

The London School of Economics and Political Science

*The impact of regeneration on existing communities in
Kent Thameside since 1991*

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Declaration

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Abstract

A key aim underpinning the regeneration of the Thames Gateway in the 1990s and 2000s was to ensure that the region's existing ex-industrial communities were able to derive tangible social, economic and infrastructural benefits from the new development taking place on brownfield sites. A more inclusive and socially aware form of regeneration that learned the lessons from the property led regeneration that took place in the London Docklands in the early 1980s was promised.

This study examines the extent to which this ambition has been achieved in Kent Thameside, one of the key 'growth areas' identified by the Government in the Thames Gateway. Using evidence from extended interviews with residents living in three existing Kent Thameside communities and key regeneration officials, as well as detailed observation of events and developments in Kent Thameside, this study examines the impact of the principal regeneration objectives relating to the area's existing communities.

It looks first at the extent to which new developments and existing communities have been integrated both physically and socially. It then considers the impact of policies which were designed to empower existing residents by enabling them to participate in the design and delivery of programmes relating to the area's physical and economic regeneration. This study uses this analysis to examine whether the Kent Thameside regeneration model, which is predicated on the private sector led redevelopment of large, brownfield sites outside the existing residential footprint, is best placed to achieve to the regeneration objectives relating to existing communities. This study also considers what lessons can be drawn from the case study of Kent Thameside to inform our understanding of the policy and practice of regeneration in the wider Thames Gateway and the UK.

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Part I

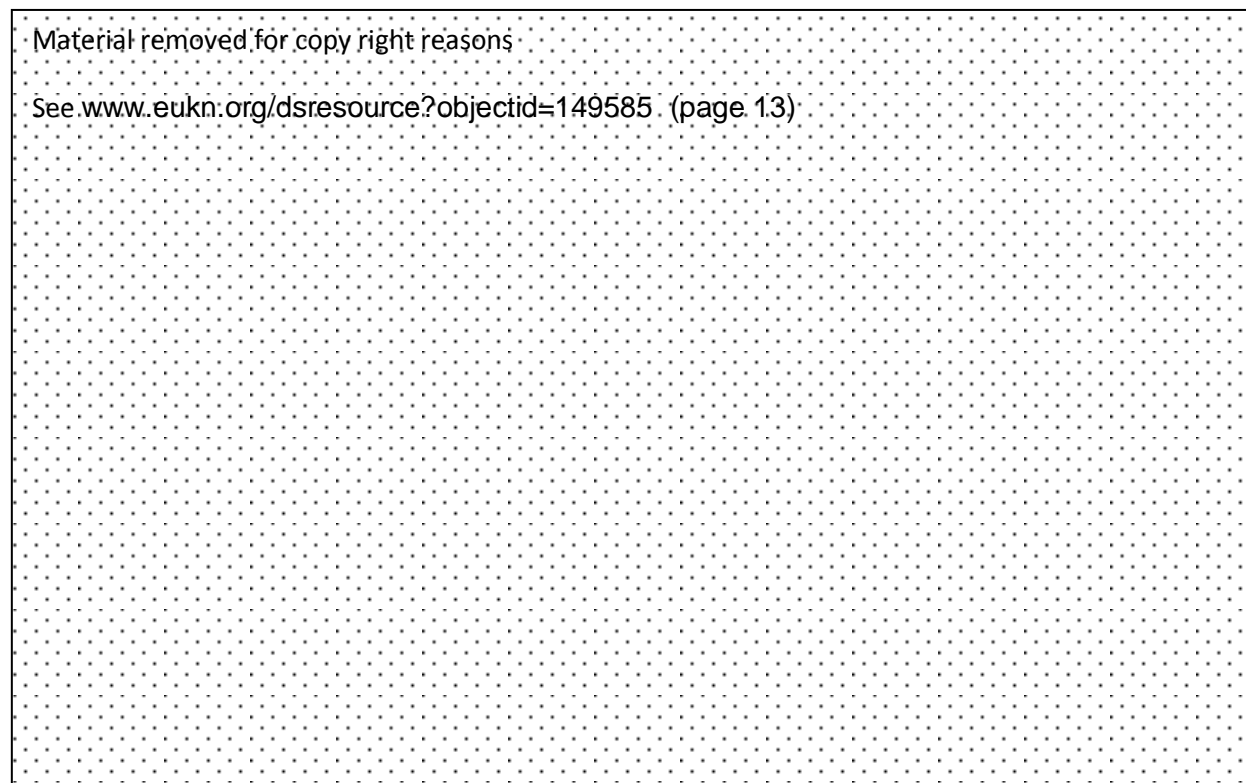
Introduction, literature review and methodology

Chapter 1 Introduction to this study

1.1 Introduction

The Thames Gateway is one of the most important UK urban regeneration projects of the last thirty years. Once labelled as the largest regeneration area in Europe (National Audit Office, 2007) the Thames Gateway region today stretches over forty miles from the edge of the City of London to the mouth of the Thames Estuary in the eastern reaches of Essex and Kent and covers sixteen local authority areas (see map 1.1).

Map 1.1 Map of the Thames Gateway



It is a physically and economically diverse region of around 1.5 million people which encompasses both densely occupied inner city London boroughs such as Newham and Tower Hamlets, with high levels of deprivation and large ethnic minority populations, and the remote, thinly populated Essex and Kent marshes. It also includes the Medway towns, which were built around the naval and defence industries, the post war new town of Basildon, the seaside town of Southend and the former cement and paper making communities of North Kent. At its fringes in Castle Point in Essex and Swale in Kent there are also prosperous villages with older, overwhelmingly white populations.

This study examines the impact of regeneration in the Thames Gateway in the 1990s and 2000s on the area's existing communities. The purpose of this introductory chapter is to consider the social, economic and political context in which this regeneration took place and to introduce some of the theories that have been used to explain the key characteristics of this regeneration. It also sets out the key aim of this study and discusses what this study will add to our understanding of urban regeneration in the UK.

This chapter will begin by describing the economic changes and policies that underpinned the regeneration of the Thames Gateway from the 1980s onwards before introducing the key aim of this study and the approach used to achieve this aim. We will then move on to examine the wider social and political context in which this regeneration occurred. This chapter will then set out the rationale for this study and describe its overall structure and specific aims.

1.2 De-industrialisation and the urban regeneration of the Thames Gateway: From the London Docklands Development Corporation to the Sustainable Communities Plan

The regeneration of the Thames Gateway began in the early 1980s in the London Docklands around the Isle of Dogs, Surrey Quays and the Royal Docks in Newham. In 1981 the Conservative government set up an Urban Development Corporation to revive the area's moribund economy and property market through the redevelopment of its redundant docklands (Foster, 1999, Brownill, 1999, Imrie, Thomas, 1999). The London docks had been undermined by the shift towards the containerisation of goods and the emergence of oil as the primary sea-borne community and had been in terminal decline since the 1950s. By the time the West India and Millwall docks on the Isle of Dogs closed in 1980, the number of people employed in the London docks had fallen from 31,000 in 1955 to just over 4,000 (Foster, 1999). In the 1970s alone, unemployment in the area had trebled from 5 to 16 per cent (Foster, 1999).

The experience of the London Docklands in the 1970s and 1980s was not unique. Many other traditional centres of industry in the UK such as Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Birmingham and Glasgow underwent similar contractions. A general failure to invest in its plant, production processes in the post war period, coupled with rising fuel and business costs following the oil shock of 1973 and poor labour relations, had left many of the UK's manufacturing centres unable to compete in an increasingly globalised market (Hall, 2006). The government's disavowal of Keynesian demand management policies in favour of a more monetarist approach aimed primarily at controlling inflation rather than tackling

unemployment or maintaining growth, together in the 1980s with a reluctance to intervene in support of struggling industries, had added to the pressure on UK manufacturing. As a result of these economic and political changes, the UK overall lost a third of its manufacturing jobs between 1971 and 1983 (Hall, 1985) while between 1971 and 2001 the UK's twenty largest cities lost 2.8 million manufacturing jobs (Moore, Begg, 2004).

The Urban Development Corporations (UDCs), of which the London Docklands and Merseyside UDCs were the first examples, and a new programme of 'Enterprise Zones', were key elements of the Conservative government's strategy to revitalise these declining industrial areas (Tallon, 2010). Armed with its own planning powers and chaired by the head of the Trafalgar House property conglomerate, the London Docklands UDC viewed the revival of the local private property market as a central element of its regeneration strategy (Foster, 1999). It saw itself primarily as a promoter and enabler of private sector investment in the Docklands, responsible for selling the Docklands to a sceptical market and removing any practical obstacles to development (Foster, 1999). The creation of an Isle of Dogs Enterprise Zone in 1982, which gave new investors significant tax incentives and a ten year rate free period, strengthened their negotiating position.

The type of entrepreneurial, 'property led' regeneration pursued by the London Docklands UDC in the 1980s proved successful in leveraging in significant private investment in the area in shape of new housing and new businesses. By the time it eventually closed in 1998, some 24,000 new homes and 60,000 new jobs had been created in the docklands and over 2,000 acres of derelict land had been redeveloped (Brownill, 2008). Yet, it was also criticised for its perceived failure to address the regeneration needs of the existing communities neighbouring the new developments, many of whom were areas of high unemployment with poor education and health outcomes. It was accused by the House of Commons Employment Select Committee of 'bypassing' the local community (Imrie, Thomas, 1999, 23) while Brownill (1999) complained that its entrepreneurial governance style had left the docklands redeveloped but not regenerated.

Under the new Conservative government of John Major in 1990s, there was a conscious shift towards a more inclusive and partnership based form of regeneration. The City Challenge of 1991 and the Single Regeneration Budget of 1994 required the public and private sectors to work in partnership in order to win government funding. There was also an expectation that successful partnerships would focus on improving local education, health, employment and housing outcomes as well promoting the physical regeneration of their

areas (Cullingworth, Nadin, 2006, Tallon, 2010). It is this change in policy emphasis in which this study takes a close interest.

These principles were reflected in the government's approach to the regeneration of the wider Thames Gateway beyond the London Docklands, which was first identified as a national regeneration priority in 1991. The Thames Gateway Planning Framework launched in 1995 still saw the market and property led redevelopment as the principal driver of regeneration in the region. Yet the framework also focused on the need to address "the broader regeneration issues facing established communities" and, importantly for this study, the "integration of new and existing areas of community and commerce" (DoE, 1995). It also expressed an interest in "encouraging a sustainable pattern of development" which optimised the use of existing redundant brownfield sites within the urban footprint.

The primary aim of the framework was to generate the jobs, training, transport, infrastructure and housing deemed necessary to enable the Gateway to match the economic success of the M4 corridor west of London linking Heathrow and Reading (DoE, 1995, Church, Frost, 1995). Plans for a high speed international rail link were also launched, which the government hoped would lend some gloss to the Gateway's image, which was synonymous with industrial decay and dereliction (Llewelyn Davies, Roger Tym & Partners, 1993). Peter Hall, an urban planner who played a key role in shaping the government's vision for the Thames Gateway, envisaged that the Gateway would become a linear city region composed of a series of discrete, self-sustaining communities linked, like 'beads on a string' by the high speed rail link (Hall, 1989). In Hall's blueprint, the international financial businesses in the City of London and the Isle of Dogs would be complemented by residential and commercial hubs in Greater London, Kent and Essex, which would fulfil routine production and back office functions (Hall, 1989).

The Labour government which came to power in 1997 shared its predecessor's commitment to the regeneration of the Thames Gateway. It saw the Gateway, with its acres of redundant brownfield sites close to London's commercial centres, as the ideal place to provide the housing needed to absorb London's growing population and bring some stability to the property market (HC Deb, 2000, ODPM, 2003a, 2003b, Barker, 2004).

In 2003 the government launched the Sustainable Communities Plan which included a commitment to create 120,000 new homes in the Thames Gateway by 2016 - a target later raised to 160,000 homes. These homes were to be built in line with the sustainable development principles set out in the Urban Task Force's final report, *Towards an Urban*

Renaissance (Urban Task Force, 1999). This influential report, commissioned by the government, had called for “well designed, compact and connected cities supporting a diverse range of uses – where people live, work and enjoy leisure time at close quarters” in order to “alleviate the increasing global ecological pressure” (Urban Task Force, 1999). In keeping with this aspiration, the Sustainable Communities Plan announced that the regeneration of the Gateway would lead to the creation of communities of “sufficient size, scale and density to support basic amenities in the neighbourhood and minimise use of resources”.

The other significant aspect of the Sustainable Communities Plan, as far as this study is concerned, was that its remit included existing communities in the Gateway as well as the new brownfield based developments. The regeneration of the Gateway, it said, should be a “broad based project” that tackles the “urban renewal” of existing communities along with “brownfield development, economic growth and environmental improvement” in “an integrated way”. Furthermore, all local people, the plan stated, should be able to “participate in the planning, design and long-term stewardship of their community” (ODPM, 2003a).

To achieve this vision, the government made £446 million available to support land assembly, site preparation, affordable housing, urban renaissance and the neighbourhood renewal of the Gateway’s existing communities (ODPM, 2003a). Nine new delivery vehicles were also created to deliver these targets in each sub-area of the Gateway. Two of them, the Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation and the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation had similar strategic and planning powers as the former London Docklands UDC. Others such as the Kent Thameside Regeneration Board and the Medway Renaissance Partnership were looser, non-statutory partnerships that had few powers of their own and existed primarily to co-ordinate delivery.

1.3 Key aim of this study

It is the move towards a more socially inclusive, participative and broad based form of regeneration articulated first in the Thames Gateway Planning Framework and then, and with more emphasis, in the Sustainable Communities Plan, that provides the primary focus of this study. The key question which this study seeks to answer is whether the regeneration model followed in the Thames Gateway in the 1990s and 2000s – which was still underpinned by the same market driven, property led approach pursued by the London Docklands UDC in the early 1980s – has been able to meet the regeneration objectives relating to the Gateway’s existing communities set out in these two strategies.

There are two particular aspects of this more inclusive regeneration approach on which this study will focus. Firstly, it considers whether a regeneration model predicated on the physical redevelopment of large-scale, discrete brownfield sites in the Gateway by private developers is capable of achieving the physical and social integration of new and existing communities. Secondly, it examines whether the necessary resources and capacity existed and were made available to enable existing residents to play an active role in shaping in the regeneration of their communities and the long-term management of their assets. Given that the delivery of these regeneration ambitions was heavily dependent on the ability of private sector developers to deliver large volumes of new houses and offices within a narrow timeframe, this second question is an important one to ask given the slowdown in construction after the banking crisis of 2008 (Granger, 2010).

To answer these questions this study will examine the regeneration experience of Kent Thameside, a 'strategic growth location' in the Thames Gateway regeneration area (ODPM, 2003b) that incorporates the urban areas of the Kent boroughs of Dartford and Gravesend north of the A2 highway and south of the river Thames (Map 1.2). Stretching from the borders of Greater London in the west to the edge of the Medway Towns twelve miles to the east, it is home to around 150,000 people, or approximately 1 in 10 of the population of the Thames Gateway. It consists of the towns of Dartford and Gravesend, each of which has a population of around 60,000, and a number of small urban villages which grew up in the Victorian era around the cement and paper making industries and were hit hard economically by the loss of these industries in the 1970s and 1980s.

Map 1.2 Map of Kent Thameside

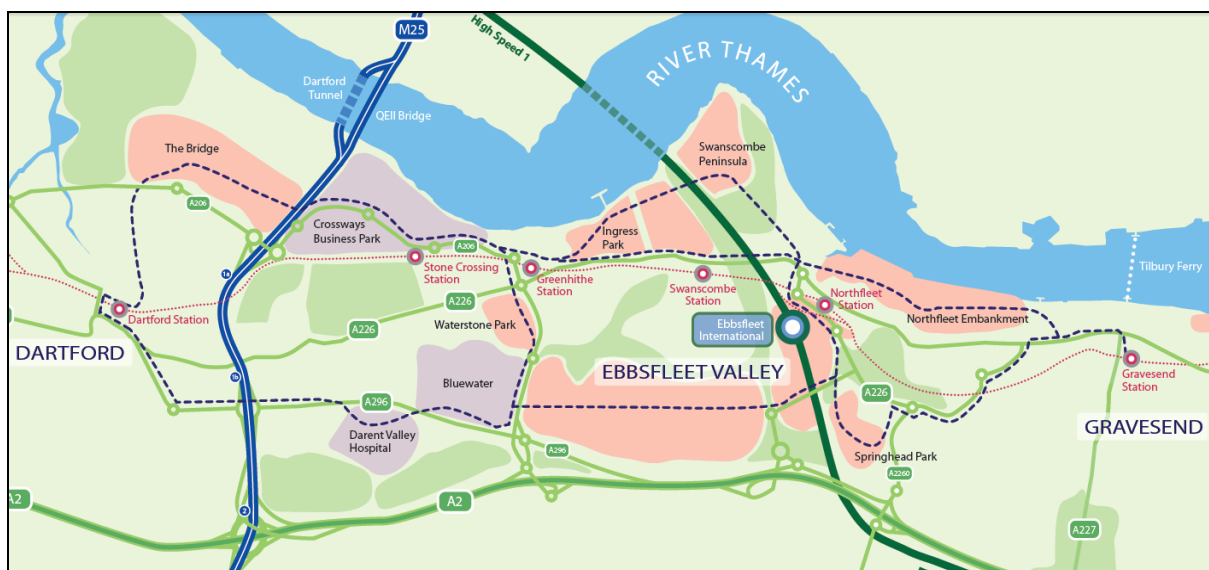


Source: Kent Thameside Delivery Board (2005)

Kent Thameside is now the location of Ebbsfleet International Station, which provides direct high speed rail services to London and international services to Paris and Brussels. The surrounding Ebbsfleet Valley, meanwhile, has been identified as one of the Gateway's key housing and commercial development hubs (see Map 1.3). In the 1990s it was anticipated that by the end of the 2020s a total of 25,000 new homes and some 50,000 new jobs would have been created in Kent Thameside, much of it around Ebbsfleet (Kent Thameside Association, 1995, 1997, 1999). While the banking crisis of 2008 has delayed some of this development and led to some projects being scaled back, Kent Thameside remains an important regeneration centre in the Gateway.

As well as being a key growth area in the Gateway, Kent Thameside is also seen as an exemplar of social regeneration in the Thames Gateway (Nelson, Quan, Forrester, Pound, 2005, Oxford Brookes, 2006). The government commissioned Thames Gateway evidence review, for example, identified Kent Thameside as one of the few key growth areas where social regeneration has been pursued with the same vigour as physical regeneration (Oxford Brookes, 2006). Ensuring that the existing residents of the former cement and paper making communities “reap the benefits” of regeneration and that new and existing communities are properly integrated have been key objectives since the early 1990s when the Kent Thameside Association, a regeneration partnership between the local authorities and Blue Circle, the principal local landowner, was set up (Kent Thameside Association, 1995).

Map 1.3 Map of the key regeneration sites in Kent Thameside



Source: Kent Thameside Delivery Board (2005)

Kent Thameside's importance as growth area and its focus on the regeneration of its existing communities means that it is well qualified to help us understand the capability of the Thames Gateway regeneration model to achieve its objectives relating to existing communities. It will enable us to examine whether the regeneration model pursued in the Thames Gateway in the 1990s and 2000s is a realistic strategy with sufficient resources to meet a demanding set of social and physical regeneration goals or is, instead, an example of the kind of 'irrational exuberance' displayed by the financial markets during the dot-com bubble of the late 1990s (Shiller, 2000): a phenomenon whereby a community's collective confidence in a particular idea is not justified by the fundamentals underpinning it.

1.4 The socio-economic and political context for urban regeneration from the 1980s to 2000s

If we are to understand the emergence and development of urban regeneration in the Thames Gateway then we need to consider the social, economic and political events that gave rise to the emergence of property led regeneration in the 1980s and its subsequent, ostensibly more inclusive forms of the 1990s and 2000s. It is also important to consider the academic theories that have emerged to explain these events.

In the previous sections we touched on the decline of the UK's traditional industrial base in the 1970s and 1980s and the economic and political factors behind it. The collapse of these labour intensive, mechanised industries and the emergence in its place of an information technology driven service economy focused on finance, the law, retail, hospitality and education is seen as emblematic of a paradigm shift in the economy, society and politics of the UK and other western liberal democracies.

Our understanding of this change has been strongly influenced by the regulation school: a group of theorists influenced by Marxist analysis of capital accumulation, who argue that capitalism is characterised by emergence and breakdown of a series of modes of production, each regulated by a distinctive set of social and political institutions. In the eyes of the regulation theorists such as Aglietta (1979), Lipietz (1987) and Jessop (1990), the 1970s marked the transition between one 'regime of accumulation', 'Fordism', and another 'Post-Fordism'.

'Fordist' economies, which existed in Western Europe and the US from the 1940s to the 1970s, were based on the mass production and mass consumption of standardised goods by a largely male workforce. To maintain a steady demand for these products, nation state governments, working in close partnership with industry, labour and capital, intervened to

maintain full employment and the purchasing power of consumers and to provide social protection payments to those unable to work (Heffernan, 2000).

Post-Fordism, on the other hand is seen as synonymous with the increasingly globalised service sector economy of the 1980s which was underpinned by a more feminised workforce and less job security (Jessop, 1990). The state, meanwhile, reflecting the rise of neo-liberal politics, saw the control of inflation and the promotion of economic competitiveness and growth rather than the maintenance of full employment and social protection as its primary responsibility (Cairncross, 1990, Brenner 1999). During this period of 'rolled back neo-liberalism', the restructured Post-Fordist state became less protectionist in spirit and concentrated its efforts on removing any perceived regulatory, legislative and structural barriers to economic growth (Peck, Tickell, 2006). In the UK in the 1980s, for example, the Conservative government sought to curb the power of organised labour and to reduce the employment and regulatory costs faced by private enterprise. In keeping with this neo-liberal ethos it also deregulated the financial markets and privatised many of the UK's public utilities and assets.

The emergence in the 1980s of the entrepreneurial city, which competed on a global stage for investment in its property and financial markets by promoting its locational, fiscal and infrastructural advantages, is closely associated with this shift from a Fordist to a Post-Fordist economy (Tallon, 2010, Boddy, Parkinson, 2004). 'City regions' such as London and New York, orientated around dense clusters of global banking and financial institutions and supported by an interdependent network of flexible service industries, are seen as the engine and 'territorial platforms' for much of the Post-Fordist economy (Scott, 2001). The governance of these entrepreneurial cities, meanwhile, was provided by public-private partnerships dedicated to attracting private capital to fund the infrastructure and other supply side initiatives once provided by the nation state (Harvey, 1989). Powerful 'place entrepreneurs' in the property and construction sectors, together with education, transport and utility providers, combined to form 'growth machines', according to Logan and Molotch (1987) in order to create a pro-growth, pro-development culture within cities. The property based approach to regeneration seen in the London Docklands, which sought to market the area to business and property investors and affluent new residents, is seen as emblematic of this new urban entrepreneurialism (Tallon, 2010).

Yet while the urban entrepreneurialism of the 1980s brought new investment and development to many of the UK's industrial heartlands, it was unable to compensate for the loss of these cities' manufacturing bases. Many of the people who worked in these industries

either failed to re-enter employment or ended up working on the insecure, low wage, low skill margins of the economy (Hamnett, 2003). In a bid to reconcile the contradictions created by the 'rolled back neo-liberalism' of the 1980s, which brought new wealth and prestige to places such as the deregulated City of London but left cities in the north, the midlands and parts of East London facing high levels of unemployment, a more nuanced, 'rolled out neo-liberalism' emerged under the Conservative and Labour governments that followed the Thatcher administration. These administrations had the same neo-liberal distaste for regulatory interference in functioning of the free market but undertook a series of supply side measures aimed at enabling previously excluded communities to participate fully in the economy (Jessop, 1990, 1995, 2002, Peck, Theodore, 2000, 2001). The Labour government which came to power in 1997, for example, adopted a series of 'workfare' policies to tackle the financial and educational barriers to employment and to equip people with the skills necessary to exist in a flexible neo-liberal economy characterised by job insecurity (Levitas, 2005).

Labour's 'workfare' policies and its emphasis on community participation in its urban renewal programmes such as the New Deal for Communities and the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy were part of a wider policy agenda geared towards enabling excluded communities to increase their levels of 'social capital' (Imrie, Lees, Raco, 2009, Tiesdell, Allmendinger, 2001). These policies were influenced by Putnam's (1993) ideas about social capital and Etzioni's communitarianism (1995). Putnam saw 'social capital', or the social networks and associations that bind individuals together, as a community asset that was essential to the successful pursuit of shared objectives. Etzioni, meanwhile, argued that the shared values, rights and responsibilities of communities were the key drivers of a successful and cohesive society.

Higher levels of social capital were associated by the government with improved educational, employment and health outcomes and seen as a means of tackling the sense of powerlessness, physical and social exclusion and low esteem that was, in part, preventing communities at the margins of society from achieving their potential (Kearns, 2003). The Sustainable Communities Plan (2003a), which highlighted the importance of community participation in the planning and delivery of regeneration as a means of building sustainable communities of engaged citizens, reflects Labour's pre-occupation with improving levels of social capital through greater civic participation. Under Labour property developers were encouraged to "adopt the language of social inclusion, partnership and community focus" while there was "much onus on the development industry" to ensure that existing communities are "core" to the regeneration process (Imrie, 2009, 98).

The debate about social and physical exclusion took place in the context of a significant social re-structuring of the UK's urban landscape. It has been argued that since the 1970s that has been a gradual spatial polarisation of income groups in the UK, with rising house prices reducing the freedom of low and medium income households to find a home in an area of their choice (Dorling, 2011). London, for example, has seen a sharp growth in the proportion of middle class professional households in the last thirty years, with many of them living in now desirable, high cost areas vacated during the post war boom by white working class households who took advantage of rising wages and career opportunities to move out to the edge of London and the Home Counties (Hamnett, 2003, Dench, Gavron, Young, 2006). Some low income households can still be found in these areas but they are almost entirely restricted to the social housing sector. Indeed, the property market in much of London is now wholly inaccessible to anyone with a low or medium income.

The Labour government's support for 'mixed communities' containing homes of different types and tenures to meet the needs of a range of income and age groups, which is a key policy objective of the Sustainable Communities Plan (2003a), was in part a response to this affordability issue. Without affordable homes for service workers in places like the Thames Gateway, London would not, the government believed, be able to compete effectively on a global stage (Rose, 2004). However, the support for mixed communities also reflects a belief that they can facilitate 'creative trickle down' between different social and income groups and act as vehicle for empowerment (Peck 2005).

Another significant influence on urban regeneration policy and practice in the 1990s and 2000s was the growth in interest in sustainable development and the 'future proofing' of cities in response to challenge posed by climate change and rising sea levels (Girardet, 2008). The rapid increase in the consumption by cities of power, water, raw materials and land, which was highlighted in UN's Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, was described by Rogers and Power (2000), members of the government's influential Urban Task Force, as being among the biggest environmental threats facing the world. This interest in more sustainable development led to a focus within regeneration policy on the 'compact city' with developments of sufficient density to enable residents to access services by foot rather than by car built on previously developed 'brownfield sites' rather than virgin greenfields (Urban Task Force, 1999, DETR, 2000a).

As well as shaping the principles behind the regeneration of the Thames Gateway (DoE, 1995, ODPM, 2003a) this focus on the compact city helped to inspire a revival in inner city living in many of the UK's major ex-industrial cities. After decades of decline, Manchester's

inner city population, for example, grew from just 200 in 1993 to over 15,000 in 2003 as the city's redundant warehouses and factories were replaced by new high density apartment blocks, shops and cultural facilities (Tallon, 2010). These gentrified inner city enclaves aimed at affluent, usually childless, urban professionals became a defining feature of urban regeneration in the UK during the 1990s and 2000s; an example of the shift in the urban economy from the Fordist mass production of standardised goods to a service economy driven by property, retail, finance and cultural and sporting industries (Boddy, 2007).

1.5 Methodology and rationale of this study

As stated above the key question which this study seeks to answer is whether the regeneration model followed in the Thames Gateway in the 1990s and 2000s has been able to meet the regeneration objectives relating to the Gateway's existing communities set out in the Thames Gateway Regeneration Framework (DoE, 1995) and the Sustainable Communities Plan (ODPM, 2003).

To answer this question this study will focus on the case study of Kent Thameside and examine the impact of the regeneration policies relating to the area's existing communities pursued by the members of the Kent Thameside Association in the 1990s and its successor the Kent Thameside Delivery Board in the 2000s. Broadly speaking, these policies fall into two, overlapping categories. First, there are the policies which are designed to empower residents by enabling them to participate in the design and delivery of programmes relating to the area's physical and economic regeneration. Among these programmes are urban renewal schemes designed to improve the fabric and infrastructure of existing communities, in which residents were supposed to be closely involved, (Dartford Borough Council, 2003e) and schemes aimed at giving existing residents the chance to help shape the regeneration priorities of Kent Thameside (Dartford Borough Council, 2003g).

The second category consists of policies that seek to promote the physical and social integration of existing communities and the new brownfield developments created through a process of property led regeneration (EDAW Plc, 2005). These policies attempt to minimise any physical disparities between the new housing developments and Kent Thameside's existing communities which are predominantly composed of late Victorian and Edwardian terraces, inter and post war social housing. Blurring the boundaries between the new and the old is seen by the regeneration partners as an important means of making sure that all Kent Thameside residents, regardless of where they live, feel the benefits of regeneration (Dartford Borough Council, 2002, Kent Thameside Delivery Board, 2005). Reducing the

sense of physical disconnection between the new and the old, it is argued, will also help to increase the opportunity for social mixing between the two discrete groups of residents.

This study will examine the implementation and impact of these policies. To do this it will look in detail at the key social regeneration projects carried out in the two decades following the launch of the Kent Thameside Association in the early 1990s. This analysis will be informed by evidence from a survey of 60 existing residents from existing Kent Thameside communities using semi-structured interviews and also 9 key local figures involved in managing the area's regeneration. The evidence from local residents and key local figures, coupled with detailed observation of events and developments in Kent Thameside will help us to understand the degree to which the regeneration partners have succeeded in their ambition to create integrated communities and ensure that the benefits of regeneration are felt by all.

There are three key reasons why this research will add to our body of knowledge on urban regeneration. Firstly, it will provide a useful addition to the literature on the social regeneration of growth areas such as the Thames Gateway. As Turok (2009) and the Thames Gateway Evidence Review (Oxford Brookes University, 2006) have stated much of the existing literature tends to focus on the Gateway's complex governance arrangements and the challenge of funding its infrastructure needs. There been little research, however, on the impact of regeneration policies in the Gateway focused on existing communities, and attempts to integrate them with new developments.

Secondly, much of the existing research on the Thames Gateway is 'London-centric' in nature and concerned with the regeneration experience of core city areas rather than the urban or semi-urban hinterland of Essex and Kent (Cohen, Rustin, 2008, Imrie, Lees, Raco, 2009, Power, Richardson, Seshimo, Firth, 2004). This poses the risk, Turok (2009) believes, that the specific regeneration needs of the urban hinterland will be seen by national policymakers as either synonymous with those of the core city areas or become obscured altogether by the weight of evidence on the core cities. A study such as this which looks at the dynamic between national policy goals, the local policy agenda in a region outside London and the needs of the local residents most directly affected by this regeneration, will help us to address this risk.

Thirdly, this study will give us an additional insight into the extent to which neighbouring residents benefit from any of the 'trickle down' effects such as new and improved amenities and employment opportunities that are purported to flow from major developments (Loftman, Nevin, 2003).

In summary, this study is an opportunity to examine the extent to which a property led approach to regeneration in one of the UK's key growth areas has been able to "reconcile economic competitiveness with social cohesion" as successive governments have promised (Buck, Gordon, Hall, Harloe, Kleinman, 2002,1). By looking at the impact of regeneration policies on existing communities in the urban hinterland of the Thames Gateway, this study will help to allow the voice of existing residents to be heard and their role in shaping or influencing policy implementation in a growth area to be better understood. This study, therefore, will help to strengthen our understanding of the extent to which the urban regeneration narrative in a city region context is influenced by the interplay between the agendas of national and local policymakers and community actors.

1.6 Structure of this study

This study consists of four parts. Part I comprises the introduction to this study, the literature review and the methodology chapter. The literature review will consider the academic research and theories relating to the emergence and development of the property led urban regeneration model over the last thirty years. It will look at the social, economic and spatial re-structuring of the urban landscape in recent decades and the change in the way in which cities and city regions have been governed. This discussion will examine the emergence of the service led, post-industrial global city and the entrepreneurial partnerships that have fuelled urban redevelopment and fostered competition among and within city regions for investment capital. The literature review will also examine the academic debate around urban renewal and the re-kindling of interest in community and neighbourhood level interventions as a means of tackling poverty and social exclusion. In addition, it will consider the rationale behind the sustainable urban development discourse and the academic response to it.

The methodology chapter will consider why a case study approach was adopted and why the particular study area was chosen. It will also discuss the methods used to gather and analyse the primary evidence underpinning this study and the aims and rationale behind them. This discussion will consider how a 'typology' of existing residents in Kent Thameside based on a survey of residents was produced and how data from interviews with key local figures involved in the regeneration of Kent Thameside was gathered and analysed.

Part II of this study focuses on Kent Thameside. It looks at the emergence of the Kent Thameside regeneration agenda and examines its existing communities and the people who live within them. This section will begin with an analysis of how and why Kent Thameside came to be identified as a regeneration priority by the government. It will also show how

Kent Thameside has evolved as a regeneration concept over the years. The aim of this discussion is to situate Kent Thameside within the wider political and academic debate that has influenced the emergence and development of the Thames Gateway regeneration policy agenda. It will also examine how this wider debate has shaped - and also been shaped by - the policies and politics underpinning the regeneration of Kent Thameside.

This discussion will be followed by an analysis of the socio-economic character of the three existing communities in Kent Thameside that provide the detailed case study evidence on which this study will focus: Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross. These villages are the communities most directly affected by the new developments taking place in Kent Thameside. This will be followed by a chapter setting out the profiles of the four groups of residents that make up the typology of residents discussed above.

Part III of this study considers the impact of Kent Thameside's physical and social regeneration initiatives on Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross. This section will examine, first of all, whether the Kent Thameside Association and its successor, the Kent Thameside Delivery Board, have been able to achieve their ambition of creating a seamless, 'integrated development' where residents use the same community facilities, mix socially and identify themselves as equal citizens of the same community (Kent Thameside Association, 1997, Kent Thameside Delivery Board, 2005). This finding would support the hypothesis underlying the Kent Thameside and wider Thames Gateway regeneration model that new developments delivered through the property led regeneration on brownfield sites can be successfully integrated with existing communities. Secondly, it will consider whether they have been able to meet their goal of ensuring that existing residents are "genuinely involved in the regeneration process": an objective which they see as necessary "if the root causes of deprivation are to be addressed successfully with a lasting effect" (Kent Thameside Delivery Board, 2005). This finding would support the hypothesis that participation delivers positive benefits to urban regeneration.

In order to understand the degree to which these regeneration objectives have been realised, this study will examine in detail the key resident participation and integration focused initiatives that have been implemented in Kent Thameside over the last two decades. We will look, first of all, at the extent to which the Ingress Park and Waterstone Park housing developments, the two most mature and high profile developments delivered through the Kent Thameside regeneration programme, have been physically and socially integrated with Knockhall and Horns Cross, their immediate neighbours. The analysis in this chapter is supported by evidence from 35 semi-structured interviews with existing residents

in Knockhall and Horns Cross and also evidence from interviews with key officials and politicians involved in the building of Ingress Park and Waterstone Park.

This study will then consider two of the key resident participation initiatives launched in Kent Thameside. The first, the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust, was a community led body in Swanscombe backed by Blue Circle Cement in the late 1990s, the principal landowner and employer in Kent Thameside. The second, the Swanscombe Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan, was a local authority led initiative launched in 2003 to ensure that the “major threats to the sustainability of Swanscombe posed by new development” were “turned into ‘substantial opportunities’ for the community” (Dartford Borough Council, 2003g).

Finally, this study will examine two urban renewal schemes in Swanscombe which were designed both to promote the integration of new and existing communities and to provide existing residents with the opportunity to actively participate in the renewal of their own community. The two initiatives, the Gunn Road Environmental Improvements Scheme and the Swanscombe Heritage Park Scheme, both of which were planned as resident led projects, were launched to help reduce the physical disparities between Swanscombe and the surrounding new developments. The analysis of all four of these Swanscombe based initiatives will be based on interviews with 25 Swanscombe residents and key local officials and politicians involved in the community’s renewal.

Part IV of this study includes an analysis of the continued viability of the Kent Thameside regeneration model and summarises the study’s key findings and conclusion. It will begin by looking at whether the regeneration model, which is heavily reliant on a buoyant property market and the availability of significant private capital, is capable of meeting the area’s social regeneration goals. This chapter will question whether a regeneration model which relies on the costly redevelopment of brownfield sites outside the existing urban footprint is capable of successfully integrating new and existing communities and of ensuring that the planned resident led urban renewal schemes in existing communities are adequately funded. It will conclude by looking at how the regeneration model could potentially be strengthened and at some alternative ways in which the same social regeneration goals could be achieved. This chapter will be followed by a final chapter summarising the key findings of this study.

1.7 Conclusion

This introductory chapter examines the social, economic and political factors that influenced the emergence and delivery of the Thames Gateway regeneration policy framework in the

1990s and 2000s. It also considers the transition from the 'rolled back neo-liberal', property led approach to regeneration pursued in the London Docklands in the early 1980s to the 'rolled out neo-liberal' form of regeneration followed in the wider Thames Gateway in the 1990s and 2000s: an approach which was still property led but which also placed an emphasis on the social regeneration of existing, low income, ex-industrial communities and sustainable development.

As well as providing an overview of the socio-economic and spatial characteristics of the Thames Gateway, this chapter examines the key features of Kent Thameside, one of the main growth areas of the Gateway, which serves as the primary case study area in this study. It then considers how the case study of Kent Thameside will be used to meet the principal aim of this study, namely; to examine the ability of the Thames Gateway regeneration model to deliver both brownfield regeneration and the renewal of existing communities.

This chapter also discusses how this study will add to the body of literature on urban regeneration in the UK before going on to examine how this study is structured and the research methodology it uses.

Chapter 2 Urban regeneration in the UK: A literature review

2.1 Introduction

The practice of urban regeneration in the UK today has a complex lineage. It is the product of a multitude of often competing policy imperatives and its development has been analysed and critiqued by academics from a wide range of disciplines. It has been seen variously as a straightforward tool for bringing redundant land back into profitable use and, more ambitiously, as a mechanism for tackling social inequalities and bringing deprived communities back into the social and economic mainstream. If we are to understand the genesis and development of the regeneration of the Thames Gateway we need to first investigate the broad range of academic discourses and debates connected with the practice of regeneration in this country.

This chapter will begin with a brief discussion of the key attributes that define the practice of urban regeneration today in the Thames Gateway. It will then move on to consider the social, political and economic events that led to the development of property led regeneration and place competition in the 1980s and the theories that have been used to explain their emergence. The social and spatial restructuring of urban spaces that accompanied these changes will also be examined. We will then turn to the academic debate about the community participation and sustainable development discourses, which emerged in the 1990s as central features of a re-branded form of property led regeneration. This chapter will then conclude with a discussion of the gaps in the existing literature that are relevant to this study and a summary of the key themes within the literature and the main lessons we should take from them.

2.2 Defining the role of urban regeneration today in the Thames Gateway

Urban regeneration in the UK is not a new phenomenon. It has its roots in the urban slum clearance and housing programmes that were set in motion by the new metropolitan authorities at the end of the Victorian era (Roberts, 2000). The state led urban reconstruction schemes that followed the two world wars are another influential forebear. But it is the neo-liberal approach to regeneration put in train by the Thatcher government of the 1980s that has had the most influence on the form of urban regeneration that one finds today in the Thames Gateway (Jones, Evans, 2008, Tallon, 2010).

Under Thatcher, Britain's declining industrial centres, such as London's East End and Liverpool, were exposed to a brand of regeneration that saw the development of privately funded commercial, office and residential spaces on derelict industrial sites as the key to

their revival (Brownill, 1999, Foster, 1999, Couch, 2003). It was a form of regeneration supported by an array of fiscal incentives and driven by entrepreneurial development corporations that operated independently of the old managerialist state in the form of publicly accountable local government bodies (Imrie, Lees, Raco, 2009, Boddy, Parkinson, 2004, Harvey, 1989). For the Thatcher government, property led and market driven “urban regeneration - as opposed to mere re-development - became akin to a moral crusade” charged with “rescuing not only the economy but the soul of the nation” (Tallon, 2010, 2). Her government’s zeal for market driven urban regeneration was shared by other liberal democracies facing the same post-industrial challenges. In the US, for example, regeneration partnerships between the public sector and city governments, aided by federal funds, emerged at the same time in places like Boston and Baltimore with the aim of transforming their run-down waterfronts and attracting new investment, businesses and people to their city centres (Williams, 2004).

In the thirty years since the launch of urban regeneration corporations in the London Docklands and Liverpool our notion of urban regeneration has evolved appreciably. It is still primarily concerned with the physical improvement and economic renaissance of urban sites that have been blighted by the loss of manufacturing, transport or other industrial capacity. The neo-liberal ‘growth first logic’ of the 1980s that brought together private capital and an increasingly entrepreneurial state in an effort to deliver the urban infrastructure needed to capture flows of global investment remains resonant today (Imrie, Lees, Raco, 2009). However, urban regeneration now has a far stronger focus on social inclusion than was the case in the early 1980s. Couch, for instance, defines urban regeneration today not just as the “re-growth of economic activity where it has been lost” but as the “restoration of social function where there has been dysfunction, or social inclusion where there has been exclusion” (Couch, Fraser, Percy, 2003, 2). It is also defined he says, as befits the growing interest in sustainable urban regeneration, “as the restoration of environmental quality or ecological balance where it has been lost”. Roberts, too, sees urban regeneration as a “comprehensive and integrated vision” which “seeks to bring about a lasting improvement in the social and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change” as well as its “physical and economic condition” (Roberts, 2000, 17).

Tallon (2010) also accepts that urban regeneration has become more holistic over the last thirty years. However he believes that the nature of its role has been complicated by the emergence of a parallel policy discourse focusing on neighbourhood level urban renewal. This discourse emerged during the early years of the new Labour government and was inspired by Putnam’s theories about social capital and Etzioni’s communitarianism (Putnam,

1993, Etzioni, 1995) and by British experiments in co-operative housing community development such as the Priority Estates Project (Power, 1987). It led to the implementation of people and place based policy interventions in socially excluded neighbourhoods which were intended to build the social capital required to deliver social cohesion and improved social policy outcomes (Kearns, 2003). In Tallon's view this led to a dilution of the urban regeneration concept under new Labour. Although the "policy rhetoric retains the language of a holistic approach", Tallon (2010, 2) argues that the primary focus has been on "interventions in the built form to stimulate economic growth". Durose and Lees (2012), though, have pointed out that new Labour's interest in neighbourhood level urban renewal measures was short-lived. Not only did it prove harder than expected, they argue, to show that neighbourhood level approaches could tackle the causes of social exclusion, but the focus within government started to shift in the early 2000s towards city region focused regeneration programmes. This meant that the Treasury was less inclined to invest in new neighbourhood based programmes when the flagship New Deal for Communities and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund schemes eventually ended.

By the end of the new Labour era, therefore, urban regeneration had once again become the primary vehicle through which the government and its partners sought to deliver the economic, social and environmental renewal of urban communities. Its ability to achieve this renewal had, however, become severely constrained by the consequences of the banking and financial crisis of 2008 which led a dramatic retrenchment in the scale and pace of urban regeneration in the UK – a position from which it has still to recover today (Granger, 2010).

2.3 Urban social and economic restructuring and governance

2.3.1 Understanding the Fordist crisis and the emergence of post Fordism

The rise of the property led urban regeneration agenda in the 1980s is widely associated with a paradigm shift in the economy, society and politics of the UK and other western liberal democracies. If we are to understand why this agenda emerged then we need to examine this wider political and economic context and consider the principal theories that have been advanced to explain the changes that took place. In this section we will briefly describe the events that presaged the emergence of this new political and economic paradigm, before moving on to consider the three key theories used to explain this transition: regulation theory; the flexible specialisation theory and the neo-Schumpeterian theory.

The radical shift in Britain's political economy that took place in the mid 1970s was prompted by an apparent crisis in the post war Keynesian Beveridge consensus (Gamble, 1994). This

political consensus, which was characterised by a belief in Keynesian economics and support for a strong welfare state, had managed to secure full and stable employment and steady economic growth up to the early 1970s through a policy of state led demand management. The 'oil shock' of 1973, which led to a period of 'stagflation' as rising business and fuel costs forced up inflation while growing unemployment and a decline in households' disposable incomes kept demand static, is often seen as the point at which the consensus began to unravel (Burk, 1990). With governments seemingly no longer able to control the economy via the favoured Keynesian method of fiscal and monetary policy management, political attention shifted, particularly on the new right, to alternative economic ideas such as monetarism.

In the UK, the 1979 election victory of the Conservatives ushered in a period in which "the control of inflation", through a monetarist policy, "became the primary aim of policy without much regard to repercussions on employment or growth" (Cairncross, 1990, 35). Monetarism, coupled with a growing reluctance by the government to intervene in support of manufacturing and extractive industries, which were facing ever stronger international competition, contributed to the ongoing decline of the UK's heavy industrial urban centres which had begun in the 1970s. The manufacturing base of the UK's traditional centres of industry such as Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Birmingham, London and Glasgow, much of which had seen little investment in the previous thirty years, either in its plant, production processes or transport connections, was ill-equipped to survive in this new economic climate (Hall, 2006). Confronted by global competitors with more advanced technology and production methods, or lower labour costs and a more productive workforce, and a struggling national economy and a less interventionist state, many manufacturing businesses in these cities were forced to close. Between 1971 and 1983, the UK overall lost a third of its manufacturing jobs (Hall, 1985) while between 1971 and 2001 the UK's twenty largest cities lost 2.8 million manufacturing jobs (Moore, Begg, 2004).

Our understanding of the causes and consequences of this paradigm shift in western economies has been heavily influenced by the work of regulation theorists such as Aglietta, Lipietz and Jessop (Amin, 1995). Regulation theory, which has its origins in the work of Aglietta (1979) and Lipietz (1987) and Marxist analysis of the laws of capital accumulation, seeks to examine how the contradictions in western capitalism have been regulated by the state, the legal system and other powerful actors in order to ensure the continued hegemony of the capitalist order (Jessop, 1990). It argues that the history of capitalism is characterised by the emergence and breakdown of a series of distinct modes of economic production, or 'regime of accumulations', which were regulated by a distinctive set of social and political

institutions and behavioural norms, or 'mode of regulations'. Much of their work focuses on the transition around the 1970s from one dominant 'regime of accumulation', 'Fordism', to another, 'post-Fordism' (Amin, 1995).

Fordism is a term coined by Gramsci, the Italian Marxist, to describe the mass production assembly line methods introduced by Henry Ford in the twentieth century during the inter-war period and their effects on social life in Italy (Savage, Warde, Ward, 2003). The methods pioneered by Ford in the motor industry of Detroit came to dominate industrial production not just in the US but in much of Western Europe during the post war boom from the mid 1940s to mid 1970s. These Fordist economies were characterised by a "durable balance between mass production of standardised goods on the one hand and the mass consumption of goods on the other" which was made possible by the full employment of economically active males and a consistent growth in the purchasing power of the wider population (Heffernan, 2000, 3).

For the regulation theorists, the state, particularly in Western Europe, played a crucial role in the development and regulation of the Fordist economy. Interventionist and protectionist in nature, the post war managerialist state worked closely with industry, labour and capital to maintain production and demand for increasing volumes of mass produced goods by ensuring full employment, avoiding labour disputes and providing pensions and welfare payments to those too old, too young or too sick to work (Heffernan, 2000). In this it was motivated by a desire to avoid crises of overproduction and under-consumption such as the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Post-Fordism, in contrast, which is seen as the dominant regime of accumulation after the ascent of the new right in the 1980s, is often characterised by a flexible, demand led, competitive service sector economy composed of small and medium businesses and an increasingly feminised and part-time workforce with less job security (Jessop, 1990). The economy also became increasingly globalised, with more businesses and indeed cities, competing at an international level for trade and investment.

Boyer (1990), one the leading regulation theorists, suggests that the crisis in Fordism which gave rise to post-Fordism was driven by the growing social resistance, firstly to the rigid management and organisation of labour in Fordist enterprises and secondly to the narrow, standardised product lines produced by Fordist industry. Fordist producers, Boyer argues, lacked the capacity to respond efficiently to these new tastes and mentalities and were further undermined by the increasing globalisation of economic flows and production. This

reduced the productivity and profitability of the Fordist model and resulted in higher costs for industry and the state and ultimately unsustainable inflationary pressure on the system.

The regulation approach is not the only model that exists to explain the transition from Fordism to post-Fordism. The flexible specialisation approach, which sees economic development in a less deterministic light than the regulation theorists, argues that two competing forms of industrial production, 'mass production' and 'flexible specialisation' have co-existed over the last two hundred years (Piore, Sabel, 1984, Sabel, Zeitlin, 1985).

Flexible specialisation involves the production of bespoke products by innovative, highly skilled and adaptable workers while mass production focuses on the delivery of standardised goods by semi-skilled workers using special purpose machinery. Piore, Sabel and Zeitlin suggest that neither form of production is inevitably destined to dominate the other.

However, they argue that at certain points in history social, political and economic events conspire to cause one of them to be seen as the dominant form. In the twentieth century two such 'industrial divides' have occurred: the inter-war period which saw the emergence of Fordist mass production and the 1970s which witnessed the crisis of Fordism and a renewed interest in the flexibility and dynamism offered by smaller specialist producers.

Another key model is the neo-Schumpeterian approach. This approach is similar to the regulation approach in that it sees the history of the capitalist system, as did Kondratiev, as being composed of a series of 'long waves' of economic development. Where it differs from the regulation approach is in the emphasis it places, building on the work of Schumpeter, on technological innovation as the driving force behind the emergence of each new wave (Freeman, Clarke, Soete, 1982, Freeman, Perez, 1988). In this sense the neo-Schumpeterian approach sees the emergence of cheap energy in the early twentieth century as being a key catalyst behind the development of the so-called fourth Kondratiev wave of mass production and consumption. Similarly, it regards the energy crisis of the 1970s as an important factor in the slow decline of this wave.

The clarity and breadth of these models have had great appeal to a generation of social scientists who have attempted to understand and explain social and economic causes and consequences of de-industrialisation. Yet each model has attracted its share of criticism. Using the ideal form of Fordism presented by the regulation theorists to understand and explain processes of change taking place in specific locales with their own complex economic and governance arrangements has proved problematic (Hirst, Zeitlin, 1991). Regulation theory, with its clearly defined universal modes of regulation and regimes of accumulation, has also been criticised for "ascribing to history a systematic, functionalist and

logical coherence which it rarely possesses” (Amin, 1995, 11). The past and indeed the present is often a lot more inchoate and contradictory than the regulation theorists or indeed many analysts of supposed transition from Fordism to post Fordism are prepared to accept. Equally, the neo-Schumpeterian approach has been criticised as being too technologically deterministic while the opposition of two distinct and coherent forms of production posited by the flexible specialisation theorists has also been questioned (Elam, 1995). The Marxist geographer David Harvey, meanwhile, while sympathetic to many aspects of the regulation approach, has debated the extent to which the emerging regime of accumulation, which he chooses to call a ‘regime of flexible accumulation’ characterised by the revival of entrepreneurialism and neo conservatism, represents a definitive break with the past (Harvey, 1990). Flexible accumulation could, he argues, be seen as a “new combination of mainly old elements” rather than a radical reconstitution of the capitalist system (Harvey, 1990, 196).

Nonetheless, the influence of these models on our understanding of urban regeneration over the last thirty years has been considerable. The work of the regulation theorists, and of David Harvey, which examines changes in the way urban societies are governed and organised as well as how urban production has been managed, has had a particular impact on urban regeneration commentators. Their ideas feature prominently in the academic analysis of the ‘place competition’ between socially, economically and politically re-configured entrepreneurial post-Fordist cities, which underpins the emergence of the property led regeneration model in the 1980s. In the following sections we shall examine the key arguments that have been used to explain the development of place competition. We will also briefly consider the academic debate about the impact on urban residents of two of the key social consequences of post-Fordism, namely, a rise in job insecurity and income inequality and the spatial re-structuring of the urban landscape as a result of changes in economic character of the Fordist city.

2.3.2 The rise of place competition between post-Fordist cities

In the last twenty years there has been a marked change in the way cities are perceived and marketed. According to Boddy and Parkinson (2004) cities in the UK, once viewed as economically and socially moribund, have come to be seen as dynamos of the economy that have a key role to play in ensuring the country’s international competitiveness. Porter (1995), writing in the mid 1990s about US also suggested that the perception of the inner city as an economically unviable entity that acted as a drag on the national economy was no longer relevant. He argued that the strategic location of the inner city, with their central business

and entertainment districts situated at the centre of a regional network of services, coupled with their supply of labour and their residents' entrepreneurial acumen meant that inner cities were well placed to help the US sustain its competitive advantage.

Today, cities have become adept at promoting these locational and infrastructural assets in a bid to attract new investment from across the globe (Boddy, Parkinson, 2004, Buck, Gordon, Harding, Turok, 2005). According to Deas (2005) cities, or rather the local coalitions of elite public and private actors at their head, view economic success as being contingent on their ability to compete effectively against their national and international peers. Their competitive standing in the eyes of international investors is influenced, they believe, by their capacity to assist business start ups and develop clustered trading networks of businesses. The skills offered by the local workforce and environmental factors such as the quality of life on offer in urban areas and the quality of the communications infrastructure are also seen as important by these coalitions.

The urban studies literature suggests that the rise of 'place competition' between cities is underpinned by four key factors. The first is the globalisation of investment flows. Post-Fordist city economies, it is argued, are increasingly driven by financial and service industries which are able to relocate more easily than Fordist industries which were often geared towards national or regional markets and dependent on local supply chains (Short, Kim, 1999). Sassen (2001) and Castells (1989) suggest that this service led economy is driven by 'global cities' such as London and New York which act as command points co-ordinating global flows of information, people and commodities. These global cities are characterised by the clustering, or 'agglomeration' of related banking, financial and legal industries which are fuelled by a large pool of creative, highly paid workers who are well versed in the corporate norms and managerial routines of businesses in these networks (Sassen, 2001, Amin, 2000, Florida, 2002, 2005).

Friedmann and Wolff (1982) and Friedmann (1986) have argued that this global economy is controlled from these cities by transnational corporations that have side-stepped national constraints and organised global production and markets to suit their own ends. Soja (1997), however, while acknowledging the importance of the command and control functions of global cities, has warned that this 'cosmopolis discourse' should not be allowed to overshadow the growing economic importance of the reindustrialising hinterlands of cities like New York, London and Los Angeles. The economies of global cities are much more complex and diverse, he argues, than the writings of the global city theorists sometimes suggest.

The second factor underpinning place competition is the apparent decline since the 1970s in the political and regulatory role played by the nation state and the associated rise in the importance of global city regions (Griffiths, 1998, Scott, 2001, Scott, Agnew, Soja, Storper, 2001, Scott, Storper, 2003). In Scott's (2001) view city regions function as the engine and 'territorial platforms' for much of the post-Fordist economy. These city regions, which frequently override national and political boundaries and regulatory regimes, are composed of dense, interdependent networks of flexible manufacturing and service industries that are embedded in global distribution networks. These business networks and coalitions, according to Storper (1997), which are created through ties of proximity and inter-personal contact, provide city regions with a crucial economic asset that helps to drive their development. City regions should not, however, be seen, it is argued, as autonomous forces of global economic and political change. Jonas and Ward (2007), Etherington and Jones (2009), Turok (2009) and Healey (2009) have criticised the tendency to see the city region as a discrete actor and have argued for an analysis that examines the complex and dynamic relationship in each region between city region coalitions, neighbourhood level politics, state level policies as well as global economic forces.

Spatially, city regions are often polycentric or multi-clustered in form (Scott, Agnew, Soja, Storper, 2001, Hall, 2001, Clark, 2000). In London, for example, back office and routine production activities have migrated outwards from the centre to new networked 'edge cities' while the inner city spaces they have vacated have become home to skilled specialist services and workers and also immigrant communities (Hall, 2001, Buck, Gordon, 1986, Sassen, 2001, Fainstein, Gordon, Harloe, 1992, Fainstein, Harloe, 2002, Castells, 1989). Turok (2009) argues that the Thames Gateway, with its 'edge cities' of Stratford and Ebbsfleet and its command points in the London Docklands and King's Cross - which are connected by a high speed rail network and Crossrail - can be seen as an emergent city region.

The emergence of flexible production methods associated with the post-Fordist era is the third key factor behind place competition (Mole, 1996, Oatley, 1998). Computer based technologies have revolutionised the way in which information and commodities are traded while advanced electronic technology and labour intensive forms of craft production, often using cheap migrant or immigrant labour, have transformed the production, cost and range of manufactured goods. It is argued that these flexible production systems have significantly re-shaped the industrial geography and productive capacity of urban economies (Soja, 1997).

The final factor concerns the shift from managerial urban government to urban governance (Brenner, 1999, 2004) and the emergence of competitive, market based forms of public service delivery as urban authorities have sought to respond to reductions in state funding (Graham, 1992). The emergence of this brand of 'urban entrepreneurialism', usually delivered via public-private partnerships, has been the subject of extensive analysis and debate among urban policy theorists. According to Harvey (1989) urban entrepreneurialism is aimed at obtaining private capital to fund supply side initiatives that were once delivered by the state. The projects pursued by these entrepreneurial partnerships are often speculative in nature, Harvey states, and are invariably supported by marketing campaigns aimed at highlighting the key cultural, environmental and supply side assets of the city.

The 'urban regime' theorists, such as Elkin (1987) and Stone (1989), argue that the growing interest in coalition building is due to a recognition by the agents of representative government that they need to reach an accommodation with the business community if they are to influence the way in which society's largely privately owned productive assets are deployed. Coalitions give the state the opportunity to press their business partners to act in a socially beneficial fashion while they give the business community enhanced access to the regulatory and political services. Stone (1989) argues that successful coalitions do not 'govern' in the traditional sense. Instead, their success is built on their members' 'ability to achieve a mutually acceptable consensus often through informal private discussions.

Logan and Molotch's (1987) 'growth machine' thesis, meanwhile, highlights the prominent role played by 'place entrepreneurs', such as landlords, developers, transport and utility companies, in forming pro-growth coalitions to help them profit from their control of local land resources. These pro-growth coalitions, Logan and Molotch argue, are designed to allow 'parochial' capital to maximise their assets by creating the necessary market conditions, infrastructure and pro-growth culture that will persuade national and international capital to invest in the area. In many cases these coalitions have evolved from small cabals of leading local power brokers into bodies that include education providers and other public and third sector organisations. This wider membership helps to normalise the pro-growth discourse and thereby marginalise opposition to development plans advanced by the coalition.

Both of these US led urban coalition theories have had a significant influence on urban regeneration studies in the last twenty five years (Tallon, 2010). However some commentators, (Jessop, 1990, Peck, Tickell, 2002) have questioned their applicability outside of the US in countries like the UK with a more influential and interventionist central state where there is less scope for local autonomy.

The regulation theorists have also taken a close interest in these changes in urban governance (Amin, Thrift, 1995, Goodwin, Painter, 1996, Jessop, 1990, 1995, Painter, 1995). They argue that Saunders' (1986) 'dual state model', in which the two major economic functions of government, social investment and social consumption, were clearly divided between central and local government, has been replaced by a more fluid structure with a greater accent on multi-level governance, coalition building, bargaining and inter organisation links (Harding, 2005). Jessop (1990) contends that this multi-level governance is a result of pressure to boost economic competitiveness and the need to ensure that social welfare provision and supply side programmes are geared to the needs of the local labour market and prospective local investors. As a consequence, local government now has a greater role in promoting economic competitiveness and in delivering social investment programmes such as infrastructure improvements. This has led to a re-calibration of the 'vertical linkages' between central and local government and stronger 'horizontal links' between the state and non-statutory and private sector actors at local and regional level.

In Jessop's view (1990), however, this new multi-level governance discourse has created a number of tensions and dilemmas which can be difficult to resolve. The desire to promote greater competition between different locales, for example, cannot easily be reconciled with the impulse to ensure that relationships between regional actors are more open and co-operative. Other theorists have also highlighted the interactions, overlaps and tensions caused by the hybrid nature of these new governance structures. Newman (2001) has referred to the dynamic tension between the participatory, networked, hierarchical and technocratic elements of urban governance while Raco (2005a) and Smith (2003), writing about UK policy, have detected a 'hybridity' between neo-liberal economic priorities and a social democratic policy emphasis on social inclusion and sustainability.

2.3.3 The rise of job insecurity and income inequality in the post-Fordist city

Throughout much of the twentieth century a consensus existed between labour, capital and the state in the city (Butler, Hamnett, 2011). As we have already discussed, the state, industry and organised labour worked closely to maintain the output of mass production industries and ensure a steady demand for their products from a consumer society buttressed by full employment, rising incomes and the welfare state.

In the UK, though, the balance between capital and labour shifted after the 1979 election as Keynesian priorities were replaced by a neo-liberal focus on economic growth and competitiveness (Brenner, 1999, Jessop, 1990). During this period of 'rolled back neo-liberalism' the re-structured post-Fordist state abandoned its commitment to promote full

employment and implemented measures aimed at supporting the market and curbing the power of organised labour (Peck, Tickell 2006). As a result of this state restructuring, together with the international division of labour, greater competition, factory closures and de-industrialisation, the urban manufacturing base of Britain's cities was decimated. Between the mid 1970s and the millennium the UK's manufacturing sector lost over four million workers – more than half its workforce (Tallon, 2010). Many of these people either failed to re-enter the employment market or ended up working on the insecure, low wage, low skill margins of the economy (Hamnett, 2003).

The tensions and contradictions created by these neo-liberal policies, particularly in the former industrial heartlands where there were high levels of unemployment, led eventually to the emergence in the 1990s of a form of 'rolled out neo-liberalism' by the state and its partners. Regulation theorists like Jessop (1990, 1995, 2002) and Peck and Theodore (2000, 2001) argue that we are witnessing a transition to a 'Schumpeterian workfare state' focused on 'rolled-out' neo-liberal supply-side policies that are aimed at preserving labour market flexibility whilst tackling any financial and educational barriers that could keep potential employees out of the labour market. These 'rolled out' policies, which were a key characteristic of the new Labour administration after 1997, have been defined by Jessop (2002) as non-market 'flanking' regulatory interventions aimed at maintaining the legitimacy of neo-liberalism. In this new form of governance, job insecurity is still presented as an inevitable consequence of changes in the global economy (Levitas, 2005). Measures aimed at alleviating its impact, however, have been implemented by the government. Individuals are encouraged, for instance, to seek to improve their own job security by taking advantage of new training and life-long learning opportunities. In this way, Levitas (2005) suggests, job insecurity ceased to be seen as a structural feature of the economy but as something that individuals have the opportunity, and indeed the responsibility, to address.

An increase in job insecurity in the post-Fordist city has been coupled with a rise in the level of income inequality. Scott (2001) argues that while there has been some upward mobility from the lower social tiers, the wage levels of those at the bottom end of contemporary urban society have been kept low by the presence of low paid service and manufacturing activities which have been supported by successive generations of immigrants. The gap between the low paid, low skilled service workers and wealthy finance and business professionals tends to be particularly acute, Scott argues, in the largest global city regions which have become "vortexes of unprecedented cultural, ethnic and racial variation" (Scott, 2001, 5). In London, for example, where half of the UK's migrants live (ONS, 2011), the post war migrants from Britain's colonies and former colonies have been joined in the last thirty years by a more

diverse range of migrants including those with no historic connection to Britain, including those from Eastern European EU states.

The social polarisation of global cities like London and New York has been discussed by Friedmann and Wolff (1982) and Sassen (1991) while Mollenkopf and Castells (1991) have examined the development of 'dual cities'. They argue that the wealth gap in cities has been accentuated by the decline of skilled middle income groups in the manufacturing industry, creating a so-called hour-glass effect in society. New York, Mollenkopf and Castells state, has been transformed following the collapse of the city's manufacturing, trucking and warehousing industries and the rise of professional, white collar service industries "from a relatively well-off, white blue collar city into a more economically divided, multiracial, white collar city" (Mollenkopf, Castells, 1991, 8). Skilled white blue collar workers have been replaced, they argue, by white male, professional managers; female, black or Latino clerical workers; and Latino and Asian manufacturing workers.

Hamnett (2003), however, suggests that this polarisation thesis is over-reliant on the experience of New York and Los Angeles and is less applicable to European cities like London where the proportion of semi-skilled and unskilled jobs has been steadily shrinking. Instead, he believes that London is experiencing an upwards shift in its occupational class structure as a result of the shift from a manufacturing to a financial and business led economy. Income inequality is still on the increase in the London region, he argues, but it exists between a large and growing professional middle class whose incomes have grown rapidly and a group of low skilled workers chasing a diminishing pool of jobs who often struggle to find work in the new economy. Many of these low skilled and low income households, however, are concentrated in London's eastern boroughs including the Thames Gateway on which this study will focus. Power et al (2004) observe that seven of the ten London Thames Gateway boroughs are among the eighty poorest local authorities in the country. Hackney, Newham and Tower Hamlets, for example, are, respectively, the second, third and seventh most deprived authorities in the country, despite the presence of growing pockets of affluence.

2.3.4 The spatial re-structuring of the post-Fordist urban landscape

It has been argued that spatial polarisation of income groups is on the rise in the UK. Dorling (2011), for example, suggests that most white families were much freer to choose where they lived in the 1970s than today. Since then families have become ever more willing, Dorling states, to spend a higher proportion of their income on housing in area that allows them to live away from poorer people and people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Rising

house prices in the 1980s and 1990s, coupled with growing income inequality, unemployment, a fear of crime and gaps in the educational outcomes of schools in different areas have all served to increase the attraction of buying property in an expensive and exclusive area.

Yet while the spatial polarisation thesis holds true for the UK as a whole, a more complicated picture emerges when one looks at London. Hamnett (2003) argues that the growth in the professional middle class in London and its expansion into previously working class areas has in fact led to a decline in 'gross segregation' between working and middle class areas. There has, however, been an increase, Hamnett suggests, in 'micro-scale segregation' in London with small enclaves of middle class owners in renovated period houses living immediately adjacent to low skilled, working class households living in social housing. These middle class households have moved into the space vacated by white working class families, who, over the last fifty years, have taken advantage of rising wages and better education and career opportunities to leave their inner London terraces in favour of larger houses in the Home Counties or the fringes of London (Dench, Gavron, Young, 2006). This retreat to London's hinterland has been inspired in part, Watt (2009) believes, by a desire to live among their peers and to preserve a sense of white working class culture. Yet, the non-white population of London, many of whom migrated to inner London during the long post war boom, have also begun to move steadily outwards in recent years, adding to the ethnic diversity of once almost universally white areas such as Havering and Thurrock in the Thames Gateway (Butler, Hamnett 2011).

In the last twenty years a significant number of studies have examined the spatial re-shaping of the London region. There is also a small but growing literature on re-shaping of other major UK cities such as Birmingham, Manchester and Glasgow (Porter, Barber, 2006, Seo, 2002). Many of the studies on London have focused on the causes and impact of the gradual 'gentrification' of the city's inner boroughs by highly educated and paid professional households. The cultural and political identity of these gentrifiers, and their degree of social investment in the places in which they live, tends to vary by area. Early gentrifiers in Hackney, for example, were often engaged in the liberal arts, left of centre in their politics and possessed a strong sense of commitment to the area (Butler, 1996). The new middle class residents in the Docklands, meanwhile, tend to work in business and finance, be more conservative in their outlook and have less of a stake in the community than their counterparts in Hackney (Butler, Robson 2001). Similarly, the young, usually childless, professionals who have moved into new build riverside developments in outer London

Thames Gateway boroughs have not chosen to form relationships with the neighbourhoods around them (Davidson, 2009).

While the middle class gentrification of deprived communities has, according to Lees et al (2008), often been portrayed as a phenomenon that can assist the economic renaissance of the post-Fordist city, evidence of a positive social impact at neighbourhood level is limited. Evidence in London, for example, of social mixing or cohesion between middle class gentrifiers and their lower income neighbours is sparse (Butler, Robson, 2001, Davidson, 2009). Gentrification is also often seen by low income, working class communities as akin to a process of colonisation and cultural appropriation that disrupts social networks and leads to the loss of valued shops and services (Atkinson, Bridge, 2005, Lees, Wyly, Slater, 2008, Keddie, Tonkiss, 2010). Dench, Gavron and Young (2006), for example, vividly describe the sense of loss and bitterness felt by the residual white working class community in Bethnal Green at the withering away of the rich communal life of their terraced streets following the exodus of many of their peers to the suburbs and the arrival, first of Bangladeshi immigrants and then of young middle class professionals.

The causes of urban gentrification have been the subject of some dispute. Ley (1996) and Hamnett (2000) argue that gentrification is inextricably linked to the changing industrial profile of cities like London as white collar professional occupations have replaced manual working class occupations. Shifts in the cultural preferences and work patterns of middle class households have also led to a renewed preference for inner city living rather than life in the more distant suburbs (Ley, 1996, Butler, 1997, Bondi, 1991, Warde, 1991). However, Smith (1979, 1987, 1996), has argued that gentrification is primarily a consequence of a growing 'rent gap' in the inner city between property values and the underlying land value which has been duly exploited by property based capital and developers. In Smith's view, gentrification represents a 'back to the city' movement by capital not people. Yet this interpretation does not, Hamnett (2003) and Butler and Robson (2001) believe, explain the fact that much of gentrification in London has been led by individuals or small scale developers rather than large property companies. Any market based interpretation of gentrification therefore also needs to take into account middle class tastes and cultural preferences.

The salience to the UK of Smith's (1996) other influential theory on gentrification, his identification of what he describes as the 'revanchist city', has also been questioned. Using New York as his model, Smith has argued that gentrification has become a key feature in the arsenal of wealthy right wing whites who want to extract their revenge against the low

income and immigrant communities whom they believe have stolen 'their city' from them. Investing in areas such as the Lower East Side has been promoted, therefore, as a means of reclaiming the city from social undesirables and making it liveable again. Lees et al (2008), though, have urged caution in ascribing revanchist tendencies to gentrifying communities in the UK. They argue that close attention should always be paid to the specific characteristics and history of each gentrifying neighbourhood - something they allege Smith is reluctant to do - before reaching any conclusions about the causes and impact of gentrification on the area.

2.4 Urban renewal and community participation

A key aspect of regeneration policy in the UK over the last twenty years has been the focus on promoting community participation in the planning and delivery of urban renewal programmes. This emphasis on community involvement and partnership, which began under the Major government in the 1990s and intensified under new Labour, is, in part, a reaction to the perceived failure of the 'trickle down' approach to regeneration during the Thatcher government (Imrie, Thomas, 1999). The regeneration of places such as the London Docklands created tens of thousands of new jobs and homes, but, it is argued, failed to improve the quality of life or economic prospects of the deprived communities living nearby (Imrie, Lees, Raco, 2009, Brownill, 1990, Foster, 1999). Enabling communities to participate in urban renewal programmes was seen not only as a basic right of citizenship but as an important means of improving residents' knowledge and confidence and ultimately their employability and quality of life (Goodlad, Meegan, 2005).

If we are to analyse the participation programmes implemented in Kent Thameside, it is important that we understand why this community participation discourse arose and what it was hoped it would achieve. In the following section, therefore, we will consider the philosophy that underpinned this discourse, the goals of community participation and the academic reaction to it.

The focus on community participation under new Labour was heavily influenced by Putnam's (1993) ideas about social capital and Etzioni's communitarianism (1995). Etzioni argued that the state had become disengaged from the lives of ordinary individuals. He saw communities with their shared basic values and shared rights and responsibilities as the principal drivers of a successful and cohesive society. Each successful community was, in turn, Etzioni believed, supported by strong families which served to teach individuals about the values

and responsibilities that they were obligated to observe and accept as a condition of their membership of that community.

Putnam, meanwhile, saw 'social capital', or the social networks and associations that bind individuals and groups of people together, as a community asset that was essential to the successful pursuit of shared objectives. In Putnam's view social capital exists in three distinct forms: 'bonding' social capital between people of similar backgrounds and worldviews; 'bridging' social capital between people with different life experiences and backgrounds; and 'linking' social capital that creates connections between communities and community organisations such as voluntary groups and organisations that hold economic or political power. The concept of social capital has also been explored by Bourdieu (1991), who believed that it constituted, along with economic, cultural and symbolic capital, the social position of each individual. Coleman (1994) too, believed that social capital was an important resource that helped to maintain family relationships and social organisation and enable educational achievement.

To a government seeking to differentiate itself from the 'rolled back neoliberalism' of the right and the centralising, Fabian, managerialist tendencies of previous Labour governments, the ideas of Etzioni and Putnam were highly seductive (Fuller, Geddes, 2008). A policy agenda aimed at enabling communities to realise their social capital resources and thereby banish the sense of powerlessness that was supposedly preventing them from achieving their potential was inherently more attractive than the redistributionist welfare model favoured by the old left which had arguably stifled individual autonomy and choice (Deakin, 2001, Kearns, 2003, Imrie, Raco, 2003). In this way, redistribution became redefined as the redistribution of opportunities rather than as the redistribution of financial resources via the tax and benefits system (Fuller, Geddes, 2008) whilst people became the 'objects' of urban policy intervention (Dikec, 2007). Supply side measures, such as education and training programmes, and new governance arrangements such as New Deal for Communities Partnerships, would give individuals the means to increase their social capital and seize new economic opportunities (Imrie, Lees, Raco, 2009, Tiesdell, Allmendinger, 2001). "Participation", in urban renewal partnerships, the government stated, would "empower (communities) against social exclusion" (DETR, 2000a).

New Labour's participation agenda was also characterised, however, by a strain of authoritarian liberalism (Dean, 2007). There was no place in the new order for individuals who failed to acquire the skills and competencies needed to fulfil their responsibilities to the

state as economically active and socially engaged citizens. The right to good public services and the state's assistance was not a given, but one that had to be earned (Freeden, 1999).

The value of a policy discourse focused on developing the social capital of communities has been heavily debated. On the one hand it is portrayed as a pragmatic course of action by a post-Fordist state with diminished resources and influence which has become dependent on external partnerships and community empowerment in order to achieve its social policy goals (Stoker, 1998). Enabling communities to take ownership of their social problems and to develop their own solutions to them is also seen as a way of ensuring their effectiveness and long term sustainability (Anastacio, Gidley, Hart, 2000, Halpern, 2004). Kearns (2003), meanwhile, suggests that a focus on the social capital of communities helps to concentrate political attention on improving the extent and quality of interactions between the individuals within a community, community groups and the agencies of representative government. In this way it can help, he says, to ensure the effective integration of area based regeneration initiatives with local, regional and national policy programmes.

On the other hand, however, it has been pointed out that social networks are often unevenly spread and can exclude as well as include (Taylor, 2002, Giddens, 2000, Kearns, 2003). Strong bonding capital between spatially concentrated groups, for example, can create hostility to outsiders and new ideas, while powerful sectional interests in the community can delay or obstruct regeneration and marginalise the views of certain constituencies (Kearns, 2003).

While there are mixed views about social capital, most discussions on the issue tend to agree that the delivery record of community participation programmes in the UK has been largely disappointing (Colenutt, Cutten, 1994, Mayo, 1997, Cebulla, Berry, McGreal, 2000). One reason for this is that communities are often expected to play by 'rules of the game' which are dictated by government agencies (Taylor, 2002, 2003, 2007). In many cases communities find themselves unable to influence the agenda in the way they want and are reduced to the tokenistic role of validating decisions taken by policymakers elsewhere (Fearnley, 2000, Purdue, 2001).

In this sense, the participation process, rather than being one focussed on genuine empowerment, becomes, according to Foucault (1979), an indirect means for the state to preserve and extend its power with the community effectively 'co-opted' to serve as an agent of the state. Foucault and other governance theorists argue that arms length participation vehicles and partnerships, which operate beyond the peripheries of the state, are, in fact, a more effective method of sustaining state power than its own formal, statutory institutions

(Foucault, 1979, Rose, 1999, Somerville, 2005, Morison, 2000). As Cooke and Kothari (2001) have pointed out, participatory vehicles are effective in preserving power differentials between the community and the state and other powerful actors, precisely because the practice of participation serves to obscure the status differences between those involved. State control is not exerted in a direct or coercive way, but through more subtle means with communities encouraged to internalise and reproduce certain behaviours and attitudes that help to reinforce state power (Rose, 1999, Taylor, 2007).

The attitude of local state actors can also act as barrier to effective participation. Local councillors and professionals, for instance, sometimes see participation as a threat to their legitimacy and status and seek to limit the scope of community representatives' involvement (Taylor, 2003). Fuller and Geddes (2008) also highlight the difficulties faced by new participatory bodies and partnerships, such as Local Strategic Partnerships and New Deal for Communities Partnerships, which often lack the necessary resources or political support to resist attempts by established statutory providers to marginalise or co-opt them. Equally, the resources and training given to individuals involved in participation processes to enable them to fulfil their role is often inadequate (Taylor, 2002, 2007). The time and budget allocated to participation projects is also insufficient in many cases to ensure that genuine community wide engagement takes place (Jones, 2003). As a result much of the community participation in urban regeneration and renewal projects in the UK tends to take place at the manipulation or therapy level of Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation, rather than at the partnership, delegated power or control levels (Taylor, 2007).

A further barrier has been created by the inconsistency of central government's policy on neighbourhood engagement. The government's enthusiasm for community participation and neighbourhood based interventions, which was much in evidence when new Labour came to power, ebbed away steadily after the millennium. Durose and Lees (2012) argue that growing scepticism with Parliament and, more significantly, within the Treasury about the lasting value of neighbourhood based interventions ensured that the New Deal for Communities, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and the associated Working Neighbourhoods Fund were not replaced when they came to end of their scheduled lives between 2008 and 2010. They cite a critical report from the House of Commons ODPM Select Committee in 2003, which complained about the uncoordinated expansion in the use of neighbourhood based initiatives and the government's failure to integrate them into its mainstream spending programmes, and the Treasury's 2007 Sub-National Review, which raised similar concerns, as evidence of the declining stock of neighbourhood related policies within government.

The subsequent evaluations of the New Deal for Communities and the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal programmes, also failed to convince Ministers to invest in further interventions at neighbourhood level (Durose, Lees, 2012). While they showed that 'place based' schemes aimed at improving the environment of deprived neighbourhoods have achieved some positive outcomes, the results of 'people based schemes' designed to improved their social and economic capital have been less impressive. In other words, while these programmes have had success in dealing with the symptoms of deprivation they have found it much harder to address its causes in the limited time available to them (Sheffield Hallam University, 2010, Amion Consulting, 2010).

Yet despite the equivocal findings of many studies on neighbourhood interventions and community participation, some grounds for optimism have been identified. A number of authors have drawn on Foucault's (1979) theory about the potential for resistance to dominant forms of power and Giddens' (1986) structuration theory, which argues that the actions of individuals are both shaped by and shape the social structures that affect their lives, to suggest ways in which a more active and equitable form of engagement could take place. Atkinson (2003) and Raco (2003) argue that communities are not passive, uncritical entities that are invariably manipulated by powerful political bodies to suit their own purposes. Communities have the capacity, they believe, to adapt to the new style of partnership based governance and to exploit it to their own advantage. However, for this to happen, Goodlad and Meegan (2005) argue, participants need sustained training, information and advice. A culture of constructive working relationships between individuals, community groups and policymakers also needs to be fostered which allows space for conflict and disagreement to emerge. Taylor (2007) also suggests that the participation process needs to learn to accommodate 'outsiders' whose ideas and beliefs diverge from the dominant prevailing discourse.

Docherty, Goodlad and Paddison (2001) and Richardson (2008), meanwhile, highlight the importance of building communities' confidence in the process and structures of participation. Participation structures, they argue, need time to become embedded in the community and for individuals to begin to trust them, especially in areas with limited experience of community engagement. Ensuring that engagement is followed soon afterwards, for example, by tangible action, such as improvements to the local environment, is an important way, Richardson states, of building community confidence in participation structures. In short, community participation exercises can achieve positive social outcomes if the state is willing and able to make a long-term investment in participation structures and

to give participants the necessary training and space to articulate their own views in a meaningful way.

2.5 Urban regeneration and sustainability

The concept of 'sustainable development' has become an integral feature of urban regeneration in the UK in the last two decades. Often used as a term to describe development that promotes social and economic progress while respecting the environment (Raco, 2005a), its best known definition is provided by the 1987 Brundtland World Commission on Environment and Development which called it "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

Interest in sustainable urban development, or in "finding ways of making cities future proof", grew significantly in the 1990s in response to concerns about climate change, rising sea levels and the growing level of urban consumption of power, water, raw materials and land (Girardet, 2008, 3). In 1992, the year in which the UN's Earth Summit in Rio called for a transformation in global attitudes and behaviour in relation to the environment and development, London alone consumed 20 million tonnes of petrol and generated around 60 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (Joplin, Girardet, 1997). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which was set up in 1988, estimated that by 2100 average temperatures would have risen by 5.8 degrees centigrade since the start of the industrial revolution while sea levels would have risen by 90 centimetres – imperilling the future of many of world's leading cities given their waterside location (IPCC, 2001). Rogers and Power, meanwhile, (2000, 142) called the "uncontrolled consumption of resources and the production of waste in cities" as "two of the biggest environmental threats throughout the world".

In this section we will be focussing on the key sustainable development principles that came to influence the regeneration policy of the Major and Blair governments in the 1990s and 2000s. During this period the government sought "to review their policies and give themselves a greener image" (Glaister, Burnham, Stevens, Travers, 2006, 28). With research showing that cities with a strong concentration of jobs and high use of public transport had lower energy consumption per capita than the sprawling cities of the US (Newman, Kenworthy, 1989), Ministers began to take an interest in the concept of a high density, 'compact city' that concentrated new development on redundant, brownfield, ex-industrial sites rather than on greenfield sites.

This interest led the new Labour government to set up the Urban Task Force to establish a new vision for urban regeneration “founded on the principles of design excellence, social well-being and environmental responsibility” (Urban Task Force, 1999). The Task Force’s final report, *Towards an Urban Renaissance*, concluded that the principle of sustainable development needed to be adopted within urban settlements in order “to alleviate the increasing global ecological pressure”. It called for “well designed, compact and connected cities supporting a diverse range of uses – where people live, work and enjoy leisure time at close quarters”.

It is the core principles of the Urban Task Force’s report; the notion of the compact city; the focus on brownfield development; and an interest in creating socially mixed communities, which we will examine in this section. These principles underpinned both the urban policy white paper, *Delivering an Urban Renaissance*, (DETR, 2000a) and the Sustainable Communities Plan of 2003 (ODPM, 2003a) which led to an intensification of the government’s development ambitions in the Thames Gateway. The Task Force’s report also led the government to stipulate that new homes should be built at a density of 30 to 50 homes per hectare and to increase the brownfield development target from 50 to 60 per cent of new housing (DETR, 2000c).

An examination of the literature relating to the development and implementation of these three principles is important if we are to analyse the steps taken in Kent Thameside to deliver brownfield development that is well integrated into the existing urban community. We will begin, however, with a brief overview of the academic response to the sustainable urban development discourse.

2.5.1 Overview of the sustainable urban development debate

The concept of sustainable urban development has been understood and employed in many different ways. Lombardi et al argue that “the proliferation of definitions and conceptualisations of sustainability render the term so poorly understood and slippery that it can be easily pressed into the service of almost any ends” (2011, 273). Asleithner et al, too, (2004) have suggested that the ‘intrinsic vagueness’ of the concept of sustainable development could act as a barrier to the delivery of a holistic and coherent form of sustainable urban regeneration. The concept has been invoked by the ‘growth first’ business lobby, for example, to justify energy intensive road infrastructure projects on the basis that they will create jobs and stimulate the economy (Couch, Denneman, 2000). Governments, meanwhile, have attempted to promote sustainability by encouraging or ‘nudging’ consumers

to reduce their energy consumption and to behave in more environmentally aware ways (While, Jonas, Gibbs, 2004, Thaler, Sunstein, 2008).

Much of the debate about sustainable urban development has focussed on the difficulties of reconciling a national economic development agenda designed to improve living standards and therefore increase personal consumption with a concern for environmental sustainability. Owens, in fact, (1992) argues that sustainable urban development is an oxymoron as urban areas will always be net consumers of energy and degraders of the environment. According to Hall (2006) governments have sought to resolve this tension through a policy of 'ecological modernisation'. In the UK, this approach is designed to 'green' regeneration through regulatory measures such as the landfill tax and 'section 106' agreements that divert developers' resources towards schemes that promote sustainability.

Haughton, however, has argued that these sustainable development policies rarely go far enough. The government's Sustainable Communities Plan of 2003, for example, was, he said, "only tangentially linked to notions of sustainable communities" and "pale green" at best (Haughton, 2003, 96). Not only did it fail to address how the water and energy needs of new development would be met, it failed to insist that developers meet basic environmental standards. Lombardi et al (2011) also suggest that many sustainable development approaches in the UK are concerned primarily with using design and technology solutions to mitigate the impact of development rather than the pursuit of a more holistic agenda. They contend that real progress towards achieving sustainable urban communities is only possible once the 'growth first' development culture is challenged and a more balanced conceptualisation of sustainability is adopted.

However, others have argued that the emergence of the sustainability discourse has, despite its flaws, had an impact on the behaviour of urban residents, regeneration professionals and government agencies and has improved the sustainability of the urban environment (Satterthwaite, 2002, Evans, Jones, 2008). The value of these improvements should not, they say, be underestimated.

2.5.2 The compact city

The concept of the 'compact city' with a high density of population was seen by the Urban Task Force (1999) as a means of providing urban populations with better access to facilities, ensuring a more efficient use of land and energy resources and reducing social segregation. The Task Force found that residential areas where densities fall below 20 homes per hectare are typically served by one local centre covering an area with a 1.5 kilometre diameter. This

type of layout encourages excessive car use, the Task Force's report argued, as over half of the homes in these areas are more than a five minute walk from the centre. It also reduces the level of contact residents have with each other, local traders and other service providers and consequently diminishes the sense of community in the area.

Two members of the Task Force, Richard Rogers and Anne Power, argued that a minimum urban density of 50 homes per hectare would make communities walkable, use less energy, increase the vitality of neighbourhoods and create the critical mass of people necessary to support local bus services, shops and schools (Rogers, Power, 2000). By "living together in closer proximity" and creating a "wider hinterland that restores the balance of the urban environment", we "would begin to make good the damage we are causing" to the environment, they concluded (Rogers, Power, 2000, 142).

Using a range of examples from across Europe, Rogers and Power concluded that it was possible to build communities at this density whilst preserving the parks, play areas, mature trees, squares, large abutting gardens and other green infrastructure that urban residents find to be important to their quality of life. Moreover, higher densities, they said, did not mean that developers were limited to building apartment blocks for single or two person households. It was also possible, as the Victorian and Edwardian suburbs of Britain's cities demonstrated, to achieve a density of 50 homes per hectare with well designed, low rise, terraced and semi-detached family houses.

In a bid to achieve this more compact city, central and local government in the UK has promoted the regeneration of city centres and prominent brownfield sites often through the creation of high density apartments marketed at affluent, childless professionals (Boddy, 2007). These gentrified enclaves are often close to visually arresting arts, sports or shopping facilities, or 'cappuccino boxes', which are designed to re-brand the city as desirable, cosmopolitan spaces (Plaza, 2006). As a result of this policy of 'positive gentrification' (Cameron, 2003) there has been a resurgence in the population of many British city centres after decades of decline as their industrial base contracted. Between 1993 and 2003 the population of central Manchester, for example, rose from just 200 to over 15,000 (Tallon, 2010).

Yet according to some authors the compact city model is based on false assumptions. Lees (2003) has complained, for instance, that the type of higher density housing described in the Urban Task Force's report is generally suitable only for wealthy professionals with no children. She has criticised the "assumption" that people found social, cultural and economic

diversity preferable to the modernist mono-zoned city or the strict segregation of work spaces, home spaces and population groups of the Garden Cities.

Peter Hall, meanwhile, a fierce opponent of 'urban cramming', added his own footnote to the Urban Task Force's report stating that there "is no overriding need to save Greenfield land, of which we have a surplus in South East England" (Urban Task Force, 2005). He argued that densification would lead to an increase in apartment construction which would be "unsuitable for families and undesired by residents". The same criticisms have been levelled at the compact city model in the US, where zoning restrictions have been introduced to discourage suburbanisation (Senior, Webster, Blank 2006).

Breheny, on the other hand, has questioned whether the compact city model is the most effective means of achieving a significant reduction in energy consumption (1995, 1997). Although the empirical evidence suggests that urban compaction *could* lead to energy savings, he questions whether the savings are sufficient to justify "draconian urban containment policies". He suggests that an increase in fuel prices and duty has the potential to deliver the same energy savings, but far more quickly (Breheny, 1995, 91).

2.5.3 Brownfield development

It has been argued that brownfield development is crucial to preventing urban sprawl and ensuring greater urban densification (Tallon, 2010). In the UK, a target of concentrating 50 per cent of all new development on previously developed brownfield sites was introduced in the mid 1990s. This target was later raised to 60 per cent in 2000 by the new Labour government which also implemented a 'sequential test' whereby green field sites would only be used after all available brownfield alternatives had been exhausted.

To encourage brownfield development, which many developers were reluctant to engage in due to the high cost of assembling and remediating the land and delivering the necessary infrastructure, the government introduced a series of tax and regulatory incentives (Raco, Henderson, 2006, Dixon, Raco, Catney, Lerner 2007). Tax breaks and grants to meet the costs of land remediation were introduced along with fast-track planning processes and a reduced planning fee structure in some cases. Compulsory purchase orders were also used to help developers assemble land while transport infrastructure schemes were promoted by central and local government in order to improve site access.

The availability of public sector funding to help off-set developers' costs has played a large part in persuading developers to embrace brownfield development according to Syms

(2001). By 2004, brownfield sites accounted for 70 per cent of new housing compared to just 56 per cent in 1993 (Dixon, 2007). Yet some authors have questioned whether the presumption in favour of property led brownfield development is always in the best interests of the community: Assumptions that the economic benefits of commercial brownfield development will inevitably 'trickle-down' to existing communities, should be treated with caution, according to Dair and Williams (2001) and Lees (2003). Brownfield development, they note, can diminish the well-being of existing communities by increasing pollution and congestion, forcing up the cost of property and local services and displacing existing residents to more 'affordable' areas.

Raco and Henderson (2006) believe that there is also a risk that privileging the commercial development of brownfield sites, regardless of the quality of the application, will rule out other potential uses supported by the community. They point out, as do Greenberg and Lewis (2000), Syms (2001) and Williams et al (1996), that for local communities the 'value' of brownfield sites often lies in their capacity to serve as a recreational or leisure resource, not in their commercial potential as a housing resource. Other authors, meanwhile, have pointed out that the high cost of developing brownfield sites, means that the commercial viability of some brownfield schemes could be undermined if there was a change in government policy or a reduction in the financial or regulatory incentives on offer to developers (Adams, De Sousa, Tiesdell, 2010).

2.5.4 Mixed communities

The concept of mixed communities is underpinned by the idea that the mixing of individuals from different social backgrounds and income groups can help to promote economic renewal and address social and economic inequalities (ODPM, 2006). Florida (2005) argues that the mixing of people with varied life experiences not only promotes cultural vitality but is also a source of economic innovation. Inclusive, mixed communities are also seen as a vehicle for stimulating 'creative trickle down' between social groups (Peck 2005) and as a key requirement for cities that are seeking to compete effectively on the global stage (Rose, 2004). Hills (2007), meanwhile, describes the policy of promoting income mix within new developments as a way of ensuring that communities don't become stigmatised or isolated by the presence of a predominantly low income, social marginalised groups of residents. It is a key feature, he says, of the former Labour government's objective of ensuring that no-one is disadvantaged by where they live.

The mixed communities' thesis has been influenced in part by the regeneration experience of the London Docklands which created new wealth and thousands of jobs in places like

Canary Wharf from the mid to late 1990s onwards but left the surrounding low income communities in the Isle of Dogs largely untouched (Imrie, Raco, Lees, 2009, Brownill, 1990, Foster, 1999). Another key influence has been William Julius Wilson's (1987) analysis of the impact of middle class flight from US inner cities. Wilson argued that the exodus of these families weakened the social capital of inner cities and removed a vital social buffer that could mitigate the impact of a growing culture of joblessness. He also argued that the loss of blue collar, male dominated, manufacturing jobs gravely damaged the traditional African American family unit. The US government's HOPE VI programme of poverty de-concentration and the New Deal for Communities programme in the UK have both been informed by Wilson's work.

The literature on the delivery of mixed communities tends to focus on two key areas: the concept of 'tenure blind' development and the design and appearance of the public realm (Roberts, 2007). Tenure blind developments usually seek to ensure the integration of households of different tenures by 'pepper-potting' houses of each tenure group across the development rather than concentrating them in discrete groups. They will often also seek to make sure that there are no obvious architectural differences between the houses of each tenure group. According to Roberts (2007), tenure blind development is now seen as orthodox best practice in much of the regeneration literature. A clearly defined public realm, on the other hand, is seen as an important device for enabling strangers to encounter each other (Sennett, 1990, 1994). Talen (1999) concludes that a high quality network of streets and public spaces with houses designed with front gardens and front doors that face the street can help to important, if weak, social ties and help to engender a sense of neighbourliness.

Yet the literature also suggests that the concept of social mix is frequently opaque and ill-defined and is employed by developers, planners and policy-makers in ways that often fail to match their rhetoric on mixed communities (Bridge, Butler, Lees, 2012). In addition, it has been argued that many of the claims made about mixed communities are flawed and are not supported by the available evidence (Imrie, Lees, Raco, 2009). One criticism is that strategies aimed at promoting social mix are little different to the policy of 'positive gentrification' described above as they are invariably addressed at deprived, low income neighbourhoods instead of high income communities which may be just as socially homogeneous (Bridge, Butler, Lees, 2012, Lees, Slater, Wyly, 2008). As Lees et al point out (2008), there are few examples of policies that promote the movement of low income residents into communities that are predominantly composed of high income households. A

policy discourse based on social mixing is designed, they argue, to deflect criticism and resistance to what is, in effect, a policy of state led gentrification.

A second criticism is that the mixed community discourse significantly over-states the willingness and capacity of people from different social and economic backgrounds to mix with each other even when they live in close proximity (Bridge, Butler, Lees, 2012, Bridge, 2005). Butler and Robson (2003) have shown that even gentrifiers who are ostensibly committed to promoting and embedding local diversity, often do not engage with people of different backgrounds in a meaningful way: they describe this phenomenon as the construction of a 'Brixton of the mind'. Equally, Le Gales (2012) has argued that when people of different social or ethnic groups live in the same building or neighbourhood, they each adopt strategies of avoidance or distinction, such as the selective use of local public spaces and services, rather than grasp the opportunity to mix. Beekman (2001), Goodchild and Cole (2001) and Thompson-Fawcett (2003), meanwhile, have highlighted the tensions that can emerge when people of different tenures and life stages live in close proximity to one another. In Cheshire's view (2006, 2007) the creation of mixed communities can also undermine the social networks and community services that emerge around clusters of people of the same income group.

The claim by policymakers and developers in the UK that discrete new developments in regeneration areas like the Thames Gateway can be physically and socially integrated into the existing urban fabric (Raco, Henderson, 2009) has also been questioned. Davidson (2009) found little evidence of social mixing between new developments in London's 'Blue Ribbon Network' alongside the Thames in South east London and existing communities in Plumstead and Thamesmead. The Blue Ribbon Network had been billed by the Mayor of London as a means of revitalising Thameside communities that would promote social integration between income groups, yet this does not appear to have happened. Royal Artillery Quay, for example, a Barratt Homes development, is not only physically divorced from the neighbouring community, protected by a network of steel gates and security cameras, but its population of young, childless professionals have little in common with their neighbours, according to Davidson, and choose not to socialise locally or use local services. In Manchester too, new prestige waterside developments such as Salford Quays are also seen as being poorly integrated with their lower income neighbours (Henderson, Bowlby, Raco, 2007). However, there is a need, according to Doucet et al (2011), for more research to be carried out on the attitudes of existing residents towards neighbouring new developments.

Some authors do believe though that with good neighbourhood management, good design and careful tenancy management it is possible to create developments in which there is at least a mutual tolerance or a degree of social interaction between people of different income groups and backgrounds (Roberts, 2007, Rogers, Power, 2000). Roberts (2007) highlights the importance, for instance, of creating attractive, well-maintained common spaces such as courtyards and play areas at the intersection between the housing of different tenure groups. She also emphasises the need to ensure that there is a visual relationship and coherence between the housing of each tenure group: the creation of a terrace of low rise social housing alongside a high rise block of owner occupied apartments, for example, would lessen the scope for interaction between each group.

Doucet et al (2011), meanwhile, who examined the relationship between the flagship Kop van Zuid development in Rotterdam and its lower income neighbours, found that a holistic regeneration strategy that caters for the needs of both existing residents as well as new residents can help to build support for new development within the existing community. In the case of Kop van Zuid, it was the creation of improved transport links, together with the retention and improvement of existing retail and community services that helped to secure support for the development among existing residents.

Davidson (2008) has also highlighted this point in relation to gentrified communities. Avoiding what he describes as 'neighbourhood resource displacement', such as the loss of popular local shops, social clubs and meeting places, will help to ensure that existing residents feel as though they still have a stake in the community following the arrival of high income residents. A programme of neighbourhood improvements that is unsympathetic to the needs and wishes of existing residents can create a 'geography of privilege', Davidson concludes, which alienates the existing community and leads to a loss of identity and a sense of place. In short, unless new and existing residents are treated in an equitable fashion by regeneration bodies, it is difficult to create an environment in which it is possible to build a socially integrated community.

2.6 Gaps in the literature

This chapter has shown that there is a mature literature on both the rationale behind the rise of the property led regeneration model and its implementation over the last thirty years. There is also a strong body of work on the key discourses of sustainable development, integration and community participation which have informed the development of the regeneration goals adopted by successive governments.

Brownill and Carpenter (2009) have shown that the governance of the Thames Gateway is understood and articulated in different forms across the region in response to local circumstances: as a result, there is both a Stratford story, a Thurrock story and an Ebbsfleet story. Absent from the literature, however, is a compelling body of work examining the practice of regeneration beyond the central urban core of growth areas like the Thames Gateway. As stated in the introduction to this study much of the existing literature tends to be 'Londoncentric' in focus (Cohen, Rustin, 2008, Imrie, Lees, Raco, 2009, Power, Richardson, Seshimo, Firth, 2004). The same is true of other regeneration areas in the UK. While there is an established literature on the regeneration of Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow, there is much less material on the regeneration of satellite communities such as the mill towns of East Lancashire. A literature focused on these more peripheral areas will not only provide us with a more nuanced understanding of how regeneration is being delivered in the UK, it will also add weight to the emerging literature on city regions.

As Doucet et al (2011) observe, the body of literature examining the response of existing communities to major regeneration developments is also limited. Most of the studies that have been carried concentrate on the motivation and aspirations of incoming, high income, gentrifiers. The lower income existing community is often seen as an undifferentiated entity which responds to regeneration in a uniform way (Paton, 2012). The possibility, therefore, that the existing community may respond in an uneven way, or seek to re-shape the regeneration narrative in different ways is ignored. A literature then that recognises the agency of existing communities and seeks to understand their role in reproducing or contesting the key aspects of the entrepreneurial, property led regeneration model, will strengthen our appreciation of how regeneration evolves.

2.7 Conclusion

In this chapter we have examined the key political, economic and social processes that led to the emergence of an entrepreneurial, market driven form of property led regeneration policy agenda in the 1980s. The principal theories used to explain the ascent of this policy agenda, which is seen as a manifestation of a new post-Fordist, neo-liberal form of governance, have also been examined. Many of these theories, such as Regulation theory, David Harvey's urban entrepreneurialism thesis, and Logan and Molotch's growth machine thesis, have been heavily influenced by Marxist analysis of the inherent tensions and contradictions present within the capitalist system.

The property led regeneration of the 1980s, which is based on a reconfigured relationship between capital and labour following the crisis of the Keynesian-Beveridge model, is seen by

these theorists as an attempt to release the growth potential of declining urban centres by an increasingly entrepreneurial state. They argue, however, that the benefits that this growth first imperative brought to urban centres were too narrowly focused and failed to reach the low income, ex-industrial communities that surrounded these experiments in urban entrepreneurialism. Later regeneration models, such as those that emerged in the 1990s and 2000s, which focused on social inclusion, integration, participation and sustainability, are seen by them as an attempt to resolve the tensions created in the 1980s and to maintain the legitimacy of the growth first logic.

This analysis has had a major influence on much of the existing literature on urban regeneration in the UK. As we have seen in this chapter many of the policy developments relating to urban regeneration in the last twenty years, by both Conservative and Labour governments, have been interpreted as vehicles for preserving a neo-liberal, growth driven form of governance. Some authors, for example, believe that progress on achieving sustainable urban development is only possible once the 'growth first' imperative has been reviewed. Others have questioned whether genuine community participation is achievable when much of the participation infrastructure is designed and maintained by the state and used to preserve and reinforce its power. The focus on increasing the social capital of communities, meanwhile, is seen by some authors as a means, first and foremost, of enabling them to become 'active citizens' with the skills necessary to help ensure the continued competitiveness of their city on the global stage. At the same time, it is recognised that there is scope for participants to challenge these assumptions and to establish their own counter-narratives.

Yet the regeneration literature also contains a more pragmatic body of work which acknowledges the limitations of current regeneration policy, but nonetheless recognises that opportunities exist to deliver an inclusive and sustainable form of regeneration. A sustained and well resourced programme of training and support, for example, can help to create an environment in which it is possible for local residents to participate in the planning and delivery of regeneration in a meaningful way. Similarly, it has been shown that effective neighbourhood management and sensitive planning can provide the opportunity for social mixing to take place on some level. Such studies provide a valuable counterpoint to the important insights provided the critique of 'rolled back' and 'rolled out' neo-liberal governance.

The literature also emphasises the need to examine the extent to which regeneration practice is shaped by the specific environment in which it takes place. In their study on the

theory and practice of gentrification Lees et al (2008) have highlighted the importance of understanding the particular characteristics of each gentrifying neighbourhood before reaching conclusions about the causes and impact of gentrification. Raco (2005a), meanwhile, has emphasised the fact that regeneration policies have hybrid origins and are formed through the complex interplay of disparate and sometimes competing philosophies and political pressures.

It is important therefore that any study of the practice of regeneration seeks to understand both the dominant political, economic and social discourses in which it is situated and also the local factors and personalities which shape and re-shape it over time. As Giddens (1986) states, individual action both shapes and is shaped by the social structures that affect their lives and even powerful actors re-interpret or occasionally subvert the norms which they themselves uphold or have helped to create.

This study then will use this broad academic narrative relating to the development of neo-liberal entrepreneurial governance and the social and spatial re-structuring that followed the crisis of Fordism in order to examine and understand the regeneration of the Thames Gateway; with a specific focus on communities in Kent Thameside. Its description and analysis of the strategies and schemes used to deliver integrated development in Kent Thameside and to promote community participation in regeneration will be closely informed by the critique of the sustainability and participation discourses discussed in this chapter.

This study will also examine the extent to which these dominant discourses have been either re-produced or re-shaped or subverted by local actors in Kent Thameside in response to particular local circumstances. As Turok (2009) says, the Thames Gateway is not a monolithic entity but a patchwork of diverse economies and communities governed by a myriad of competing and overlapping delivery structures: Each community engages with the Thames Gateway regeneration agenda constructed in Whitehall in its own distinct fashion. Consequently, we need to examine the Thames Gateway, as this study seeks to do, in a layered way that takes account of the cascading of policy from the national to the very local and respects the nuances of each area. For within the Gateway there are multiple regeneration narratives which are continually being constructed and reconstructed.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the aims, rationale and methods behind the fieldwork in Kent Thameside that underpins this study. This fieldwork was carried out in order to examine the extent to which the regeneration model pursued in 1990s and 2000s in the Thames Gateway is capable of delivering the social and physical integration of new and existing communities and of empowering residents by enabling them to participate in the design and delivery of regeneration programmes.

This chapter begins by discussing the case study method of empirical research and examines the rationale for its use in this study. It also examines the approach taken to identify appropriate case study sites and discusses the methodological strategy underpinning the case study approach. The following section provides a discussion of the methods used to gather and analyse the primary evidence underpinning this study and the aims and rationale behind them. It will look first at the production of a ‘typology’ of existing residents in three established ex-industrial communities in Kent Thameside based on a survey of residents. It will then discuss the data gathered from a set of interviews with key officials, politicians and developers involved in the regeneration of Kent Thameside. The strategy and techniques used to identify and recruit interviewees as well as the challenges involved in this strategy are also considered. This will be followed by a description of how the fieldwork interviews were planned and delivered in 2007/08 and how the data from these interviews were recorded and analysed.

This chapter then moves on to consider the main ethical issues generated by this fieldwork process such as the author’s dual status as a researcher and a staff member of a Kent Thameside Member of Parliament. It will conclude with a discussion of the strengths and limitations of the fieldwork process.

3.2 The case study method

3.2.1 The rationale for the case study method used in this study

Despite the “magnitude and social importance” of the Thames Gateway regeneration project, there has been “little attempt”, Cohen and Rustin observe (2008, 2), to “develop locally grounded case studies” that will help us to provide a critical assessment of the Thames Gateway effect. This study, which takes a case study based approach, is an attempt to

address this research gap and to strengthen our understanding of the impact of regeneration in the Thames Gateway on existing communities.

The case study method is described by Yin (2003) as an empirical research strategy that allows the researcher to examine complex organisational, social and political phenomena such as institutional, organisational or neighbourhood change in a holistic and meaningful way. Its reliance on multiple sources of evidence and its ability to deal with a variety of evidence types - including documents, interviews, surveys and observations - enables the researcher, Yin says, to explore the wider context in which complex phenomena are situated and in so doing produce a grounded and nuanced explanation of why or how these changes have taken place. Moreover, Yin argues that it is possible, provided the researcher undertakes a 'generalising analysis' rather than a 'particularising analysis', to produce explanations that have a theoretical legitimacy beyond the boundaries of the specific case study in question.

This study, which aims to examine the impact over time of regeneration measures on existing communities and the people who live there, requires a methodology like the case study method which allows us to collect and analyse different types and sources of evidence and to examine, in detail, the social, economic and spatial context in which regeneration is taking place.

If we are to understand the extent to which regeneration has been able to empower existing residents and promote the integration of new and existing communities, we need to examine the types of people who live in these communities and to understand their backgrounds and lifeworlds. We also need to examine how these communities have developed over time and what their relationship is with the sites on which the new developments are situated and the bodies responsible for their development. The range and depth of evidence that can be brought together through the case study method will allow us to develop this understanding.

In the next sections we will look at how and why the case study sites used in this study have been identified before examining the methodological strategy underpinning the case study method.

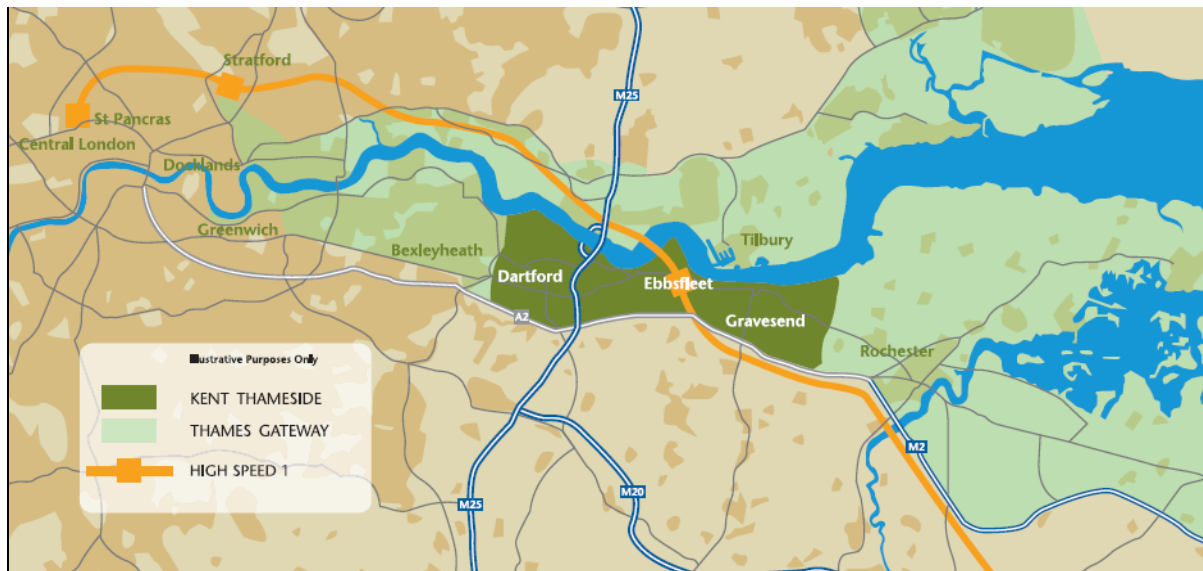
3.2.2 The identification of case study sites in the Thames Gateway

3.2.2.1 Kent Thameside

The area identified as the primary case study area is Kent Thameside, one of the Thames Gateway's 'strategic growth locations' (ODPM, 2003b). Kent Thameside, the name given to

the urban areas of the Kent boroughs of Dartford and Gravesend north of the A2 highway (Map 3.1), stretches from the borders of Greater London in the west to the edge of the Medway Towns twelve miles to the east. It is home to around 150,000 people, or approximately 1 in 10 of the population of the Thames Gateway.

Map 3.1 Map of Kent Thameside



Source: Kent Thameside Delivery Board (2005)

The principal reason for the selection of Kent Thameside is that it has been widely identified as an exemplar of social regeneration in the Thames Gateway (Nelson, Quan, Forrester, Pound, 2005, Oxford Brookes, 2006). The government commissioned Thames Gateway evidence review, for example, picked out Kent Thameside as one of the few key growth areas where social regeneration has been pursued with the same vigour as physical regeneration (Oxford Brookes, 2006). The review cited the development of Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plans in Kent Thameside, which aimed to identify and deliver the social, economic and infrastructural projects required to allow existing communities to extract tangible gains from the regeneration of ex-industrial brownfield sites in the area, as an illustration of Kent Thameside's commitment to social regeneration. Kent Thameside was also one of the few growth areas to be allocated funding from the ODPM and DCLG following the launch of the Sustainable Communities Plan in 2003 to deliver social regeneration projects in existing communities.

This commitment to social regeneration from the Kent Thameside regeneration partners, which was acknowledged and supported by the government, mean that the area has the ability to tell us a great deal about the potential of the Thames Gateway regeneration model

to deliver meaningful benefits for existing residents living alongside the main regeneration sites. Kent Thameside, moreover, is unusual in that its regeneration plans pre-date both the Sustainable Communities Plan of 2003 and the Thames Gateway Planning Framework of 1995. The Kent Thameside Association, a partnership founded in 1993 between the local authorities and the main private sector developers, was set up to drive forward both the area's physical regeneration and to equip existing residents with the skills and opportunities necessary to benefit from this regeneration. In this sense, a study of Kent Thameside, unlike many other areas in the Thames Gateway, allows us to trace the development of a social regeneration programme over an extended period of time.

The maturity of the Kent Thameside regeneration vision also enables us to examine how the governance of a key regeneration area in the Thames Gateway has evolved over time in response to particular political and economic changes. It allows us to gauge how the relationship between local regeneration actors has changed over time and also to explore the extent to which national politics has shaped the local vision and whether the local vision has influenced the national agenda. In short, this case study provides an important opportunity to examine the degree to which the governance of the Thames Gateway is consistent with the more fluid, multi-level, neo-liberal governance arrangements described by Jessop (1990) which were driven by inter-agency bargaining and coalition building.

In using Kent Thameside, a regeneration area outside of London, as a case study site, this study will also provide a useful addition to our existing core of research on the Thames Gateway which tends to be 'London-centric' in nature and to ignore the regeneration experience of non metropolitan areas (Cohen, Rustin, 2008, Imrie, Lees, Raco, 2009, Power, Richardson, Seshimo, Firth, 2004).

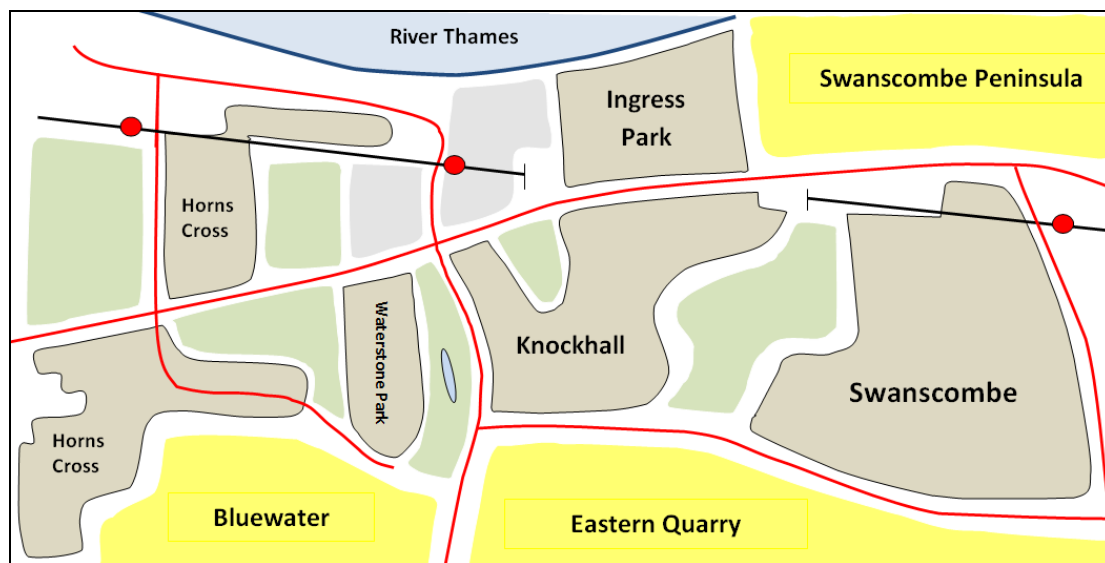
A further reason for selecting Kent Thameside as a case study was the author's knowledge of the area and local connections due to his professional experience as a Dartford Borough Councillor and a constituency based member of staff of the Member of Parliament for Dartford. This experience gave the author a detailed understanding of the existing communities in the area and the key regeneration sites, policies and officials in Kent Thameside. In view of this experience, the author decided it was justifiable to focus exclusively on Kent Thameside as a case study site, rather than to spend some of the time allocated to the fieldwork process examining other parts of the Thames Gateway.

3.2.2.2 Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross

Three existing communities within Kent Thameside were identified as appropriate case study sites: Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross (Map 3.2). They were selected as they are the communities that are most directly affected by new development in Kent Thameside.

Swanscombe, the largest of the three communities with a population of 7,500 lies immediately to the west of the new Ebbsfleet International Station and to the north of the proposed Eastern Quarry development. Knockhall, a community of 4,000 people, lies immediately south of Ingress Park, the largest of the new developments built as a result of the Kent Thameside regeneration programme, and to the east of Waterstone Park, another significant new Kent Thameside development. Horns Cross, meanwhile, which has an equivalent sized population as Knockhall, lies to the west of Waterstone Park and north of Bluewater Regional Shopping Centre, the first major Kent Thameside brownfield site redevelopment.

Map 3.2 Map of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross



Source: Bryan Jones (2014)

Swanscombe and Knockhall have also been identified as 'priority communities' by the local authorities for investment and neighbourhood renewal due to their deprivation challenges highlighted in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (see appendix nine). 'Priority community' status was seen as a means of attracting external funding to deliver programmes aimed at enabling residents to take advantage of the opportunities created by regeneration. All three communities, meanwhile, were selected as target areas of the EU Urban II Thames Gateway Kent Programme. This programme aimed to reduce the disparities between the new and

existing developments in Kent Thameside and to build the capacity and confidence of existing communities (see appendix nine).

The proximity of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross to the key regeneration sites and their status as priority renewal areas means that they are ideal case studies through which to examine the extent to which Kent Thameside has succeeded in meeting its key integration and resident participation goals. To this end, this study will look in detail at the impact on these communities of the key regeneration programmes created to deliver these goals. In Swanscombe, it will look at the impact of the Swanscombe Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and Action Plan, which was designed to enable residents to identify their priorities for regeneration and the measures needed to achieve them, and at two urban renewal projects designed to give residents a leading role in improving the environment of their community. This study will also examine the extent to which Knockhall and Horns Cross have become physically and socially integrated into the two new developments next to them: Ingress Park and Waterstone Park.

3.2.3 The methodological strategy underpinning the case study method

The case study approach used in this study is a multi-method one. In order to examine the extent to which social and physical integration has taken place in Kent Thameside and the degree to which existing residents have participated in the regeneration process, four types of primary data were collected from the case study sites in Kent Thameside.

The first type is survey data from semi-structured, in-depth interviews carried out by the author with existing residents from Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross and Kent Thameside regeneration partners. The second type is official statistical data derived in the main from the UK Census relating to changing population, age, employment, educational, housing type and housing tenure patterns between 1971 and 2011 of the three communities and Kent Thameside (ONS, 2011, 2001; OPCS, 1991, 1981, 1971). In addition to this official data, data from Mosaic geo-demographic profiling system relating to post-code areas in Kent Thameside (Experian, 2010) was also collected.

The third type is the publications relating to the regeneration of Kent Thameside produced by the key public and private sector regeneration partners between 1979 and 2013. This includes local authority development, planning and land use strategies, local authority committee minutes and agendas, the publications of public-private partnerships such as the Kent Thameside Delivery Board, and government planning frameworks relating to the regeneration of the Thames Gateway and Kent Thameside. Community newsletters from

private sector developers, town councils, residents' associations and other community bodies were also collected.

The final type of data collected was derived from the author's ethnographic observation of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross between 2005 and 2013. During this time the author visited the three communities regularly in order to observe and record the types of housing, shops, community services and amenity spaces found in each community and to gain an understanding of residents' lifestyle patterns and how they interact in public and use their immediate environment and services. The author also recorded any changes to the housing stock, shops, services and amenities that took place over this time as well as any observable alterations to the population mix and lifestyle patterns within each community. These observations and also any interactions with service providers or residents were recorded by the authors in a series of field journals.

The data from these four sources was used and analysed in different ways. The survey data from the in-depth, semi-structured interviews with residents was analysed qualitatively in order to produce the 'typology' of residents in existing communities set out in chapter six (see sections 3.3 to 3.6). A limited amount of quantitative analysis was also undertaken in order to support chapter seven, which looks at the social and physical integration of the new and existing communities, and chapter nine, which considers two neighbourhood renewal projects in Swanscombe. The quantitative analysis in chapter seven examines the number and frequency of visits by Knockhall based interviewees to Ingress Park and Waterstone Park, while the analysis undertaken for chapter nine examines the level of awareness and use among Swanscombe based interviewees of the two renewal projects. The survey data from the interviews with key regeneration figures was analysed qualitatively and used to inform the discussion in chapters six to ten examining the delivery of the Kent Thameside social regeneration and resident participation goals and the viability of the Kent Thameside regeneration goals.

The official data from the UK census underpin chapter five which examines the social, economic and spatial character of Swanscombe, Knockhall, Horns Cross and also Ingress Park and Waterstone Park. The documentary evidence, meanwhile, from public, private and community bodies plays a key role in chapter four which examines the emergence of the Kent Thameside regeneration model. However, it also informs the discussion and analysis in chapters six to ten. The primary use of the data collected from the author's ethnographic observations was to guide the selection of resident interviewees in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross, to help formulate an appropriate interview schedule, and also to enable

the author engage interviewees in an informed and sensitive way. However, this data also helped to inform the author's understanding and analysis of the impact of the key Kent Thameside regeneration initiatives on the three communities.

3.3 The aim and rationale of the fieldwork in Kent Thameside

3.3.1 Existing residents

The primary aim of the fieldwork carried out for the purposes of this study was to examine the attitudes of existing residents in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross to the regeneration that is taking place in Kent Thameside.

This fieldwork was intended to identify the range of views present within the different communities in relation to the delivery of Kent Thameside's key social regeneration goals. In line with main questions underpinning this study, it sought to establish whether residents felt that they had been able to influence Kent Thameside's regeneration priorities or to participate in the urban renewal schemes affecting their communities. It also aimed to examine whether residents felt that new developments such as Ingress Park had become physically and socially integrated into existing communities and to find out what economic, social or infrastructural benefits residents felt they had gained from regeneration.

A further goal of this fieldwork with existing residents was to challenge the tendency of local and national policymakers to see existing communities as undifferentiated entities whose attitudes in relation to regeneration are broadly similar. As Paton (2012) argues, policymakers often think of new and existing communities in binary terms and tend to ignore, or suppress, the cultural, physical and economic differences present within each community. Moreover, local councillors and professionals sometimes resist external attempts to engage residents as they perceive them as a threat to their legitimacy and authority within the community (Taylor, 2003). Both of these factors are apparent in Kent Thameside. The 'community voice' in the local regeneration discourse is usually articulated by influential community organisations such as Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council which purport to speak for the wider community. Their views are often accepted uncritically by local policymakers and very few attempts have been made to engage directly with residents in order to develop a more nuanced understanding of local attitudes to regeneration.

The fieldwork strategy in relation to existing residents was informed by two key assumptions. The first was that the existing community would contain a diverse range of perspectives on regeneration and it would not be possible to reduce the opinions expressed by the

community to one, single, broadly consistent perspective. The second assumption was that the extent of residents' emotional commitment to Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross had an important influence on their attitudes to regeneration. Furthermore, as the extent of this commitment appeared to be changing across the three communities, it followed that one would find marked differences in residents' attitudes to regeneration.

The first assumption was based on an analysis of local census data from 1971 to 2001 which showed that Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross had become significantly more economically and socially diverse since the end of the local paper and cement making industries in the 1980s (see chapter five). Not only were the working lives and housing circumstances of people in the community more varied, they were spending less time with other and they were subject to a wider range of social, cultural and economic influences. As a result it seemed reasonable to assume that their ambitions for regeneration and their expectations of what it would deliver would be quite different.

Although the three communities were still overwhelmingly composed of relatively low skilled, white British households, the economically active population was no longer concentrated in manual quarrying and manufacturing occupations based within a ten kilometre radius. Retail, wholesale and construction related occupations were becoming the most important employment sectors, while an increasing number of people were working in finance and public sector jobs. It was also apparent that more people were commuting into Greater London for work and that the housing and tenure profiles of the communities were changing. A significant number of new build flats and detached houses were available for purchase and rent in each community while the proportion of houses available for social renting was falling sharply.

The second assumption was also based on an appreciation of the changing demographics of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross. While it was apparent that many residents in each community had lived in the area for most of their lives and had strong emotional ties to the area and its industrial legacy, it was also clear that new people were moving into the communities who had few ties to the area and saw it perhaps as a temporary home (Dartford Borough Council, 2004c, 2005b). As many of these new residents are likely to have been attracted to the area at least in part by the advent of Ebbsfleet and Bluewater and the prospect of a sustained long-term growth in the local housing market, one might expect them to exhibit a broadly positive attitude towards the regeneration of Kent Thameside.

Longer-term residents, on the other hand, might be expected to display a more ambivalent attitude to regeneration. As Raco and Henderson (2006), Syms (2001) and Williams et al

(1996) point out the commercial regeneration strategies governing the redevelopment of brownfield land are not always consistent with the way in which existing communities have used these sites in the past or would like to see them used in the future. This can lead, they argue, to tensions emerging between long-term existing residents and regeneration agencies.

Having analysed official data on the socio-economic composition of residents, it was then necessary to develop a more fine-grained approach to understanding residents' views. In order to answer the main questions underpinning this study and to test the assumptions discussed above it was decided to produce a 'typology' of residents in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross using the survey method to gather data from a series of semi-structured, in depth interviews with residents. This typology would look to identify similarities and differences in residents' socio-economic circumstances and the extent of their engagement in their community and then look for correlations between these factors and their attitudes to regeneration. Each resident interviewed would be asked to provide details of the length of their residency in the community, the extent of their family, social and employment ties in the area, and their involvement in any community organisations. Interviewees would also be asked to say how long they expected to remain living in their present community and, if they planned to move on, when and where they would go and why. This data, along with information about their employment, education, housing and domestic circumstances and their responses to questions about regeneration would then be analysed to see if it was possible to identify clusters of similar residents. Profiles of any resident cluster identified through this process, setting out their shared socio-cultural, socio-economic and attitudinal characteristics, would also be produced to help contextualise and explain their attitudes to regeneration.

This approach was influenced in part by the Mosaic geo-demographic profiling system (Experian, 2010). Mosaic classifies British post-code areas according to sixty one lifestyle types that are based on shared socio-cultural and socio-economic behaviours. The variables used to construct each lifestyle type are derived from UK Census data, MORI's financial surveys, Experian's own Lifestyle Surveys and other geo-demographic data. Mosaic and other geo-demographic profiling systems such as the National Classification of Output Areas (ONS, 2003) are playing an increasingly prominent role in public service delivery and in academia (Longley, 2005; Anderson, 2010). Such neighbourhood classifications are being used in health, education and policing policy to assess risk and target interventions more effectively and in academia to understand the effect of people's home environments and social backgrounds on their behaviours (Singleton, 2004; Farr, Wardlow, Jones, 2008;

Ashby, Longley, 2005; Butler, Hamnett, 2011). The Mosaic neighbourhood classification was used to refine and contextualise the residents' typology produced for this study. The residents' profiles that comprise this typology along with details of the Mosaic classification of each resident are set out in chapter six.

3.3.2 Kent Thameside regeneration partners

The other principal targets of the fieldwork process were the key officials, politicians and developers involved in the planning and delivery of regeneration in Kent Thameside. The primary aim of engaging key figures associated with the Kent Thameside Association and later the Kent Thameside Delivery Board was to understand the rationale behind these organisations' social regeneration goals and the challenges and obstacles involved in their delivery. Testimony from the regeneration partners would also help to establish the extent of their commitment to their stated social regeneration goals and the level of resources they had available to deliver them. This fieldwork, therefore, provided an important opportunity to examine whether the rhetoric about the value of social regeneration articulated in the key Kent Thameside policies and strategies (Kent Thameside Association, 1995, 1997; Kent Thameside Delivery Board, 2005) was matched by their actions. In order to meet this aim, it was decided to carry out a series of semi-structured, in depth interviews with key Kent Thameside regeneration partners. It was felt that in depth interviews would be the most effective way of exploring the complex issues relating to the social regeneration goals of Kent Thameside and its governance.

3.4 Identifying and recruiting fieldwork respondents

3.4.1 Existing residents

It was decided during the fieldwork planning stage that a survey using semi-structured, in depth interviews would be used as the principal evidence gathering method in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross. It was felt that this method would be the most effective means of exploring complex issues such as the extent of residents' emotional commitment to the communities in which they were living. One to one interviews were selected over group interviews as it was felt that this format would be more likely to elicit strong responses from members of the community who were not used to articulating their views in public (Esterberg, 2002).

Given that in depth interviews are time consuming to carry out and analyse, the author took the view that the sample of residents participating in the study would need to be relatively

small. He estimated that it would only be possible to interview around sixty residents during the fieldwork of 2007/08 out of a total population of approximately twelve thousand. This meant that it would be extremely difficult to identify a sample that was fully representative of the populations of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross. However, the author felt it would be possible to achieve a broadly representative sample that contained a balanced geographical spread of interviewees and was broadly representative of the age profile, the educational attainment profile, the employment profile and the housing tenure and property size profiles of the three communities. Therefore, a purposive sampling method was adopted. This would be based on the analysis of demographic data from the 2001 census.

As discussed in the previous section the author used a range of methods to identify and recruit potential interviewees. After reviewing census data and the electoral register and spending time in each community and observing and recording conditions the author produced maps of the communities with detailed information of the property and tenure types present in each street and drew up a provisional pool of the households he wished to target. The author then began to contact households in the pool either in person by door-step knocking or by phone, if their landline details were publicly available, to see if they would be willing to be interviewed.

These methods proved to be effective in recruiting older retired residents, people who worked part-time or were full-time parents or carers and people who worked regular full-time hours in the local area. However, these methods were less effective in recruiting people who worked irregular hours or commuted for work outside the area. Consequently, it became necessary to supplement the provisional pool towards the end of the fieldwork process with people who had been recommended by previous interviewees. In this snowball method the previous interviewees made the initial contact with the potential interviewee, who were usually neighbours, acquaintances or family members, and then reported back to the author. All of the people interviewed were recruited either from the pooling or snowballing methods with the exception of the two interviewees who were recruited opportunistically at a community event that the author attended.

Initially, the author had wished to recruit an equal number of interviewees from each the three villages. However, he eventually decided to focus more on Swanscombe and Knockhall as they were more directly affected the new developments in Kent Thameside. Horns Cross is some distance away from Ebbsfleet and Ingress Park and is only directly affected by the Waterstone Park development. In view of this, twenty six interviewees were

recruited in Swanscombe, together with twenty seven in Knockhall and a further seven in Horns Cross.

A summary of the backgrounds of these sixty interviewees can be found in tables 3.1 to 3.3 and more detailed information about them is set out in appendices 3 to 5. Figures 3.1 to 3.6, meanwhile, describe the housing tenure, qualification and age profiles of the interviewees in Swanscombe and Knockhall and compare them to the data for all Swanscombe and Knockhall residents from the 2001 census. These figures show that the main tenure types in each community along with the main qualification types and age groups are represented in each cohort of interviewees – although there are no interviewees in private rented accommodation. At the time the interviews took place private rented households accounted for fewer than 1 in 10 households in Swanscombe and Knockhall and greater priority was given to identifying interviewees in social rented accommodation, a tenure type which constituted more than 1 in 4 households in Swanscombe. Due to the low number of Horns Cross interviewees, equivalent figures have not been produced for Horns Cross.

Table 3.1 Summary details of Swanscombe interviewees

	House type	House tenure	Ethnicity/ Relation status/ Gender	Age	Occupation	Level of highest qualification
JER	3 bed ex-council terrace	Mortgage	White Married Fem	51-60	Semi-retired Caring Post	Level 3
LGA	3 bed terrace	Mortgage	White Married Fem	41-50	Part-time Caring Post	Level 2
SPA	3 bed terrace	Owens	White Married Fem	51-60	Part-time Caring Post	Level 3
GBA	3 bed ex-council terrace	Owens	White Single Male	41-50	Full-time Local Govt Officer	Level 5
PTU	4 bed semi	Mortgage	White Married Male	41-50	Full-time Civil Servant	Level 3
BFI	3 bed ex-council semi	Owens	White Married Male	41-50	Full-time Business Prof.	Level 4
CLA	2 bed terrace	Owens	White Single Fem	41-50	Full-time Civil Servant	Level 3
LCA	3 bed ex-council terrace	Owens	White Married Male	51-60	Part-time Retail Post	None
WBA	1 bed ex-council flat	Owens	White Single Male	61-70	Long-term Sick/Disabled	None
SNE	3 bed terrace	Owens	White Married Fem	41-50	Part-time Admin Post	Level 1
RWA	2 bed ex-council flat	Mortgage	White Married Male	31-40	Full-time Driver	Level 1
YST	4 bed terrace	Mortgage	White Married Fem	31-40	Part-time Teaching Prof.	Level 4
MMU	3 bed terrace	Owens	White Married Male	61-70	Part-time Elementary Trade	None
SHR	3 bed ex-council terrace	Shared own	White Married Male	21-30	Full-time Skilled Trade	Level 2
PMA	3 bed terraced house	Mortgage	White Married Fem	51-60	Part-time Admin. Post	Level 1
MBR	3 bed terrace	Mortgage	White Married Male	21-30	Full-time Skilled Trade	Level 3
OKA	4 bed semi	Mortgage	Black Married Fem	41-50	Full-time Business Prof	Level 4
PMI	3 bed semi	Mortgage	White Married Male	41-50	Full-time Driver	Level 2
DTR	3 bed council terrace	Council	White Married Male	51-60	Unemployed	None
MCR	2 bed terrace	Owens	White Married Male	61-70	Retired	None
SWO	3 bed council terrace	Owens	White Married Fem	61-70	Retired	None
KBA	3 bed council terrace	Council	White Married Male	71-80	Retired	None
AWI	1 bed council flat	Council	White Single Male	61-70	Long-term Sick/Disabled	Level 1
EHR	3 bed ex-council terrace	Shared own	White Married Fem	21-30	Part-time Retail Post	Level 2
JMU	3 bed terrace	Rent free	White Single Male	31-40	Full-time Teaching Prof.	Level 5
PTR	3 bed council terrace	Council	White Married Fem	51-60	Part-time Caring Post	Level 3

Figure 3.1 Level of highest qualification of Swanscombe interviewees and all Swanscombe residents

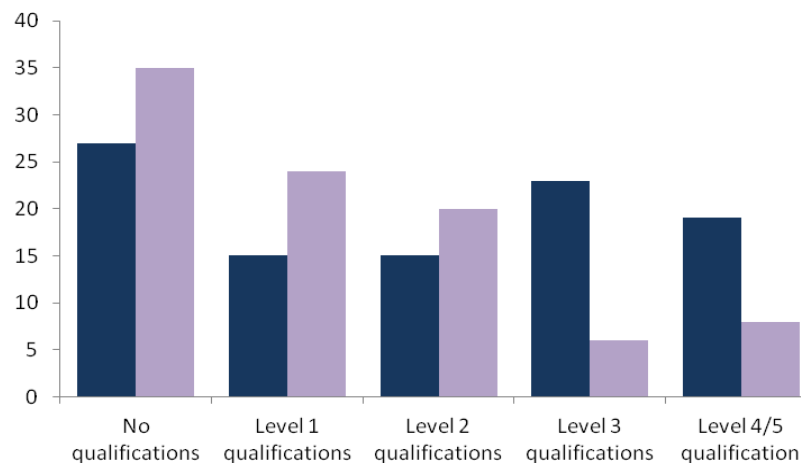


Figure 3.2 Housing tenure of Swanscombe interviewees and all Swanscombe residents

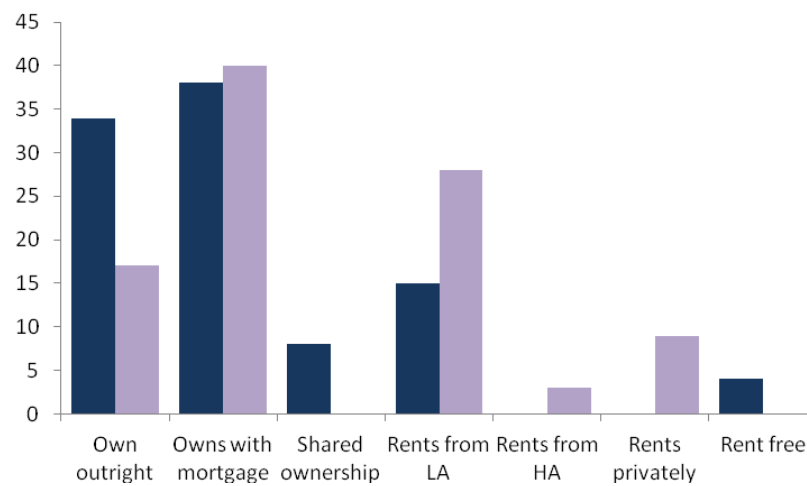
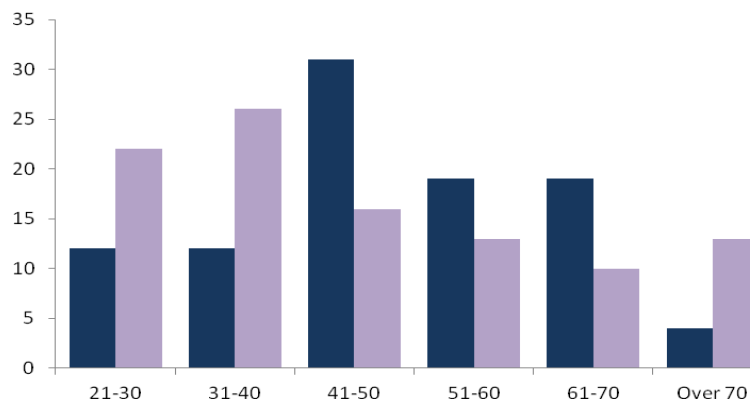


Figure 3.3 Ages of Swanscombe interviewees and all Swanscombe residents



■ Swanscombe interviewees ■ All Swanscombe residents (%) (Census 2001)

Table 3.2 Summary details of Knockhall interviewees

	House type	House tenure	Ethnicity/ Relation status/ Gender	Age group	Occupation	Level of highest qualification
DCA	4 bed semi	Mortgage	White Single Fem	41-50	Full-time Elementary Trade	None
AFU	3 bed townhouse	Mortgage	White Single Fem	51-60	Full-time Librarian	Level 3
CCU	3 bed semi	Mortgage	White Married Fem	41-50	Full-time Church Official	Level 2
KWH	4 bed semi	Mortgage	White Married Male	51-60	Full-time IT Consultant	Level 4
KFA	3 bed terrace	Mortgage	White Single Male	31-40	Full-time Skilled Trade	Level 3
DPA	3 bed semi	Owns	White Single Male	51-60	Full-time Admin Manager	Level 2
JLO	3 bed bungalow	Owns	White Married Male	71-80	Retired	Level 4
PRA	3 bed townhouse	Mortgage	White Married Fem	41-50	Part-time Elementary Trade	Level 1
MCO	3 bed terrace	Mortgage	White Married Male	41-50	Full-time Driver	Level 1
MEL	3 bed townhouse	Owns	Asian Married Male	61-70	Full-time Mental health nurse	None
SHA	2 bed terrace	Mortgage	White Single Fem	21-30	Full-time HR Officer	Level 3
SSM	3 bed terrace	Mortgage	White Single Fem	31-40	Looking after home	Level 2
JPI	3 bed terraced house	Council	White Single Fem	61-70	Retired	Level 1
SWH	4 bed semi	Mortgage	White Married Fem	51-60	Full-time Community Nurse	Level 4
GST	3 bed terrace	Mortgage	White Single Male	31-40	Full-time Teaching Prof.	Level 4
SED	3 bed terrace	Owns	White Single female	61-70	Retired	Level 1
ABR	2 bed terrace	Mortgage	White Single Male	21-30	Full-time Sales Post	Level 3
TCA	2 bed terrace	Mortgage	White Single Male	31-40	Full-time Civil Servant	Level 4
DFR	3 bed terrace	Council	White Married Male	51-60	Full-time Elementary Trade	None
RBA	4 bed detached	Rent free	White Married Male	51-60	Full-time Church Rector	Level 4
BKE	3 bed terrace	Mortgage	White Married Male	51-60	Full-time Teaching Prof.	Level 4
TWR	3 bed terrace	Owns	White Married Male	61-70	Retired	Level 3
DBL	3 bed semi	Owns	White Married Male	51-60	Long-term Sick/Disabled	Level 4
JFR	3 bed terrace	Council	White Married Fem	51-60	Part-time Elementary Trade	None
RFA	3 bed semi	Owns	White Single Male	61-70	Full-time Admin. Post	Level 1
NTI	3 bed terrace	Owns	White Married Male	31-40	Full-time Teaching Prof.	Level 4
JHI	3 bedroom townhouse	Owns	White Single Male	51-60	Full-time Legal Clerk	Level 2

Figure 3.4 Level of highest qualification of Knockhall interviewees and all Knockhall residents

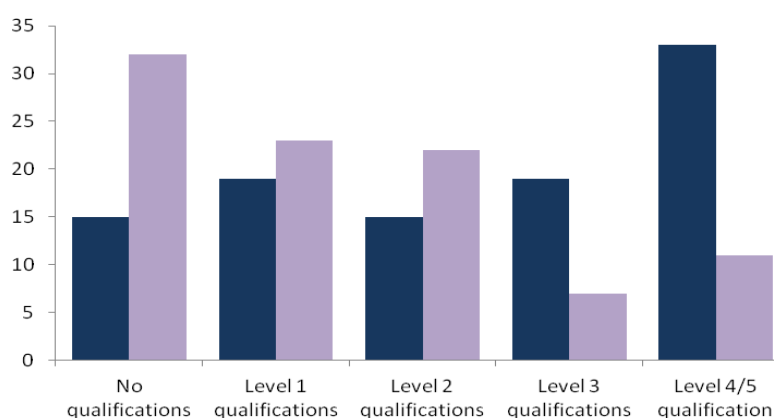


Figure 3.5 Housing tenure of Knockhall interviewees and all Knockhall residents

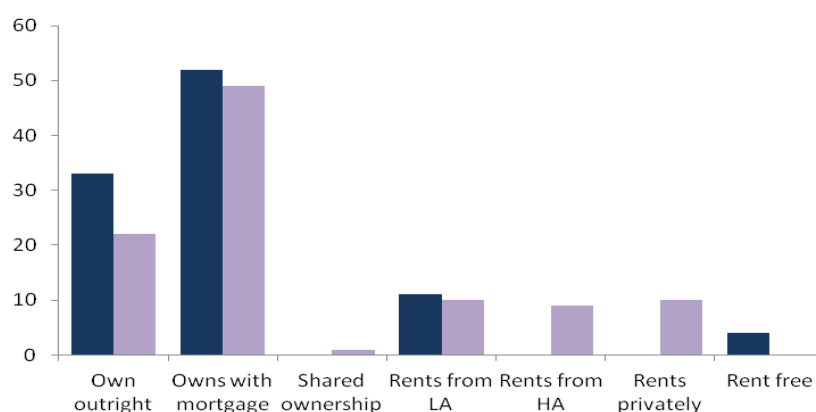
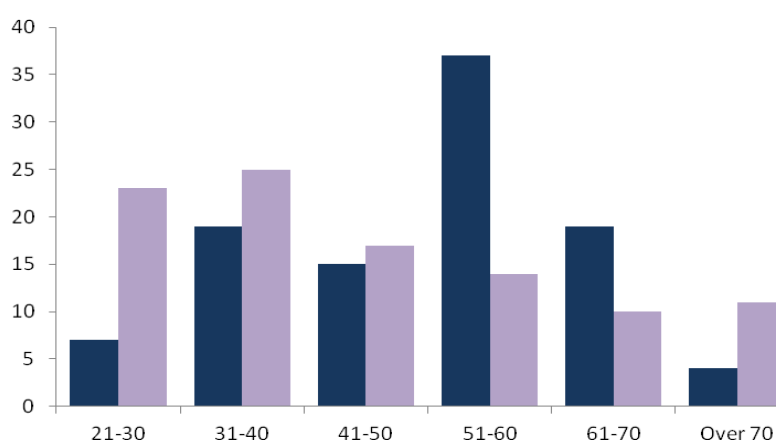


Figure 3.6 Ages of Knockhall interviewees and all Knockhall residents



■ Knockhall interviewees ■ All Knockhall residents (%) (Census 2001)

Table 3.3 Summary details of Horns Cross interviewees

	House type	House tenure	Ethnicity/ Relation status/ Gender	Age	Occupation	Level of highest qualification
RFO	3 bed detached bung.	Owens	White Married Male	61-70	Part-time Engineer	Level 4
PWA	3 bed detached bung.	Mortgage	White Married Fem	61-70	Retired	None
JAR	3 bed semi	Private rent	White Married Male	31-40	Full-time Skilled Trade	Level 3
JMA	3 bed terrace	Mortgage	White Single Male	41-50	Full-time IT Manager	Level 4
DBK	3 bed semi bung.	Owens	White Married Male	71-80	Retired	None
JFO	3 bed detached bung.	Owens	White Married Fem	51-60	Full-time Lab Technician	Level 3
BWA	3 bed detached bung.	Mortgage	White Married Male	61-70	Retired	Other

3.4.2 Kent Thameside regeneration partners

The task of recruiting interviewees from among the Kent Thameside regeneration partners was made relatively easy due to the author's familiarity with local regeneration processes. Most of the individuals who were interviewed had existing knowledge of this research and were interested in its findings. Consequently all the individuals contacted by the author agreed to be interviewed and were willing to set aside the necessary time for the interview.

It was important that the sample of regeneration partners identified as potential interviewees reflected the mixed public and private sector membership of the Kent Thameside Association and the Kent Thameside Delivery Board. In view of this the author contacted three senior private sector developers: an executive from Land Securities, which was responsible for developing the Ebbsfleet Valley; an executive from Countryside Properties which had the house building contract for Waterstone Park; and a senior executive from London and Continental Railways, the company charged with building Ebbsfleet Station and the high speed rail link.

Four public sector regeneration partners also agreed to be interviewed: the Chief Executive of the Kent Thameside Delivery Board; a senior Dartford Borough Councillor who was a former Leader of the Council; a senior director from Dartford Borough Council; and a former Chief Executive of Dartford Borough Council who had been a founding member of the Kent Thameside Association. At a later stage in the fieldwork process two senior public sector professionals who worked in the Swanscombe and Knockhall area, a local GP and a secondary school headteacher, also agreed to be interviewed. Details of the backgrounds of the interviewees can be found in appendix seven.

3.5 The planning, delivery and recording of fieldwork interviews

3.5.1 Existing residents

Prior to the start of the interviews with existing residents, a detailed interview schedule was drafted and piloted with four residents in Swanscombe and Knockhall whom the author knew personally. The final version of the interview schedule, which was revised after the piloting stage, can be found in appendix two.

The interview schedule consisted of four sections of open response questions. The first section included questions on interviewees' personal circumstances while the second section explored their perceptions of their community. These sections provided the background information necessary to produce the typology of residents. The third section

included questions designed to establish how much the interviewees knew about the regeneration of Kent Thameside and the fourth section was composed of specific questions related to the area's social regeneration goals. This section explored residents' views on the integration of new and existing communities and the extent to which they had been involved or were aware of any initiatives relating to the regeneration of their community or the wider Kent Thameside area.

The interview schedule also initially contained some closed response questions designed to gauge residents' awareness of specific regeneration schemes. However, these questions disrupted the flow of the interview and interviewees were reluctant to engage with them as they saw them as a test of their knowledge: as a result they were dropped after the first two interviews and all questions became open-ended.

When discussing the arrangements for each interview, most interviewees indicated that they wanted it to take place at their home address. However, five of the sixty interviewees asked for a location that was close to where they worked: two interviews, therefore, were carried in Bluewater shopping centre; one was carried out in a supermarket cafe; and one took place at the business address of the interviewee. The author tried, whenever possible, to ensure that at least an hour was set aside for each interview. It was thought that an extended period of time would help to establish a rapport between the interviewer and interviewee and would give the interviewee time to think about their answers and bring in new issues that they believed were relevant to the topic in question. It was hoped that this would help give the interviewee more control over the content and tone of the interview.

In the event, the extended interview format proved to be helpful: many interviewees became more relaxed and expansive in their answers in the latter part of the interview and some returned, unprompted, to topics they had already addressed in order to provide additional insights. A change in the format of the interview, which was made after the first two interviews, also had an important impact on the depth of the answers given by interviewees. Whereas the initial interviews had placed an equal emphasis on developments that had yet to happen, such as Ebbsfleet Valley, and on developments that had already taken place, such as Ingress Park, the later interviews focused much more on the latter type of development. Although the author provided pictures and plans of future developments, many interviewees found it difficult to relate to them or to comment on the impact they might have on existing communities. Focussing on completed developments such as Ingress Park enabled many interviewees to provide richer answers when discussing topics such as the social and physical integration of new and existing communities.

The author, with the consent of participants, chose to record each interview in full rather than take verbatim notes. This allowed the author to focus on the interviewee during the interview and to replay the interview at a later stage in order to pick additional nuances and to compare responses. After each interview the author prepared a report with details of the interviewee's age, gender, relationship status, occupation, educational attainment, housing status and the extent of their social and family connections and voluntary activity in the community. The report also included a selective transcription of the relevant parts of the interview.

3.5.2 Kent Thameside regeneration partners

As with existing residents, a detailed interview schedule, which was piloted with two Dartford Borough Councillors, was prepared before the start of the interviews with the regeneration partners. This schedule, which was composed of open-ended response questions, was designed to enable each interviewee to set out their understanding of each key social regeneration goal, and why and how it had emerged (see appendix six). It also provided them with an opportunity to explain the challenges involved in meeting these goals and to describe the ways in which they had changed over time. Interviewees were also invited to comment on the governance arrangements in place in Kent Thameside and the wider Thames Gateway and their strengths and weaknesses as a means of delivering the government's regeneration programme. Finally, interviewees were asked to comment on the nature of their engagement with existing communities and to describe what had worked well and what could have been improved.

Prior to the interviews, some regeneration interviewees had requested to see a copy of the interview questions in advance. This raised a question about whether they may prove guarded in their response, even though they had been willing to agree to be interviewed. However, the interviewees all provided very full and detailed answers and placed no restrictions on the type of issues they were prepared to address or how their responses could be used. This may be because they knew the author was familiar with the practical, political and financial challenges involved in the regeneration of Kent Thameside and understood the difficult choices, barriers and competing pressures they faced as professionals. As Nutt and Bell (2002) have noted, interviewees are often willing to disclose more when the interviewer has a similar personal or professional background and is able show empathy with their situation.

All the interviews with the key regeneration figures were recorded in full and then selectively transcribed. Interview reports containing the transcriptions and details of the interviewees' professional status and the nature of their involvement in Kent Thameside were then produced.

3.6 The analysis of the fieldwork interviews

3.6.1 Existing residents

The data from the interviews with existing residents was analysed thematically based on the material collected during the interview process. After replaying the interviews the author produced an index of the key themes and sub themes that were discussed by the interviewees. In identifying these key themes particular attention was paid, as recommended by Ryan and Bernard (2003), to repetitions in the interviews; similarities and differences in the way interviewees discuss a topic; the use of metaphors and analogies by interviewees to explain their opinions; and the use of linguistic connectors such as 'since' or 'because' to explain why events have occurred. The key themes and sub themes identified are set out in tables 3.4 and 3.5. After producing this index of themes, the interview data relating to the themes were transcribed and recorded in the interview reports and in a database produced for each key theme.

Table 3.4 Index of the key themes relating to residents perceptions of their own community

Key themes	Sub themes
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique of the performance of the local authorities • Engagement with the local authorities
Community and social inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community strengths • Community weaknesses • Reasons for staying in the community • Reasons for leaving the community • Social and family ties to the community • Social and family ties outside the community • Voluntary activity within the community
Environment and public services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique of local health and education services • Critique of local sport and leisure facilities • Critique of the local public realm • Critique of local shops and services • Critique of the evening economy • Critique of quality and maintenance of local housing stock • Priorities for environmental and infrastructural improvement
Transport and Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique of the local public transport network • Critique of the local road network • Critique of walking routes

Table 3.5 Index of the key themes relating to residents' perceptions of the regeneration of Kent Thameside

Key themes	Sub themes
The design and architecture of new developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique of their density, layout and design • Critique of their facilities and services • Critique of the public realm • Critique of the quality and desirability of housing • Critique of the accessibility and permeability of the development
Integration between new and existing communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique of the physical integration between new and existing communities • Comparisons between the built environment of new and existing communities • Comparisons between social and economic backgrounds of residents of new and existing communities • Critique of the social integration between residents of new and existing communities • Extent of use of community facilities and services by new and existing residents • Frequency of visits by existing residents to new developments • Reasons for visits by existing residents to new developments • Extent of existing residents' confidence about visiting new developments • Frequency of visits by new residents to existing communities • Reasons for visits by new residents to existing communities • Comparisons between treatment of new and existing residents by regeneration partners
Involvement of existing residents in the regeneration of Kent Thameside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of existing residents involvement in shaping the key regeneration goals and strategies of Kent Thameside • Extent of regeneration partners involvement and knowledge of existing communities • Critique of urban renewal schemes in existing communities • Extent of existing residents involvement in urban renewal schemes
Overall impact on existing communities of new development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructural benefits for existing communities from new developments • Economic benefits for existing communities from new developments • Disadvantages of new developments for existing communities • Future action required from regeneration partners to ensure that existing residents benefit from new development • Critique of the distribution of regeneration resources between new and existing communities • Critique of the distribution of regeneration resources <i>among</i> existing communities

This thematic analysis of the interview data was used to support the production of the residents' typology. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the typology was created by examining the residents' level of commitment to their community; their socio-cultural preferences; their socio-economic status; their plans for their lives and their attitudes to regeneration. The intention was to see if discrete clusters of residents could be identified with comparable life journeys and expectations and similar attitudes to regeneration. In the event, it proved possible to identify a typology composed of four discrete groups of residents.

Two thirds of the residents interviewed were classified using this typology. The typology revealed significant variations in the backgrounds and life choices of Swanscombe,

Knockhall and Horns Cross residents and also marked differences in their attitudes to regeneration. At one end there is a discrete group of residents, who are 'Just Passing Through' Kent Thameside. They have moved to the area for investment reasons attracted by the regeneration vision for Kent Thameside. However, they have limited social or emotional capital invested in the community and most will expect to move on within a few years. At the other end there are the older, blue collar residents from Swanscombe who have always lived and worked in the area and are rooted in the community: these 'Guardians of the Flame' recognise the need for additional housing but are ill at ease with the scale and pace of the regeneration plans and the social changes taking place within their own community.

The third group of residents, meanwhile, the 'Community Crusaders', are educated, professionals who are heavily involved in community projects aimed at promoting social cohesion and improving the skills and confidence of local residents. They are sceptical, however, about some of the claims made by the Kent Thameside regeneration partners and feel that the opportunity posed by regeneration to improve the quality of life and life chances of existing residents has largely been squandered. The largest group, though, which accounts for a third of the interviewees, is composed of residents with busy family and working lives who have few complaints about their lives or the communities in which they live, except with regard to the level of services available for younger people. These 'Happy Families' have a more pragmatic attitude towards regeneration than their peers and tend to focus on positives it will bring to their lives. Detailed profiles of the four residents groups are set out in chapter six and a summary with details of the socio-economic backgrounds of the members of each residents group can be found in appendix eight.

The residents who have not been included in this typology fall into five categories. The first category is a sub-set of the 'Happy Families' group. It consists of four residents whose attitudes to regeneration and whose lifestyles are similar to the 'Happy Families' group, except that they do not have children or grandchildren and are therefore less exercised about the quality of service provision for younger people in the area. The second category includes four older residents, who, like the 'Guardians of the Flame' group, have always lived and worked in the area and are also uneasy about the impact of regeneration on them and their communities. However, due to the fact that they live in Knockhall and Horns Cross, rather than Swanscombe, which, it is argued, lends the Guardians of the Flame a distinctive sense of identity and loyalty to place, they have not been included in this group.

The third category consists of two residents who are first generation immigrants from the commonwealth who have settled permanently in the area with their families. While their

attitudes to regeneration are similar to the 'Happy Families' group, the difference in their life journeys and their wider network of social and family connections, which tend to stretch across London and the South east, means they have not been included in the group.

The fourth category consists of five middle age residents with comfortable incomes and busy professional lives who have been living in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross for some years, due to family connections or because of the affordability of housing in the area and its transport connections to London. The attitudes to their community and to towards regeneration vary, which is why they have been included in the typology. Some are sceptical about regeneration, see few positives about living where they do and are considering moving elsewhere. Others, despite being disengaged from their community, are prepared to tolerate living there due to its convenience. The final category of residents consists of six residents, or outliers, whom it has not been possible to classify due to the unusual nature of their life journeys and current lifestyles.

The thematic analysis used to produce the residents' typology was also used to inform chapters seven and nine which examine the delivery of the Kent Thameside social regeneration goals. The data from the sub-themes relating to the integration of new and existing communities were used to support the analysis in chapter seven. In this case, the data from Knockhall interviewees relating to the frequency and nature of their visits to Ingress Park and the extent of social interaction between them and Ingress Park residents was used to examine the extent of social integration between the two communities. The data from the sub-theme focusing on comparisons between the treatment of new and existing residents by the regeneration partners was also examined in this chapter. In chapter nine, meanwhile, the data from Swanscombe interviewees relating to the quality of the urban renewal schemes in the community was used to support the analysis of the Gunn Road Environmental Improvements Scheme and the Swanscombe Heritage Park Scheme.

3.6.2 Kent Thameside regeneration partners

The data from the interviews with the Kent Thameside regeneration partners were analysed thematically in the same fashion as the data from residents' interviews. The index of the key themes and sub themes generated after replaying the interviews is set out in table 3.6. The data linked to these themes have been used extensively throughout this study in the analysis of Kent Thameside's governance arrangements and the delivery of its social regeneration goals.

Table 3.6 Index of the key themes from interviews with Kent Thameside regeneration partners

Theme	Sub themes
Kent Thameside social regeneration objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of key social regeneration objectives • Description of change in social regeneration objectives over time • Critique of the deliverability of the social regeneration objectives • Critique of the strengths of the social regeneration objectives • Critique of the weaknesses/gaps in the social regeneration objectives • Understanding of existing residents' regeneration priorities
Delivering the Kent Thameside social regeneration objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of successful social regeneration initiatives • Description of unsuccessful social regeneration initiatives • Critique of urban renewal schemes • Critique of social and physical integration schemes • Critique of the strengths of the social regeneration delivery process • Critique of the weaknesses of the social regeneration delivery process • Description of measures to enable existing residents to participate in shaping the regeneration of Kent Thameside • Critique of resident participation initiatives
Kent Thameside developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique of their density, layout, design and construction • Critique of their strengths • Critiques of their weaknesses • Description of the main challenges in their delivery
Governance of Kent Thameside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique of the Kent Thameside governance structures • Critique of the Thames Gateway governance structures • Description of the relationship with regeneration partners • Critique of the Kent Thameside infrastructure delivery arrangements • Critique of the adequacy of the Kent Thameside infrastructure

3.7 Ethical considerations

Prior to beginning the fieldwork process there were two key ethical issues that needed to be addressed and resolved. The first was the author's dual status as an academic researcher and as a professional with a close personal involvement in the regeneration of Kent Thameside. The second issue, which was linked to the first, was how to ensure that potential interviewees did not feel obliged to participate in this research and were able to make a free and informed choice about participation.

As a former Dartford Borough Councillor and a constituency based staff member of the Member of Parliament for Dartford, the author was in a position in 2007 to gain privileged access to information relating to Kent Thameside and to negotiate access to potential interviewees. This created the dilemma as to how the author should represent himself to

potential interviewees. Electing to withhold information from potential resident interviewees about the author's professional status would help to avoid a scenario whereby interviewees felt either pressured into taking part in the research or believed that in agreeing to participate they would gain improved access to local decision makers. It would also help to equalise the power relationship between the interviewer and interviewee and lessen any inhibitions the interviewee may have had about speaking freely. On the other hand, it would have been extremely difficult for the author to separate his professional and academic roles and ensure that his professional background and knowledge had no influence on the interview process or that the information gained from the interviews had no bearing on his subsequent professional activities. After all, the interviewer is not a neutral facilitator but a co-creator of the interview data: their personality, appearance and background have a powerful influence on the interviewee and the responses they give (Esterberg, 2002). Moreover, withholding information about aspects of the author's status which are clearly relevant to the subject of the interview could be construed by interviewees as disingenuous and misleading.

The ethical dilemmas facing the 'practitioner-researcher' have been discussed by Bell and Nutt (2002). Using the example of Nutt's research with foster carers whilst working as an employee of the National Foster Care Association, they highlighted the practical difficulties involved in keeping the identities of researcher and practitioner separate. Having decided initially to withhold her professional identity from interviewees, Nutt found that aspects of her professional self leached into the interview process and that her professional status became clear to some interviewees as a result of their interaction during the interview. Although she felt that revealing her dual status might make it difficult for some interviewees to know whether they responding to her as an 'insider' practitioner or an 'outsider' researcher, she eventually took the view that she needed to be transparent about her status. In fact, Nutt and Bell argue, as do other qualitative researchers (Oakley, 1981; Edwards, 1993), that revealing personal details to interviews can help to build up trust between the interviewer and interviewee and encourage greater disclosure by the interviewee.

The author decided therefore to disclose details of both his professional and academic status when approaching potential interviewees. When engaging interviewees directly he began by stating that he was a university graduate student carrying out research in Kent Thameside. If they were happy to proceed, he but then went on to explain that it was his professional interest in the area as an employee of the local MP that had led him to engage in this research. He also highlighted the fact that he had lived in the area for twenty years and had also served as a Borough Councillor. If potential interviewees showed any initial reluctance to be interviewed, then the author ended the conversation at the point and did not

go on to reveal his professional status in case the interviewees felt obliged to change their mind and take part. Every individual who agreed to be interviewed was given a 'cooling off' period before the actual interview took place and they were encouraged to contact the author if they had any questions about the research or wished to withdraw from the interview.

While the majority of interviewees were contacted directly by the author without the prior involvement of a 'gatekeeper', a few potential interviewees from social groups that were otherwise difficult to reach were contacted first by previous interviewees as part of a 'snowball' recruitment method. Although these intermediaries were asked to emphasise the fact that the research was part of an academic study and was being undertaken by a graduate student who happened also to work for the local MP, there is no record of these conversations and no way of knowing for certain how the author was described or how the research was pitched. As Miller and Bell (2002) state in their discussion of the role of the gatekeeper in qualitative research, there is a risk that some interviewees who are contacted or 'volunteered' by powerful or assertive gatekeepers may feel that they have limited scope to resist participation. In this study, the author attempted to mitigate this risk by selecting intermediaries whom he believed would present the interview request in a sensitive fashion and would ensure the potential interviewee felt under no pressure to comply.

In one case, two potential interviewees were approached opportunistically by the author at the end of a community event that he was attending in a professional capacity. While this did represent a blurring of the boundaries between the author's professional and academic roles, the author believed that an exception could be made in this instance in view of the personalities of the people in question. The author was satisfied that they would understand the academic focus of the research and that they would only agree to be interviewed if they were certain that it was something that they wanted to take part in.

A further issue related to the author's status as a 'practitioner-researcher' that had to be addressed was how the author should respond to questions from interviewees during and after the interview which were prompted by his professional role. In line with the approach taken by Bell and Nutt (2002) the author decided that while such questions should be answered directly, and not be deflected or deferred, it was important to try to draw a distinction between the author as an academic interviewer and as a political professional. Consequently, the author decided if any such question was asked he would stop the recording of the interview and only turn it on again once the question had been answered. In the event a number of interviewees did ask some general questions about public services in

their community and future development in Dartford which the author then answered directly. The author felt this empowered the interviewees and helped to make the interview a less formal, more conversational experience which, in turn, encouraged interviewees to disclose more in their answers.

Following each interview the author provided each interviewee with his academic contact details and encouraged them to get in touch if they had any questions about the progress of his research or any other issue related to the regeneration of Kent Thameside. Once the fieldwork was complete the author decided to withdraw himself from any professional business or community events relating to the residents of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross. As the interviewees had provided the author with some sensitive personal information, he wanted to avoid any embarrassment or awkwardness that might occur if he came into contact with them again in a professional capacity.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the rationale for employing the case study method of empirical research in this study, and for selecting Kent Thameside and Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross as the case study sites. This chapter also sets out the methodology used to identify, gather and analyse the primary data used in this study and the rationale behind it. It examines in detail the aims and implementation of the fieldwork strategy used to engage the two main target groups of this study: the existing residents of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross; and the key officials, politicians and developers involved in the regeneration of Kent Thameside. The key hypotheses that have informed this strategy and the ethical considerations and methodological literature that have influenced its design have also been considered.

This fieldwork strategy has yielded a rich volume of interview data which has enabled the author to produce a typology of residents that has highlighted the social and economic diversity present within the existing communities and the differences in attitudes to regeneration. In this sense, it has addressed a notable weakness in the evidence base underpinning the regeneration of Kent Thameside. Up to now the existing community has been treated as an undifferentiated entity and the commentary on regeneration from the existing community has been provided almost exclusively by a small cohort of powerful individuals who purport to represent the community. This interview data has also provided a valuable and detailed commentary - from both residents and the regeneration partners - on the delivery of the key social regeneration goals of Kent Thameside on both participation and integration.

However, the interview data does have its limitations. While the interview data from the Kent Thameside regeneration partners is broadly representative of the key public and private constituencies that have shaped the area's regeneration goals, the cohort of sixty resident interviewees can only provide a partial snapshot of the views of the existing community. In this case, the depth and quality of the responses provided by residents has inevitably limited the study to a more qualitative approach. This has restricted the scope for undertaking a quantitative analysis of the residents' responses.

Although the author has endeavoured to ensure that the cohort of interviewees is geographically balanced and includes residents from the key socio-economic groups in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross it is possible that some viewpoints and nuances will have been missed. The author's dual status as a 'researcher-practitioner' is also significant. While steps were taken to mitigate the impact of his status on interviewees and the data they provided, it may have influenced the decisions of some interviewees to participate in the research.

The evidence provided through this study will help to strengthen our understanding of the impact of regeneration on existing communities in Kent Thameside and the wider Thames Gateway. But in reviewing this evidence the limitations described above need to be borne in mind.

Part II

Kent Thameside: its people, communities and regeneration policies

Chapter 4 Kent Thameside: The emergence of a regeneration vision 1979-2013

4.1 Introduction

This chapter has three key aims. It aims first of all to explain how and why Kent Thameside came to be identified as a regeneration priority by the government in the 1990s. It will then show how the regeneration and governance of Kent Thameside evolved over the next two decades. This discussion will help to contextualise the analysis of Kent Thameside's social regeneration goals in the later chapters of this study.

Secondly, it aims to situate Kent Thameside within the wider policy and academic debate that has influenced the Thames Gateway regeneration policy agenda (see appendix one for a timeline of key events). It will examine the gradual evolution of regeneration policy in the UK from a neo-liberal belief in the 1980s in the power of the market to transform under-performing local economies to the more subtle, 'rolled out' neo-liberalism of the 1990s and 2000s which placed a greater emphasis on social regeneration and sustainable development. It will also explore the dynamic between national regeneration policy, the Thames Gateway policy discourse and the local policy discourse in Kent Thameside. The key social and economic issues that have influenced the scale and pace of regeneration in the Thames Gateway - such as the recessions of the early 1990s and the late 2000s; the post millennium property market boom; and the growing influence of environmental politics - will also be explored.

Thirdly, this chapter aims to examine the relationship between Kent Thameside's governance partnerships - such as the Kent Thameside Association - and regional and national regeneration bodies over time. It will consider the extent to which the governance of Kent Thameside is consistent with the fluid, multi-level, neo-liberal governance arrangements driven by inter-agency bargaining and coalition building which were described by Jessop (1990).

4.2 Reviving the East Thames Corridor 1979-91

The election of Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government in 1979 was a pivotal moment for the East Thames Corridor. Determined to sweep away the rigid planning system, the local authority bureaucracy and the high taxation, which it felt was constraining economic growth in the region, it embarked on a series of initiatives designed to revive its sclerotic market economy (Heseltine, 2000). In 1980, the six volume South East planning guidance was shelved in favour of a loose two page guidance document. And in 1981, an 'Urban

Development Corporation' was set up to take control of vast swathes of the London Docklands, as well as the planning powers of the local authorities (Imrie, Thomas, 1993a; Brownill, 1990). The new London Docklands Development Corporation was given central funding to acquire and prepare land for development and an Enterprise Zone was created which gave new investors substantial tax breaks.

Two years later, North West Kent got its own Enterprise Zone. The decline of the area's manufacturing base, coupled with rising unemployment and its growing economic reliance on London, had persuaded Kent County Council and the government that urgent action was needed to promote the industrial regeneration of the area (Kent County Council, 1984). For Conservative controlled Kent County Council it was a politically expedient strategy. By focussing its economic development strategy on the North of the county, Kent was able to placate urban members who were demanding action to help tackle the county's industrial decline, whilst appeasing rural members who wanted a brake on new development, particularly on green field sites (Vigar, 2000).

In the event Enterprise Zone status for North West Kent did not prove to be quite the panacea that its supporters hoped it would be. The rate of development across the zone varied substantially, leading Kent County Council to conclude that "Enterprise Zone designation in itself will not generate immediate development and employment". It found that other issues were also important; such as the "availability of land and premises, location and accessibility, and the image and environment of the area" (The Financial Times, 1985).

North West Kent's problems were mirrored in the wider East Thames Corridor. According to SERPLAN (1987), the association of South East planners, a wide range of factors were inhibiting the Corridor's economic development potential and preventing the region matching the impressive growth of the M4 corridor west of London. A combination of issues including the population's low spending power; its low skills level; the poor environmental image of the East Thames Corridor; and its inadequate road and rail networks, were holding back the area's growth, SERPLAN found.

Yet, the East Thames Corridor had one asset that the M4 corridor could not match: the proposed Channel Tunnel rail link between London and Paris. In Kent, a team was set up to determine how to realise the Tunnel's economic potential. Their 'Strategy for Kent', published in 1987, concluded that the M25 and the new link would 'interact strongly' and have a significant impact on the economy of Dartford and Gravesham (Kent Impact Study Team, 1987). This would, it claimed, justify the establishment of the Dartford and

Gravesham area as a 'growth centre' with Dartford's strong potential as a major distribution hub a particular cause for optimism. Their recommendation echoed a call by Martin Simmons (1987) in an influential article in 'The Planner' for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link to be used to stimulate the economy of the Thames estuary, and in particular the industrial towns of North Kent.

However, a report by Deloitte, Haskins and Sells (1989), commissioned by SERPLAN, concluded that the image of the East Thames Corridor would have to be radically overhauled in order to persuade the private sector to invest in the area. Deloitte suggested that the East Thames Corridor should try to replicate the Glasgow Action project, which was set up in 1985 to enhance Glasgow's appeal to business and new residents and to promote an entrepreneurial climate.

The Deloitte report, with its focus on property led regeneration and the re-branding of the area, borrowed heavily from the Docklands regeneration model. It was based on the premise that the main barriers to regeneration were physical ones, in terms of lack of road capacity, and on site constraints. If these could be removed, then, with the right kind of marketing, the market could be relied on to provide the investment and the jobs that the area needed. It was an approach that typified the government's intrinsic belief in the power of the market alone to transform the prospects of Britain's declining industrial heartlands. However, even by the late 1980s it was a model that was already beginning to attract critics. In the next section we will consider this criticism and discuss the government's reaction to it.

4.3 A new approach to urban regeneration in the East Thames Corridor 1991-94

The brand of private sector, property led regeneration described in the Deloitte report had already begun to attract criticism by the time it was published in 1989. The London Docklands Development Corporation's 'entrepreneurial governance' style was accused of leaving the Docklands "redeveloped but not regenerated" (Brownill, 1999). The House of Commons Employment Select Committee, meanwhile, concluded that Urban Development Corporations "cannot be regarded as a success if buildings and land are regenerated but the local community are bypassed and do not benefit from regeneration" (Imrie, Thomas, 1999, 23).

It was a criticism that John Major's new Conservative administration took to heart. Its flagship urban policies, the City Challenge initiative of 1991 and the Single Regeneration Budget of 1994, were recognisably Conservative in that they obliged cities to bid against one another for central funding. But in contrast to the urban policy of 1980s, they were founded

on the principle that regeneration required partnership between the public and private sectors and the community if it was to succeed (Tallon, 2010). There was also a more overt focus on social issues such as education, housing and health (Cullingworth, Nadin, 2006).

Major's arrival in Downing Street also heralded the return of Michael Heseltine to the Department of Environment. Back in power, Heseltine turned his attention once again to East London:

"My vision was to build on the success of the London Docklands Development Corporation by stimulating development out into the East Thames Corridor"
(Heseltine, 2000, 398).

To assist him he appointed Peter Hall, "a left of centre but internationally renowned expert on urban planning", as his special adviser (Heseltine, 2000, 398). Hall saw the development of the Corridor as a necessary response to the outward drift of population and jobs from London (Hall, 1989). Hall castigated attempts by the Callaghan government in the 1970s to halt this through a programme of inner city revitalisation. He concluded that even with the development of the London Docklands, that the "outward drift will continue as strongly as ever" and that there is no "long-term substitute for new building in the rest of the south east" (Hall, 1989, 28).

A disciple of Ebenezer Howard's garden city movement, Hall supported the creation of 'discontinuous clustered developments' focused on 'radial transport corridors' extending out from London. These new communities, Hall insisted, should be small, semi-self contained, walking scale communities clustered along public transport routes like 'beads on a string' or a 'linear version of Howard's Social City'. Investment in high profile employment hubs, he said, would counteract the 'huge magnet of central London' and ensure the economic success of the corridors (Hall, Ward, 1998, 154-8). Hall envisaged that the 'East Thames Corridor' could become the prototype for sustainable, public transport orientated, urban development not just in the UK, but across the world.

Confirmation of the East Thames Corridor's status as a regeneration priority for the government came in March 1991. With Peter Hall in attendance, Heseltine outlined his plans to an audience of planners for a linear city in the corridor with a string of new centres on both sides of the Thames. He also hinted at the prospect of a major high speed rail link in the East Thames Corridor.

"The East Thames corridor contains much land of poor environment, and development opportunities that cry out to be taken. Its position makes it an area of key significance for communications linking not only London and the South-east but the Midlands and the North with Europe" (Schoon, 1991)

This became a reality in October 1991 when the Transport Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, announced that the new Channel Tunnel Rail Link would include an intermediate international station located in the corridor (HC Deb 1991).

Political interest in the Corridor was strengthened by the 1992 household projection figures for England which calculated that an extra 4.4 million new homes were required by 2016: the need for housing being particularly acute in the South east. Anxious not to alienate the wealthy shire counties the government signalled its intention to concentrate this new housing on previously developed, 'brownfield' sites – which the East Thames Corridor possessed in abundance (Cullingworth, Nadin, 2006). From now on, Ministers announced, 50 per cent of all new development would be located on brownfield sites. As well as bringing investment to run down areas and containing urban growth, it was a policy, Ministers promised, that would cut energy consumption; promote greater social mixing; lead to better urban design; and promote greater public participation in the development process (Raco, Henderson, 2006; Punter, 2010). It represented, The Guardian said, a dramatic shift in policy.

"The ideological purity of economic liberalism has been dissipated as environmental problems have come home to roost, not least in the mighty green backlash in Tory shires to the perceived over-development of their patches. Where once development came first, planning tagged along and people came nowhere, it is recognised in government now that there should be more of social element to planning." (Vidal, 1990)

In North Kent, Blue Circle Industries, which owned over 1,000 hectares of redundant 'brownfield' chalk quarries and cement production plants, saw its chance to transform the value of its portfolio. The company had gained planning permission for the redevelopment of its Western Quarry site in Greenhithe as a shopping centre in May 1990. However, the proposal for an intermediate international station on the new Channel Tunnel Rail Link offered an even greater prize. But in order to persuade the government to locate the station in North Kent, Blue Circle recognised it needed the participation of the local authorities and other community partners. Shortly afterwards, in 1993, the Kent Thameside Association, an informal coalition involving Dartford and Gravesham Borough Councils, Kent County

Council, and Blue Circle was formed. The Association's aim, according to Dartford's Chief Executive at the time, who was interviewed for this study, was:

"To try and influence the work being carried out by the government in setting up the East Thames Corridor under Michael Heseltine. The aim of the partnership was to show that we could talk with one voice in the community and to ensure that North Kent got the maximum benefit it could from development in the Gateway." (CSH)

The ensuing contest for new station, which pitted Stratford and Rainham against 'Ebbsfleet', Kent Thameside Association's candidate, was reminiscent of a City Challenge funding round. In their bid, the Kent Thameside team promised Ministers a 'Euro-city', with up to 12,500 homes and 34,000 jobs to be created around the new station. Moreover, it would be a self-sustaining centre built according to Peter Hall's precepts with its own offices, shops, hotels and community amenities. All of this, the team claimed, could be delivered by the private sector without any public finance. Blue Circle would provide the land for the station at no charge and the cost of building the station and associated infrastructure would be met out of the proceeds from the commercial development.

The announcement of Kent Thameside's privately financed Euro-city plan in March 1993 was perfectly timed. It came just days after Michael Howard, the new Environment Secretary, had established a task force of civil servants to put together plans for redeveloping the corridor - a project complicated, the Financial Times noted, by the absence of any available public sector capital funding (The Financial Times, 1993). The Euro-city project was also boosted by a government commissioned report into the development potential of the corridor which found that Ebbsfleet had the edge over Stratford and Rainham as the location for the new station (Llewelyn Davies, Roger Tym, 1993). Llewelyn Davies's report concluded that Ebbsfleet, which was close to the M25 and had an abundance of brownfield land suitable for commercial and housing development, would make an ideal "outer growth point" in the Corridor that could act as "a countervailing attraction" to London.

However, the Llewelyn Davies's report said little about the social regeneration of the Corridor's existing communities. It concentrated instead on the transport and environmental challenges that had to be addressed if developers were to see the Corridor as anything other than "the place where London generates its power and dumps its rubbish". There was no discussion about how to ensure existing residents' access to the new jobs and homes created in the Corridor. For seasoned regeneration observers the report was a disappointment. The Docklands Consultative Committee (1993), composed of local

authorities and community organisations, complained about the report's "emphasis on land development, rather than community needs, existing economic structures or social regeneration".

4.4 The emergence of the Thames Gateway Planning Framework 1994-97

As civil servants prepared the planning framework for the Corridor, aimed at formalising Michael Heseltine's regeneration vision, the media speculated about the cost of delivering the framework. "The big unanswered question is funding", said *The Independent*:

"The task of turning round this deprived area to create a centre for industry and tourism as well as an attractive place to live, is a mammoth one....(Yet) although government money has been fed into transport links, other development is likely to depend on the private sector." (Brace, 1994)

It was a question to which Ministers too could not find an answer. At the launch of the draft planning framework for 'Thames Gateway' in September 1994, the Environment Minister, David Curry, did his best to dampen expectations about the scale of the project. The government wasn't looking for "megapolis or a corridor city", he told the media (Minton, 1994). And while the Gateway had the *potential* to provide hundreds of thousands of new jobs, a figure in the tens of thousands was "more certain". The proposed housing delivery target of 110,000 new homes, 70,000 of which were to be delivered by 2006, was also short of many commentators' expectations. The plan was, the Royal Town Planning Institute noted, "a lot less lavish than Heseltine's vision developed by Peter Hall". But then Curry, who hadn't any government money to commit to the Thames Gateway, could not afford to be lavish: "It will be very exciting" but "I'm not going to pay for most of it" he admitted.

However, even Curry's streamlined development vision failed to appease the sceptics. *Planning Week* reported that although some inward investment would follow the transport opportunities, "planners remain concerned that lack of funds is the fatal flaw behind the down-scaled project" (Minton, 1994). Church and Frost (1995) were equally sceptical: they questioned whether companies would be willing to invest in the Thames Gateway and divert expansion away from the west of London without policy direction or incentives from government or substantial investment in new infrastructure.

The Minister also found himself embroiled in a controversy over the location of the new station. In August 1994, the Transport Secretary, Brian Mawhinney had awarded the station to Ebbsfleet. Yet accusations that the bid's success owed more to the connections between

Tory grandees and Kent Thameside's public affairs company, than its commercial merits, soon emerged (Osborne, 1994). Curry had to insist to the Commons that "Ebbsfleet was chosen because it stood up commercially from the very start" (HC Deb, 1994). Many felt that Stratford, an area with high unemployment, would have been a better location. In the end Ministers made a partial climb-down: the government wouldn't give its official support to a station at Stratford but would allow contenders for the rail link construction contract to include Stratford in their bid if they felt there was a business case to do so (Barker, 1995).

Despite these criticisms, it was clear from the new planning framework that some of the lessons from the 1980s had been learnt (DoE, 1995). While it reaffirmed the government's commitment to "working with the market" in order "to attract new investment and new residents", it also stressed the importance of;

"building on existing economic and community strengths; reinforcing the economic base, and strengthening existing communities"

It declared that "the government is keen for those living in the Thames Gateway to share in the success" that the growth of the region's business sector would generate. To enable this there would be an expansion of the Gateway's further and higher education base coupled with new investment in health and cultural opportunities. This would ensure that regeneration is able to make "the most to be made of the talents and resources of local people". Furthermore, the driving force behind the delivery of these objectives wouldn't be the government or Urban Development Corporations, but local authorities in partnership with business interests. This would help to ensure that "the wider matters of community regeneration...in established communities" are addressed in tandem with the physical regeneration of the Gateway's brownfield sites.

The framework also confirmed Kent Thameside's status as one of the Gateway's two main centres of development – the other being Stratford. With the new station at Ebbsfleet, the government believed that the area had the potential to provide 30,000 new homes "over the next 30 years" as well as "significant opportunities for employment". Kent Thameside would also be, the framework promised, a "sustainable development": "jobs, housing and services (would) be in easy reach of each other" and "new and existing centres of community and commerce" would be integrated. House development close to Bluewater, for example, would be encouraged. This would allow Bluewater "to act as a focus in the new Kent Thameside rather than standing alone as an out of town centre".

The Kent Thameside Association took a close interest in the drafting of the framework. Blue Circle, in particular, was keen to see the framework implemented quickly. It felt that the existing planning system - which produced carefully negotiated land use plans that required lengthy consultation - was ill-equipped to respond to the opportunities emerging in Kent Thameside (Hull, 1998). For Blue Circle to realise its development ambitions, it needed a planning framework that provided a strong development vision for the next thirty years, and underlined Kent Thameside's regional and national significance. This was necessary to ensure co-ordinated support for the Kent Thameside agenda from across government. Official recognition for the Kent Thameside project would also help to unlock investment from the private sector. Consequently Blue Circle lobbied Ministers for an early publication of the framework and strove to ensure that its development principles for the Thames Gateway were consistent with its own (Hull, 1998). In fact, Dartford's Chief Executive at the time, who was interviewed for this study, said that "almost everything put forward" by the Association was included in the Thames Gateway Framework.

The Association also commissioned David Lock to produce a local development vision. Lock, a close associate of Peter Hall, was the Chief Planning Adviser to the Department of the Environment. His role was to set out how the development principles established in the Thames Gateway Framework would be met in Kent Thameside. The document would have no statutory footing, but with political control of Kent Thameside split between three local authorities, it would fulfil the pressing political and commercial need for an overarching strategic framework for the area. As Hull states;

"It points to the importance of the partnership approach in the process of area regeneration. Although partnerships have no executive power they can bring people with various resources together. So in this case Blue Circle bring money, land and government influence, KCC bring highways and planning powers and the districts local planning permit responsibilities" (Hull, 1998, 332).

It was an attempt to reinvent the planning process to make it relevant to a new paradigm in which local authorities and private enterprise were the co-authors of regeneration. It is also a strong illustration of the fluid, multi-level, networked neo-liberal governance described by Jessop (1990). As much a business case for development as it was a strategic framework; it was designed to sell the Kent Thameside vision to investors and to the local community. It shows a blurring of the boundaries between the local authority - the regulator of development - and the commercially driven private developer. The commercial imperative to publish in quick time, one shared by all the Kent Thameside partners, led a reversal of the

usual local plan consultation process: instead of consulting first and spending time establishing a consensus view, the partners' final vision was presented to the community who were then encouraged to buy in to it.

The vision itself, 'Looking to the Future', envisaged the creation of over 30,000 new homes and 50,000 new jobs on brownfield sites around Bluewater and Ebbsfleet (Kent Thameside Association, 1995). In line with the government's new Strategy for Sustainable Development (DoE, 1994) these new communities would "embody the principles of sustainability" while the "utmost importance" would be attached to "protecting the identity of existing communities and ensuring that existing residents benefit directly from the Kent Thameside initiative". The new communities would also be planned with "the use of public transport in mind" with the community infrastructure located locally in order to "minimise the need to travel".

David Lock (2010) subsequently described the Kent Thameside Vision as "a unique exercise in British town planning". He claimed that its focus on "mixed use, public transport-orientated development on brownfield land" - principles that have "become an established part of national planning policy and the cornerstone of the move towards sustainable development" - was highly innovative for its time. Yet Lucas (1998, 211) felt that Kent Thameside would find it hard to deliver a shift towards more sustainable transport. While Dartford took public transport "very seriously" - opting for higher densities on new developments to make them attractive to public transport providers and supporting the development of a tram system - Lucas found Kent less supportive. Kent believed that the development intensity in Kent Thameside was insufficient to justify new public transport projects and felt that neither the government nor private finance would be willing to fund them. In Kent's view, it was the road network, which had still had spare capacity, which would absorb most of the traffic generated by development. In short, she felt it would difficult to translate the "rhetoric of support for public transport improvements in the Thames Gateway" into action.

Nonetheless, the Kent Thameside Association (1997) was optimistic about the future. By 1997 construction of Bluewater was underway; Blue Circle had submitted a development application for Ebbsfleet; and the government had struck a deal with London and Continental Railways to build and operate the new Channel Tunnel Rail Link. The Association was also working on a 'community involvement strategy' aimed at ensuring that existing residents were "able to become more closely involved in the Kent Thameside initiative". However, one key question remained unresolved, namely, how would Kent Thameside fare after the forthcoming General Election which the Labour Party, out of power for almost twenty years, was widely expected to win. In the next section, we will find out.

4.5 The Thames Gateway under New Labour and the Third Way 1997-2000

The profound re-shaping of the British political landscape that took place in May 1997 was nowhere more apparent than in the Thames Gateway. The Thameside seats of Kent and Essex, which had been Conservative for a generation, opted decisively for Tony Blair's New Labour project. The tide in Blair's favour was so strong that by the morning of 2 May, the entire Thames Gateway, every constituency from Tower Hamlets to Dartford, the Medway Towns and Swale, was in Labour hands. But while the Thames Gateway was evidently ready for New Labour, it remained to be seen whether New Labour was ready to engage with the Thames Gateway project.

The local authorities in Kent Thameside, eager to keep their regeneration plans alive, insisted that their vision for the area was consistent with the new policy agenda. Labour's promise of new political discourse a third way between the neo-liberal, market focused mantras of the right and the dirigiste welfare state of the old left (Giddens, 1998), was well suited to Kent Thameside, they claimed. It was the ideal location to embed this new discourse and to establish "a blueprint for the nation" (Dartford Borough Council, The Thameside Local Authorities Team, Travers, Kleinman, 1998).

"Among the government's key priorities are job creation and the welfare to work programme, environmentally friendly development, an integrated transport policy, quality lifelong learning and a new house building programme focused on brownfield sites. The regeneration programme underway in Kent Thameside provides the government with an ideal opportunity to meet these policy objectives in the South east and to act as a blueprint for the nation."

The plea to Ministers was motivated by a pressing need for new funding to meet existing "service demand pressures" and to provide the social infrastructure needed to achieve "a balanced community". Yet with Blair and his Chancellor Gordon Brown still wedded firmly to the Conservatives' modest spending plans there were limited resources available for the Thames Gateway. Under Blair (1997), just as it was under Major, "the economic prosperity on which everything else turns" relied, not on an expansionist state, but on the existence of an open, well functioning, deregulated market and a fiscal environment that was conducive to business. Regeneration in the Thames Gateway would continue to depend primarily on "attracting jobs and inward investment through partnerships with business" (Blair, 1997).

Nonetheless, there were important differences between the governments. Deeply concerned about rising inequality, Labour ministers had promised to place 'social justice' at the heart of

their policy agenda. An overriding priority for the government would be to address the causes of deprivation in an effort to deliver genuine equality of opportunity for all. Labour believed that this would be attained by creating a more inclusive and engaged citizenry, with individuals empowered to take responsibility for their own economic destiny through the support of an enabling state (Giddens, 1998, 65). Blair sought to replace the individualism of the 1980s with a more communitarian ethos that was predicated on balancing one's individual rights with one's civic and personal responsibilities: rights were no longer to be automatic; they had to be earned (Johnstone, Whitehead, 2004).

Labour's communitarian impulse led to a renewed policy interest in neighbourhood regeneration. Under the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, intensive, multi-agency programmes aimed at tackling the barriers to education, skills development and employment and other 'neighbourhood effects' that entrenched social exclusion were targeted at the country's most deprived neighbourhoods (Atkinson, Kintrea, 2002). "Nobody should be disadvantaged by the area in which they live"; the government's new Social Exclusion Unit insisted (Social Exclusion Unit, 2001a, 75). This was complemented by a focus on reducing welfare dependency and getting people into work. Initiatives such as the New Deal and the tax credit system were the key, Ministers argued, to the creation of active, empowered citizens.

Labour's belief in the importance of community empowerment also led to a greater emphasis on involving residents in regeneration. Whereas the Major government had attempted to engage the community in the Single Regeneration Budget programme, but rarely succeeded, Labour insisted that the community needed to be involved in its flagship New Deal for Communities programme from the outset. Under this programme, it was local residents, not civil servants, who were charged with identifying the key regeneration challenges. Partnership working was also encouraged: firstly to ensure joint working between public sector and community partners; and secondly to try and lever in additional resources (Fordham, GFA Associates, CRESR, 2010). Under Labour, "urban renewal (was) no longer seen as something that is done to communities but a process with which members of the community have a duty to actively engage" (Johnstone, Whitehead, 2004, 10).

Ministers were also concerned about the quality of urban life – particularly in view of the progressive decline in the numbers of people able or willing to live in England's urban centres. Avoiding the 'doughnut effect' seen in US cities, with affluent and expanding suburbs surrounding declining urban cores, was a priority for the government. This led the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, to set up the Urban Task Force in 1998 under the

chairmanship of Richard Rogers. The Urban Task Force (1999) was charged with “identifying the causes of urban decline in England and recommending practical solutions to bring people back to our cities, towns and urban neighbourhoods”.

Prescott was also determined to deliver an ‘integrated transport policy’ that promoted sustainable travel and ensured that the different tiers of government and transport modes operated in unison. Having urged the public to judge him against the pledge that “within five years more people will be using public transport and driving their cars less” (Schoon, Laurance, 1997), he then published a White Paper (DETR, 1998a) that set out plans to allow congestion charging in cities, tax workplace parking and road charging. According to Hine and Preston (2003) it was indicative of a new faith in land use planning as a transport demand management tool and a more holistic approach to public transport focused on creating a seamless, door to door passenger experience.

Kent Thameside’s new integrated land use and transport planning framework, published a few months after the White Paper, reflected this new approach. It rejected the roads dominated ‘predict and provide’ transport planning model in favour of a planned shift from private to public modes of transport underpinned by carefully planned public transport orientated developments (Kent Thameside Association, 1999).

This vision of a development landscape geared around the needs of public transport was heavily influenced by Urban Task Force (1999). Their report, *Towards an Urban Renaissance*, called for “well designed, compact and connected cities supporting a diverse range of uses – where people live, work and enjoy leisure time at close quarters”. It was followed by *Delivering an Urban Renaissance*; the first government white paper on urban policy since the 1970s (DETR, 2000a). Both concluded that mixed tenure, high density developments located in compact centres with a mixture of uses and a strong public transport system would provide the quality of life necessary to draw people back into the country’s urban centres. Better connections between key employment zones, city centres and poorer areas would also help to tackle social exclusion (Rogers, Power, 2000; Power, Houghton, 2007).

The call for more compact urban areas was enthusiastically endorsed by the Council for the Protection of Rural England. “Urban renewal has to be the dominant paradigm,” it claimed: “Protecting the countryside whilst renewing towns and cities is both “modern and progressive” (Building Design, 2000). Yet, there were also dissenters. Peter Hall, a member of the Urban Task Force, but also a fierce opponent of ‘urban cramming’, added his own

footnote to the Task Force's report stating that there "is no overriding need to save Greenfield land, of which we have a surplus in South East England" (Urban Task Force, 2005). He argued that densification would lead to an increase in apartment construction which would be "unsuitable for families and undesired by residents".

The government was unmoved by these concerns. Embroiled in a heated political debate about the number of new houses required in the South east, it needed a way of delivering extra housing whilst keeping the Home Counties' green fields intact. The Urban Task Force's densification agenda offered Ministers a way to achieve both. Prescott duly called for more mixed use, high density developments in urban locations with good public transport and announced an increase in the brownfield development target from 50 to 60 per cent of new housing (DETR, 2000c). A sequential test whereby green field sites would only be used after all available brownfield alternatives had been exhausted was also introduced.

As we will see in the next section, The Thames Gateway, with its acres of redundant brownfield sites close to the capital, offered Prescott an obvious opportunity to implement his new vision.

4.6 Accelerating growth in the Thames Gateway under Labour 2000-2003

In March 2000, John Prescott confirmed the government's commitment to the Thames Gateway "as a hub for development and regeneration" while announcing the new house building target for the South east. More houses would be built in the South east, but by concentrating development in an expanded Thames Gateway it would be possible to "conserve Greenfield land" while satisfying the growing demand for urban housing – particularly among "single people, low-income families and key workers" (HC Deb, 2000). It was enough to neutralise some of the media opposition to housing growth in the South east. The Evening Standard, usually one of Prescott's most caustic critics, concluded that the announcement struck the "right balance" between "homes and fields" (Moore, 2000).

The Channel Tunnel Rail Link, which Prescott had rescued by releasing £1.6 billion of government backed bonds to pay for its construction, provided the government with an added incentive to press ahead with the Gateway's regeneration. Having talked up the link's role "in regenerating north Kent and the east Thames corridor" in order to justify its bail out, Prescott was keen to see progress made (HC Deb, 1998). At the link's ground-breaking

ceremony, he revealed that he wouldn't be 'calling in' Blue Circle's planning application for Ebbsfleet. This would ensure that it could be progressed "without delay" (DETR, 1998b)¹.

However, delivery in the Gateway was proving to be slower than the government had hoped. Roger Tym and Partners' (2001) review of the Thames Gateway Planning Framework concluded that delivery was being hindered by the absence of a single accountable Gateway wide body. It also found that development in the Gateway was running significantly below that in central and west London. Future progress would depend heavily, Tym stated, on the provision of key transport projects such as phase two of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. The report also warned that the community infrastructure required to meet "the needs and aspirations of existing communities" would be hard to secure through planning gain alone. This warning was echoed in the North Kent Area Investment Framework which calculated that the *additional* net contribution required from the public sector to "ensure existing residents benefit fully from the change" would be £4.3 billion over twenty years (Thames Gateway Kent Partnership, 2002). Without this funding, the Framework concluded, it would hard to deliver the housing growth anticipated in North Kent.

Eventually, Prescott, under pressure to tackle rising house prices, decided that urgent steps were needed to unblock housing delivery. In July 2002, he admitted to MPs that his target of 39,000 new homes a year for the South east "simply wasn't being met" (HC Deb, 2002). This shortage of housing was "causing record housing costs", he said, and making it more difficult for companies to "recruit and retain staff" and for "young people to get on the housing ladder". The answer, Prescott claimed, was to "accelerate existing proposals for significant growth in the Thames Gateway" and other growth areas. There would be a "renewed emphasis on delivery" in the Gateway and new means established for delivering "rapid regeneration". It appeared that time had been called on the gradualist model of delivery of the Thames Gateway Planning Framework, which had eschewed fixed targets and left it to local partnerships to decide when it was appropriate to bring forward key developments.

The promised 'step change' in housing delivery was unveiled in February 2003 in 'Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future' (ODPM, 2003a). Two months later, the economist, Kate Barker, was commissioned by the government to conduct a review of housing supply in the UK and to identify ways of improving the responsiveness of the housing market.

¹ Phase one of the CTRL from Folkestone to Ebbsfleet opened in 2003. Until the opening of phase two from Ebbsfleet to St Pancras in 2007, trains joined the existing rail network at Ebbsfleet and terminated at Waterloo.

The Communities Plan included a commitment to provide an extra 120,000 homes in the Thames Gateway by 2016. The delivery of this target would be overseen in each sub-region of the Gateway by new delivery vehicles. Local partners would be able to choose between 'non-statutory partnerships', 'urban regeneration companies' and 'new style local development bodies' equipped with development corporation powers. Prescott also announced a £446 million fund to support the delivery of land remediation, affordable housing and community infrastructure: a fund David Curry had been unable to offer in 1995.

The new homes in the Gateway would be created in 'sustainable communities' and would be built according to the design principles set out by the Urban Task Force and the Urban White Paper. They would have a "well integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures" and would be of "sufficient size, scale and density to support basic amenities in the neighbourhood and minimise the use of resources". Residents would also be able to participate in the "planning, design and long-term stewardship of their community". However, their sustainability would depend on the presence of a "flourishing local economy" to provide jobs and "strong leadership" capable of reacting quickly to changes in the market.

Fundamental to the success of this vision was investment in the Gateway's transport infrastructure (Llewelyn Davies, Steer Davies Gleave, Roger Tym & Partners, Atkins, 2003). If the Gateway was to become a competitive location for development, it needed high quality regional and local transport. The Channel Tunnel Rail Link was needed to provide the 'strategic spine', allowing 'contra-commuting' from London to hubs such as Stratford and Ebbsfleet. The Crossrail network would then provide 'the vertebrae' linking intermediate locations, while local transit schemes, such as Docklands Light Railway extensions and Fastrack in Kent Thameside, would enable "efficient local circulation". Other schemes such as the Thames Gateway Bridge between Beckton and Thamesmead would strengthen cross river relationships and increase access to job and commercial opportunities. The report saw Fastrack as an immediate priority given that Ebbsfleet International Station was due to open in 2007.

For Buck et al (2005) the government's Communities Plan was an expression of the 'new conventional wisdom' which dictates that communities must be well governed, socially inclusive and economically competitive in order to succeed. In these sustainable communities, according to Raco (2005a), the competing pressures of the market and civil society are reconciled by New Labour's active citizenry whose stewardship role is intended to steer the development process in ways that are mutually beneficial for both residents and investors. However, some commentators argued that the Communities Plan was no more

than a neo-liberal adaptation to a new economic climate in which supply side failures - such as a shortage of affordable housing and public transport services - were affecting the competitiveness of London's economy (Peck, Tickell, 2002; De Angelis, 2008).

Brownill and Carpenter (2009, 266), meanwhile, have highlighted a tension in the government's attempt to marry economic competitiveness with a social inclusion agenda in the Communities Plan. They have questioned the compatibility of the "low skills equilibrium" in the Gateway with the drive to create high skill jobs in knowledge intensive industries. There is an inconsistency, they conclude, between this high skills agenda and the desire to create new jobs which "will provide local residents with more choice as to where they work and live". While investment in the skills base of existing residents will help to narrow this skills gap, a degree of commuting, both in and out of the Thames Gateway will be inevitable; undermining the goal of creating communities of people who live and work in the same area.

Power et al (2004, 36), on the other hand, felt that the high environmental and infrastructural cost of building large new communities from scratch was hard to justify: A far better approach, they believed, would be to work out from existing centres with established infrastructures. By concentrating on renovating existing housing and creating new housing on small, redundant town centre sites, it would be possible to deliver extra capacity "more cheaply, more quickly and more sensitively", whilst also benefitting existing communities.

The political response to the Communities Plan also focused on the infrastructural costs of development. The House of Commons Housing, Planning and Local Government Select Committee (2003) concluded that although it was an "opportunity to develop good practice in building high density neighbourhoods" the costs of implementation were likely to be prohibitive. Only a fraction of the Gateway's infrastructure needs would be met by the £446 million fund allocated by the government. The House of Commons Environmental Audit Select Committee (2005) and the South East County Council Leaders Committee (Roger Tym and Partners, 2004) echoed these conclusions: both expressed concern as to whether the infrastructure of the South east could accommodate the extra houses proposed in the Communities Plan.

Kent Thameside's development plans, however, were largely unaffected by the Sustainable Communities Plan. A brownfield regeneration plan had been in place for a decade and there was limited scope to extend it. Moreover, the Kent Thameside Association was already pursuing a regeneration model that reflected the plan's key principles. 'Looking to an Integrated Future' promised sustainable developments aligned along public transport

corridors with high residential densities of 90 units per hectare in the 200 metre zone either side of the route (Kent Thameside Association, 1999). These developments would be served by a dedicated lane rapid bus system with the flexibility to expand as the pace of development and passenger numbers increased.

Concerted efforts to ensure that existing residents were able to extract the maximum gain from regeneration were also being made. Indeed, the government's Thames Gateway Evidence Review described Kent Thameside as one of the few areas in the Gateway where "social regeneration is being considered as seriously as physical regeneration" (Oxford Brookes University, 2006). Their efforts were underpinned by an £18 million European Union funded six year regeneration programme aimed 'achieving social inclusion' in Kent Thameside's existing communities. This was followed in 2003 by a Community Strategy which identified a series of 'priority communities' that were facing "particular economic, social or environmental issues that make it difficult for them to share in the new opportunities regeneration will bring" (Kent Thameside Local Strategic Partnership 2003). A neighbourhood renewal action plan, modelled on the targeted, multi agency approach adopted by Labour's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, was also implemented in Swanscombe, one of Kent Thameside's 'priority communities' (Dartford Borough Council, 2003g).

Nevertheless, the government was keen to see the pace of delivery stepped up in Kent Thameside. Work had begun on only two of the key Kent Thameside brownfield sites, Waterstone Park and Ingress Park, and many developments, including Eastern Quarry, were still at the planning stage. According to a Dartford Borough Council director interviewed for this study the "panic on housing policy" at national level was so acute that "accelerating the rate of housing development" had become the dominant theme in all discussions between the Council and the government. Other key regeneration objectives, such as the goal of establishing Ebbsfleet as a major economic hub in the Thames Gateway, were "obscured", he said, by the imperative to create more houses.

It was for this reason that the Kent Thameside Delivery Board was established in 2003. One of the 'non-statutory partnerships' envisaged in the Communities Plan, the Delivery Board brought together the key public and private partners involved in Kent Thameside. In contrast to the Kent Thameside Association, the Board was run by a full-time Chief Executive and a team of civil servants and financed directly by the £446 million Communities Plan fund. Its function was to co-ordinate the delivery of key housing developments; lead on the implementation of Fastrack; promote the Kent Thameside 'brand' and co-ordinate efforts to

improve its physical environment. One of the board's first actions was to produce the Kent Thameside Regeneration Framework (Kent Thameside Delivery Board, 2005). This provided a formal expression of the key regeneration objectives that the members of the Kent Thameside Association had identified over the previous decade.

The delivery board was not the first choice of the Kent Thameside partners. They would have preferred "a looser arrangement" led by the local authorities akin to the existing Kent Thameside Association. However, it became apparent to the Leader of Dartford Council at the time, who was interviewed for this study, that "the government neither trusted us nor thought that we had the right abilities to do it ourselves". The option of a development corporation was also ruled out, as Kent Thameside, unlike Thurrock, had no need for an agency with the powers to assemble land and prepare it for development.

The delivery board emerged as a compromise choice: it had no obvious champion among the local regeneration partners, but it was the most palatable option available. Unfortunately for the board this lack of local support constrained its effectiveness as an organisation. With the local authorities "unwilling to devolve powers to it or to give it teeth", according to a Dartford Borough Council Director, who was interviewed for this study, the board struggled "to work out what its role was" or to "find meaningful work to do". The board and the local authorities found it difficult to co-ordinate their efforts to prevent the duplication of work in areas where they had overlapping responsibilities. As a result the board struggled to build up political capital or to establish a distinctive identity for itself.

4.7 The governance and delivery of the Thames Gateway after the launch of the Sustainable Communities Plan 2003-2008

The delivery and governance arrangements established in the Gateway by new Labour have been the subject of considerable criticism. After the introduction of the new tier of local development vehicles in 2003, there were over fifty agencies with a direct interest in regeneration operating at various spatial levels in the Thames Gateway. For Ministers the complexity of the delivery landscape in the Gateway was a strength. David Miliband (2005), the Local Government Minister, insisted that "a complex set of projects" required a flexible approach that allowed each sub-area of the Gateway to select a delivery mechanism appropriate to its needs and objectives. It was "network governance" that allowed "horizontal as well as vertical linkages" that was necessary rather than a top-down, "one size fits all" strategy.

Allmendinger and Haughton (2009, 629) saw merits in Miliband's argument. They felt that the "complex, multilayered, fluid and sometimes fuzzy scales of policy and governance arrangements" in the Gateway, a place where "almost everyone is busily co-ordinating with others" provided opportunities for creativity, innovation and consensus building. However, Richard Rogers complained that "the plethora of overlapping, but differently funded and monitored, regeneration bodies" in the Gateway had resulted in "fragmented decision-making and institutions which lack coherent area-based delivery mechanisms" (Urban Task Force, 2005). Hornagold and Hills (2007) also found that regeneration practitioners were confused by delivery the arrangements and frustrated by the apparent lack of clear overarching strategy from central government.

Brownill and Carpenter (2009, 262), meanwhile, detected "an uneasy tension between different scales of governance" and concluded that "arrangements for 'governmentality' have not been working in the Gateway". Each sub-region, they noted, had developed similar economic growth strategies - usually based on attracting financial, environmental, transport, leisure and advanced engineering businesses to their area - and were competing against each other for investment. They also pointed out that Stratford, the 2012 Olympics venue, had received a disproportionate share of central resources and political attention after London was chosen as the Olympic city.

Another area of concern raised by the House of Commons Public Accounts Select Committee (2007) and the National Audit Office (2007) was the DCLG's capacity to lead the Thames Gateway project. A small department with limited Cabinet influence, the DCLG was seen to be in weak position to ensure that the Thames Gateway was treated as a cross-government priority. The Public Accounts Committee found that major developments were being "delayed due to a lack of joined-up infrastructure investment". The Eastern Quarry development in Kent Thameside, it noted - a key development in the Gateway - had been suspended owing to the Highways Agency's refusal to give its consent to the development until new investment in the road network was secured.

In Keith's (2008, 61) view, the DCLG's difficulties in securing infrastructural investment in the Gateway were exacerbated by a misconceived development time-scale. The problem, or the 'gateway paradox' as he described it, was that the housing growth targets set out in the Communities Plan were "too high over the short-term but too low over the long-term". An "over-ambitious" development target in the short-term demanded a level of infrastructural investment that Ministers found hard to justify. Yet the more modest long-term Gateway growth targets, which demanded less from the public sector, were equally unattractive to the

Treasury as it made investment “fiscally wasteful and economically sub-optimal”: physical infrastructure became more expensive because of the “higher per capita costs for each public sector infrastructure decision”. A more prudent strategy, Keith believed, would have been to increase the Gateway’s growth targets but to phase in development over a much longer period. Not only would this have strengthened the case for public sector investment but it would also have ensured that the necessary infrastructure was delivered as new businesses and residents arrived, instead of many years later.

The absence of a long-term programme of public sector investment beyond the £446 million Communities Plan Fund was also deterring private sector investment. Even in 2005, with “property markets becoming hotter”, Regeneration and Renewal reported the failure of a private sector investment capital fund for the Gateway due to a lack of interest. According to the House Builders Federation (Walker, 2005):

“The problem lies in whether or not the potential will turn into a realistic business proposition. There is still no indication as to how much the government is prepared to invest in the required infrastructure to make the Gateway an attractive and viable site for sustainable communities. Nobody is going to take on a loss making project.”

While the non-delivery of key developments due to infrastructure delay was becoming a concern for Ministers, an equal if not greater problem was the quality of the developments that were being delivered. The National Audit Office report (2007) found that although there were some good developments in the Gateway, such as Greenwich Millennium Village and St Mary’s Island in Chatham, many fell short of the standards set out by government. CABE’s Chief Executive, Richard Simmons, was more vehement still: design quality in the Gateway needed to improve dramatically, “if the Thames Gateway is to avoid becoming an urban wasteland of badly-designed housing estates and public spaces” (Simmons, 2007). The media was also highly critical:

“The Thames Gateway is a tragic fiction of a non-place ...the dumping ground of crass new housing for poor people.” (Glancey, 2006)

“Inside Prescottgrad there are Barrack-like homes, no local shops, schools, playgrounds - not even a post-box.” (Gilligan, 2006)

In response to this criticism, Ministers appointed a Thames Gateway ‘Tsar’, Judith Armitt, in 2006 to give the project renewed momentum and leadership. A cross Governance board and integrated funding streams were also established to provide a coherent decision making

mechanism at national level. In addition, a strategic framework for the Gateway with key regeneration objectives and outcomes was launched in 2007 to provide an overarching 'vision' (DCLG, 2007). The framework was supported in the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review by a £600 million package for transport and infrastructure improvements. However, Ministers made no move to streamline the Gateway's network of delivery agencies or to review the decentred, network based delivery system.

The government's other significant move was to appoint the architect, Terry Farrell, as their Thames Gateway Parklands Design Champion. After publishing a Thames Gateway Parkland Vision (Farrell, 2008), Farrell was commissioned to 'refresh' the government's overall Thames Gateway Vision (Farrell, 2008, 2009a, 2009b)). These vision statements imagine the Gateway as an 'eco-region' capable of acting as an exemplar in sustainable living. His appointment was a recognition by Ministers that the negative perceptions of the Gateway had to be reversed if businesses and prospective residents were to be persuaded to invest in the Gateway.

Farrell's vision was supported by Ministers but they lacked the resources to implement it. A £35 million package of measures was announced, including the establishment of an Institute for Sustainability, but in Chaplin and Nicolaou's opinion (2010, 233), it was a "weak offer" that was "woefully inadequate" for the task in hand. It failed to address the cost of assembling the land necessary to deliver the Parklands Vision or to set out any "sticks or sanctions" aimed at persuading developers, local authorities to take action. It was typical of the constrained climate in which the government had to operate in the wake of the banking crisis and the credit crunch. For the Gateway, it was a sign of things to come.

4.8 After the credit crunch: The Thames Gateway in an era of fiscal austerity 2008-2013

In 2006 Ministers had felt confident enough, with the economy booming, to raise the housing delivery target in the Gateway from 120,000 to 160,000 homes by 2016 (DCLG, 2006b). Yet by the end of the Labour government Ministers had become far more cautious: In the view of Shahid Malik, Labour's last Thames Gateway Minister;

"We cannot ignore the challenges of the economic recession and must be prepared to think innovatively about how the Thames Gateway vision can best be achieved in the years ahead... the Thames Gateway could be thought of as a 70-year journey, which we are but a fraction of the way through." (Malik, 2009)

Unfortunately for Kent Thameside the opening of the new station at Ebbsfleet in late 2007 coincided with the start of the financial crisis. Ebbsfleet's developer, Land Securities (2009), which had invested over £100 million in the site after acquiring it in 2001, was badly affected by the credit crunch. By 2009, the company had effectively suspended work on the site. Having pledged to fund highways improvements of £40 million in 2007 so that it could begin construction in Eastern Quarry, Land Securities now described the development as a 25 year project that would be rolled out gradually (Estates Gazette, 2010). As a result none of the promised homes or offices at Ebbsfleet had been started when the first services into St Pancras got underway.

Elsewhere in the Gateway, a series of transport projects were abandoned. In 2008 the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, scrapped the £70 million DLR link from Beckton to Barking and Dagenham along with the £450 million Thames Gateway Bridge plan.

Hopes that public sector investment could help to 'kick-start' development in Kent Thameside were encouraged by the DCLG's decision in early 2010 to inject £23 million into the Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme. However, such hopes proved short-lived. After the new coalition government came to power in May 2010, the DCLG's contribution was immediately suspended (HM Treasury, 2010). All central funding for Thames Gateway programmes was then cancelled in the subsequent Comprehensive Spending Review. The loss of this funding, which had been the primary source of support for most of the Gateway's local delivery vehicles, proved terminal for the Kent Thameside Regeneration Partnership, as the Delivery Board had been re-named. The partnership was wound up in April 2011 after failing to identify any replacement funding from the local authorities or developers in Kent Thameside.

The demise of the local delivery vehicles and many of the other regional and sub-regional partnerships and agencies created in the Gateway under Labour had been signalled prior to the election when David Cameron vowed to roll back "the growth of the quango state" (Cameron, 2009). The new Thames Gateway Minister, Bob Neill, confirmed the government's determination to curb the influence of central government and encourage localism:

"We do believe the best way forward is to hand over the reins to local people. Decisions about the Thames Gateway shouldn't be taken in Whitehall. They should be taken in the area, by the people who know the area." (Neill, 2010)

The 'glue', Neill said, would be the new Thames Gateway Strategic Group, composed of local authority and business leaders. The Group would replace "the plethora of bodies we've had up to now." Neill made it clear that the government wouldn't be "issuing more blueprints from Whitehall (or) setting targets" for the Gateway. The target driven culture supported by direct grants from Whitehall would be replaced by an incentives based system that rewarded local authorities for success in attracting investment and overseeing economic and housing growth.

Local Enterprise Partnerships for Kent, Essex and East Sussex and the London Thames Gateway were also created to provide business and civic leaders with a forum to promote private sector growth (BIS, 2010). Local authorities would also be able to finance capital projects by borrowing against their future tax revenues through 'Tax Increment Financing' vehicles. Under this model, local authorities or other agencies would be allowed to raise money upfront for infrastructure projects by offering investors a share of the extra business rates generated by new development.

The Conservative controlled Kent County Council welcomed the new agenda with its "pragmatic localist solutions" (Carter, 2010). But ultimately the experiment with localism was short-lived. Local authorities proved unable to find local solutions to the development impasse and in the summer of 2012 Ministers intervened once again in a bid to unlock development. Amid growing criticism of its failure at national level "to invest for growth" (Eaton, 2012), the government announced a new infrastructure deal to enable a limited amount of development to take place in Eastern Quarry. As well as agreeing to bring forward improvements to key road junctions, Ministers announced that Land Securities' upfront contribution to the revived Strategic Transport Programme was to be cut from £40 million to £25 million. In return the company made a commitment to deliver 1,500 new homes in Eastern Quarry by 2020 (DCLG, 2012). It was solution, a government spokesman claimed, that was made possible because of Ministers' preparedness "to bang heads together" at local level (Walmsley, 2012).

News in Autumn 2012 that a private developer was in negotiations to build 'Paramount World', a £2 billion theme park on Swanscombe Peninsula, provided local regeneration partners with some further cause for optimism (Peck, 2012). Whether these announcements represent a watershed moment in the history of Kent Thameside, or another false dawn, remains to be seen.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the evolution of the Kent Thameside and wider Thames Gateway regeneration policy agenda over the last thirty years. It has found that while the scale and pace of delivery demanded by Ministers has fluctuated in line with the economy, the same concerns about the adequacy of the infrastructure and social regeneration programmes planned for the Gateway have been consistently articulated. Even when government spending and private investment in the Gateway were at their peak in the years following the launch of the Sustainable Communities Plan, commentators were sceptical as to whether the scale of the resources available matched the scale of Ministers' ambitions for the area.

The Thames Gateway has been seen by Ministers as an opportunity to provide London with the homes and workers it needs to sustain its status as a global city. It has also been viewed, however, as a means to deliver the homes, jobs, skills and services needed to regenerate the South east's most deprived region and as a potential exemplar of sustainable development. Yet few commentators have been convinced that the property led development model followed since the Thames Gateway first emerged is capable of meeting such a demanding, and at times contradictory set of objectives. While there have been some undoubted successes, such as the creation of a high speed rail link and the 2012 Olympic developments at Stratford, many of the Gateway's key brownfield regeneration sites remain mired in a morass of intractable planning, financial and infrastructural problems. The Gateway has also been hampered by the lack of a clear, consistent development vision or identity. A physically, socially and economically heterogeneous region with no obvious centre, the Gateway has proven to be a difficult entity to define. It also boasts few obvious regeneration success stories or iconic developments capable of stoking the interest of a sceptical media and public.

This chapter has also explored the way in which the governance of Kent Thameside and the wider Thames Gateway has evolved over the years and looked at the interaction between competing local, regional and national policy priorities. Inevitably, one finds that in many cases the local policy discourse has been shaped by national priorities while local preferences have had to be put to one side in order to accommodate the wishes of national politicians. Westminster's pressing political need in the mid 2000s to accelerate housing delivery in the Gateway, for example, led to the marginalisation of Kent Thameside's social regeneration plans and its commercial development goals for Ebbsfleet. In this sense Turok's (2009) observation that the government's regeneration plans for the Gateway have often obscured local regeneration priorities holds true.

Yet, this chapter has also found examples of circumstances in which local regeneration partners have succeeded in influencing national policy on the Thames Gateway. In the mid 1990s the Kent Thameside Association used its political connections and resources to influence the shape of the Thames Gateway Planning Framework and to ensure that Ebbsfleet was selected as the location of the new international station on the channel tunnel rail link. One finds at this point a blurring of traditional boundaries between the public and private sector and local and national government with Blue Circle instrumental in driving forward Kent Thameside's regeneration policy and a key Ministerial adviser employed by local regeneration partners to define the shape and form of Kent Thameside's new developments. It is a potent example of the fluid, multi-level and multi-partner neo-liberal governance described by Jessop (1990).

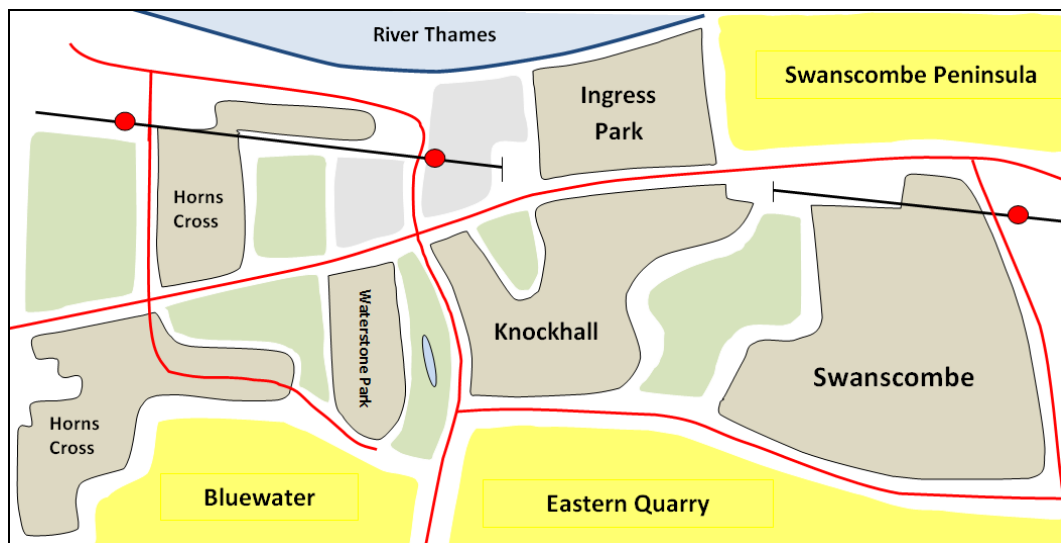
However, the most notable characteristic of the governance of the Thames Gateway, and certainly the one which has attracted the most comment, is its complexity and fluidity. This had made it difficult to provide the consistent, co-ordinated regeneration vision that the Gateway requires (NAO, 2007). The plethora of overlapping delivery agencies created in the aftermath of the Communities Plan in 2003 led to confusion and strategic uncertainty within the Gateway. Yet the decision of the coalition government in 2010 to sweep away the different tiers of governance and abolish local delivery agencies has created a policy vacuum in Gateway and made it difficult to co-ordinate delivery across local authority boundaries. This governance quandary has stymied the Thames Gateway regeneration agenda and reduced confidence in its delivery potential.

Chapter 5 Mapping the Communities

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of the key social, economic and spatial characteristics of the three existing communities and the two new developments examined in this study, Swanscombe, Knockhall, Horns Cross, Ingress Park and Waterstone Park (see Map 5.1).

Map 5.1 Swanscombe, Knockhall, Horns Cross, Ingress Park and Waterstone Park



Source: Bryan Jones (2014)

Using data from the UK Census (ONS, 2011, 2001; OPCS, 1991, 1981, 1971) this chapter will examine the ways in which the existing communities have changed over the last forty years following the decline of Kent Thameside's traditional industries. It will highlight the growing occupational, class and ethnic heterogeneity of the three communities and examine the impact this has had on their housing stock, environment and infrastructure. However, it will also draw attention to the social and economic legacy of the three communities' industrial past. While the cement and paper mills of Kent Thameside have long since gone, traces of an economy that was once dominated by semi and unskilled manual occupations can still be found in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross. The spatial character of Ingress Park and Waterstone Park and the types of people who have moved into these communities will also be considered in this chapter.

This chapter will begin with a discussion of Kent Thameside's industrial past and its impact on the communities examined in this study. It will then move on to examine the social,

economic and spatial character of each of the five existing and new communities before concluding with a summary of their key characteristics.

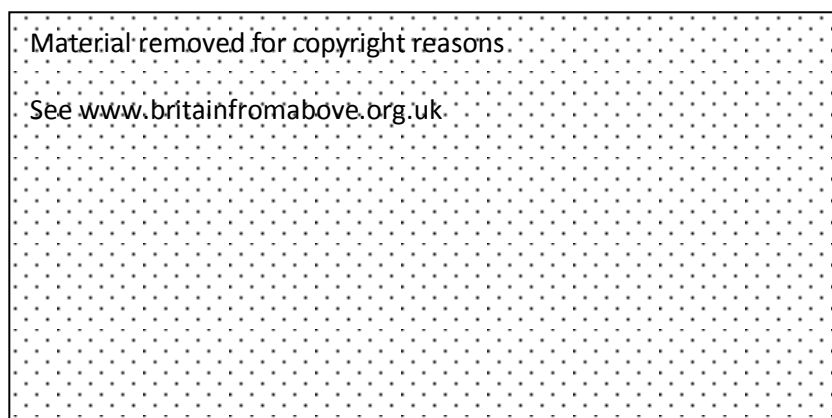
5.2 The extent of Kent Thameside's cement and paper making industries

Sixty years ago, as Britain continued its recovery from six years of war, much of the new housing and offices being built across the country were being produced with cement from the kilns of Kent Thameside. Two fifths of the cement produced in the UK, and over two thirds of the chalk used to make it, came from a narrow estuarine strip on either side of the Thames between Dartford and Gravesham and Purfleet and Grays (Beaver, 1944). One quarry in Swanscombe was producing over a million tonnes of chalk a year alone. Kent Thameside in particular, the Geographical Journal noted, had a set of physical attributes that made it unusually well suited for the production of cement (Beaver, 1944, 177).

“In north Kent, the cement companies control some 5500 acres of land, and the expansion of Stone, Greenhithe, Swanscombe, and Northfleet is almost impossible. Yet there is no denying that Thames-side is the most suitable locality in all England for the cement industry. The chalk lies adjacent to the river bank, river mud or London clay is easily available for mixing with chalk, private wharves exist for the import of coal and the export of cement, and the London market is on the doorstep.”

By the mid 1950s, cement production, which at the turn of the century had been based in over a dozen plants in Kent Thameside, had been restricted to four major plants: Kent's Works in Stone, Johnson's of Greenhithe, White's of Swanscombe - the largest in the country in the interwar period - and Bevan's of Northfleet (see map 5.1). The four plants, all of them run by ACPM, the producer of Blue Circle cement, employed 2,720 workers and were the biggest employer in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross (Coleman, 1954).

Picture 5.1 Johnson's Work in Greenhithe and behind it Kent Works in Stone in 1938



Picture 5.2 The New Northfleet Paper Mill and White's Works in Swanscombe in 1932



Another important post war employer in Kent Thameside was the paper industry. The Empire Paper Mill, which had been set up in 1906 on a site next to Ingress Abbey to produce wallpaper, recruited many of its workers from Knockhall. The company had even built its own housing estate in Knockhall Road to house the workers it had imported from Lancashire. The Imperial Paper Mill, which processed pulp into newsprint for the Daily Mirror, Bowater's Paper Mill, the New Northfleet Paper Mill and British Vegetable Parchment also employed many of Swanscombe and Knockhall's residents (see map 5.2).

Map 5.2 The cement plants, paper mills and chalk quarries of Kent Thameside



● Cement Plants ● Paper Mills □ Chalk quarries

Source: © Google (2009)

The activities of the cement and paper industries during this post war period left a conspicuous impression on the landscape and environment of Kent Thameside (see picture 5.3). Writing in the 1950s, Coleman (1954) observed that:

“Stone, Greenhithe and Knockhall are no more than a narrow industrial ribbon, virtually dependent on a single industry, but where paper begins to rival cement, Swanscombe and Northfleet thrust broad nuclei into the countryside..... The immediate scene betrays ubiquitous legacies from past generations of cement manufacturing - row upon row of uninspired nineteenth century dwellings made even more repellent by a stale coating of dust, great factory agglomerations and above all pits. Truly, the freshly gashed landscape of extractive industry is raw and harsh.”

Picture 5.3 Eastern Quarry south of Knockhall in 1953



By the mid 1960s, with demand for cement still booming, the four Kent Thameside cement plants were producing over 2.5 million tonnes of cement a year; or 15 per cent of UK output (see table 5.1). Optimistic that demand would continue to expand, Blue Circle drew up ambitious plans to open a vast new plant in Northfleet that would be among the most technologically advanced in Europe. The company's plants in Greenhithe and Stone and the old plant in Northfleet were to be closed as part of the review, but overall cement production in Kent Thameside would continue to rise. In the short-term the company's confidence proved well founded. In 1970, the year the new Northfleet plant opened, UK production hit an all time high of 20 million tonnes and Blue Circle emerged as the world's largest cement producer. The company's demand for labour too was undiminished: in the early 1970s over 1,800 people were employed at the Northfleet works, either directly or through Blue Circle's contractors.

Table 5.1 Kent Thameside cement production 1966-2006

Plant	Cement production (in tonnes) (Clear, 2006)			
	1966	1987	2006	Plant closed
Stone Plant	105,000	0	0	1971
Greenhithe Plant	290,000	0	0	1972
Swanscombe Plant	370,000	200,000	0	1990
Northfleet Plant	1,880,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	2008
Kent Thameside total production	2,645,000	1,200,000	1,000,000	
Kent Thameside proportion of UK total production	15%	9%	6%	

However, the oil shock of 1973 put paid to both the post-war surge in cement demand and Blue Circle's pre-eminence. Demand tumbled throughout the 70s and early 80s, and UK production fell to just 13 million tonnes in 1984. Blue Circle's board responded to these tougher market conditions by conducting a radical overhaul of its working practices. Between 1985 and 1991, the company's 'integrated working programme', carried out in the face of fierce Union opposition in many plants, slashed labour costs and workforce numbers - mainly through voluntary redundancies - but managed to maintain production at the same level. By the turn of the 1990s, a UK workforce of just over 2,000 staff was producing the same output as Blue Circle's mid 1980s workforce of just under 10,000 staff (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2002). In Kent Thameside, almost 200 jobs were lost when the Swanscombe Plant closed in 1990 after 150 years of continuous operation, while the workforce at Northfleet was reduced to a fraction of its size in the early 70s.

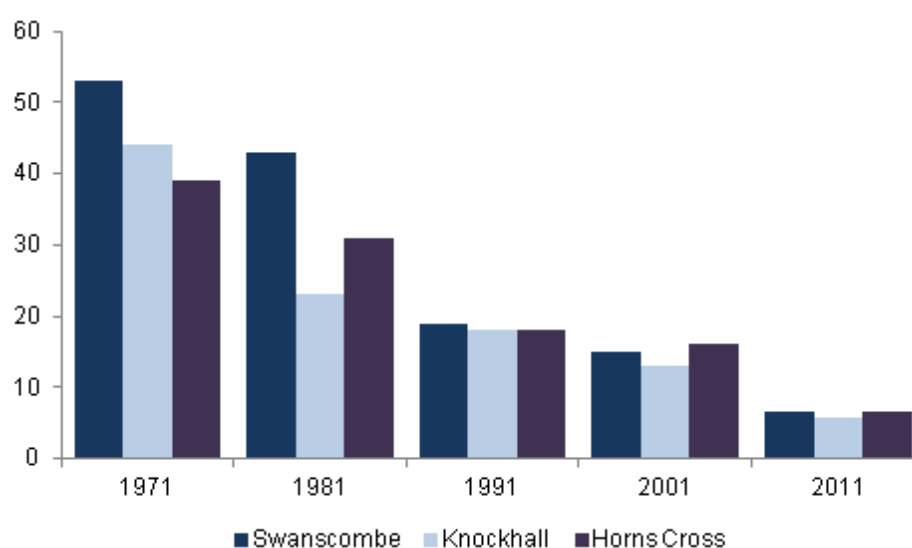
The cement industry experienced a brief fluorescence in the late 1980s due largely to major infrastructure projects such as the new Dartford River Crossing, the Channel Tunnel and the building boom in the City of London and the Docklands. However, the recession of the early 1990s coupled with growing competition from cheaper European imports forced Blue Circle into further cutbacks and redundancies. In 1992, plans to shed another 200 jobs at the Northfleet Plant were announced along with the closure of one of the plant's kilns and the mothballing of another. Although some of this capacity was restored at Northfleet in the mid 1990s, when plans to build Bluewater Shopping Centre were confirmed, the plant's future appeared precarious due to an acute shortage of available chalk deposits. The plant remained open for another decade, sustained primarily by the construction of the new high speed channel tunnel rail link, but it eventually closed in 2008, a few years after Blue Circle

had been taken over by the French group, Lafarge. By the time of its closure the Northfleet Plant employed just 240 people: less than a tenth of Blue Circle's total workforce in Kent Thameside in 1950s.

The paper making industry of Kent Thameside also felt the effect of stronger international competition from lower price producers. The New Northfleet Mill closed in the 1970s and the Imperial Paper Mill closed shortly afterwards in 1981 after a period of sustained redundancies. The Empire Paper Mill struggled on until the 1990s but was eventually closed in 1993 after its Norwegian owners failed to turn its fortunes around. By the millennium the only paper mill still in existence was the Bowater's Mill in Northfleet which had become part of the Kimberly Clark group.

As a result of these plant and mill closures and the gradual contraction of the cement and paper making workforce unemployment rose steadily in Kent Thameside in the 1980s. In 1991 unemployment hit 13 per cent in Swanscombe having stood at just 5 per cent in 1971. Joblessness among men in the Galley Hill area of Swanscombe was even higher; exceeding 15 per cent in 1991. Unemployment fell over the next decade as new retail and construction jobs became available at Bluewater and distribution and warehouse jobs were created at Crossways Business Park in Stone. Yet, the manufacturing sector of the local economy, which had been responsible for half of all jobs in Swanscombe in 1971, never recovered. By 2011 only around 6 per cent of the workforce in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross were still employed in manufacturing jobs (figure 5.1)

Figure 5.1 Proportion of jobs in the manufacturing sector in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross 1971-2011



5.3 Kent Thameside's industrial legacy

When asked to describe their community, a number of residents interviewed for this study chose to liken them to the old mining communities of South Wales. Villages like Swanscombe may only have been twenty miles from the heart of London, but they had the same insularity and community spirit, they argued, that one still found in the mining villages in the remote, isolated valleys of South Wales.

Decades of occupational homogeneity created by the dominance of the cement and paper making industries had helped, they said, to build kinship and social networks that were as strong and resilient as those that one might find in these Welsh valleys. The working lives of the people, usually men, who used to work in the chalk quarries, cement plants and paper mills of Kent Thameside also closely resembled the lives of those who worked in coal mining. Not only was the work physically arduous and sometimes dangerous, they said, but it generated a strong sense of solidarity and identity that survived the closure of the quarries and mills. As one Swanscombe resident said:

"I always likened Swanscombe to an old mining community and all those old ideas still permeate the community. When I first started playing football in Swanscombe, four or five of the team had 'made in Swanscombe' tattooed across their backs – and that's a tattoo that they still have done. Generally there is a sense of community and cohesiveness that is still there." (BFI)

The sense of residual solidarity described here is also highlighted in the literature examining the social identity of other small, spatially distinct post-industrial communities that were reliant on one or two industries (Bostyn, Wight, 1987; Warwick, Littlejohn, 1992; Waddington, Critcher, Dicks, Parry, 2001). In their study of former coal mining communities in South Yorkshire Warwick and Littlejohn (1992) found that the culture associated with traditional industries is able to survive for several generations after the industries and social institutions associated with them have disappeared. The "gregarious sociability of the old pit villages is still remembered and enjoyed in contemporary pubs and clubs", Warwick and Littlejohn found (1992, 131), and their villages' mining identity is still celebrated in everyday conversation. Waddington et al (2001), meanwhile, have argued that many former mining communities worked hard to preserve previous standards of family and community life following the demise of the pits: the post industrial identity of these communities is characterised as much by processes of social and cultural continuity, they claim, as it is by processes of social change and economic dislocation.

The tension highlighted by Waddington between an industrial past dominated by a select number of local employers and a more diverse post-industrial future is also in evidence in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross. The villages are no longer as occupationally homogeneous as they were during the heyday of Blue Circle cement and the paper making industry. Like many former coal mining communities, they have been obliged, as we will see later in this chapter, to embrace a more eclectic set of occupations and have also become home to a more heterogeneous population, many of whom have no family connection with the old industries.

Yet, while Horns Cross, and to a lesser extent Knockhall, have become absorbed into the residential suburban hinterland of Dartford, Swanscombe still retains the look and feel of a mining community. Not only has it kept the narrow terraced Victorian and Edwardian streets and social clubs and facilities once funded by the cement industry, it remains just as physically isolated as it was half a century ago. It is surrounded to the south, north and east by deep quarries and is accessible by road and rail only via a few remaining narrow chalk ridges. Moreover, memories of the old cement and paper industries also still run deep in all three villages. Many older residents who started work in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s began their working lives in the mills, plants and quarries of Kent Thameside while many of their parents worked solely for Blue Circle or one of the paper mills. As three residents interviewed for this study said:

“Talk to people in their eighties here and they’ll all talk about Blue Circle. Everyone knew what was happening there then. Take my wife. Her father worked for Blue Circle, her mother worked for Blue Circle, she worked for Blue Circle and I worked for Blue Circle too.” (RFO)

“I worked down in Eastern Quarry when I was younger on the mill gang. ...I was at the Kent Works for 20 years before I was transferred up there though. ...My father worked for 51 years for Blue Circle, I worked there, my brother worked there...suppose it runs sort of in the family.” (KBA)

“When I started work in 1961 the day after Boxing Day on the Northfleet Paper Mill, I was 15. My father also worked in the paper mill, apart from the war years, from the 1920s until he retired in the 1970s. It was always called industrial North Kent in them days. You had Northfleet Paper Mill, Kent Craft, British Vegetable Parchment, Imperial Paper Mill, Johnsons, Whites, Bevins and Empire Paper Mill.” (WBA)

The strong sense of identity and place that residents derived from working in the cement and paper mills and quarries of industrial north Kent has not diminished over the years. In fact, many former industrial workers have clung on ever more tightly to these memories over the years as north Kent's iconic industries have been replaced by generic service based industries and more and more of the workforce have begun to commute to London. However, any notion of nostalgia for this industrial past and the identity and social cohesion it engendered is tempered by their recollection of the environmental damage caused by the cement industry in particular. The industries provided residents with a living and a way of life but it came at a cost. As three residents recalled:

"Greenhithe in the past (had) its cement industry...and its people had to put up with a lot of dust, noise and the rest of it. When my wife first came here all we had was houses, a few shops in the high street surrounded by industry and nothing else."
(DBL)

"We were always covered in dust from the cement factories. We seemed to be under a constant dust cloud from something or another" (RFA)

"For years the community had to put up with all the dust from Blue Circle" (PMA)

The continued presence of this industrial past in the collective memory of existing residents has important implications for the regeneration of Kent Thameside. It has had a clear influence on the priorities for regeneration of many older residents who experienced industrial North Kent at first hand. Having grown up in a polluted and despoiled landscape many older residents now place a high premium on protecting the remaining green spaces and woodland areas in the vicinity of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Stone. For them the regeneration of Kent Thameside should be seen as an opportunity to enhance the area's natural environment in recompense to those existing residents who invested their working lives in the cement and paper making industries and tolerated the pollution and noise they generated. As two residents commented:

"I'd love to see that little bit of woodland given back to us - which was an ancient woodland. People from miles around used to come to it. They said that they were just going to dig the chalk out and put it back. That should have been stopped." (SWO)

"There are benefits that were promised to us years ago when it was all signed. You know the nice tree lined avenues up here; promises that everything would be spick and span....We're the ones who've been putting the money in for the last 50 years." (RFA)

This testimony highlights the fact that the key brownfield regeneration sites in Kent Thameside are not blank canvasses devoid of any cultural or historical meaning. As Raco and Henderson (2006) state these sites are rich in significance for many existing residents due to their previous uses. This significance is perhaps greatest for those residents who worked there or witnessed their previous uses, but they also have significance to their relatives and friends and also to new residents who are seeking to establish a connection to the area. Like the mining communities of South Yorkshire or South Wales, the industrial past of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross continues to exert a powerful influence on the present. It is important, therefore, that the regeneration partners understand how these sites were once used and how they are viewed today by the existing community while planning their redevelopment.

5.4 An overview of Swanscombe

Swanscombe is the largest of the three existing communities examined in this study. After a period of contraction in the 1970s and 1980s as its industrial base shrank, its population has grown steadily over the last twenty years and now stands at around 7,500. It is orientated around a core of late Victorian and Edwardian two to three bedroom terraces that were built for the employees of the cement and paper industries (see picture 5.4 and appendix eleven)

Picture 5.4 A traditional terraced street in Swanscombe in 2012



Source: © Google (2012)

This historic terraced core was substantially enlarged during the inter war and post war periods by the addition of terraces, low rise flats and semi-detached houses in the west and south of the village (see picture 5.5). A small estate of more modern housing with some detached housing was built after the millennium in the north west of the village on the site of a former chalk quarry. Yet in 2011 almost half of Swanscombe's housing stock still consisted of terraced housing while detached housing accounted for fewer than 1 in 20 homes.

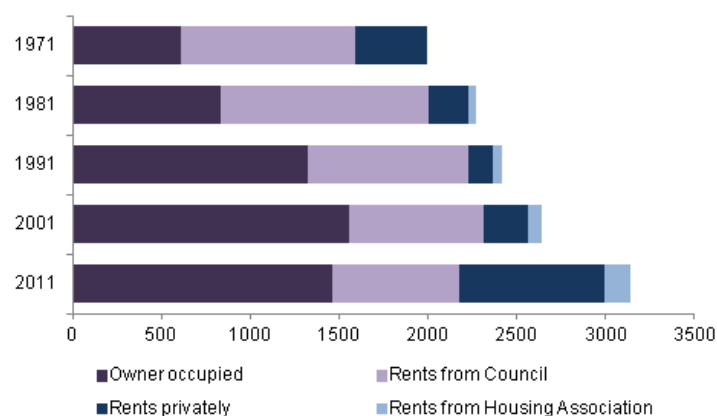
Picture 5.5 An inter-war terraced street in Swanscombe in 2012



Source: © Google (2012)

In the last decade the tenure profile of Swanscombe has changed substantially (see figure 5.2). In 2001, fewer than 1 in 10 of houses in the village were privately rented. By 2011, however, this figure had risen to 1 in 4 of Swanscombe's housing stock. It appears that the proximity of the new Ebbsfleet Station and Bluewater to Swanscombe, coupled with the relatively low average cost of housing in Swanscombe, has encouraged a significant growth in the buy to let market. Over the last ten years the average property price in Swanscombe has been consistently lower, despite the regeneration of Ebbsfleet, than the average property price in both the South East and England as a whole. In 2010, the average price in Swanscombe was £159,000 – some £50,000 less than the average price in the South east (Right Move, 2011).

Figure 5.2 The housing tenure profile of Swanscombe 1971-2011



This change in Swanscombe's tenure profile has coincided with a dramatic increase in the proportion of residents from non White British backgrounds. In 2001, Swanscombe was

almost exclusively composed of White British residents. Yet ten years later almost 1 in 6 residents were from non White British backgrounds. The largest contingents among this non White British population are Eastern European and Black African residents. Many of these Black African families have migrated eastwards from Lewisham, Greenwich and Bexley in search of larger and more affordable housing. Kent's selective secondary education system, which has provided Kent Thameside with six grammar schools, is another undoubted attraction. This out-migration of minority groups into areas outside of London previously dominated by White British families mirrors a trend that is occurring in the Essex and Thurrock parts of the Thames Gateway (Watt, 2009; Butler, Hamnett, 2011).

The growth in the private rental market has also been accompanied by an increase in the village's population turnover, particularly among younger residents, according a senior GP at Swanscombe Health Centre, who was interviewed for this study.

"You've a number of fairly cheapish starter homes and the people who come in don't see this in any way as their ultimate destination. They'll stay a couple of years and then move on. You can see that in the practice profile. Our practice size is about 10,500 and we've probably got a flow of maybe 100 to 200 patients every month; so there's quite a rapid turnover and it tends to be at the younger end."

One of Swanscombe's older long-term residents, who was interviewed for this study, also commented on the growing population turnover in the village's old terraced streets.

"People are moving in and out so fast now, we don't really get the chance to get to know them. This particular area has changed, with so many being sold for development and letting. People might stay for only six months before moving on."

Another notable change in the last decade in Swanscombe in the last ten years is the increase in the proportion of people working in managerial and professional occupations. This figure rose from 1 in 5 residents in 2001 to 1 in 4 residents in 2011, although it remains much lower than the national average. Many of these professional residents are concentrated in the new estate in the north west of the village (see picture 5.6). However it is also likely that some younger professionals, attracted by the village's modest rental and purchase prices and its rail connections to London, are moving into Swanscombe's older terraces (see appendix ten for details of property prices in Swanscombe). The Mosaic geo-demographic profiling system (Experian, 2010) also highlights this change. Mosaic suggests that Swanscombe now contains a number of 'New Homemaker' households: a category that

includes young people on middle incomes in a secure job in a large private or public sector organisation who often rent flats or small starter homes in areas of brownfield regeneration.

Picture 5.6 A modern housing estate in Swanscombe in 2012



Source: Bryan Jones (2012)

Yet despite this change Swanscombe remains a recognisably white, low skilled, working class community. Even in 2011 the proportion of residents without qualifications far outstripped the proportion of residents with degree level qualifications (see figure 5.3 and appendix twelve).

Figure 5.3 The qualifications profile of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross 2001-2011



In contrast, in the Thames Gateway as a whole there is now parity in the proportions of people with a degree level qualification and those without a qualification. The occupations held by Swanscombe residents reflect this skills profile. In 2011 more than 1 in 3 residents worked in semi-routine or routine occupations and almost 1 in 10 of the workforce was unemployed: both figures are appreciably higher than the national and Thames Gateway

average. The retail and wholesale industry, which accounted for 1 in 5 jobs in Swanscombe in 2011, is now the most popular occupation sector in the village.

This is in part a legacy of Swanscombe's industrial past. Until the 1970s it was possible to leave school at 16 with few or any qualifications and to get a job immediately in the cement or paper making industry. As a consequence the community placed a relatively low value on the attainment of formal educational qualifications. This culture is still in evidence today. The headteacher of Swanscombe's non-selective secondary school, who was interviewed for this study, identified the historic culture of low educational and professional aspirations, as the community's greatest challenge.

"There's a poverty of self-aspiration at times, rather than financial poverty. One of my biggest battles is the level of literacy that the students come in here with. I think that in Year 7 we have 60 per cent of students who have a reading age that is below their chronological age. That's quite a demand..... What I want to do is to say hang on a minute education can have a value too - because people here have had a more than reasonable life based on the local chalk pits and the work that Blue Circle has done. Swanscombe has been well served by the industries around it, but things are rapidly changing and it has to adjust." (NJO)

Data from Mosaic tends to confirm this picture. The most common Mosaic groups in Swanscombe are 'Ex-council community', 'Industrial Heritage' and 'Terraced Melting Pot' households. Mosaic describes Ex-council community neighbourhoods as being populated by people "who are practical and enterprising, rather than well-educated, who have created a comfortable lifestyle for themselves through their own hard work" and live on pleasant well-built council estates" (Experian 2010, 11). Industrial Heritage people, meanwhile, are "traditional and conservative, living in communities that historically have been dependent on mines, mills and assembly plants for their livelihood" while Terraced Melting Pot people are described as being young, poorly educated and employed in relatively menial, routine occupations (Experian 2010, 11-13).

The shops and community facilities in Swanscombe are also consistent with this white, working class identity. The village's much depleted high street contains an array of hair and tanning salons, bookmakers, tattoo parlours, fast food shops and a medium sized Co-op food store (see picture 5.7). A members only social club, which is popular among Swanscombe's thriving football, cricket and bowls teams, is located adjacent to the high

street. The only visible sign in the high street of a change in Swanscombe's socio-economic identity is the recent addition of two estate agents.

Picture 5.7 Swanscombe High Street in 2012



Source: © Google (2012)

The high proportion of council housing in Swanscombe is another indication of the village's residual working class identity. In 2011, almost 1 in 4 houses in Swanscombe were rented from the council, compared to around 1 in 10 houses in the Thames Gateway and just in 1 in 11 houses in England as a whole. This substantial council housing stock, which accounts for 1 in 6 of all council homes in Dartford, is a legacy of a major post war building programme undertaken by Swanscombe's former Urban District Council before it was absorbed into Dartford Borough Council in the mid 1970s.

This building programme, much of which was funded through the tax income the Labour controlled Urban District Council received from Blue Circle, ensured that by 1981 over half of Swanscombe's housing stock was council owned. Many of Swanscombe's council housing tenants are former employees of Blue Circle and the paper industry who have lived in the same house for decades and who have never wanted or never been able to exercise their right to buy. Yet Swanscombe's council housing also now contains families who come from across Dartford Borough and have no previous family or work connection with the village. As we shall see in chapter six, this is a source of resentment for some of Swanscombe's long-term, indigenous residents.

The emergence of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association as the main political force in Swanscombe is due in part to the lingering sense of injustice felt by the village's indigenous community about the loss of its Urban District Council and its political independence. The Residents Association, which is dominated by long-term Swanscombe

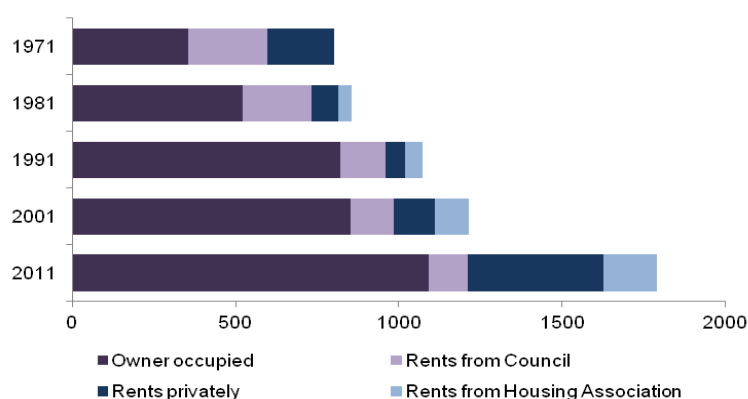
residents, now controls the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council and represents the village on Dartford Borough and Kent County Councils. In low turnout local elections it has succeeded in mobilising its membership far more effectively than the Labour Party which controlled the village for several generations up until the 1980s. Its success is testimony, as chapter six will demonstrate, to the continued strength of the identity and sense of exceptionalism forged during the village's industrial past.

5.5 An overview of Knockhall

Knockhall is an appreciably smaller community than Swanscombe. Although its population has grown steadily in the last twenty years to just over 4,000 in 2011, it remains only around half the size as its neighbour Swanscombe to the east. Like Swanscombe, its core consists of late Victorian and Edwardian terraces built to house the workers of the cement and paper industries and inter war and post war terraces and semi-detached houses (see appendix eleven). However, Knockhall experienced significantly more development in the 1980s and 1990s than its neighbour. These new estates of detached and semi-detached houses in the south of the village had a marked impact on Knockhall's population and scale. The village also includes some substantial mid Victorian villas built for the burgeoning middle class of North Kent which pre-date the arrival of the cement and paper industry. As a result, Knockhall's industrial past is less readily identifiable as it is in Swanscombe.

There are also important differences between the housing tenure profile of Knockhall and Swanscombe (see figure 5.4). The owner occupied sector has always been significantly larger than the council rented sector in Knockhall. Even in 1981 two thirds of the housing was owner occupied and fewer than 1 in 4 houses were rented from the council. As a result Knockhall experienced an earlier influx than Swanscombe of people brought up outside the community who have no personal connections with the cement or paper making industries.

Figure 5.4 The tenure profile of Knockhall 1971-2011



In the 1980s and 1990s, Knockhall's relatively low property prices and its proximity to Greenhithe station made it an attractive location for many younger couples looking to buy their first home (see appendix ten for details of property prices in Knockhall). According to one long-term Knockhall resident interviewed for this study this influx has had a noticeable impact on the character of the community.

"We now have more professional, upwardly mobile people moving in and that's bringing money into the area. They're changing that sense of insularity, because they're no familiar with that history and they're living for the now. If you think of Knockhall, we've got new housing up the top, but even the old housing is changing. As the older people have died or moved into nursing homes, younger people have moved in and they've modernised." (RBA)

This influx of new residents continued in the 2000s as Knockhall experienced the same sharp growth in its private rented market as Swanscombe. Most of these rented properties are flats, either in converted Victorian houses (see picture 5.8) or purpose built flats built in the last thirty years. Indeed, flats are now the most common property type in Knockhall. In 2011, they accounted for 4 in 10 properties in the village compared to 3 in 10 properties only a decade earlier.

Picture 5.8 Converted mid Victorian villas in Knockhall in 2012



Source: Bryan Jones (2012)

This change in the population of Knockhall over the last thirty years has altered the occupational and educational profile of the village. While there is still a significant white, working class community in the village composed of relatively low skilled people who have lived in the area for most of their lives, they no longer represent the majority of Knockhall's population. Knockhall now contains a similar proportion of Eastern European and Black

African residents to Swanscombe and it is also now home to a large population of professionals with degree level qualifications. In 2011, almost 1 in 4 Knockhall residents had degree level qualifications while fewer than 1 in 5 residents had no formal qualifications (see figure 5.3). The proportion of residents working in managerial and professional roles also now outnumbers the proportion working in routine and semi-routine occupations. More than 1 in 3 residents are managers or professionals while only 1 in 4 residents are engaged in routine or semi-routine activities – figures which are the same as the national average. Furthermore, only around 1 in 20 Knockhall residents were unemployed in 2011, a rate almost half that of Swanscombe.

The data from Mosaic confirms this change in Knockhall's occupational and educational profile (Experian, 2010). As well as the 'Industrial Heritage', Terraced Melting Pot', 'Ex-council Community' and 'New Homemaker' households that one finds in Swanscombe, Knockhall is also home to some 'Suburban Mindset' households. These are industrious, married individuals who work in city office jobs and live in the kind of semi-detached house which is found in the southern part of Knockhall. While they work hard, they also value their independence, Mosaic states, and do not often get involved in their local community.

As we will see in chapter six, many of these new professional residents do not see themselves living in Knockhall for more than a few years. For them it is a convenient and affordable stepping stone on the way to a larger family house further out into Kent. Most have limited family and social connections in Knockhall and when at home rarely venture far into the community. They are much more likely to use the shops and restaurants in nearby Bluewater, which can be reached on foot in twenty minutes, than they are to visit one of the handful of pubs or social clubs in Knockhall. These local pubs and clubs, such as the British Legion Club and the Ingress Tavern, remain bastions of Knockhall's white, working class community.

Apart from its pubs and social clubs, Knockhall has few other community facilities. It has no shops, other than two convenience stores and a small post office, and has limited sports facilities (see picture 5.9). The focus of the community, if it can be said to have one, is its primary school, which, as chapter six will demonstrate, is one of the few places that brings together existing working class families and the professional middle class residents of Knockhall and Ingress Park.

Picture 5.9 A terraced street and shop in Knockhall in 2012



Source: © Google (2012)

While this relative dearth of local facilities does not exercise Knockhall's professional residents, it is a significant issue for many of the village's longer term residents. A frequent complaint, which is discussed in chapter six, is that Knockhall has not received its fair share of resources when compared to Swanscombe. They argue that Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council, in particular, which is led by Swanscombe residents, tends to privilege the needs of Swanscombe over those of Knockhall. Although Swanscombe is larger and faces more significant deprivation related issues than Knockhall, the palpable lack of investment in Knockhall's community infrastructure in the last twenty years, lends this complaint a certain credibility.

5.6 An overview of Horns Cross

With a population of around 3,500 Horns Cross is the smallest of the three existing communities examined in this study. It is also split between two historic cores and as such is the least spatially coherent of the three villages. At its northern end close to the Thames and Stone Crossing station are the Edwardian terraces of Charles Street which were created to serve the workers of the Kent cement works (see picture 5.10) and some terraces and town houses built in the 1960s and 1970s near St Mary's Church. At its southern end, near London Road, is a more eclectic mix of inter war and post war terraces and semi detached houses, substantial detached bungalows and terraces and flats built in the 1980s and 1990s. The two poles were only connected in the 1990s by a large development of flats built on land once owned by Johnsons cement works (see picture 5.11 and appendix eleven).

Picture 5.10 Charles Street in 2012



Source: © Google (2012)

This lack of spatial coherence or any obvious centre means that Horns Cross is not as immediately recognisable as a single, discrete community as Swanscombe and Knockhall are. Its residents are as likely to see their immediate locale as a peripheral part of Stone to the west or Greenhithe village to the north east next the Thames as they are to describe themselves as residents of Horns Cross. Moreover the residents in Charles Street in the north are likely to have relatively little engagement with the residents of Hayes Road or Morgan Drive to the south. The only environment in which the disparate parts of the community might encounter each other is the Co-op food store, the post office or the pubs in London Road. In truth, Horns Cross can be more accurately described as a part of the extended suburban hinterland of Dartford to the west than as a discrete community in its own right.

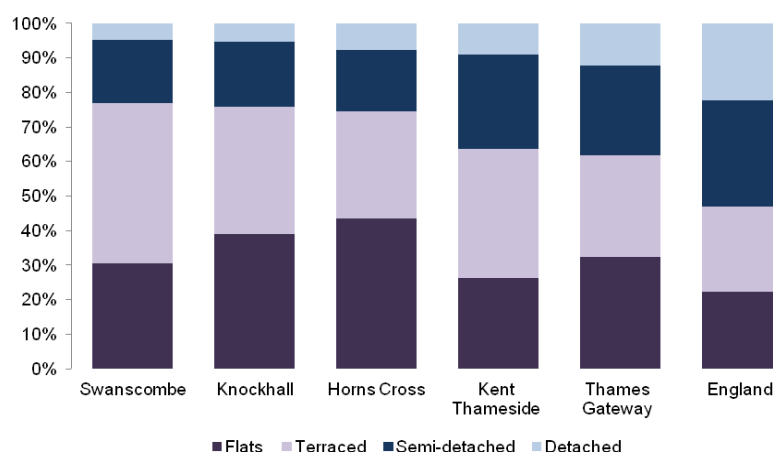
Picture 5.11 Flats built in the 1990s in Horns Cross in 2012



Source: © Google (2012)

Much of Horns Cross today is a transient, dormitory settlement composed of young single men or women or childless couples who live in privately rented flats such as those seen in picture 5.11. In 2011, flats made up almost half of the housing stock in Horns Cross, a figure which far outstrips the average proportion of flats in Kent Thameside, the Thames Gateway or in England (see figure 5.5) and 1 in 3 Horns Cross properties were privately rented (see figure 5.6).

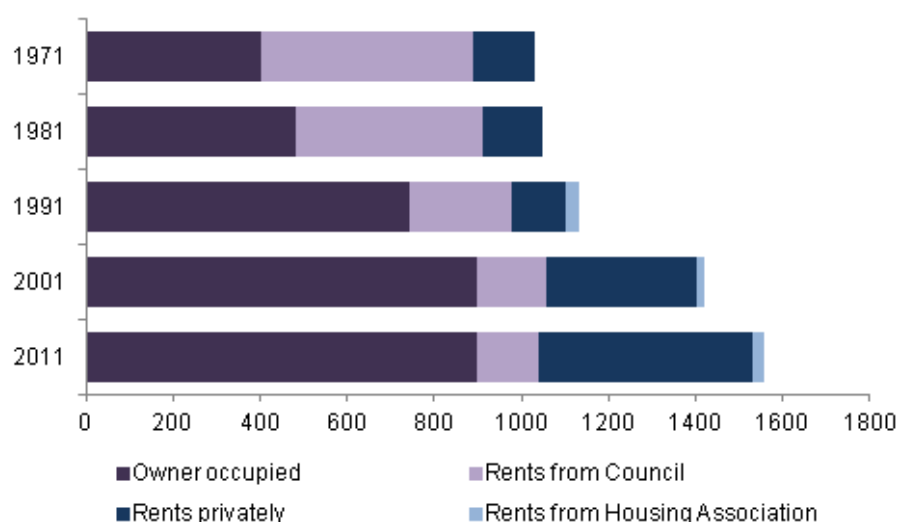
Figure 5.5 The property type profile of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross in 2011



The occupants of these flats are educated to GCSE or A Level standard - the proportion of Horns Cross residents with level 2 and 3 qualifications exceeds the national average - and they often work in intermediate, non professional, white collar service sector occupations. Crossways Business Park to the north of Horns Cross, whose offices are occupied in the main by the back office administrative and technical arms of national financial, legal and construction companies, is a prime example of the type of place where Horns Cross residents work. Over 1 in 6 Horns Cross residents work in these intermediate occupations compared to just 1 in 10 in the country as a whole.

Unsurprisingly, the Mosaic data for Horns Cross shows that the community is dominated by transient 'New Homemaker' households. This category consists of young people on middle incomes in secure white collar jobs who often rent flats or small starter homes in areas of brownfield regeneration (Experian, 2010).

Figure 5.6 The tenure profile of Horns Cross in 2011



Horns Cross does still contain some older white, working class residents who have lived in the area for all of their lives but they now represent a far smaller proportion of the population than they did thirty years ago. In 2011, only 1 in 11 people in Horns Cross were aged over 65, a figure which is half the national average and only marginally larger than the proportion of Eastern European residents living in the community. Moreover, only around 1 in 6 Horns Cross residents had no formal qualifications (see figure 5.3).

Of all the existing communities examined in this study, therefore, Horns Cross is one with the least connection with Kent Thameside's industrial past. It now houses a predominantly young, affluent, reasonably well educated and above all transient population which is not bound by any strong social or emotional ties to the immediate area.

5.7 An overview of Ingress Park

Ingress Park is the largest of the new developments that have been created to date as part of the Kent Thameside regeneration programme. Built in the last decade, it stands on the site of the former Empire Paper Mill and a Merchant Navy College. The estate, which stretches from the eastern border of Greenhithe village to the edge of Swanscombe Peninsula in the west and from the Thames to London Road in the south, contains around 1,000 houses.

Compared to Knockhall, Swanscombe and Horns Cross it is an expensive place to live. In 2007/08, a three to four bedroom terraced house in Ingress cost between £350,000 and £400,000: approximately double the cost of an average terrace house in Knockhall a few hundred metres away (Right Move, 2011). It has been marketed primarily as an estate for

high income, professional households who work in London and this is reflected in the data from the 2011 census. More than 1 in 3 residents in the Ingress Park area have degree level qualifications and over half work in managerial or professional occupations – a proportion which is dramatically higher than in all three existing communities to the south.

The age profile of Ingress Park also differs from the existing communities. The archetypal Ingress Park resident has an established career, is married or in a long-term relationship and is aged between 35 and 54. Around half of these career couples, who account for almost half the estate's population, will have children of school age or younger. The proportion of residents aged 16 to 24 or over 65, meanwhile is well below the national average. In short, it is an estate that predominantly attracts mid career professionals who are looking for a modern, well appointed house in easy reach of London. The fact that Ingress Park has no shops or community facilities of its own suggests that these residents are more interested in the quality and location of the house than they are in finding an area with a strong, well functioning community.

The Mosaic data for Ingress Park, which shows the development to be dominated by 'Careers and Kids' households, is consistent with this picture. These people are "well-educated and established in a technical, junior or middle management career, in which they benefit from the prospect of future career development" (Experian, 2010, 10). Their lives are focused on "the needs of their growing children and the creation of a comfortable home" which is usually located in well-equipped, if not spacious, purpose built family housing on the outer edge of a town. Their life outside of work is dominated by the car with family trips to modern out of town retail centres such as Bluewater to shop, eat and go to the cinema being a popular leisure activity.

The character and appearance of Ingress Park, a topic which will be examined in detail in chapter seven, is also quite different from that of its neighbours. It is a high density development with few detached houses built around Ingress Park, an early nineteenth century mansion which is now occupied by a private business. It is mainly composed of terraces and townhouses constructed, according to the developer, in a 'local vernacular' style that apes the clapboarded villages of the Kentish countryside (see picture 5.12). However, it also contains a large number of riverside flats (see picture 5.13). Unsurprisingly, the overwhelming majority of houses on the estate, around 7 in every 10, are owner occupied. Yet there is also a sizeable private rented market on Ingress Park, particularly in flats, and around 1 in 10 houses are rented from housing associations.

Picture 5.12 Terraces and townhouses in Ingress Park in 2012



Source: Bryan Jones (2012)

Picture 5.13 Riverside flats in Ingress Park in 2012



Source: Bryan Jones (2012)

Despite the attempt to mimic the appearance of a Kent village, Ingress Park cannot be said to have a village feel to it. It is largely empty by day and at weekends and is geared towards the time poor lifestyle of the well paid commuter with its easy access to Greenhithe station, Bluewater and the A2. Like Horns Cross, it is firmly orientated within the social and economic orbit of greater London and feels largely disconnected from industrial and cultural heritage of Kent Thameside.

5.8 An overview of Waterstone Park

Waterstone Park, a development of 650 homes built in the last decade, is located to the south west of Ingress Park on the site of former Blue Circle research facility. Horns Cross lies to its west, separated a land-filled chalk quarry, and Knockhall lies to its west on the other side of a shallow vale. To its north lies London Road while Bluewater is situated immediately to the south beneath a steep chalk cliff.

While property values at Waterstone Park are not quite on a par with Ingress Park - the estate does not have the same sweeping views of the Thames for which Ingress residents pay a premium - the residents of the two estates are very similar in many respects. Like Ingress Park, 1 in 3 residents have degree level qualifications and just over half work in managerial or professional occupations. The estate also attracts the same mid career professionals in the 35 to 54 age bracket as Ingress Park and is dominated by the same 'Careers and Kids' Mosaic households (Experian, 2010). Almost half of Waterstone Park residents are in the 35 to 54 age group while only 1 in 20 residents are over the age of 65. Evidently, it is not a place where people come in order to retire.

However, there are some slight differences in the tenure and property profile of Waterstone Park and Ingress Park. Waterstone Park is built at a lower density and has more detached houses. It also has a larger proportion of shared ownership housing and homes rented from housing associations. As a result only 6 in 10 houses at Waterstone Park are owner occupied.

Nonetheless, the design and character of Waterstone Park is, as we will see in chapter seven, much the same as Ingress Park. One finds the same architectural contrast between the traditionally designed, locally inspired, terraces and semi-detached houses built in the estate's first phase part of the estate, and more modern, streamlined flats built in a later phase (see pictures 5.14 and 5.15). The estate also has the same dearth of community facilities and is equally as quiet during the day. Like Ingress Park it is apparent that the estate is built for professional households for whom convenient road and rail links and a modern house that is easy to maintain are of more value than a strong and well functioning local community that is well endowed with facilities and services.

Picture 5.14 Traditionally inspired townhouses at Waterstone Park in 2012



Source: © Google (2012)

Picture 5.15 Modern flats at Waterstone Park in 2012



Source: Bryan Jones (2012)

5.9 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the key social, economic and spatial characteristics of Swanscombe, Knockhall, Horns Cross and Ingress Park and Waterstone Park. It has also looked at the industrial history of Kent Thameside and examined the impact of its legacy on the area's existing communities.

It is apparent that while villages like Swanscombe have lost the industries that lent them their distinctive industrial character, the fierce sense of place and clan loyalty felt by the workers of 'industrial north Kent' has not gone away. The regeneration priorities articulated by these former industrial workers today are heavily influenced by the memories and emotional legacy of this past. Yet, it is equally clear that all three existing communities are in the throes of a

significant social change. New residents are moving into these communities as a result of the area's improved transport links, modest property prices and the growth of the private rental market. Many of these new residents will move on within a few months or years as their income and savings grow. Consequently, the residual white, low skilled working class population of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross is becoming appreciably less dominant. Although Swanscombe is still a recognisably white working class community, Knockhall is now far more mixed while Horns Cross has largely become a dormitory settlement for young allied professionals and administrators. These changes mean that the population of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross is becoming better educated, more occupationally diverse and also more ethnically diverse.

The growing socio-economic diversity of Kent Thameside's existing communities identified in this chapter will be discussed further in the next chapter which sets out the profiles of the four residents' groups revealed as a result of the fieldwork undertaken for this study.

Chapter 6 A typology of the residents of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross

6.1 Introduction

A key aim of this study is to reveal the range of views about regeneration present within the three existing communities examined in this study and in doing so to challenge the tendency of policymakers at local and national level to regard the existing community as a single, undifferentiated entity (Paton, 2012).

The typology of residents which is set out in this chapter is a product of this aim. It was designed, as discussed in chapter three, in order to test two key ideas. The first is that the existing community contains a diverse range of perspectives on regeneration and that one cannot reduce the community's opinion to one broadly consistent perspective. The second is that the extent of residents' emotional commitment to Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross has an important influence on their attitudes to regeneration.

These ideas were partially examined in chapter five which considers the impact of Kent Thameside's industrial past on the worldview of the existing residents who lived through this past and explores the social and economic character of the three existing communities. The residents' typology set out here further underlines the growing social and economic diversity of these communities revealed in chapter five. It also highlights the diversity and complexity of existing residents' views on regeneration and suggests that their emotional stake in their community does indeed have an important bearing on these views.

Four discrete groups of residents were revealed as a result of the thematic analysis of the interview data with existing residents, namely: Just passing through; Guardian of the Flame; Community Crusaders; and Happy Families. This chapter will set out the profiles of these four groups in turn and will also consider the extent to which they match the Mosaic classification ascribed to the members of each group. It will conclude with a discussion of the key lessons that we can draw from this typology and the degree to which it is able to confirm our two key hypotheses.

A table with details of the members of each residents group and their socio-economic backgrounds appears in appendix eight.

6.2 Group A: Just passing through

6.2.1 Introduction

This group of residents is predominantly composed of young couples in their late twenties or thirties who have moved out of Greater London in a bid to get on the property ladder. Educated to degree level or A level standard they hold down responsible middle ranking service sector jobs in the City of London or Docklands or work in the public sector as primary or secondary teachers or civil servants. They are usually either childless or have only recently started a family. Although they account for only a small proportion of the overall population of the area at present this group has grown rapidly in size over the last decade.

These residents tend to live either in modern terraces on small, infill developments of conventional design built in the last twenty years or in traditional pre 1919 terraces. When these interviews were conducted in 2007/08 residents in this group were also more likely to be found in Knockhall and to a lesser extent in Horns Cross than in Swanscombe. This was due in part to the faster and more frequent rail services into London at the time from Greenhithe compared to Swanscombe. Knockhall's greater proximity to Bluewater Shopping Centre may also have given the village an edge over Swanscombe in these residents' eyes.

This section will look in detail at these residents' reasons for moving to Kent Thameside and the factors that influenced their choice of home. It will then go on to consider the extent of their engagement with the local community before exploring their attitudes to new development in Kent Thameside.

This group has been identified on the basis of the interview testimony of five residents living in Knockhall. Unsurprisingly, four of these residents are in the 'New Homemakers' Mosaic group, which as we saw in chapter five, consists of young people on middle incomes in secure jobs in large private or public sector organisations who often rent flats or small starter homes in areas of brownfield regeneration (Experian, 2010). The other resident, who lives in a slightly larger modern terrace, features in the 'Careers and Kids' Mosaic group which is the most common group in Ingress Park and Waterstone Park.

6.2.2 Reasons for moving to Kent Thameside

These residents were attracted to Kent Thameside principally by the relative affordability of its housing and their assumption that prices would rise more sharply compared to the regional average in the short to medium term because of the so-called 'Ebbsfleet effect'.

“I guess a lot of people will move out from London and set up here. We’ve been thinking about moving out a bit further but the thing that’s keeping us here to be honest is the Ebbsfleet development. It’ll probably mean that house prices will go up.”
(NTI)

For these residents space was as important as price. Finding a house in a quiet area with well-proportioned rooms, a garden and a parking space was of paramount importance to them. Many of them considered moving to the more vogueish Thameside developments such as Ingress Park and Waterstone Park but were put off by the premium charged for living there; the density of the layout; and the size of the housing. They prefer developments that resemble the lower density suburban communities in which many of them grew up. These communities, with their large gardens, generous living space and clear demarcations between properties, represent the ideal to which they aspire. They want good neighbours but they also value their privacy and their personal space.

“The thing about Waterstone Park is that they really pack the houses in to what is quite a tight site - I don’t know if they’re going to do the same over here at Eastern Quarry. Some of the houses, we went over to have a look, and I think I’d have to duck to get in some of them.” (ABR)

“I was interested in Ingress Park and it seems to be reasonably well built, but quite crowded in though. It’s a good place to build: I wouldn’t live that close to a river, but there you go.” (TCA)

“Ingress Park: we were actually toying between moving there and here. We looked at the houses that were on offer there and we looked at the houses that were on offer here – and the ones here were almost, not literally, half price, so that’s why we moved here”. (NTI)

6.2.3 Community engagement

In most cases contact between this group and the community around them is minimal. They commute to work and spend their limited leisure time socialising with an existing network of friends and family - few of whom live in the immediate area. They do not envisage staying in the area for more than a few years and consequently have no real motivation to invest time in strengthening their ties with the community. This is something they feel can wait until their next move further out into Kent once they start a family or their children begin school.

“Hopefully house prices will go up. It’s an investment. We thought we’d get our own house here and then move on.” (SHA)

“The people that live here have lived here for a long time so I know my neighbours for four doors either way. On a good summer’s day there can be four or five families outside talking to each other – and you don’t get that in London. The downside is that it’s not London which is why I tend to socialise in London rather than here.” (TCA)

“I’m quite happy here but if I was to move it would probably be further out into Kent”. (GST)

Consequently their expectations of the community or the agencies responsible for its management or governance are fairly low. They are frustrated by the amount of traffic on the roads and they wish the trains they use to commute to London could be less busy. If pressed they may pass a comment about the council’s recycling or waste collection performance – which is probably the only service that they are conscious of the council delivering – but that is usually all.

“I’d say the recycling is quite good; that’s Dartford Council isn’t it? It’s good to be able to recycle everything into the same box. To be honest I don’t have a lot of contact with the council really.” (SHA)

“It’s a great place to live. My only reservation is the traffic” (NTI)

“When I moved here 3 years ago there was hardly anyone getting on the trains. It’s virtually doubled in 3 years and sometimes you’re fighting to get a seat.” (ABR)

Their daily lives are also played out within a narrower geographic area than long-term residents. They don’t use the local pubs, shops or leisure facilities to the same extent as residents who have been brought up in the area and who have constructed their social life and identity around them. Their ‘community’ may not extend, in fact, beyond the few neighbours on either side of them with whom they are on nodding or first name terms. Lack of motivation or time may partly explain this reluctance to broaden their local horizons but they also worry about the response they’ll receive from an unknown and unfamiliar group of people.

“I’ve got really good neighbours here: It’s a little community that I’m really happy to come home to. Whether I feel safe to walk along the road at night I’m not sure to be

honest. I like the fact that it's a bit out of the way but with Bluewater – a mini Oxford Street – just down there.” (NTI)

“Around here there is a choice of about three pubs of which one is not very friendly shall we say. You have to go into Bluewater or South East London if you want to go out in the evening.” (TCA)

Trips out locally for these residents tend to begin and end with Bluewater; a safe, neutral, impersonal environment in which everyone is a stranger but which operates according to a set of familiar and readily comprehensible rules and regulations. The only other local facilities in which they take any interest are gyms and sports clubs. Typically though, they prefer to use private sector gyms outside of the immediate area rather than more local council funded facilities.

“We did go to Cygnets down the road (Town Council funded), but we now go to Next Generation in Dartford, which is much nicer, really much nicer, even though you have to pay for it.” (SHA)

“We used to be members of the fitness place at the Hilton hotel down by the Dartford Crossing. I don't know of anywhere in Greenhithe.” (NTI)

6.2.4 Attitudes towards the new developments

The attitude of this group towards new development in Kent Thameside is not straightforward. On the one hand they are enthusiastic about the opportunities that Ebbsfleet will bring to the area – many of them cite it in fact as one of the main motivations behind their move to the area. However, they tend to be less sanguine about the level of house building taking place in Kent Thameside. They express concerns about the pressure this will bring to bear on the local infrastructure; even though they are conscious that as recent arrivals they could be considered to be part of the problem.

“I am quite pleased about the regeneration going on in the area, but at the same time I am worried about the extra people; the extra cars; the extra pollution. I have heard about (Eastern Quarry), but I suppose I've been trying to block it out really and pretend it's not going to happen. It does concern me about the number of houses being built there. Everything around here is quite green at the moment but it's not going to look like that in five years time.” (SHA)

“Virtually every week I’d say down by Greenhithe station, there’s this thing - I don’t know what it is - that takes the sewage out of the sewers. My mate who’s a plumber says it’s because the sewers can’t cope with all the people in the area.” (ABR)

One resident is more ambivalent about new development; noting that;

“If the south-east is, unfortunately, the powerhouse of the UK economy, then people have got to live somewhere: If it’s housing down in Eastern Quarry then fine”. (TCA)

This passing nod towards the need for greater housing equity is unique among this group. However, even he has qualms about the impact this development is going to have on his own lifestyle:

“(I am) concerned about Greenhithe becoming overcrowded; I’ve seen its population double since I’ve been here”. (TCA)

The views of these residents show a clear tension between their support for the *principle* of regeneration and their concern about *practical implications* of regeneration. They welcome the extra investment but not the additional people, the competition for services and the perceived loss of green space that it will entail.

6.3 Group B: Guardians of the flame

6.3.1 Introduction

This group of residents, all of whom were born, schooled, married and, whenever possible, employed in Swanscombe, have a deep attachment to their village and the industrial and political institutions that built it. They are usually of pensionable age, or just below, and are married or widowers. They live either in local authority or ex-local authority accommodation and in most cases have lived in the same house ever since they first married. Some are asset rich having bought their house cheaply under the right to buy legislation, but most are relatively cash poor after working for most of their lives in low-paid, manual professions. Many of the men will have spent at least some of their lives working in the cement industry around Swanscombe while the women tend to have worked as cleaners, caterers, or in basic administrative posts in between long breaks looking after their children. The majority of people in this group possess no formal qualifications and in 2007/08 many received some form of financial assistance from the state such as the Pension Credit, Jobseekers Allowance or Incapacity Benefit. Although large in number and still a strident voice within the

community, this group is declining in size with each passing year as fewer residents who experienced Swanscombe's industrial past remain alive.

People with similar backgrounds and employment histories as this group of Swanscombe residents - and an equally strong sense of attachment to place - can of course be found in both Knockhall and Horns Cross. It is the contrasting status of the three communities in the local administrative hierarchy that sets them apart. Whereas Knockhall and Horns Cross, as administrative satellites of Greenhithe, Swanscombe and Stone, have struggled to assert their own identity as distinct communities, Swanscombe has always fiercely defended its political and administrative independence. An independent urban district until the mid 1970s when it was absorbed - after much protest - into Dartford, Swanscombe has since managed to claw back some vestige of its lost status through an active Town Council. This sense of fierce independence is imbued in this group of Swanscombe residents: many of them were once tenants of Swanscombe Urban District Council and today they look back with conspicuous pride on the days when the village controlled its own affairs.

Swanscombe's physical isolation from its neighbours has also perhaps accentuated this sense of separateness and desire for self-sufficiency. While other communities in Kent Thameside have gradually morphed into one another over the last century, Swanscombe is surrounded on all sides by chalk pits and cement plants: only the rail line and a few roads built on the last remaining chalk ridges connect the village with its neighbours. Unlike the other communities Swanscombe is not a place that blends easily into the existing urban grain.

This section will examine these residents' perceptions of Swanscombe today. It will then go on to look at their relationship with the authorities responsible for the governance of the community before exploring their attitudes to new development in Kent Thameside.

This group has been identified on the basis of the interview testimony of seven residents living in Swanscombe. These residents are split between three Mosaic groups: 'Industrial Heritage', 'Terraced Melting Pot' and 'Claimant Cultures' (Experian, 2010). While there are some income differences between these groups, with Claimant Culture households finding it more difficult to make ends meet than Industrial Heritage households, the educational and occupational backgrounds of the three groups are consistent with the profile of Group B set out above. All three groups consist of people with few formal qualifications who work, or worked, in routine, semi skilled or unskilled occupations such as those provided by the cement and paper industries of Kent Thameside.

6.3.2 Perceptions of Swanscombe today

This group's vision of what Swanscombe is, or ought to be, is tinged with nostalgia for the time when the village governed itself and the 'combine'² was in its heyday. They guard this memory jealously and a sense of bitterness about what Swanscombe has lost since then is never far from the surface. Some express an almost visceral antipathy towards the village's modern incarnation; an attitude that sits awkwardly alongside their reverence for the community in which they grew up. To them the community has become dirty, run-down and uncared for. They also regret the loss of the shops and services that were once the most potent symbol of Swanscombe's social as well as economic health.

In their eyes this decline is due primarily due to an influx of damaged, unsocialised outsiders, many of whom have been allocated social housing in Swanscombe by the borough council in Dartford that replaced their 'own' urban district council. They view this deterioration therefore as an exogenous process: one that has been driven by forces that they believe, or want to believe, are beyond their control. These interlopers, as they see them, are people that haven't been subject to the same stabilising institutions - such as marriage and the paternalistic 'combine' - that once helped to control and structure the lives of "old Swanscombe people" like them.

"It's been neglected, it's run-down. We're having people move to Swanscombe who are in my opinion low-life; I don't know why. You really feel ashamed to say that you live here anymore. This was a beautiful place years ago. I've good neighbours thank God; but they're all old Swanscombe people." (SWO)

"I think that it is gradually getting run down. All the shops are disappearing – if it wasn't for the Co-op we wouldn't have anything. The rowdiness at night is on the increase. It's got worse as it's got bigger." (DTR)

"It used to be a nice place when I was younger. You've had a lot of Londoners move in.... and a lot of riff-raff from Dartford – which has brought the place right down." (SPA)

"I like the place but it's altered. You get all the drop outs from Dartford sent down here. You couldn't wish for a better place when we first moved in here. They had all

² The 'combine' is a local short-hand term for the Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers Ltd which was formed in 1900 and its subsidiary the British Portland Cement Manufacturers Ltd formed in 1911 which were dominated by North Kent producers. The company was eventually re-branded as Blue Circle in the 1970s.

big families, but you never had them out here playing football, they all went down the park. We've now had our window broke, and our flower beds kicked up." (KBA)

"We've got one shop left in the High Street that sells food compared to years ago when there used to be a lot of independent traders. We have lost a lot of things, with the old cement works gone. It was always called industrial North Kent in them days. You had the Cement works, Northfleet Paper Mill, Empire Paper Mill...which is now gone, with all the houses there now." (WBA)

6.3.3 Perceptions of the local authorities

The blame for Swanscombe's alleged decline is also laid by this group of residents at the feet of Dartford Borough Council and Kent County Council in Maidstone. Not only have they treated Swanscombe as a convenient repository for 'problem' families, they are also accused of stripping the community of its assets and consistently failing to listen to residents or invest in the village's infrastructure.

"We was better off when we was our own Council, than we are under Dartford. Since we've come under Dartford I think we get ignored, and money spent on Dartford...that's how it looks to the ordinary man....The local council here gets overruled by Dartford." (KBA)

"It grieves me that you could go to Dartford and everything is looked after – and we're paying more money than them! For what? What are we getting?" (SWO)

"There is a great distrust in Swanscombe of Dartford.... I don't think there has ever been any discussion about what it is we want. I don't think that we're getting a great deal." (MMU)

"My wife was on the committee to save the old school and when they went down to Maidstone it was the same old story – you can't win, can you?" (DTR)

However, the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association, which has prospered politically, as a result of the perceived failure of the main political parties to represent the interests of Swanscombe residents, also comes in for criticism. The Town Council, now controlled by the Residents Association, was accused by a number of residents, for

example, of failing to do enough to safeguard local bus services – a major issue for older residents like them without access to cars.

“My biggest grouse about Swanscombe is the buses. Up here they ignore us. You used to have the 308 and 309 up here all day. Now you’ve got the 455 to Dartford which packs up just after 2. ...My missus can’t walk anywhere at all now. The Residents Association say they’ve been on about it but nothing’s been done.” (KBA)

“The buses are bad, very bad. I can’t understand it because up this end you’ve got more older people, yet the last bus from Gravesend to here is half past two, so this end of Swanscombe is cut off after half past two. We have got onto the Residents’ bloke, but he don’t seem to want to know”. (DTR)

In many ways their disillusionment with the Residents Association was predictable. There is a fatalistic streak about this group and it can seem sometimes that they expect disappointment; or even find it fortifying. The County Council has let them down, the Borough Council has let them down, and now the Residents Association looks set to do the same now that it has become ensnared in machinery of government: they expect nothing less from those that govern them. Only the former Urban District Council, long since abolished, escapes their ire.

This ingrained fatalism also absolves them of any responsibility to try to improve the lot of the community: Trying to effect change, when even fellow residents serving on the Town Council - people who are as committed to Swanscombe as them - have tried and failed to address the village’s problems, would be pointless in their view. It is a curious paradox. On the one hand they see themselves as the heartbeat of the community and are fiercely protective of Swanscombe’s right to govern itself. Yet on the other hand they expect others to assume the mantle of leadership but nonetheless reserve the right, because of their seniority in the community, to pass judgement on any actions they take.

6.3.4 Attitudes towards new development

This group is suspicious of new development in the area and worried about the impact it will have on them and their community. One common fear is that it will remove the last traces of green space and woodland around the village and further impoverish it in terms of its community resources.

“There used to be places to walk to, but even they’re going. I’ve got a dog and I walk it up the woods, well what’s left off the woods. Or I could probably take him over the heritage park, other than that, that’s it.” (DTR)

“I’d love to see that little bit of woodland given back to us, which was an ancient woodland; people from miles around used to come to it. They said that they were just going to dig the chalk out and put it back. That should have been stopped. There’s still a little bit left but it’s all fenced off now.” (SWO)

They are also concerned about change to the character and social mix of Swanscombe now that new people are moving into the village because of the proximity of Ebbsfleet and the buoyancy of the local property market. It will create a community which is less intimate and less cohesive, they believe, with a much higher population turnover.

“Because people are moving in and out so fast now, we don’t really get the chance to get to know them.This particular area has changed, with so many being sold for development and letting. People might stay for only six months or so before moving on.” (MMU)

“We know the neighbours either side, but other than that no. Nobody’s interested these days. When we first moved in everybody spoke to each other, but now....you say good morning to someone and they just ignore you.” (KBA)

“There are lots of foreigners moving into Swanscombe now. White people, black people; they don’t speak like us. And yet your own people don’t seem to be able to get places which seems wrong to me” (SWO)

However, their greatest concern is that Swanscombe will be surrounded and cut off by new development. They are sceptical as to whether there will be any physical or infrastructural integration between the new and the old developments. Instead they see Swanscombe and new developments such as Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet as very different communities with very different residents that will inevitably have little to do with each other. Some also express resentment about the level of facilities that are due to be created in the new communities. This investment stands in stark contrast to the ‘neglect’ of Swanscombe which they feel continues to suffer from a lack of accessible community facilities.

“What I think, is that you’ve got everything going on around us, and we’re stuck in the middle if you see what I mean. So whether any of this will benefit us I don’t know.”
(DTR)

“I see Swanscombe as being surrounded by development, but there’s very little integration at all...and I don’t think the new areas would welcome any form of integration. There’s going to be Swanscombe and Eastern Quarry and each is going to have its own separate identity.” (MMU)

“At Eastern Quarry they’re going to make their own little village, schools, doctors...another small town being developed. It just shuts us off again. And we’re surrounded by these new developments, and you’ve got Swanscombe, the old town, in the middle.” (SPA)

Nonetheless, this group is not inherently opposed to development. They acknowledge that the development of Ebbsfleet International Station is likely to be a good thing for the area and they are broadly supportive of Bluewater even though it is not a place where they would choose to shop. Given the difficulties that their grandchildren face in finding a house, they also recognise the need to create some additional housing in the area; if not quite on the scale being discussed. It is their experience of regeneration to date in Kent Thameside that has fuelled their scepticism about the new development in Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet. One resident for instance refers to the failure to integrate Ingress Park into the rest of Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

“Ingress Park is a nice enough development. I think people here look at it a little bit enviously. It is a bit them and us....I don’t think it’s really been integrated. It is a dormitory area. The people there don’t really give anything to the area. They might do so within the confines of the development but not outside it.” (MMU)

The failure to incorporate Swanscombe into the new Fastrack bus network coupled with cutbacks to existing bus services within the village is seen as evidence that the regeneration partners aren’t giving Swanscombe’s needs the priority they deserve.

“They didn’t tell us when Fastrack was being set up that they were going to take some of our services away in order to pay for it. You cannot get to the hospital from here by bus, which is disgusting.” (SWO)

“My biggest bugbear is Fastrack. It cuts out Swanscombe entirely and we’ve got no feeders onto it. At the moment you can walk up to the George and Dragon and get it,

but the new route will go through the marshes, so we won't be able to get to it at all."
(MMU)

It seems therefore from this evidence that the regeneration partners have a great deal of work to do to persuade this group of residents that the regeneration of Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet is capable of providing Swanscombe with any significant, lasting, tangible benefits.

6.4 Group C: Community Crusaders

6.4.1 Introduction

Articulate, passionate and single-minded, this group of residents are community campaigners who have made it their life's work to change the face of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross.

Invariably, they are middle age professionals holding high level positions with management responsibilities usually, but not exclusively, within the public sector. They include local government officials, teachers, health officials, church ministers, engineers and business people. Although some work in London, most, particularly those in the public sector, work within North Kent; a situation which has helped to reinforce their connection to the area and enable them to develop a network of high level contacts. This group is also among a select handful of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross residents, who have been college or university educated.

Most weren't born or brought up in Swanscombe, Knockhall or Horns Cross but moved there early in their careers - often from elsewhere in North Kent or South East London - in order to get on the housing ladder. Having grown attached to the area they then decided to stay and put down roots. They all now have comfortable incomes, but the size of their home does not always reflect their salary. A few now live in substantial detached or semi-detached houses, but a number have chosen to stay in the same modest terraced houses, some of them ex-local authority, that they moved into as young professionals.

Some are members of political parties and involved in local charities. They are often shrewd judges of local politics and know how to navigate the political landscape and gain access to local power-brokers. They are also quick to exploit these political contacts when necessary in order to further a local cause. This has given them an appreciation of the rationale behind key regeneration decisions and policies relating to Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross and an insight into the personality and motives of the people responsible for making

them. Moreover; they understand the difficulties involved in making effective interventions and the obstacles that have to be overcome. They are pragmatic about what can be achieved, and realistic about the time-scales involved. However, when they feel an opportunity has been missed, or resources squandered, their criticism of those responsible is often robust.

Although this group is extremely small in size, their impact on the community has been considerable. It is for this reason that this group of residents is profiled in this chapter. This section will look first at their general perception of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross today. It will then consider their views with regard to the quality of the urban environment and the leadership provided by the local authorities in more detail. It will also briefly examine the actions they have taken themselves to promote a culture of 'active citizenship' in the three villages. Finally, it will explore their attitudes towards the new development in Kent Thameside.

This group has been identified on the basis of the testimony provided by seven residents living in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross. In this case the Mosaic Group profiles of these residents bear little relationship with the profile set out above. Given that the educational, occupational and cultural backgrounds of these residents are largely atypical of the communities in which they live, this is not surprising. The majority of these residents are notionally part of the 'Ex-council community' Mosaic group (Experian, 2010), which is characterised by low educational outcomes and routine occupations – the reverse of group C's profile. In this case, therefore, it is clear that the Mosaic classification cannot be used to confirm our group profile.

6.4.2 Perceptions of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross

This group of residents have a close interest in the cohesiveness of their communities. They are conscious that the number of residents who were born or grew up in the area is falling and they are concerned that fewer residents appear to have a social or economic stake in the three villages. In their eyes, the community is at a crossroads. While they see no reason why Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross cannot emerge as stronger communities with a clear sense of their own identity, they think there is a risk that the remaining bonds holding the community together could become further atrophied and disintegrate. They worry that the opportunity to reinvigorate the community provided by the arrival of a new set of predominantly younger, more affluent residents could be lost.

Finding a way to preserve the cohesiveness of the community is a key challenge for the villages they believe. However, they are not seeking simply to reproduce the sense of togetherness that the community had when the cement industry was the primary employer. They are conscious that the community has moved on and that a new identity needs to be forged: one that builds on the past and respects the contribution that existing residents have made to the area but also incorporates the demographic change that has occurred. This is crucial, they feel, in order to prevent the emergence of a socially fragmented and ghettoised community, split down the line between the old and the new residents.

“When I first moved here it seemed like a model place to live: Everyone knew each other; everyone looked out for one another. The neighbourliness has changed since then. There is less and less social cohesion. But I actually think it has more potential than other communities because of that historic sense of identity. I always likened it to an old mining community and funnily enough all those old ideas still permeate the community. There are still people who have ‘Made in Swanscombe’ tattooed across their backs!” (BFI)

“I moved here 18 years ago. People felt as though they were lost and being overlooked: the community had gone; the industry had gone; the shops had closed down..... Now we have more professional, upwardly mobile people moving in and that’s bringing money into the area. They’re changing that sense of insularity, because they’re not familiar with that history and they’re living for the now. ... But there needs to be a place where the different social groupings can actually interrelate so you can avoid social ghettos.” (RBA)

“I think that more could be done in terms of place making and in doing so raising the civic pride of existing local residents and giving new and existing residents an opportunity to engage with each other through that shared cultural heritage.” (GBA)

6.4.3 The quality of the urban environment

These residents believe that if the community is to move forward the quality of the urban environment needs to be improved. In their opinion a lack of investment over the years in the street-scene and basic amenities of the three communities has left much of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross in a parlous condition.

“A lot of Swanscombe looks unloved. There could be more flowers etc, more effort made to encourage householders to tidy up Where’s the money been spent? I don’t see any evidence of an improved street scene.” (BFI)

“In Knockhall the roads and paths are not being maintained to the level to which they used to be. Another thing is that vandalism – and we’ve been lucky it’s been very low up to now – is beginning to escalate.” (TWR)

“If you go back thirty years, (Horns Cross) wasn’t neglected as such but not a lot of resources went into it compared to Dartford and Gravesend. Every few years or so, the cement industry would build something to help keep people on board but that was it. But now they’ve gone there isn’t anyone to provide a helping hand.” (RFO)

In their view this neglect has damaged the community’s self-esteem; a state of mind that is being exacerbated, they argue, by the new developments. Before the new developments at Ingress Park and Waterstone Park came on the horizon, this failure to invest in the fabric of the villages was less visible. However, now that houses there are being built, and existing residents are able to see the level of resources being invested in the fabric of these new estates, the poverty of their own environment has become more apparent. In fact even some of these residents, who are worldly, confident and professionally successful, come away from new developments such as Ingress Park, feeling as though they are ‘second class citizens’.

“Swanscombe’s urban environment has to be improved. Compared to a lot of the new developments, it is very much second rate and when you go onto these new developments you come away feeling like a second class citizen.” (GBA)

“The new developments will also have an impact in terms of showing the difference in the standards of housing there and the infrastructure monies used to maintain it and the standard of Swanscombe housing. It will show Swanscombe in an even worse light I think.” (BFI)

However, it is not just the physical appearance of the villages that causes these residents concern. The provision of community facilities is also seen as wholly inadequate: This is felt especially keenly in Knockhall. Yet, there is also concern about the lack of community facilities in Ingress Park and Waterstone Park. These facilities are seen by the group as an essential prerequisite for building a more cohesive and integrated community. They believe that without these social arena, which help to anchor the community and generate a stronger

corporate identity based on shared experiences and activities, the community will struggle to flourish.

In Knockhall much of the existing community provision has been stripped away in the last twenty years according to residents living there. A former NHS clinic that also provided a home for youth club was closed down due to concerns about its asbestos content and has yet to be replaced. Knockhall's only community hall, meanwhile, is seen as woefully under-utilised. And efforts by the church to create a new community facility that will act as bridge between the new and old communities have been hampered by funding difficulties. These Knockhall residents also feel that Swanscombe has received a disproportionate share of capital funding compared to Knockhall.

"We're finding a huge demand for community facilities. We've opened three playgroups here recently and we still have to turn people away. Where else can they go in the community? There's also nowhere for teenagers to meet – even the open spaces are being reduced. And there's is no real centre to this village. Where can people meet, or bump into friends?" (RBA)

"There is a shortage of good local shops and there is a shortage of basic leisure facilities. ...I think the local councils pay lip service to Knockhall. The focus of the town council is Swanscombe and the focus of the borough council is Dartford. The resources that come into Swanscombe are very large; the resources that come into Knockhall are very small." (BKE)

"There's nothing for the young here; nothing at all for pre-school age children. When we run the youth club the council didn't do anything for us. When they knocked the clinic down and didn't give us an option to go anywhere else." (CCU)

"Any facilities that we did have are gone. More people are moving in – they're all young people who will eventually have children and so on. The church runs a mother and toddler group and it's now heaving. The other day there were 35 adults down there." (TWR)

The residents living in Swanscombe on the other hand don't appear to have the same concerns as their neighbours in Knockhall about the level of community provision within the village: a fact that adds credence to the suggestion that there is an imbalance between them in terms of resource allocation.

“Swanscombe is probably doing a lot better than Knockhall which is smaller and relatively isolated.... For a place this size the facilities in Swanscombe are pretty good. You’ve got the centre down Craylands Lane and the Swanscombe Centre, that’s got three badminton courts, an outdoor pitch and a weights room. You’ve also got football pitches at Swan Valley.” (GBA)

6.4.4 Perceptions of the local authorities

A key concern for the residents living in Swanscombe and Knockhall was the performance of Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council.

The residents in Knockhall accuse the Town Council of a deliberate bias towards Swanscombe and of ignoring the needs of Knockhall. Its indifference is summed up for one resident by the failure of the Residents’ Association to put forward any candidates at the last local elections who lived in Knockhall. He suggests that the residents’ association’s continued ascendancy owes more to the still toxic reputation of the local Labour Party in Swanscombe and Greenhithe, than it does to any inherent political qualities it may possess.

“There is a growing desire in Greenhithe for separation between Swanscombe and Greenhithe. At the last borough election not one of the six town councillors that actually got elected for Knockhall lived in Knockhall. Our problem was that for years the area was dominated by a necrotic and often corrupt Labour council. Now we have the Residents Association. They’re not corrupt but they offer poor representation to local people.” (BKE)

“I do get the sense that Knockhall is being overlooked and that the emphasis is on Swanscombe. There is this constant sense of does anyone actually care about the people who actually live here?” (RBA)

In Swanscombe, meanwhile, residents acknowledge the Town Council’s commitment to the community but have reservations about its decision-making record. One area of concern is the manner in which capital funding from the Borough Council and the Government aimed at regenerating Swanscombe has been spent. The decision to spend over a million pounds on a new building for the Town Council is seen as particularly ill-judged. Not only do they question the necessity of such a building, they feel the project has been badly managed with little thought given as to how its running costs will be financed in the long-term.

"I don't agree with the decision to build a new set of council offices in Swanscombe. I can't see the point when you should be looking at the wider spatial structure of the emerging community. It seems daft to be building something on the basis of the old when you should be looking at the new." (GBA)

"I'm not sure the new council building has helped. The problem was Dartford didn't project manage it; Swanscombe didn't project manage it, so it's half empty. People didn't think about the operational expenditure needed to run it." (BFI)

6.4.5 The need for active citizenship

Another serious challenge in this group of residents' view, one closely linked to the perceived lack of effective political leadership, is the absence of a culture of active citizenship in the community. Although there is dialogue between residents and their community leaders, in their opinion it is not a constructive one. Residents are willing to petition the local authorities on local issues and to press for better services, but they rarely play a role in identifying solutions or in implementing them. This responsibility continues to lie firmly in the hands of the small cabal of elected councillors and other influential local bodies. In this group of residents' view little has changed since the days of the 'combine' when a small clique of paternalistic industrial bosses and civic fathers ran the villages. Challenging this culture of paternalism and empowering residents to take more responsibility for the management of their community is essential they believe if the communities are to move forward.

It is a challenge that this group of residents have chosen to take on themselves. Many of them have become closely involved in activities and projects aimed at addressing perceived shortfalls in the facilities and resources available to the community³. As well as improving the level of community provision, one of the main motivations behind their work has been to try to inculcate a culture of active citizenship in the community.

Residents have been given a central role from the start for instance in delivering the Greenhithe Community Market Garden project. The project is now 'owned' by the community

³ BKE has led a project to create a Community Market Garden in Greenhithe. Until recently BFI was closely involved in the running of Swanscombe Tigers Football Club. RBA and TWR are at the forefront of plans to build a new multi-purpose community facility on land at St Mary's Church. CCU led a youth group in Knockhall until 2004. GBA is a community activist who has been a strong critic of aspects of the proposed new development in the Ebbsfleet Valley. RFO is a senior figure in the local Methodist Church.

and this has undoubtedly contributed towards its success. In Swanscombe meanwhile, residents' efforts to sustain a local football club and provide it with a permanent base in the village, are aimed at reaching out to young men and teenage boys and helping them to establish a positive identity and become more self-confident.

"I think that one of things that needs to change is the culture of paternalism where communities are told what they need rather than articulate what they need." (BKE)

"My job - with the gradual development of the Thames Gateway providing an impetus - is to bring this church into the heart of the community. If we don't create more community facilities then I can only see people's dissatisfaction with life here increasing. We want to use the church as a focal point where local people come throughout the day for all kinds of activities." (RBA)

"People say about the young people in Swanscombe that there is football and motorbikes – that's how they identify themselves. Well they can't do either. The Tigers now have 14 teams but we have to play outside the area. With so much green space around, and so much landfill, there should have been the opportunity to provide them with their own facilities." (BFI)

The projects have met with mixed success, largely due to the differing levels of buy in and financial support they've received from the local authorities and other statutory agencies. Nonetheless, they hope that their example will encourage other residents to follow their lead. At the very least they hope that it will begin to change the nature of the relationship between residents and the elected bodies serving them.

6.4.6 Perceptions of new development

This group of residents' optimism about the capacity of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross' capacity to reinvent themselves and become communities with active, politically engaged and self-confident residents stands in stark contrast to their attitude towards the new development in the area. Here their attitude is one of unalloyed pessimism.

Their criticisms of the efforts being made to integrate existing communities and developments at Ebbsfleet and Eastern Quarry are particularly stinging. They believe that meaningful integration either physical, social or economic is more or less impossible given the location and design of the new developments and the type of housing being built in them. They are also sceptical as to whether 'integration' has ever been a serious goal of the

developers. Many of the actions taken by developers on the borders between the new and old communities are seen by residents as inconsistent with the policy of closer integration.

“There’s no spatial masterplan for Swanscombe and Greenhithe taking into account Eastern Quarry, Ebbsfleet and Swanscombe Peninsula. If these places are allowed to develop as separate entities it will lead to alienation and social dislocation: Swanscombe could become a ghetto unless we’re careful. It’s not simply about providing footpath linkages, it is about making them coherent as a place with a real identity.” (GBA)

“I think that there is an unwillingness to have the oiks from the council estate in Swanscombe mixing with Eastern Quarry residents; and this will have a negative effect in terms of social cohesion. There was supposed to be all sorts of walking routes linking Swanscombe and the quarry: well the only evidence of that so far is that they have put up a metal fence in order to shield it.” (BFI)

“In my mind the way new housing developments are built creates separation. If you look at Waterstone Park, Ingress Park, they’re dead end estates; and that creates separation – them and us.” (RBA)

“I went to the pre-launch of Eastern Quarry and the developers talked about this wonderful enclosed area with easy access to the motorway. They never want to talk to people about Swanscombe, Greenhithe or Stone. If you’re an optimist you could talk about a gradual gentrification of the area; if you’re a pessimist you’d say it was a recipe for disaster.” (RFO)

The continued failure to upgrade the villages’ infrastructure is indicative, they believe, of the regeneration partners disinterest in achieving the integration of the new and existing communities. Swanscombe may have had some money directed at it in recent years, unlike Knockhall or Horns Cross, but it is not enough to correct the probable imbalance between the communities. In their view Eastern Quarry residents are unlikely to come to Swanscombe or Knockhall for any of their services as most of what they need will be provided on site. Obvious opportunities to create shared facilities, such as at the Swan Valley site, have not been exploited and the chance to link the new and the old via the Fastrack bus network has been squandered.

"I don't think that in any of the negotiations that have taken place, any regard has been paid to the existing communities. They are going to build a new school in Eastern Quarry. Yet they've just built a new private finance school in Swanscombe; which is half full. Instead of providing new football pitches in Swanscombe – as Land Securities agreed – Kent are telling them to put them in Eastern Quarry. Any bus routes coming along? No. Anyone actually investing in Swanscombe town centre? No." (BFI)

"At the moment it can seem like 'them and us', but you can prevent that by making it about 'us'. It does seem silly creating facilities on the edge of Swanscombe - the Swan Valley campus - and then keeping it on the edge of both communities when it could be at the heart of both; or certainly linking both." (RBA)

"One problem is that Swanscombe isn't going to be connected into the Fastrack network. It is difficult to get a system like Fastrack through an existing urban area with a relatively tight grained range of residential streets, but that doesn't lessen the problem. Swanscombe could end up being relatively isolated compared to the new developments." (GBA)

To this group of residents it seems unlikely that the regeneration taking place will deliver any meaningful improvements in the fabric of their communities. In their view, neither the resources nor the motivation are there to make this happen. Although some economic benefits from regeneration will filter down to existing residents, most of the benefits, in their view, will be accrued by accident rather than by design. Sheer proximity to Ebbsfleet will guarantee some gains for the community, but they could have been greater if the right foundations had been put in place from day one. In their view Kent Thameside could well come to represent an opportunity lost, rather than an opportunity gained in twenty years time.

6.5 Group D: Happy Families

6.5.1 Introduction

This group of residents is the largest of the four groups profiled in this chapter. A pragmatic, hard working group of people, with strong family and friendship networks and a dependable income, they have few complaints either about their own lives or the communities in which they live. They are not politically active or engaged and their 'voice' is

one that is rarely heard in the ongoing debate about the direction of regeneration in Kent Thameside.

These residents have lived in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross for most of their adult lives. Many were born and raised locally while the rest moved to the villages in early adulthood as a result of relationship with a local man or woman or in order to find an affordable home. They tend to be in stable long-term relationships and have either children living at home or adult children and grand-children living nearby.

In most cases, both partners are working, either both full-time, or one full-time and one part-time. However, some are now semi or fully retired. Many of the men work in skilled trade occupations such as plumbing and carpentry for local firms or national service providers with local offices. In most cases they left school at sixteen and went on to gain the necessary vocational qualifications at a local FE college while training on the job. The rest work, or worked in semi-skilled or unskilled occupations. In the past they would have found work in the cement or paper making industries. Today they often work as warehouse, machine or transport operatives or in equivalent posts for companies based at places such as Crossways Business Park or Bluewater.

Typically, the women in this group are employed locally in the retail industry or in administrative, catering or cleaning jobs in the public or private sector. However, a few women who possess Level 4/5 qualifications are working locally as education or healthcare professionals. Some women work full-time, but many work part-time to fit in with family and caring responsibilities. The exceptions are usually women with very young children or a large number of children who tend not to be in employment.

While the majority of these residents live in two to three bedroom terraces, there is a mix of tenures among the group. Many in their thirties and forties have been able to afford to obtain mortgages. However, some younger residents, faced by rising house prices in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross after the millennium have had to consider other purchasing options such as shared ownership deals. A few residents, particularly those in their fifties and sixties, are long-term local authority tenants who have not chosen to exercise their right to buy.

These residents tend to have active local social lives. Many are regular visitors to local pubs and social clubs and a few have found the time to get involved in local sports clubs or voluntary organisations such as the Scouts. In most cases their involvement in these groups has been a long-term one that began when they were children.

This section will look first at these residents' perceptions of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross before going on to consider their attitudes towards the new development taking place.

This group has been identified on the basis of the testimony provided by twenty residents living in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross. Just over half of these residents were in the Terraced Melting Pot Mosaic group (Experian, 2010), which is composed, like group D, of semi and unskilled workers with few formal qualifications. Another trait which is common to both groups is their social lives. Terraced Melting Pot residents possess strong social networks in the immediate community and spend much of their spare time, as group D do, in local pubs, clubs and restaurants. The remaining residents are split between two Mosaic groups which also consist of householders with limited qualifications who work in routine occupations: Ex-council Community and Claimant Cultures. The contrasting housing tenure status of these two Mosaic groups, with Ex-council Community predominantly composed of owner occupied households and Claimant Cultures largely consisting of social rented housing, is consistent with the broad mix of tenures present in group D.

6.5.2 Perceptions of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross

The residents in this group like living in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross. They describe the villages as friendly and close-knit places; although some of those who arrived as adults acknowledge that that they've had to work hard to become accepted by the community. Their neighbours and friends are in constant touch and can be relied upon to help out with childcare responsibilities when necessary.

"Yes it's fine here. My kids are at a good school; my wife's got her friends here.... I know Swanscombe has got a bit of a name for being a bad area, but it's not really.... A lot of the people have been here for years and years. I wouldn't say they don't welcome you here but people moving here have got to keep a bit of an open mind and join in with things. If you do that then people are quite welcoming." (PMI)

"Yes this road here is nice and quiet. Everybody gets on. The youngsters here are as good as gold. I've lived here almost all life and I'll never change. I know you've all new faces here now but all my mates are still all here." (DFR)

"The people around here are very friendly. One of our neighbours uses some interesting language when she's had a few drinks. But nothing horrible; no-one coming around knocking on your door being offensive." (EHR)

“Yeah I do like it here. There’s quite a variety of pubs. The neighbours are really friendly.... I play in the local cricket team too and it’s quite a tight knit bunch. We get on really well and most of us come from Swanscombe. After cricket we usually go down the social club at the pavilion.” (MBR)

Nonetheless there are aspects of the community which these residents would like to see improved. A key issue for them, which is unsurprising given their family circumstances, is the level of provision in the area for young people, whose needs they believe have been habitually ignored by the local authorities.

“There’s loads for the old people - the senior citizens club, the Oast House - but nothing for kids. They put Bluewater in to pep it up, but there’s not much really and we’re supposed to be the gateway to England.” (JFR)

“We need more things for teenagers to do around here I think. My son was stopped by the Police the other day and they told him to go Kings Farm in Gravesend. There are loads of things to do there, they said. But we live in Swanscombe!’ Going to Kings Farm’s not the answer.” (SNE)

They are also concerned about the level of traffic in the area, which they feel has increased sharply since the opening of Bluewater.

“When I first came to the area, it was a bit down at heel and then all of sudden with Bluewater it became an area that people want to move to. But it is a very busy area with a lot of traffic and congestion.” (KFA)

In the main, however, these residents are happy with their lives and are phlegmatic about the shortcomings of their community. After all, no community, they argue, however affluent or attractive is devoid of faults.

6.5.3 Perceptions of new development

This group of residents are equally pragmatic about the changes taking place in Kent Thameside. There is a downside as well as an upside to all new development, they say, and Kent Thameside is no exception. Rather than dwelling on the disadvantages of development, they prefer to reflect on the positives it will bring to their lives.

The jobs that Ebbsfleet and the surrounding commercial development will create will provide a benefit for the area, they believe, that overrides most of the downsides they’ll experience.

For an area which experienced such heavy unemployment in the 1980s and early 1990s, the opportunities that Ebbsfleet will create for local people are a huge boon: one not to be dismissed lightly. Moreover; there is no doubt in their minds that the residents of existing communities will be able to embrace such opportunities. After all, they say, the communities have prospered in recent years thanks to the property led development industry and the expansion of the service sector economy. The growth of these industries has given them both work; a home; and a degree of financial security.

The skilled tradesmen in this group know that the new development, as it takes shape, will always provide them with work. Those with administrative and secretarial skills are also hopeful of finding work at Ebbsfleet; an opportunity which will reduce their travel to work time and give them more at home with the family. The same is true of those residents in semi-skilled posts. They are confident that Ebbsfleet will provide work for them too, just as the opening of Crossways and Bluewater did in the previous decade.

“There’s a lot of people living here who will benefit from Ebbsfleet; people with their own businesses. There are so many guys here who are locksmiths, plumbers, carpenters.” (PMI)

“It’ll be good for jobs, definitely. I worked in Canary Wharf and the City as a secretary for ten years. I don’t want to work in Canary Wharf or have that journey up to London again, so (Ebbsfleet) will benefit me as it’s on the doorstep.” (EHR)

“I think Ebbsfleet is going to be a very good thing for this area. ...Jobs, obviously, if they employ people from the area, and they should pick up some people.” (YST)

“I think it can only do the area good in terms of jobs and in putting the area on the map and also for house prices.” (SNE)

Nonetheless, these residents were less certain as to whether existing communities could be integrated seamlessly with the new developments. While less damning in their assessment than other groups, they were nevertheless conscious of the challenges that would need to be overcome for integration to be achieved.

In their opinion, for integration to take place, considerable resources would have to be diverted into existing communities in order to upgrade their facilities and to create new shared services. Without these shared services the residents of the new developments would have no reason to venture beyond their expensive enclaves. New investment was

also important, they argued, in order to blur the boundaries between the new developments and altogether scruffier existing communities.

“The way I’d like to see it is if the whole place is not separated but joined together with something. Whatever building works do take place in the Eastern Quarry need to bring it up so that it joins onto Swanscombe.” (PMI)

“I think with Eastern Quarry... the chances are that you won’t ever need to meet up with anyone down there because they’ll have their own community sort of thing.” (SSM)

“It’s all right if they can build the roads and all the amenities so we don’t go without because other people are moving in. I think it is a few too many houses though. People won’t know each other before long.” (JFR)

This group of residents are also conscious of the significant difference in the price of housing - and also in residents’ income - between new developments like Ingress Park and the existing communities. Ingress Park is seen as a ‘nice’ development, but one which is well beyond their financial reach. It is a place for ‘businessmen’ and ‘professional types’, in their view, rather than people from their backgrounds.

“We looked at some of the ‘affordable housing’ at Ingress Park, but it was still very high. The house was still £260,000, so we would have had to have a mortgage of £130,000; and then pay rent on top of it. No-one on a low wage is going to be able to afford to move in there.” (EHR)

“We had a look at a house down in Ingress Park, but it’s very expensive and for the size of them you’re not getting a lot for your money. It’s all about the view over the river isn’t it? I think you’re only going to get businessmen buying them really.” (MBR)

“We was amazed when we walked down there to see how many houses there were snaking along the river-front. It’s a lovely development; bit out of our reach though.” (KFA)

Despite these reservations, the residents in this group do not question the principles underpinning the regeneration process. They are, by inclination, passive observers of the regeneration process who believe that it is for politicians and developers, not them, to decide where and in what manner development takes place. They see development as inevitable and beyond their control: a state of affairs they accept with equanimity and without rancour.

“Perhaps we’re better off not knowing too much about it before it happens because there’s nothing we can do about it anyway.” (JLO)

“I don’t see what difference it would have made to involve us – because it is going to happen anyway.” (SNE)

“We’re not very important in their scheme of things. When they’re moving so many thousand cubic metres of earth I suppose they’re worried about us saying ‘we’ve got a bit of dust up here’.” (EHR)

In truth, this group of residents see the regeneration of Kent Thameside as tangential to their own lives. It will, they accept, ultimately create opportunities for them, but they are not people who get unduly exercised by events and issues that don’t have an immediate, visible impact on their lives and those of their family. They are content therefore simply to watch and let matters take their course.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter has set out the profiles of the four distinct residents’ groups that have been identified using the data from interviews with residents in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross. These profiles are broadly consistent with the Mosaic group classifications of the households in these groups. The exception is Group C, which, as we have seen, consists of individuals whose social, educational and occupational backgrounds are quite atypical of the households in the streets in which they live. Nonetheless, this analysis confirms the value of geo-demographic classification systems like Mosaic as a tool for understanding the social, economic and cultural diversity present within each community. It cannot capture outliers like Group C which deviate from the mean but it is a useful device for categorising the broad socio-economic character of individual clusters of households.

The profiles presented here provide only a snapshot of the three villages. Nevertheless, they confirm the idea that Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross are complex and multi-faceted communities which resist any reductionist analysis that attempts to discern any one single ‘authentic’ community voice in relation to regeneration.

The profiles also suggest that the nature of residents’ views on regeneration is closely linked to the extent of their stake in the community. This chapter has shown that residents who are family and career focused such and those who see themselves as only temporary residents

(Groups D and A) have very different attitudes to regeneration to those are heavily involved in community life and politics and residents who have first-hand experience of the area's industrial past (Groups B and C). While the former groups are generally sanguine about regeneration, although they have some concerns about congestion and construction related disruption, the latter groups are much less content. The embattled residents of Group B, while acknowledging the need for more housing for their children and grandchildren, fear that regeneration will lead to loss of valuable amenity land and are suspicious of the motives of the regeneration partners, despite their public commitment to community engagement. The residents of Group C, meanwhile, who have strong opinions about how regeneration should be delivered, speak eloquently about the opportunities that are being missed by the regeneration professionals and the promises that have not been met.

This chapter also underlines the need to treat with caution the views of those who purport to speak for the community, or to have a privileged insight into its consciousness. This is true not just for politicians or external actors, but also for residents, however long they have lived in the community and however well immersed they are in the life of that community. Self-styled community leaders are as likely as any external agency to perhaps underestimate or downplay - not always wittingly it must be said - certain social trends that don't fit their favoured political narrative. The testimony of residents in Group D, for example, which has highlighted the resilience of certain social networks, is far from consistent with the narrative of a community in decline articulated by residents in Group B. It is also at variance with the evidence of residents in Group C, who focus on the threats to the cohesion of the community, while making their case for new investment in the social infrastructure of Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross.

An over-reliance on the testimony of the most vocal and politically active members of the community by development partners can lead to the adoption of policies that do not accurately reflect the will of the community. An illustration of this is the decision to include a plan for a 'Major Urban Park' into the design brief and planning application for the Eastern Quarry development (Dartford Borough Council, 2007b). This park, 46 acres in size, is due to be situated between the main Eastern Quarry development and Knockhall and Swanscombe to the north. It was included in the application at the behest of Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council which was anxious to replace the green space that had been lost to the community as a result of Blue Circle's quarrying activities over the last fifty years. Yet while this decision seems to reflect the wishes of vocal older residents, such as those in Group B, it is less clear whether it meets the needs of other residents. It would probably find

favour with residents in Group A, who attach a high value to green space and a quiet environment, but most of the remaining residents whose views are reported here appear to believe that physical integration of the two urban communities is more important.

Ironically, the officials at the Kent Thameside Delivery Board, in Dartford Borough Council and also Land Securities that were interviewed as part of this study, all questioned the wisdom of the urban park concept. However, they felt obliged to incorporate the park into the plans as the Town Council was in a strong position politically at the time as a result of the Resident Association's coalition with the Conservatives at Borough Council level. They also had no other channels of communication with residents that would allow them to test local support for the plan; particularly among residents - such as those in Group D – who are disinclined, as we have seen, to engage in formal consultation exercises.

It is an example that illustrates the need for developers and their public partners to build a relationship with the community that reaches beyond its most visible and voluble organisations and individuals. Time spent engaging residents across the community will often reveal multiple perspectives that may challenge existing pre-conceptions and prove difficult to reconcile; indeed it may make it harder not easier to establish a consensus as to how regeneration should proceed. Nonetheless, it is a necessary first step, if the whole community, not just a politically engaged minority, is to have a stake in the regeneration process.

Part III

The impact of Kent Thameside's social regeneration initiatives on Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross

Chapter 7 An integrated community? The relationship between Ingress Park and Waterstone Park with Knockhall and Horns Cross

7.1 Introduction

A key aim of this study is to understand the extent to which the Kent Thameside regeneration partners have been successful in promoting the integration of new and existing communities in the area.

Creating a seamless, 'integrated development' where residents use the same community facilities, mix socially and identify themselves as equal citizens of the same community is one of the regeneration partners' central regeneration objectives (Kent Thameside Association, 1997, Kent Thameside Delivery Board, 2005). Successive governments over the last twenty years, meanwhile, have also demanded an integrated approach to regeneration that places the interests of the existing community at the heart of the process.

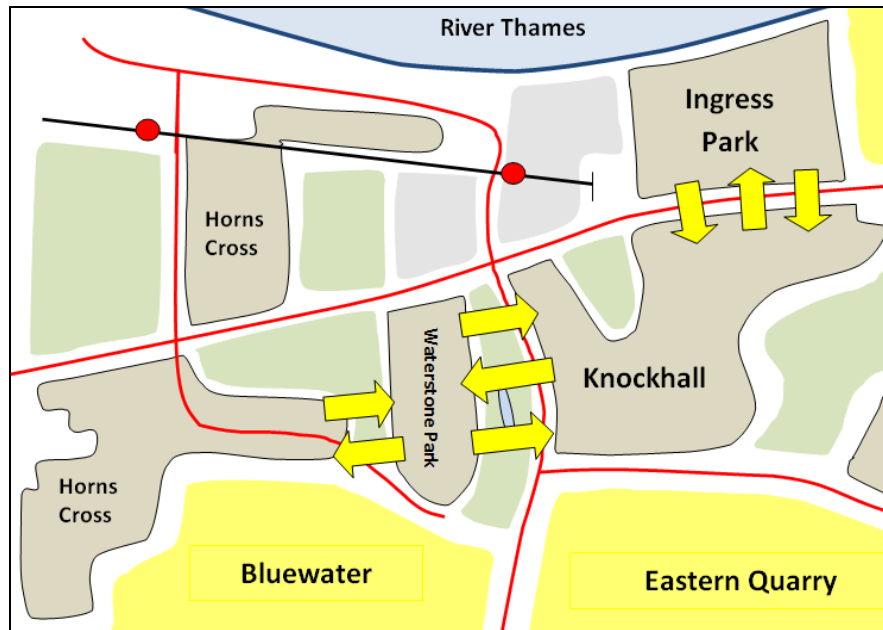
Consequently, "there is much onus on the development industry", Imrie (2009, 98) observes, to ensure that existing communities are "core" to the regeneration process. The goal of 'knitting together' new developments with existing communities is often presented, Raco and Henderson (2009) note, as an important rationale by developers and local authorities in an effort to legitimise their regeneration plans. The tacit aim behind this ambition to create a mixed community is to ensure that existing residents, particularly in the more deprived wards, are exposed to the lifestyles and worldviews of incoming residents, many of whom are highly educated and employed in the knowledge intensive industries that Kent Thameside wants to attract.

If we are to understand the extent to which integration is taking place between new and existing communities in Kent Thameside then we need to turn to Ingress Park and Waterstone Park. As the largest and most mature of the Kent Thameside developments, located adjacent to Knockhall and Horns Cross, they are well placed to help us determine whether the regeneration partners are succeeding in their bid to create a cohesive, integrated community (see map 7.1).

Ingress Park, which lies immediately to the north of Knockhall, began in 2001 and now holds just over a thousand houses. It has long been seen as one of the Thames Gateway's prestige developments. In the late 1990s planners and politicians in Kent Thameside saw Ingress, with its dramatic riverside setting, as an important opportunity to change the "derelict, chimney stack" image of the area (Llewelyn Davies, Roger Tym, 1993, Dartford Borough Council, 1995, 14). And in Crest Nicolson (2002) they had a developer which

shared this vision. For Crest, Ingress was a chance to create a visually arresting, high density development that would serve as a flagship for the company for years to come and strengthen its credentials as a socially responsible developer that is conscious of its responsibilities to existing communities (see figure 7.1).

Map 7.1 The relationship between Ingress Park, Waterstone Park, Knockhall & Horns Cross

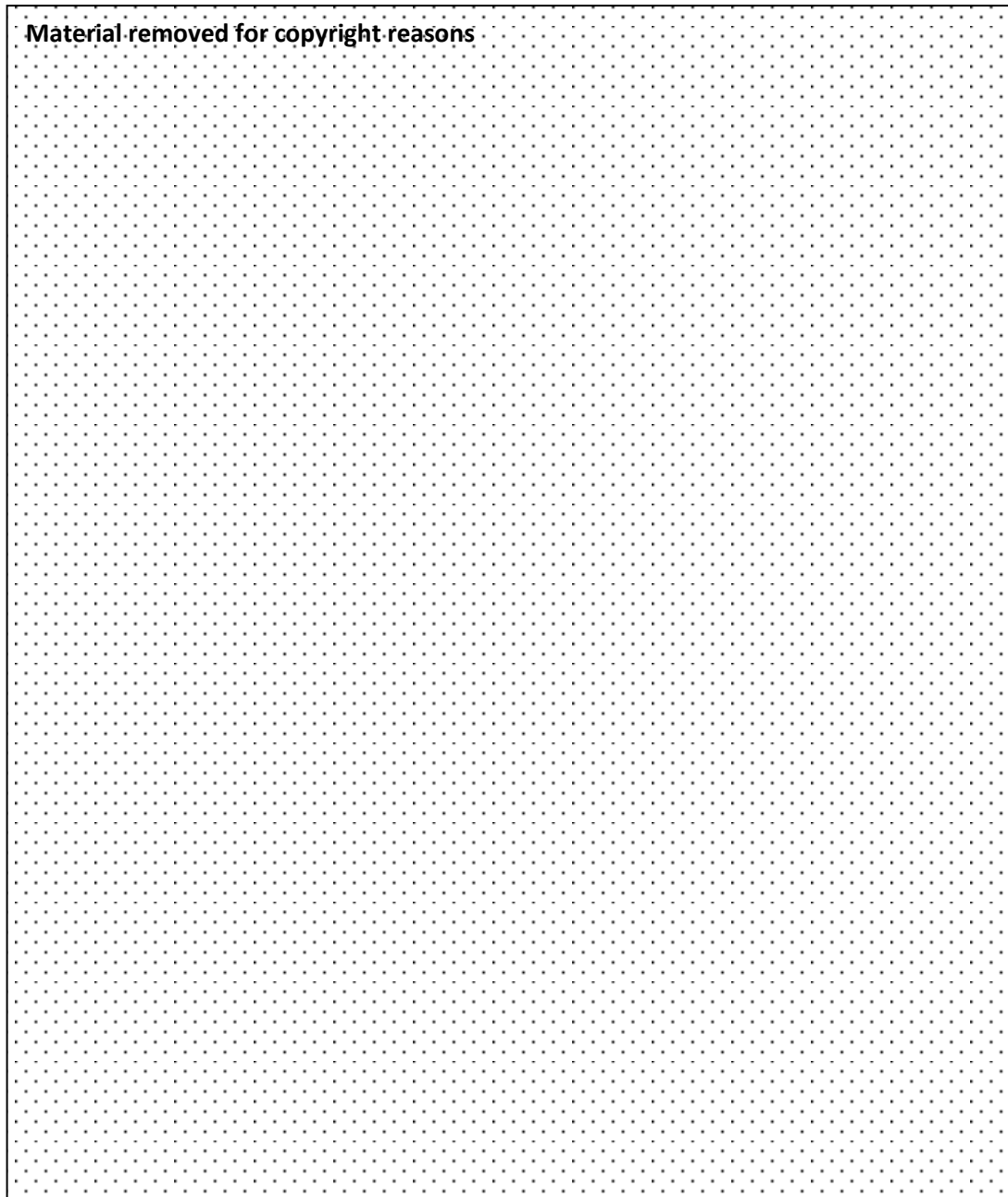


Source: Bryan Jones (2014)

The yellow arrows indicate the main visual interfaces between Ingress Park, Waterstone Park, Knockhall and Horns Cross

Waterstone Park, meanwhile, is situated half a mile south west of Ingress between Knockhall and Horns Cross (see figure 7.2). A joint venture between Countryside Properties and Land Securities, a city centre commercial developer making its first ever foray into the house building market, Waterstone Park now contains over 650 houses built in two phases. For Land Securities, it was an opportunity to “set a high design standard” that would “set the scheme apart from the average quality of most new housing in the surroundings” (CABE, 2010b). Its partnership with Countryside Properties, a company “who understands regeneration and delivers quality”, would, Land Securities’ said, “create a development which sits comfortably with the existing community” (Countryside Properties, 2011). The Chairman of Countryside Properties, who was interviewed for this study, has argued that successful regeneration “is not going to be done simply via new development, it’s going to be done by improving existing areas” and “engaging existing residents”.

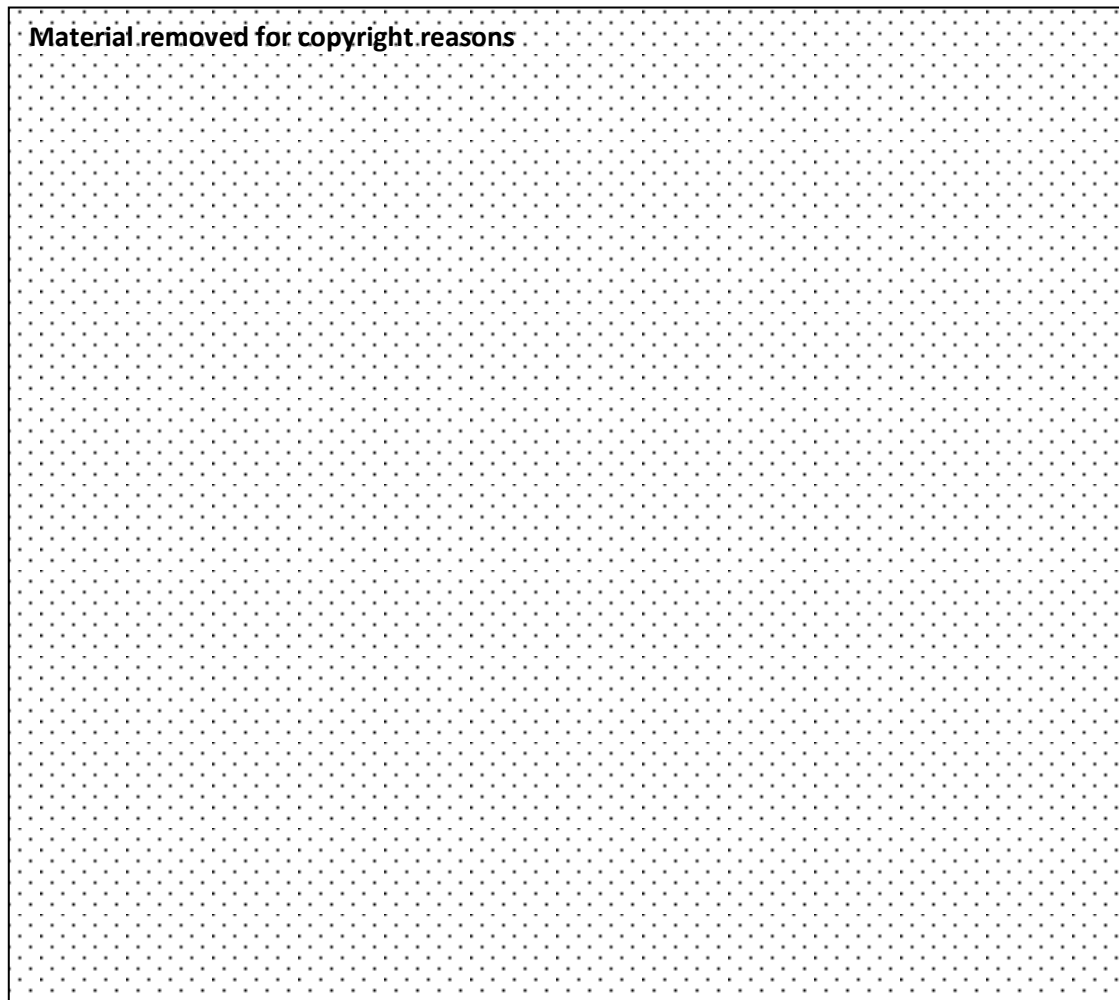
Figure 7.1 Crest Nicolson advertorial from 2007 focusing on Ingress Park



In order to test this commitment to integrated development this chapter will examine the testimony of twenty seven residents in Knockhall and Horns Cross interviewed in 2007/08 for this study. It will consider whether these residents see Ingress Park and Waterstone Park as an equal and intrinsic part of their community, or as exemplars of the type of affluent, spatially disconnected Thameside developments described by Davidson (2009) whose professional residents have no social or economic relationship with their less affluent neighbours. As well as helping us to meet a key aim of this study, this analysis will also provide a useful addition to the literature on major flagship redevelopments which, to date,

has tended to focus on the people moving into these developments rather on how the residents of neighbouring communities relate to them (Doucet, Van Kempen, Van Weesep, 2011).

Figure 7.2 Countryside Properties advertorial from 2010 focusing on Waterstone Park



This chapter will begin by looking at the relationship between Ingress Park and Knockhall to the south. It will start with a brief overview of Ingress Park and its key characteristics. As well as looking at its design, infrastructure and the way it relates to its neighbours, it will examine the critical response to Ingress Park from the development industry, design experts, the media, key figures in Kent Thameside and local resident organisations. Using the interview data with Knockhall residents, it will then look at how the residents of Knockhall have responded to the Ingress Park development. It will examine any evidence of physical and social integration between the two communities and consider whether or not local facilities are being shared.

We will then turn our attention to the design characteristics of Waterstone Park and its relationship with Knockhall and Horns Cross. This section will be briefer than the section on Ingress Park as the interviews with residents in Knockhall and Horns Cross yielded relatively little evidence relating to Waterstone Park.

Finally, having summarised and compared the key findings from each case study, the chapter will end by looking at what lessons can be taken from them when it comes to planning future developments in Kent Thameside and the wider Thames Gateway.

7.2 Ingress Park: a development ‘that cries out quality living’?

To the north of the A226 lies Ingress Park; an estate of a thousand houses set in the manicured grounds of the listed Ingress Abbey. It’s a development that “cries out quality living” according to the former Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, who visited it with Tony Blair in 2002 (Community Care, 2003). CABI, meanwhile, the Government’s former advisory body on architecture and the built environment, has picked it out as one of the best developments the Thames Gateway has to offer. Its “subtle architectural details and interesting landscaping create a strong sense of place” enthused CABI’s experts (CABI, 2010a). Ingress Park’s developers, Crest Nicholson, “have rejected the conventional procurement practices”, CABI explained, and have opted instead “for a bespoke design which takes its cue from the site and character of Kent’s traditional towns and villages”.

Picture 7.1 The entrance to the Ingress Park estate



Source: Bryan Jones (2012)

Picture 7.2 Some of Ingress Park's 'bespoke', locally inspired housing



Source: © Google (2012)

Subtle architectural details come at a cost of course, and prices for a bespoke Ingress Park property are well in excess of those in neighbouring Knockhall⁴. The media's coverage of the development has tended to reinforce this sense of exclusivity. Ingress Park residents are "middle England with a manicured twist", one City based consultant told *The Times*. "We shop at Sainsbury's not Asda: We have taste;" he insisted (*The Times*, 2003).

Few Ingress Park residents have any personal links with the surrounding villages. A survey of Ingress residents carried out by Dartford Borough Council in 2005, to which almost 30 per cent of residents responded, found that only one in five residents had moved there from addresses within the borough of Dartford (Dartford Borough Council, 2005b). Just under 40 per cent of residents meanwhile had come from London, and nearly 10 per cent had come from places outside the south east. Most were attracted to Ingress, the survey found, by the design and appearance of the development and the quality of the local road and rail links. Proximity to Bluewater shopping centre, described to *The Times* by one Ingress resident as "my corner shop", was another important attraction (*The Times*, 2003).

Ingress residents also show little inclination to establish ties within the local community. Less than one in ten residents, according to Dartford's survey have become members of a local community group. People living at Ingress, one resident maintained, "don't want a small town feel" (*The Times*, 2003). A residents' association has been set up, largely in response

⁴ In 2007 3-4 bedroom terraced houses in Ingress Park were on the market for between £350,000 - £400,000. In Knockhall meanwhile the average price of a terraced house was £179,000 in 2007 (Right Move, 2011).

to parking and speeding issues on the development, but it has found it difficult to make an impact. Its Secretary complained to Dartford Borough Council that;

“Currently Ingress Park is ghost-like during the day with few people prepared to settle down for the long-term... The Residents Association here is in its infancy in Ingress Park and is struggling to develop a community spirit.” Ingress Park Residents Association, 2008)

Today, any encounter between residents at Ingress is unusual. The estate’s design does not help. Although the views around the bend of the river over the Dartford Crossing are spectacular there are no facilities or features that would encourage anyone to linger there for long (see picture 7.3). With its ambiguous public space and coded rules and boundaries, Ingress is not a place that encourages spontaneous outdoor activities or any disturbance of its expensively maintained calm. As the former Chief Executive of the Kent Thameside Delivery Board, who was interviewed for this study, said:

“Visually, Ingress is an attractive development (but) the public space at Ingress is terribly ambiguous. If a family from London pitch into their car and say we’re going to have a picnic by the Thames, drive on to Ingress Park and open their picnic table and chairs and sit down there, would they be welcome? There’s no sign saying private land, keep off, but it has the air of being people’s front lawns, not communal parkland and that’s an issue of great importance for the future of the development.” (MWA)

It hasn’t always been so. Early post war pictures of the riverside park at Ingress in the summer show children on swings and adults sitting by the river (see picture 7.4). Yet at the time the Ingress estate was privately owned. One half was owned by the Thames Nautical Training College - and subsequently by the Merchant Navy College - which used it for sports grounds and offices. The other half was occupied by the Empire Paper Mill which had been opened at the turn of the century as a wallpaper plant. Both had close ties to Knockhall. Most families in Knockhall would have known someone who worked at the mill or was connected with the college in some way⁵. Their owners also encouraged local residents to make use of the estate’s sport and leisure facilities⁶. So although the estate was privately owned it was in effect an integral part of the public realm and treated as such by residents.

⁵ The pre 1919 terraces in Knockhall Road were built by the owners of the Empire Paper Mill for their new workers – many of whom had been recruited by the company directly from Lancashire.

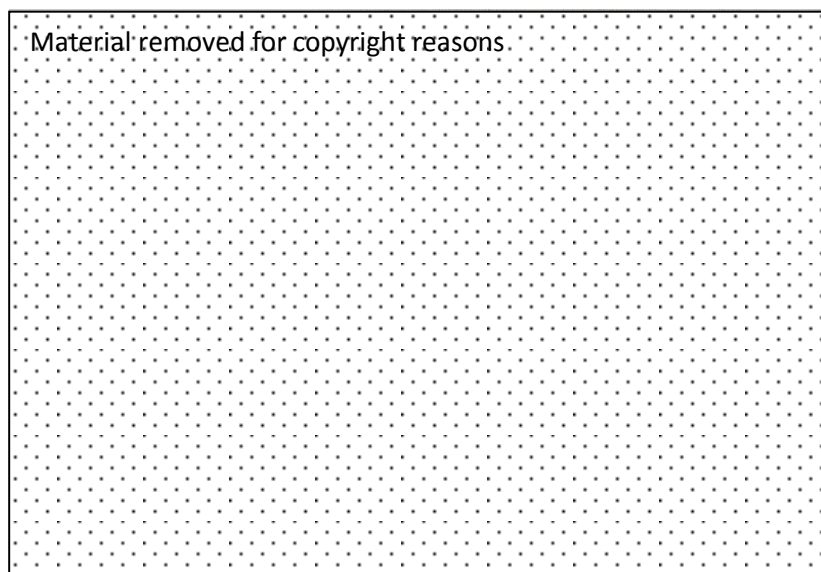
⁶ Personal communication with a Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Councillor, August 2007

Picture 7.3 The riverside at Ingress Park in 2008



Source: Bryan Jones (2012)

Picture 7.4 The riverside at Ingress Park in 1952 with maritime training vessel HMS Worcester and the Cutty Sark in the background



The only remnant from those post war days is the building that gave the estate its name; Ingress Abbey. Built as a country retreat by a successful London solicitor in the 1830s it has survived intact to this day despite long periods of disuse. It is now the estate's principal feature, having been restored and its grounds re-landscaped by Crest Nicholson⁷.

⁷ In return for this outlay the council agreed to a reduction in the social housing component of the new development. Consequently, only 10% of the housing at Ingress falls into the social and affordable category.

Picture 7.5 The restored Ingress Abbey



Source: Bryan Jones (2012)

Yet, aside from the occasional heritage open day the abbey remains closed to the public. A film and TV technology firm, Pandora International, now occupies the building. The grassy terrace beneath the abbey is also rarely used. The estate's architects had hoped this would serve as an amphitheatre where residents could gather for music performances and other community events. This never came to pass and the lush grass still shows few signs of use, despite its obvious appeal as a play or picnic area.

In fact, ten years after work on the first houses began Ingress still lacks even the most basic of community facilities such as a shop, pub or community centre. The planned *Fastrack* bus route through Ingress has been beset by planning and financial problems whilst plans for a primary school, health centre and shops have been either shelved or put on hold. Indeed, the secretary of the Ingress Park Residents Association suggested that a failure to attract 'families' to the estate - which one can interpret as code for people willing to invest in the community and put down roots there - is largely due to this absence of community facilities (Ingress Park Residents Association, 2008).

"Neither Ingress Park nor Greenhithe Village has any community meeting place. 'Greenhithe' Community centre is in 'Knockhall' and not readily accessible to the younger element. ... We need somewhere to hold meetings, have mother and toddler groups, youth facilities, adult education and a host of other uses. More families must be encouraged to move to Ingress Park and the prospect of a school/community centre will improve that."

It isn't just the Residents Association that is frustrated by the lack of facilities. When interviewed for this study, the Leader of Dartford Borough Council who struck the deal with Crest Nicolson admitted that he was wrong not to insist on having community facilities built at the onset of the development.

"The biggest single mistake that was made as far as the new build was concerned was at Ingress Park. It consists entirely of houses and there are absolutely no facilities whatsoever for them down there. The school that was promised was only a land allocation and that's not there even now and the development is coming to an end. It's just a huge mass of very nice houses but no facilities. They have to come off the site to access facilities that we, living in this area, take for granted. That was a big mistake and we shouldn't have done it. We should have insisted on it but the developer didn't think about it either." (JMU)

The former Chief Executive of the Delivery Board made a similar point. Of all the lessons to be learnt from Ingress Park he said this was one of the most important. One cannot create a vibrant, sustainable community, he said, if you fail to provide the necessary arenas in which residents can get together and begin to build relationships. The same observations were made by residents in Knockhall interviewed for this study.

"It doesn't seem to be taking root as a real organic community as yet and there are no shops, or pubs or restaurants as yet to act as a real focus. There always seems to be a marked lack of actual residents. It always seems terribly quiet." (DPA)

"A lot of people are young professionals, exactly the people it was built to attract, but the overall picture has not been looked at. It's a beautiful area, lovely houses, very expensive, but nothing down there for the families to do." (TWR)

"I'd like to see the abbey opened up for public use. I also don't know what there is in terms of community facilities, doctors and so on; I'm not sure there is anything." (DBL)

In other words the "subtle architectural details" described by CABA can take you only so far. Without shops, community services and public space that is clearly delineated and well designed, any development, however attractive, will struggle to generate the critical mass of public interactions necessary to create a robust community.

7.3 The view of Ingress Park from Knockhall

7.3.1 Do Knockhall residents feel that their needs have been given the same priority as those of Ingress Park residents?

South of the A226, behind an Esso garage and the British Legion hall are the terraces and inter war semis of Knockhall. On the corner of Knockhall Chase is a small corner shop, next to which is a piece of overgrown wasteland, fenced off from the public. Opposite lies the site of Knockhall Health Centre, which was summarily pulled down in the 1990s when asbestos was disturbed in the building (see pictures 7.6 and 7.7).

It seems a world away from the elegant houses and boulevards of Ingress Park. Yet despite the palpable differences in the character and appearance of Knockhall and Ingress Park, Knockhall residents' attitudes to Ingress vary. While 40 per cent of the Knockhall residents interviewed for this study felt that a sense of injustice about the disparity between the two communities, other residents felt differently as we shall discover later in this section.

Picture 7.6 The entrance to Knockhall Chase and Park Terrace in Knockhall



Source: © Google (2012)

Picture 7.7 Terraces in Knockhall Chase



Source: Bryan Jones (2012)

We will start however by considering the views of the former group of residents. Two key characteristics are common to the residents in this group. First of all, they are all established long-term residents who have been living in Knockhall for well over a decade. Second, they are very community orientated. Some are leading community activists who have leadership roles in key community organisations like the local church. Others are or have been members of political parties, voluntary organisations or social clubs. Many of them are also in regular contact with the local authority and other service providers about the standard of local services.

These residents made it clear that they resented the way in which the needs of Ingress residents appeared - consistently - to be given priority over their own by the authorities. One example given was the decision to give Ingress Park its own set of traffic lights on the A226. Two residents said;

“My sore point is that their convenience overtakes everyone else in that there is a traffic light system purely for their benefit. Well why? Why couldn’t they do that for the existing community? We’re the ones that have been putting the money in for the last 50 years.” (RFA)

"It's got its own set of traffic lights, but Knockhall, which is just as busy has got nothing. I don't want any by the way, but I don't like the fact that Ingress has been treated with some respect and the residents here haven't." (KWH)

Another source of frustration is the disparity in the quality of the urban fabric and street furniture on display in Ingress Park and Knockhall. Two residents commented:

"They have the privileges of having all the lights and things. There were big arguments about that. They've improved the roads and the lamp-posts for so many yards on each side of the estate and then it stops, which I think is so ridiculous.... I think the old residents are going to lose out badly. The little bit in the middle is being more and more neglected." (JPI)

"When it comes to slicing up the cake financially we always lose out. For instance the new development down by the river has broadband and it's got high speed access; it's got cable television; nice new water systems; all the modern amenities. Here the telephones keep breaking down. I've got broadband but I'm only 800 yards from the exchange and it works quite well, but other people here have just about given up on it. So people here always feel a little bit jealous and there's a lot of ill-feeling. Even when it comes to roadworks we're always bottom of the pile." (DBL)

They feel that Knockhall's needs – or more specifically the needs of long-term residents – aren't being given the consideration they deserve. It frustrates them to see newcomers, who, as they see it, have yet to contribute to the community, being treated better than them. For one resident this sense that Knockhall is being treated as a second class community was confirmed by the visit of the former Prime Minister, Tony Blair, to Ingress Park in 2002;

"When Tony Blair came to the new development, he didn't come across to Knockhall to say hello to us too. It's that kind of feeling: there's all this activity going on around the abbey, but no-one's really interested in the people that are already here." (MCO)

Many had been led to expect that Ingress would deliver real benefits for Knockhall. One resident said that the early meetings between the community and the Ingress design team had given her cause for optimism. At one meeting, she said, the architect had suggested that the swimming pool belonging to the old navy college would be retained as a community resource: "He told us to keep it and use it", she said. Yet when the final plans for Ingress Park were drawn up the swimming pool "went straight away" she recalled. Her disappointment was compounded by the developers' decision - backed by the council - to

spend several million pounds restoring Ingress abbey. Spending so much money on the abbey, a building that would never be used by the public, was misguided she felt.

“What we wanted done was for Ingress Abbey which has no historical value – how much did they spend doing it up? At least a million pounds or so – to be left alone and the money used instead for community and services”. (SWH)

Two other residents made the same point. The abbey now “looks wonderful”, one man said; but what was the point in doing it when “nobody can see it, because nobody can get in there”? Another hoped that it would eventually “be opened up for public use”. Other residents complained that Knockhall had gained little in terms of new or upgraded facilities.

“Knockhall in particular hasn’t seen any particular benefits from the Ingress development. The local primary school is still struggling to accommodate its children. The section 106 money could have been better used providing classrooms” (BKE)

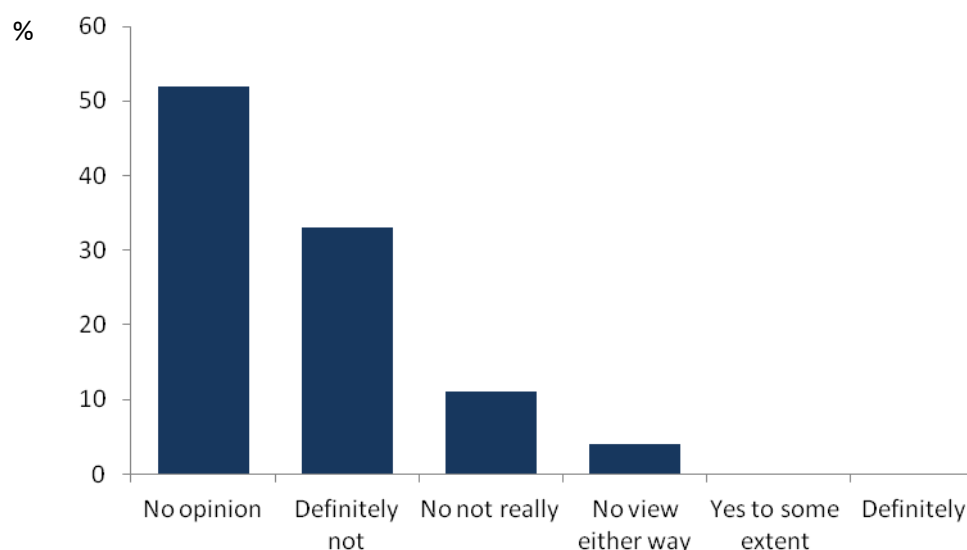
“What (have we) gained? Something like two thousand new houses and not a single new community facility in the eighteen years that I’ve been here” (RBA)

“Amenities are the biggest disappointment; particularly the total disregard that Ingress has for us. I thought we’d actually gain something when the new developments got underway, but there’s been nothing” (KWH)

In short, nothing has been done, as far as these residents are concerned, on the back of the new development to make their lives easier or better. All that the new development at Ingress has achieved, they believe, is to bring into focus just how impoverished their own physical environment is and how poorly served Knockhall is in terms of resources. In their eyes all the advantages that come with new investment have flowed in one direction only.

Yet, as the Figure 7.3 shows, not everyone in Knockhall feels this way. In fact over 50 per cent of residents interviewed said nothing that suggested they felt any sense of injustice about the way in which Knockhall has been treated. It’s not that they felt that Knockhall had been dealt with *equally* - they simply expressed no opinion at all.

Figure 7.3 Knockhall interviewees perception of whether they and Ingress Park residents have been treated equally



These residents fall into two distinct categories of more or less equal size. On the one hand there are the newer arrivals to Knockhall, who are using Knockhall as a stepping stone on the property ladder. They work outside the area in relatively well paid jobs and spend little time at home in Knockhall. Understandably they are more ambivalent about Ingress Park than their more established, community minded neighbours. To them it is merely another development: it isn't loaded with the same historical and metaphorical significance as it is for their neighbours. Indeed many of them have given serious consideration to buying a house in Ingress Park at some stage. It was only the prospect of getting more space for their money and more privacy from their neighbours that led them to choose Knockhall over Ingress. One Knockhall resident said;

"We were actually toying between moving there and here. We looked at the houses that were on offer there and we looked at the houses that were on offer here – and the ones here were almost half price, so that's why we moved here" (NTI)

Another resident said that he was also put off by the proximity of Ingress to the river;

"I was interested in Ingress Park and it seems to be reasonably well built, but quite crowded in. But I wouldn't live that close to a river." (TCA)

They are also less concerned about the absence of community facilities in Knockhall. Like Ingress residents they see Bluewater as their primary shopping and leisure facility and are content to use their cars to get there.

The other category consists of established, long-term residents whose family and work commitments leave them with little time or inclination to get involved in community causes. They harbour no resentment towards Ingress or its developers and they don't see the Ingress development as a missed opportunity for Knockhall. Nor are they as critical of the way in which Ingress has been designed as Knockhall's more recent arrivals. They see Ingress as a pleasant, attractive and well designed development. The only downside is that the prices of houses at Ingress are well beyond their financial reach: a fact they accept with equanimity and without any overt disappointment.

"My cousin lives there; she's got a lovely house. Cost her an arm and a leg but it is lovely." (DFR)

"We was amazed when we walked down there to see how many houses there were snaking along the river-front. It's a lovely development; but bit out of our reach" (KFA)

This evidence suggests that residents' views on whether Knockhall has gained anything as a result of Ingress are influenced by the size of their stake in the community. Residents who are active in the community and remember the Merchant Navy College and the Empire Paper Mill are the most unequivocal about the 'unfairness' of Knockhall's treatment. They feel that the opportunity presented by Ingress to improve Knockhall's services and to reward its long term residents for their commitment to the area has been squandered.

The reverse is true for residents who have arrived since the start of Ingress and longer term residents for whom family, home and work are the priorities. The debate around the equitable distribution of resources and services between the new and the old communities is not one they have entered into or thought about it seems. As homeowners or aspirant homeowners who have considered a move to Ingress, or as the parents or grandparents of potential homeowners at Ingress, they don't see the Ingress estate as a pernicious creation. Their attitude is one of ambivalence – although if challenged they may well consider Ingress to be an opportunity for Knockhall rather than as a threat.

This evidence shows that one cannot make assumptions about the views of the existing community towards regeneration. As we have seen here, residents' attitudes to Ingress Park vary considerably.

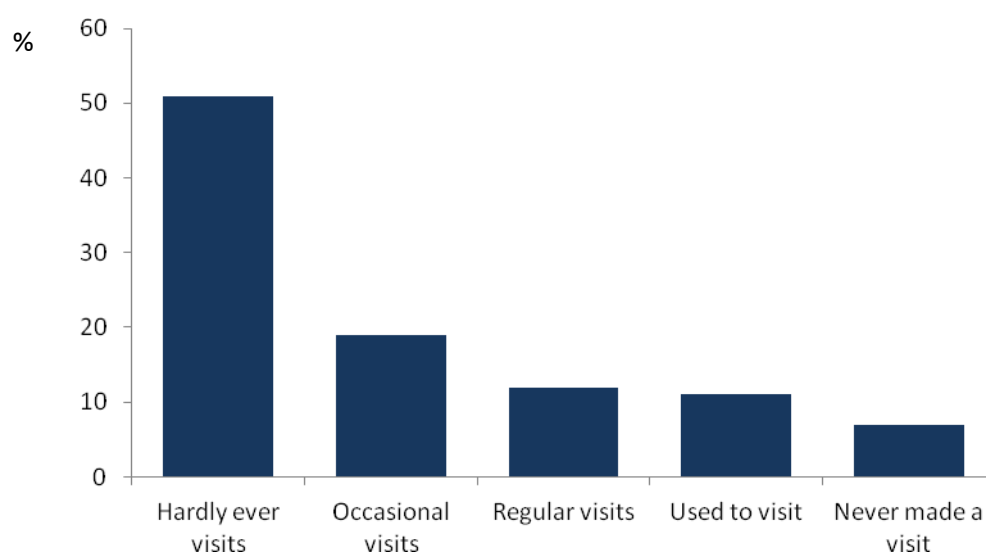
7.3.2 Is there any evidence of physical or social integration between Knockhall and Ingress?

Ingress Park is not a gated community. There are no 'residents only' signs, metal gates or security cameras guarding its entrance. However, its design does not encourage non-residents to cross its threshold: Its well tended appearance; its executive trappings; and its rarefied calm imply that only those with a definite purpose - preferably a professional one - should consider entering. Casual visitors, who might want to take the air by the river or explore its housing, are less welcome, its design suggests.

The A226, which skirts the entrance of Ingress Park and divides the estate from Knockhall, seems to reinforce this sense of physical separation. It is a busy road, one that's often choked with idling traffic, particularly when the Dartford Crossing is busy or the sales are on at Bluewater. On such days it's not uncommon to see a queue of stationary traffic half a mile long snaking up the hill. Yet it is a place that people seem to avoid if they possibly can. Some roads invite pedestrians, either because of the shops or facilities along it or because they live on one side and have business on the other. This one positively discourages them. The pavement is narrow and is covered with a thick crust of chalky mud and ragged undergrowth. An encounter here with the procession of haulage trucks that grind their way up hill, their suspensions shrieking with the effort, is not one any pedestrian would relish. It appears to be the archetypal 'border vacuum' described so vividly by Jane Jacobs in *The death and life of great American cities* (Jacobs, 1972)

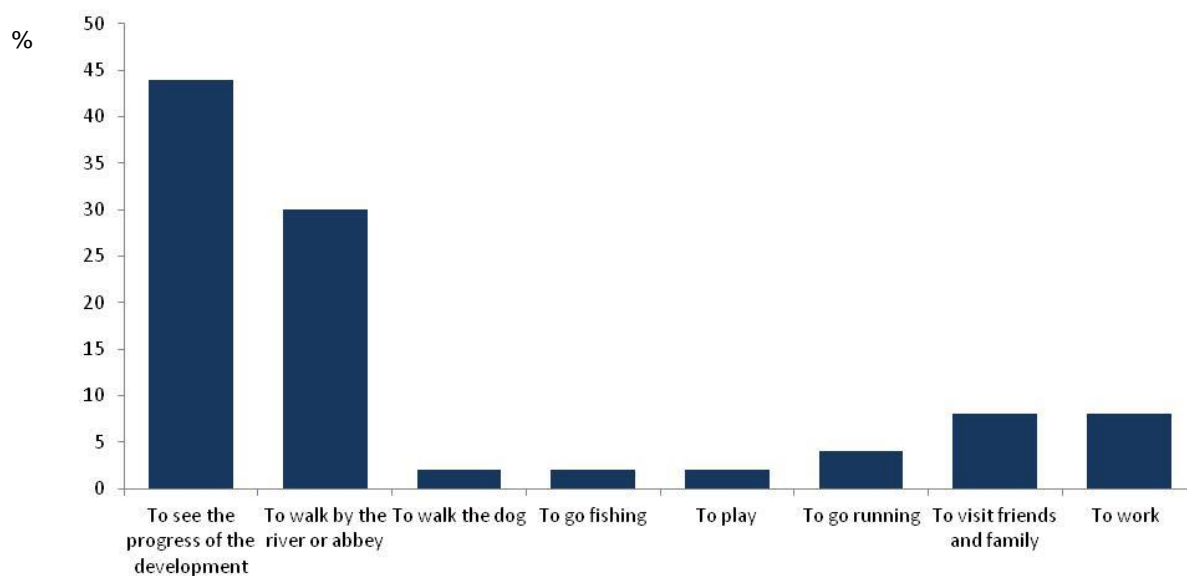
Unsurprisingly Knockhall residents rarely visit Ingress Park. Although all but two Knockhall interviewees had visited Ingress Park at some point, only a very small number visit on a routine basis (see figure 7.4). Over half of the residents interviewed had visited the estate only once or twice and just over 10 per cent admitted that they no longer visited Ingress Park at all.

Figure 7.4 Frequency with which Knockhall residents visit Ingress Park



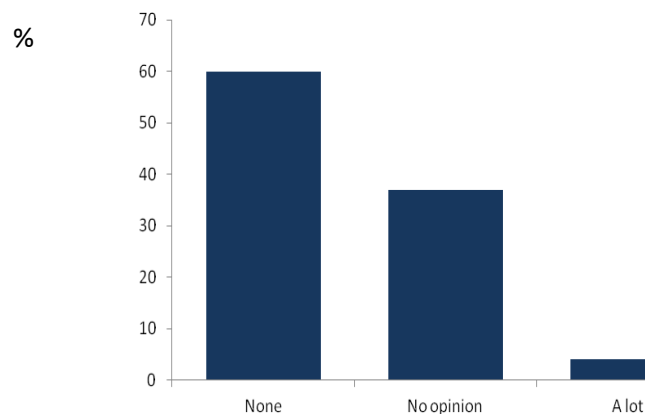
Furthermore, only 10 per cent of visits to Ingress were for the purposes of visiting friends or family living on the estate or on work related matters (see figure 7.5).

Figure 7.5 Reasons of Knockhall interviewees for visiting Ingress Park



In fact, 60 per cent of the residents interviewed had seen no evidence whatsoever of any interaction between Ingress Park residents and the existing community (see figure 7.6). Among them are the same long-term residents and community activists we discussed in the previous section.

Figure 7.6 Knockhall interviewees perception of the extent of social interaction between Ingress Park residents and Knockhall residents



In their view, Knockhall and Ingress Park are two entirely separate communities that are physically and psychologically divorced from one another. They feel that the way in which Ingress has been designed fosters a sense of separation and precludes any meaningful interaction between the two communities.

“It has become a ‘them and us’. We don’t mix; we don’t have any opportunity to mix.”
(JPI)

“People down at the Thames are like one unit; down the village they are one unit; us up here is like one unit” (CCU)

“If you look at Ingress Park, it’s a dead end estate; and that creates separation – them and us.” (RBA)

Nonetheless there are subtle differences in opinion between the community activists; the *older* long-term residents; and the *younger* long-term residents. The older long-term residents appear to be the most emotionally affected by this apparent dislocation between the two communities. In their eyes the new development has broken the social bond between Ingress and Knockhall and appropriated part of their history. The familiar riverside park that they knew as children is now only a memory because of Ingress. The estate that has replaced it feels alien to them and removed from their own lives. One resident, a retired council tenant, who has lived in Knockhall all her life said that she is reluctant to spend any time at Ingress now;

“We can’t walk anywhere because of the houses. You used to be able to go down the river. I used to take the children down to Greenhithe park to picnic, but if you go

down there now...they say it isn't private but you feel as though you're encroaching on their private walkways. There is nowhere to sit down there now. There used to be benches but because they built the houses on the front there's nowhere to put anything to sit on. There also used to be a little bit of woodland – peacocks used to be down there – that's all gone. They've taken an awful lot away.” (JPI)

To her Ingress is no longer a shared public space in the way that it used to be when it was in the hands of the naval college and the paper mill. It feels like a privatised space from which existing residents are excluded. Another of Knockhall's older long-term residents made the same point.

“A lot of the older people like to go down and fish on the river but have had problems recently because of the new development and the security around the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. They're claiming its private land, but it isn't – it is public access. So there is a lot of bad feeling here on this little island; people feeling as though they are second class citizens. It gets peoples' backs up. They feel that they've contributed all their lives and now in their old age they just want to do a little bit of fishing or walk their dog – as they've always been able to do - and some over-zealous security guard is telling them that they can't.” (DBL)

Some of the younger long-term residents also expressed concern about the disconnection between Ingress and Knockhall. Yet, it was the social differences between the two communities that concerned them, rather than the loss of amenity space. Two residents, for instance, referred to the gap in social status and wealth between Ingress Park residents and those in Knockhall. Both had visited Ingress, but neither felt particularly comfortable there given the type of housing on the estate and type of people living in them. One of them still visits the estate on occasion in order to help his son with his paper round, but the other made it clear that she has no desire to go back. She found the atmosphere on the estate stifling and even suggested that undesirable non-residents were being challenged by 'security' staff⁸.

“It's very different to anything that's been in Greenhithe before. My perception is that it is people who are quite upwardly mobile, who work in London in well paid jobs. I don't see too many people in my position living in Knockhall selling their houses and

⁸ The management company at Ingress does not employ any dedicated security staff on the estate. According to the Crest Nicolson and Dartford Borough Council officers, the 'security' personnel are likely to have been parking enforcement officers employed by a private contractor working for the management company.

moving into Ingress Park – they couldn't afford it. When it first opened you were almost frightened to go down there. There was this feeling that you weren't allowed down there, which for people who have lived in Greenhithe all their lives must have been quite difficult... Now, my son's got a paper round around there, and I occasionally go around and do it with him, but that's it." (MCO)

"The only thing I have found there is that they have their own security down there chasing off basically anyone local that don't live down there. Even adults are being questioned; 'what's your purpose in being down the estate?' So people can't cut through anymore to get to the bottom without being stopped by security to ask what their purpose is. I used to walk my dog down there; I can't do that no more. I don't know if there's a stigma down there. You know that we're the yokels and they're the gentry." (DCA)

The community activists, on the other hand, spoke about the lack of interaction between the two communities from a more detached perspective. They were no less exercised about the apparent social disconnection between Ingress and Knockhall, but it tended to be other residents' experiences – those of the people they encounter during their work in the community – rather than their own, that informed their comments. As individuals, they didn't feel the same sense of personal loss or social disparity articulated by others.

One community activist, for instance, expressed concern about the loss of amenity space in Greenhithe as a whole and the effective privatisation of the remaining green spaces. He complained that the available amenity space around Ingress Abbey had been sequestered by the developers and reserved, in effect, for the sole use of the new residents. However, the primary losers were not people like him but Knockhall's older long-term residents who had witnessed the changes at first hand.

"The old residents will tell you about everything we've lost. There was also a lot more green space where children could play in days gone by. At the old Merchant Naval College, there was a great deal of sharing of space; that's all gone now. In my mind the way new housing developments are built creates separation – them and us." (RBA)

However other Knockhall residents were less sceptical. The remaining 40 per cent of the residents interviewed expressed no opinion at all on whether there would any social interaction between Ingress and Knockhall residents. This group of residents was composed primarily - as in the previous section - of recent arrivals to Knockhall who had little invested

in the community and long-term residents whose family and work commitments allowed them little time for community life. Aside from the occasional comment about the cost of houses in Ingress Park, none of these residents expressed any view about the nature of the relationship between Ingress and Knockhall. They expressed no anxiety or reservation about visiting Ingress or making use of its facilities. Nor did they make any comment about the propensity of Ingress residents to engage with Knockhall residents, or vice versa. Nevertheless very few among them admitted to spending any time with Ingress Park residents or visiting the estate on a regular basis. One long-term resident revealed that he had a cousin living in Ingress whom he visited; one young mother said she had friends in Ingress that she'd made through her children; and a recently arrived resident said that he often jogged around the estate. However, these were the only examples of any routine interaction between Ingress and Knockhall residents alluded to in the interviews.

In summary therefore, having taken into account the evidence from the interviews with Knockhall residents, it seems reasonable to conclude that there is little routine social interaction taking place at present between the residents of Knockhall and Ingress Park. Yet while the prospects for creating a genuinely integrated community do not, on the face of it, appear bright; there are some grounds for optimism. One cause for hope is Knockhall Primary School, a case study that will be discussed in the next section. Another reason for optimism is the attitude of Knockhall residents' to Ingress. While some Knockhall residents, particularly older long-term residents feel alienated from their new neighbour, and others are conscious of the social disparity between the two communities, many Knockhall residents made it clear that they have no qualms about visiting Ingress Park or interacting with its residents. Ingress doesn't feature in their weekly routines at the moment, but if an appropriate opportunity presented itself to engage with Ingress residents, they would have no compunction about taking advantage of it. It is enough to suggest that with careful management, the goal of an integrated community could yet be achieved.

7.3.3 Is there any evidence of Knockhall and Ingress residents using the same community facilities?

While the Ingress Park estate offers few opportunities for its own residents or the residents from neighbouring communities to interact socially, the situation in Knockhall is different. In Knockhall there are a number of community facilities which provide an opportunity for Knockhall and Ingress residents to interact and in doing so potentially strengthen the relationship between the two communities. A case in point is Knockhall Primary School, which today is the main catchment school for Ingress Park and Knockhall. The school

provides the clearest evidence we have of Knockhall and Ingress residents sharing a community facility.

Knockhall's role as a shared facility is, however, an accidental one. It was the unwitting consequence of an abrupt strategic shift by the local authority in response to budgetary pressures and errors in its forward planning. When the first plans for Ingress Park emerged in the late 1990s it was envisaged that the estate would contain its own dedicated primary school. Initially, Kent County Council, the local education authority, proved receptive to the idea. However it changed its position when it became apparent that primary school rolls in the east of Dartford were in decline due to a drop in birth in the late 1990s. The authority had also become nervous about predicting the likely yield of primary school age children from new developments. Having already opened a new primary school in Craylands Lane in Swanscombe in 2000 in order to cater for the needs of a new 500 home estate - and got its predictions badly wrong - Kent was keen not to make the same, expensive, mistake again. It began to question the projected yield of primary school children for Ingress Park and decided to withdraw support from the project. Only when existing primary schools in the area hit capacity, they told the developer and local politicians, would they be prepared to re-examine the business case for a school at Ingress. The prospects for a school in Ingress Park took a further blow once it became apparent around 2005 that Land Securities' plans for a 1,500 home development on Swanscombe Peninsula immediately to the east of Ingress were unlikely to go ahead. With the Swanscombe Peninsula development off the agenda, it became almost impossible to deliver the critical mass of children necessary to persuade Kent to revisit the case for a new school at Ingress.

As a result Knockhall Primary has become the default primary school for the Ingress Park estate – one place where Ingress and Knockhall residents are obliged to spend time together. According to figures provided by Kent County Council some 45 per cent of the primary age children living in Ingress Park now attend Knockhall Primary⁹. These 52 children from Ingress account for just over 14 per cent of Knockhall's total pupil roll of 367 pupils. The influx in children from Ingress Park was noted in the school's 2004 Ofsted report (Ofsted, 2004):

⁹ These figures were provided in January 2009 by KCC's Area Children's Services officer for Dartford and Gravesham. They state that there are 114 children living on the Ingress Park estate currently attending primary schools in the Kent County Council area. 52 of these children (45.6%) attend Knockhall Community Primary School; 15 (13.2%) attend St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Gravesend; 9 (7.9%) attend Stone St Mary's CE Primary School; 6 (5.3%) attend Bean Primary School; and 5 (4.4%) attend Craylands Lane Primary School in Swanscombe. The figures do not include those in private education and those in schools in Greater London and beyond.

“Although the school is located next one of the most disadvantaged wards in the county, there is a growing proportion of pupils from more advantaged homes (and the pupils now come) from a wide spectrum of socio-economic backgrounds”.

The report also found that the school was making progress in terms of its academic performance and discipline. Having been put into special measures after its 2002 inspection, test results had risen and the report noted that the school’s leadership had worked hard to raise standards in the classroom and to improve attendance. Whether this improvement is in any way connected to the arrival of children from Ingress Park is impossible to say. Yet one Knockhall resident, whose wife teaches at the school, certainly felt that they had had a marked impact on the character of the school:

“Lots of children from Ingress go to the primary school. It’s meant that there are a few more bright kids and a few more bright switched on parents at the school who want to have an impact on it.” (BKE)

Another feature of the school picked by Ofsted in its 2004 report and again in its 2007 and 2009 reports was its role as a hub for the wider community. “The school is working hard to become a focus for its community,” the 2004 report noted - drawing particular attention to the school’s new 50 place nursery. The school’s 2009 report meanwhile, made reference to the children’s contribution to the Greenhithe Community Market Garden which had recently been opened in the grounds of the school (Ofsted, 2009). Indeed, the school’s developing role as a community hub has provided an opportunity for some parents in Knockhall to mix with their neighbours in Ingress Park for the first time. One Knockhall resident, a mother with four children of primary school age or less, said that she has made a number of friends through the school and the nursery who live on the Ingress estate.

“The people from Ingress come to the same Mother and Baby groups as us; so there’s no them and us. I know quite a few friends that live down there. At Ingress you’ve kind of forced the issue; parents have to bring their children up here, because they don’t have a school of their own to choose.” (SSM)

It is important, however, not to overstate the school’s role in knitting together the two communities. Only two of the residents interviewed highlighted the contribution that the school has made in enabling greater engagement between Knockhall and Ingress residents - and one of them was highly sceptical as to whether real integration is achievable. Another resident drew attention to the fact that while some Ingress parents are choosing to send their

children to Knockhall Primary, many are not; preferring instead to send their children to schools outside the area with stronger academic records.

“Already you have people from Ingress Park saying we’re not going to send our children to that local school and they end up sending them to some private school or school with better prospects. I think it’s a recipe for them and us.” (RBA)

Indeed, the only thing we know beyond doubt is that a substantial number of children from Ingress Park are mixing with their peers in Knockhall. Until further research is carried out we can only speculate as to the impact this had had on the school and the wider community.

7.4 Waterstone Park: a development which sits comfortably with the existing community?

The sole entrance to Waterstone Park, a discreet side road off the A226 shaded by trees and flanked by a short stretch of three to four storey apartment blocks, belies the size of the development. Built by Countryside Properties in partnership with Land Securities in two distinct phases starting in 2002 and 2005, Waterstone Park now contains some 650 homes stretching south from the A226 up to the chalk cliffs overlooking Bluewater. It is one of the largest developments built in Kent Thameside in the last ten years.

The first phase of development, comprising of 201 one and two bedroom flats and three and four bedroom houses, was built in a “neo vernacular style” (Countryside Properties, 2011) that was “designed to reflect Kentish architecture and the local vernacular of Victorian and Edwardian villas” (CABE, 2010b). The second phase of 450 flats and houses, built on the site of a former Blue Circle cement testing and research facility, was designed in a more “contemporary” style. The red, white and blue rendering of the “mews houses” of phase two now provide a striking contrast to the more traditional phase one houses with their London stock bricks and cream rendering.

Like Ingress Park, Waterstone has its own ‘feature’ centrepiece; Stone Castle, a Georgian manor house incorporating a twelfth century tower. Unlike Ingress, however, it was already functioning as a conference and wedding venue and contributions from the developer for its restoration weren’t required. This allowed planners to set aside almost 30 per cent of housing for social and affordable purposes at Waterstone: a far higher proportion than at Ingress Park, where it accounted for just 10 per cent of the total. In terms of community facilities though, Waterstone is equally as bereft as Ingress Park. Only one small playground for children has been created on site to date. Around £150,000 was earmarked in the

Section 106 agreement struck with Dartford Borough Council in 2003 for a ‘community meeting space’ in the area, but in 2010 a suitable site had still to be identified.

The reaction to Waterstone Park in the design and architectural community has been mixed. Phase two received a Building for Life Silver standard from CABI in 2007, with the judges commending it as a “really interesting” and “very brave and bold” out-of-town development (CABI, 2010b). They drew attention to its “light contemporary feel”; the absence of any “external distinction between the social and market housing”; “the diversity of housing” and the effective use of the hill-top location to give residents commanding views over the Thames and Bluewater.

Picture 7.8 Phase two housing at Waterstone Park



Source: Bryan Jones (2012)

Picture 7.9 Phase two housing at Waterstone Park



Source: Bryan Jones (2012)

Phase one, with its “neo-vernacular housing” has been less well received. One CABE advisor complained to the Guardian that it was a “standard product” that “doesn’t really take into account that it is in Kent or by the Thames” (Barkham, 2007). The buildings were not only “turned in on themselves”, wasting the hilltop location, but they often failed to relate to each other, he said, with some homes facing fences or blank gable ends. He also took issue with the build quality, pointing out that many of the buildings were cheap and already looked worn just a few years after completion. Many of the canopies around the entrances of the properties, for instance, were seriously discoloured and degraded.

Picture 7.10 Phase one housing at Waterstone Park



Source: © Google (2012)

Concern about the way in which Waterstone Park relates to its surroundings has also been expressed by CABE. Its otherwise positive evaluation of phase 2 of the development, criticised the failure to build any physical links between the estate and Bluewater; pointing out that “there is no practical means of getting there except by car” via the development’s northern exit. The only direct connection between Bluewater and Waterstone, it said, was “an isolated path that runs steeply downhill” where it meets the busy main Bluewater access road. The evaluation also drew attention to the fact that the nearest supermarket was half a mile from the estate’s northern entrance and that the nearest primary school was a twenty minute walk from the centre of Waterstone. Waterstone Park was, the evaluation concluded, “a well designed enclave” which had “no connections to the locality” and did not appear to have been considered as part of a coherent urban design strategy for the area.

The unusual geography of the site and the surrounding area undoubtedly complicated the developer’s task of integrating the development into its neighbouring communities. In addition to the cliffs at its southern end, the land drops sharply immediately to the east of the

development due to a former chalk pit, while the land on its western side is an undeveloped former gravel pit and landfill site that is now used chiefly to graze horses. Its only physical link with Horns Cross to the west is a path in the south west corner which is accessible only to cyclists and pedestrians. The busy A226 to the north also precludes any relationship between Waterstone and the housing to the north. Nonetheless, it is arguable, as CABE suggests, that more could have been done to soften these hard edges and to create a stronger physical relationship between the development and its neighbours.

The difference in cost between the houses at Waterstone Park and the houses in Horns Cross and Knockhall has also made it difficult to integrate the estate into the community. While the prices of new houses at Waterstone Park in 2007 started at £157,000 for a one bedroom flat and £415,000 for a four bed house (CABE, 2010b), the average house price in neighbouring Horns Cross and Knockhall was just £153,000 and £184,000 respectively (Right Move, 2011). This price disparity is accentuated by the marked difference in the quality of landscaping and street furniture at Waterstone compared to its neighbours.

Opinion among Waterstone residents about the development is mixed. On the one hand some phase one residents were so concerned about the structural problems they encountered when they moved in that they organised community meetings with local councillors and the MP¹⁰ and set up a Residents Association to pursue their grievances with the developer: According to the association, the “severity” of the problems “has resulted in owners struggling to get remedial works completed or to sell their property” (Waterstone Park Residents Association, 2011). Yet on the other hand a Dartford Borough Council survey of all phase one households in 2005 (Dartford Borough Council, 2005b), which was answered by a quarter of households, found that 85 per cent of residents felt that it was good neighbourhood in which to live. Moreover 73 per cent of residents said that they were sufficiently satisfied with their home and the development as a whole to recommend it to others. This suggests that while some residents have serious concerns about build quality, most residents in phase one seem generally content with their houses and the development as a whole.

But while most residents in Dartford’s survey appeared to like the development, very few were interested in making a long-term investment in the community. Only 5 per cent of residents were members of a local community organisation, either on the estate or in the wider community, and only 10 per cent of residents planned to stay at Waterstone for more than 5 years. According to the survey it was the attraction of a modern property in a

¹⁰ These meetings were attended by the author of this study in a professional capacity

‘peaceful area’, that was in a good location close to a main rail station, the A2 and M25 and Bluewater that attracted them to Waterstone. In other words it was the convenience of the location and a modern property that required the minimum of investment or maintenance, rather than the presence of community facilities or a strong community spirit that occupied their thinking. This is borne out by the fact that while 85 per cent of residents felt it was a good community in which to live, the same proportion of residents admitted that it lacked ‘a strong sense of community’.

The evidence examined so far appears to suggest that Waterstone Park is neither physically nor socially well integrated into the wider community. The testimony from residents in Horns Cross and Knockhall, which will be discussed in the next section, will allow us to test this idea. Is Waterstone seen by residents in existing communities as a separate enclave? Or do they have a more nuanced impression of the development and its relationship with the wider community?

7.5 The view of Waterstone Park from Knockhall and Horns Cross

Waterstone Park does not impinge heavily on the lives of residents in Horns Cross and Knockhall. Only eleven residents, less than a third of the thirty-four residents interviewed in the two villages, knew of the development and were able to express an opinion about it. Most of these residents, seven in total, lived on the eastern slopes of the shallow valley that separates Knockhall from Waterstone: the only area in the surrounding community to have a direct visual relationship with Waterstone. Beyond the crest of the valley in the central and eastern part of Knockhall, awareness of the development was much more limited; just three residents here were able to discuss Waterstone. In Horns Cross, meanwhile, only 1 resident, who lived at eastern tip of the village - no more than a hundred metres from Waterstone - had anything to say about the development.

The few residents who were able to discuss Waterstone had a poor opinion of its design and appearance. Only one resident expressed a positive view about its design. This may well be due in part to the fact that construction of phase 2 of Waterstone was still in progress when the interviews were taking place. Negative comments about the “noise and dust from the construction work”, and the “sight of cranes on the horizon” were made by two residents and it is possible that the opinions of other residents too may have been influenced by the disruption caused by construction. Nonetheless, all of the residents who disliked Waterstone were able to point to specific design issues that they felt had undermined the development.

Three residents, for example, questioned the density of the development and size of the houses:

"It's very compact, very closed in; it doesn't look very inviting at all to me. Not somewhere I would want to live." (JHI)

"The thing about Waterstone Park is that they really pack the houses in to what is quite a tight site. Some of the houses, we went over to have a look, and I think I'd have to duck to get in some of them." (ABR)

"As a development I think that they've gone far too far and tried to milk the development for all it's worth and people are going to suffer for it." (TWR)

They also disliked the aesthetic of the modern 'award winning' phase two of the development; preferring the neo-vernacular style of phase one, which, ironically, was criticised by CABE.

"I wouldn't move there. I think they've gone a bit too modern to be honest with you. A lot of the new ones have got metal balconies – it looks like a factory. I don't think they're attractive at all" (JAR)

"The front part seems to be quite elegant, quite well designed, but then they've started in higher density stuff that overlooks this area" (TWR)

"I thought the first phase was good; I really liked it. Some of the second phase though; the design leaves a lot to be desired" (JLO)

However a number of residents echoed CABE's comments on the isolation of Waterstone, and its lack of physical connections with the existing community. Waterstone, they said, was "closed off" from its neighbours; a "cul-de-sac" or "a dead end estate" that no tangible relationship with Knockhall or Horns Cross.

"It's stuck out of the way: you don't really notice it to be honest with you. Because you've only got that little slip road there, you don't tend to notice how many houses there are until you actually go in there. It's not really part of the community. People go in their little estate and they stay in their little estate. There's one way in and one way out – so no they don't integrate. It's like a barrier. With the old system of lines of roads people mixed in with one another." (JAR)

"Waterstone Park, Ingress: They're just big cul-de-sacs these places (KFA)

“If you look at Waterstone Park, Ingress Park, they’re dead end estates; and that creates separation – them and us.” (RBA)

This sense of division between Waterstone and its neighbours was exacerbated, some residents believed, by the houses prices at Waterstone which were far higher than those in Knockhall and Horns Cross.

“It’s an expensive, intensive development which will change the political map of the area and the nature of the existing communities that are here.” (BKE)

“They’re very expensive places; to say the least” (JLO)

“Waterstone Park is very expensive for what they’ve got there. I wouldn’t want to pay their prices.” (AFU)

In fact in most cases residents were unable to point to any particular environmental or social benefits that they or the community had derived from the Waterstone Park development. One resident, whose children used the playground at Waterstone, felt that it had made the area “nicer than it was before”; but his comments were the exception. For most people, it was the downsides of the development that were most apparent. Two residents took issue with the extra traffic and pressure on the A226 that the development would generate. One resident also complained about the loss of his view while another resident was disappointed that a field of allotments had been lost because of construction.

Nevertheless, it is what residents *didn’t* say about the development, rather than what they did say, that provides us with the most compelling evidence about the relationship between Waterstone Park and Knockhall and Horns Cross. The fact that over two thirds of residents had no comment to make about a major development of over 650 homes less than half a mile from their home is a graphic illustration of the failure of the developers and their public sector partners to integrate Waterstone Park into the existing urban grain. It is a development in Kent Thameside, but not part of Kent Thameside. It certainly cannot be described as sitting comfortably with the existing community.

7.6 Conclusion

It isn’t easy to provide straightforward answers to the questions posed at the start of this chapter. On the face of it, the prospects of integrating Ingress Park and Waterstone Park seamlessly into the existing urban grain would appear to be slim. Devoid of facilities, physically and aesthetically disconnected from its neighbours and seemingly populated by wealthy professionals with only the most tenuous of stakes in Kent Thameside, Ingress and

Waterstone would seem destined to remain marginal entities; developments that are indifferent to their neighbours and resolutely ignored in turn by them.

In the case of Waterstone Park such scepticism would appear justified. Over two thirds of the residents interviewed in Knockhall and Horns Cross had nothing at all to say about Waterstone Park, despite its size and proximity to their home. It is a development that simply hasn't impinged on their lives. The few residents who were able to talk about Waterstone tended to confirm CABE's assessment of the development as a separate enclave with no connections to the immediate neighbourhood.

However, the relationship between Ingress Park and Knockhall is far more complex. Like Waterstone Park, Ingress is physically divorced from the surrounding communities. Yet, as the interview testimony demonstrates, Knockhall residents are far from indifferent to Ingress. Virtually all the residents interviewed had an opinion about Ingress Park. Indeed many of these opinions were strongly expressed. In other words, Ingress - unlike Waterstone - is unquestionably a part of Knockhall residents' lives.

How can we explain this difference in perception? It is probably due in part to the fact that Waterstone Park is the junior of the two developments: not only is it smaller in size, it was built more recently than Ingress and is situated in a less prominent location away from the river. Consequently most of the political and media interest in Kent Thameside over the last decade has been directed at Ingress Park not Waterstone Park. We also need to consider the previous uses of each site. Whereas Waterstone Park is located on the site of former Blue Circle research and testing building, a small facility which had a comparatively low profile locally, Ingress Park occupies a site that has a far more important place in the collective memory of the existing community. As well as hosting the Empire Paper Mill and the Merchant Navy College, both of which were major local employers, the Ingress site has been an important leisure resource for thousands of local residents over the years. Its subsequent uses were always likely to be subject to greater scrutiny, and to be more keenly contested, than those of Waterstone Park.

The response of Knockhall residents to Ingress Park reflects this interest. The older long-term residents, who have strong emotional ties to Ingress, have found it difficult to reconcile themselves to the new development. They feel shut out from Ingress and believe that the development has appropriated part of their identity and heritage. The community activists in Knockhall meanwhile, who had high expectations of Ingress, given its billing as an iconic, exemplar Gateway development, also have strong views about Ingress Park. For them it is a missed opportunity. Not only has Ingress failed to deliver much needed community facilities

and affordable housing, but its developers have been insensitive to the needs of neighbouring communities: sparing no expense on the estate's fittings, but allowing none of this investment to trickle down into Knockhall. It is, in their opinion, most definitely a case of 'them and us' and no basis on which to build an integrated community.

Yet these views, which are often expressed loudly and publicly, are not representative of everyone in the community. There are many residents, as we have seen, who have less emotional or political investment in Ingress. These residents take Ingress at face value; judging it on the basis of whether they could see themselves living there at some point if they had the money, not on any other grounds. And while some find the estate somewhat crowded and its houses ungenerously proportioned, many of them like the development and would be happy to live there. Yes, Ingress Park is wealthier and better maintained than Knockhall, but this isn't something that inhibits them or lessens their interest in ultimately moving there or finding friends there.

Nonetheless, it also appears, Knockhall Primary School aside, that there is limited social interaction taking place between Ingress and Waterstone and the neighbouring communities. Only two existing residents in Knockhall and Horns Cross admitted to having friends or family living on either new development. This seems unlikely to change until further investment in social and community facilities – in both the new and existing communities – is made. It is the opportunity to share common facilities and to mix with another that potentially holds the key to further integration. The hard physical edges between the two communities can't be removed, but they can be softened, psychologically at least, through carefully managed investment in the area's community infrastructure. The question is; do the Kent Thameside regeneration partners still have the will, or more importantly the means to make this happen?

Chapter 8 Getting the locals on board: An examination of the strategies employed by the Kent Thameside regeneration partners to involve existing communities in the regeneration process

8.1 Introduction

In chapter seven we examined the measures taken by the Kent Thameside regeneration partners to promote the social and physical integration of the new and existing communities. In this chapter we will consider the other key regeneration objective relating to Kent Thameside's existing communities, namely, the policies aimed at empowering residents to participate in the design of programmes relating to the area's regeneration.

A commitment to community involvement is strongly underlined in the key Kent Thameside regeneration strategies. The need to ensure that local people "are closely involved in the Kent Thameside initiative" was articulated by the Kent Thameside Association in the updated version of Looking to the Future published in 1997 (Kent Thameside Association, 1997). The Kent Thameside Regeneration Framework, published in 2005, also makes it clear that "local communities must be genuinely involved in the regeneration process if the root causes of deprivation are to be addressed successfully with a lasting effect" (Kent Thameside Delivery Board, 2005). This enthusiasm for community involvement is echoed by Kent Thameside's main developers. A Land Securities' executive and the Chairman of Countryside Properties, who were both interviewed for this study, said;

"We have to find ways, certainly in the case of Swanscombe, of engaging with existing communities regarding our proposals so that they input and have the ability to comment on them. We employ a dedicated community liaison individual who is responsible for liaising with local community groups." (RPY)

"The existing community is hugely important because they are the people who live and work there and have investments in the area. We have to consult them regularly and keep them informed so that they are able to play a part in the process. Without the support and enthusiasm of the existing population, regeneration won't be as successful.....The lessons learnt from the London Docklands are being brought to Kent Thameside, and the right people are being brought on board." (ACH)

These comments are consistent with the more community orientated approach to regeneration of successive governments over the last twenty years. Conscious of the limitations of the Urban Development Corporations of the early 1980s, which have been

widely criticised for their failure to engage existing communities and to respond to their social and economic needs (Turok, 1992, Imrie, Thomas, 1993b, Brownill 1999, Foster, 1999), Ministers have adopted a “less property-oriented and more ‘people’-oriented” form of regeneration (Foley, Martin, 2000, 481). The government has encouraged developers to “adopt the language of social inclusion, partnership and community focus” (Imrie, 2009, 98) and regeneration partnerships have been encouraged to engage the community at an early stage. Effective community involvement schemes, the Thames Gateway Evidence Review noted, have a key role to play in easing “some of the tensions that could rapidly build up as development progresses” and ensuring that existing residents do not feel “excluded and alienated as new developments are built” (Oxford Brookes University, 2006).

In order to assess the extent to which the Kent Thameside regeneration partners have succeeded in enabling residents to participate in the area’s regeneration, this chapter will examine two key resident participation initiatives launched in Kent Thameside: the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust and the Swanscombe Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan (NRSAP). As well as enabling us to answer one of this study’s key questions, this analysis will provide a useful addition to the literature on community involvement schemes in the Thames Gateway, which remains limited according to the Thames Gateway Evidence Review (Oxford Brookes University, 2006).

This chapter will begin by examining Blue Circle’s proposal to establish the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust; a community led body with its own dedicated resources and powers to deliver and manage specific projects within the community (Blue Circle Properties, 1996). It will then consider the design and implementation of the Swanscombe Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan (NRSAP) (Dartford Borough Council, 2003g). Launched in a bid to ensure that the “major threats to the sustainability of Swanscombe’ posed by new development” were “turned into ‘substantial opportunities’ for the community”, the Swanscombe NRSAP team sought to work with residents to identify and implement a series of local priorities for regeneration. This chapter will examine how successful the Swanscombe NRSAP has been in engaging residents to order to identify these priorities. We will then move on to consider the key findings from these case studies and the lessons we can take from them to inform future community involvement projects in the Thames Gateway.

8.2 Early promise? Blue Circle and the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust

8.2.1 The emergence of the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust model

In the early 1990s, Blue Circle was one of the main drivers behind the formation of the Kent Thameside Association. A key initial objective for Blue Circle and its KTA partners was to convince the Government to locate the proposed new international and domestic station on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link in Kent Thameside. After a well executed lobbying campaign led by Blue Circle, Ebbsfleet was confirmed as the location of the new station by the Government in August 1994.

Blue Circle's success illustrates the company's skill as a political operator. It understood, better than any of the other bid teams competing for the station¹¹, the importance of presenting a bid in terms that reflected the Government's regeneration priorities. Ministers had wanted a bid that contained a major housing and commercial development scheme capable of acting as a driver of growth across the region, so Blue Circle promised to deliver a 'Euro-city' capable of housing 40,000 people. Its success earned the grudging admiration of the London Evening Standard:

"Ebbsfleet is a dirty little stream that flows through a grubby valley into the Thames between Dartford and Gravesend. It doesn't even exist on the map. It was once the site of Europe's largest cement works. Those have now closed, but the land remained in the ownership of cement manufacturer Blue Circle. When the Government announced that it was looking to build an intermediate and domestic station for the CTRL, Blue Circle spotted the chance to convert a dead weight on its books into a glistening asset. Without the CTRL, Ebbsfleet was all but worthless. As the site of a throbbing international station it is a potential goldmine." (Osborne, 1994)

Having gained Government approval for a station at Ebbsfleet, Blue Circle turned its attention to planning the development around the station. Once again, it set out to ensure that its development concept was consistent with the Government's key regeneration policy goals. With the onus now on developers to speak the language of partnership, social inclusion and community focus, Blue Circle moved quickly to highlight its credentials as a socially responsible developer committed to inclusive regeneration. In early 1996 Blue Circle published its community development manifesto for Ebbsfleet, which set out its "guiding principles for the social and community development of Ebbsfleet" (Blue Circle Properties,

¹¹ Ebbsfleet was competing against Stratford and Rainham for the right to build the station.

1996). This manifesto, drafted by David Lock Associates, whose director was also the Government's Chief Planning Adviser, recognised that the Ebbsfleet Valley could "provide major opportunities to bring social, community and economic benefits to those currently living, working and doing business in the area".

In the manifesto Blue Circle outlined a series of mechanisms that would enable existing communities to influence the regeneration process. Chief among them was its proposal for the establishment of an 'Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust'. This new body, Blue Circle promised, would take the concept of an 'Ebbsfleet Forum' that had been proposed in the local authority led Ebbsfleet Development and Environment Framework, "one step further". Whereas the Ebbsfleet Forum would ensure "clear communications and co-ordination" between the developers, local authorities and the community, the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust would be a community led body with its own dedicated resources and powers to deliver and manage specific community projects. Elected community representatives would sit on this body alongside representatives from voluntary groups, local businesses, local authorities and other public sector bodies.

The Blue Circle manifesto justifies the creation of such a body by stating that "successful regeneration initiatives" are usually underpinned by the creation of "appropriate vehicles to service the needs of all those involved in the process of change and development"¹².

Equipped with its own funding, The Forum and Trust would be able to undertake a variety of community, conservation and economic activities within the Ebbsfleet Valley, such as the management of open space. It could also be used as a conduit for resources earmarked by the developer and other bodies for the delivery of projects within the existing communities. Such a body also had the potential to perform an economic role within the existing communities: fostering the development, for example, of community businesses responsible for the management of open space. In short, The Forum and Trust could become, Blue Circle believed, "a major force in determining and influencing the long-term institutional and community infrastructure of the area."

¹² One such vehicle is The Isle of Dogs Community Foundation (IDCF). Established in 1990, the IDCF is one of 64 community foundations in the UK. Community foundations have two principal remits - to establish a permanent and independent source of local charitable funds and to use these to make grants to local charities and voluntary groups for the benefit of the community. IDCF is a partnership between local businesses, statutory services, the voluntary sector and other intermediary agencies. It supports deprived communities on the Isle of Dogs and South Poplar. When London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) withdrew from the area in the late 1990s, it paid over to IDCF various amounts as endowments. The income from the endowment is available for grant giving along with any other funds that the Foundation raises.

This explicit recognition firstly of the importance of community engagement and secondly, and perhaps most strikingly, of the need to give existing residents the opportunity to establish some control over the regeneration process, was without precedent in Kent Thameside. The fact that it was first articulated by a developer rather than by a local authority is even more remarkable. It goes far beyond anything contained in 'Looking to the future', published just a few months previously (Kent Thameside Association, 1995). This discussed the need to make sure that existing residents benefit directly from the Kent Thameside initiative but failed to set out how this might happen. The Association admitted in its follow up document to Looking to the future published two years later that its earlier publication hadn't paid enough attention to the social and community dimension of regeneration or the question of community engagement (Kent Thameside Association, 1997).

Why was Blue Circle so keen to pursue the idea of The Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust? The company's corporate social responsibility agenda undoubtedly had a part to play. Blue Circle was the principal employer in the area for over a century, and had strong ties with Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross. The company would certainly have wanted to ensure that these communities were in a position to benefit from the regeneration opportunities presented by Ebbsfleet. Other members of the Kent Thameside Association however felt that Blue Circle's social agenda was borne of commercial expediency rather than a sense of benevolent paternalism. One sceptic was the Chief Executive of Dartford Borough Council at the time, who was interviewed for this study. In his view the company's obligation to extract the maximum possible commercial value from its Kent Thameside land holdings for its shareholders would always take priority over its social obligations to existing communities. While the Council and Blue Circle wanted similar outcomes from the regeneration programme, they were each motivated by different strategic objectives:

"The Managing Director of Blue Circle, Tony Kemp, kept telling me that Blue Circle had the same social agenda as I had. I didn't really believe it and I eventually said to him look we don't have the same agenda, you have the bottom line that you have to meet for your shareholders, I have the public interest to consider, but we may have common outcomes."

The proposed Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust was useful for Blue Circle in helping to sell their redevelopment plans firstly to the community and secondly to the local authority and central Government. Neutralising local opposition to their plans for Ebbsfleet would help Blue Circle to smooth the passage of its planning application through Dartford's development control

process. It also reduced the risk of the application being 'called in' by the Government and subjected to a planning inquiry and a lengthy and expensive delay. As a major application of national significance consisting of just under 800,000 square metres of employment, residential, leisure and retail development there was a strong possibility that Ministers would feel obliged to call it in for further scrutiny; even though it was consistent with Government policy for the Thames Gateway. The fact that Blue Circle submitted its formal planning application just two months after the publication of 'Ebbsfleet: the first steps' in January 1996, certainly adds credence to the argument that the Forum and Trust was a device designed primarily to help the company gain planning consent as quickly as possible.

An additional advantage for Blue Circle of the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust, according to Dartford Borough Council's Development Control Manager¹³, was that it would be able to limit the role of the local authorities in the management of Ebbsfleet and its amenities. The company had not been impressed by the way in which the local authority had managed the amenity land at the recently opened Crossways Business Park and was keen to avoid a repeat of this at Ebbsfleet. It wanted the Forum and Trust to take responsibility for managing Ebbsfleet's park land and leisure spaces, rather than Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council, which had offered to take on the role. Through the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust Blue Circle would be able to continue to exert a degree of control over how the amenity land at was managed and how its money was spent, while cultivating its image as an inclusive and community orientated developer.

Unsurprisingly, Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council failed to endorse the proposal for a Forum and Trust in its response to the public consultation on Blue Circle's application. Instead, the Town Council called for a liaison committee, whose membership would include the Council, to be set up to monitor the progress of the development – a proposal which was far less ambitious in scope than Blue Circle's idea of an Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust. The Council's willingness to accept a supervisory body with a very modest remit suggests that its members were concerned about the threat the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust might pose to the Council's political status and power in the community.

Nonetheless, when the application eventually came before Dartford Borough Council's Development Control Board in December 1997, the report to the board made particular reference to Blue Circle's proposal to establish an Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust (Dartford Borough Council, 1997). It also reminded members that the Ebbsfleet Development and Environment Framework had placed special "emphasis on the involvement of local

¹³ Personal communication, August 2008

communities as the development progresses”. Conscious of the Town Council’s concern about the Forum and Trust proposal, the report did not give an outright endorsement to the proposal, stating that “any proposals of this nature need to be considered in the context of the Kent Thameside partnership as whole”. However, it saw no reason why this extra work should delay consideration of the application. The Board duly granted the application provisional planning approval.

8.2.2 The abandonment of the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust model

In the end, the Borough Council was not required to make a decision about the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust. Although the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott announced in October 1998 that he wouldn’t be calling the application in so that it could be progressed “without delay” (DETR, 1998b), the Section 106 negotiations dragged on for another five years, and it didn’t receive formal outline approval until November 2002. By this time the property arm of Blue Circle which had lodged the application had ceased to exist. Having become part of Whitecliff Properties in late 1996, a joint venture between Blue Circle and Lend Lease, the developer of Bluewater, the new company collapsed in 2000 and its remaining assets and land interests were sold on to Land Securities¹⁴. With each change of ownership and personnel, the focus within the organisation on community issues such as the creation of a Forum and Trust at Ebbsfleet seems to have progressively diminished. Land Securities, Britain’s largest commercial property company with extensive interests in Westminster and the City of London, has much broader goals and strategic interests than either Whitecliff Properties or Blue Circle. According to Dartford Borough Council’s former Chief Executive, Land Securities was far less active locally than its predecessors:

“(One) thing that affected the Kent Thameside Association was that Blue Circle Industries entered into a deal called Whitecliff Properties with Lend Lease. This then collapsed and become part of Land Securities, who are a much bigger company in some respects in that Whitecliff were only involved in developing derelict land while Land Securities have other interests.” (CSH)

¹⁴ In February 2001 Land Securities PLC acquired Whitecliff Properties from Blue Circle Industries together with 1013 acres of its Kent Thames-side and Cambridge portfolios for £60 million. The Kent Thames-side projects to be acquired include Crossways Business Park, Stone Castle and Eastern Quarry. In addition Blue Circle and Land Securities agreed to develop in partnership a further 825 acres of Kent Thames-side at Ebbsfleet and Swanscombe Peninsula. Under the terms of the agreement Blue Circle retained ownership of the land while Land Securities provided development expertise and development funding. In the same month however Blue Circle Industries was taken over by the French building materials group, Lafarge, which now holds BCI’s stake in Ebbsfleet and Swanscombe Peninsula

These changes in ownership, combined with a general shift by developers to managing amenity land in house¹⁵, mean that the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust model is no longer being actively considered by either the Borough Council or Land Securities. The lack of any meaningful support from within the community for the model has also contributed to its abandonment. Conceived in house by Blue Circle for its own managerial and strategic reasons, the company never made any concerted attempt to sell the idea to residents or key stakeholders in the community. Had the company sought to do so, and presented it to residents as an opportunity to influence the development agenda and the manner in which the developer monies were spent in the existing communities, it may well have generated a local momentum of its own and been more difficult to dismiss.

It is an episode that illustrates the difficulty of seeking to impose a generic community engagement model on an area without paying due attention to the local circumstances. In an area with an established culture of community participation in major strategic issues, and a local authority sector which had the resources and experience to implement it, the Forum and Trust model may have been a success. In Kent Thameside however such a culture did not exist. In fact implementing the Forum and Trust model in such a climate may actually have set back the cause of community participation in Kent Thameside by reducing residents' trust in the regeneration partners and prompting them to view engagement activities with cynicism. As the National Community Forum has argued, "bad participation" can have a "destructive impact" on the relationship between communities and the individuals and agencies responsible for their governance and lead to the embedding of "poor engagement practices" (Morris, 2006).

It is fair to say therefore Blue Circle's proposal for an Ebbsfleet Forum Trust promised far more than it was ever likely to be able to deliver in the circumstances. The fact that Blue Circle was apparently ready to work with the community in the regeneration of Ebbsfleet was a major step forward, and one that shouldn't be underestimated. But the rhetoric of Blue Circle about the need for participation disguised another agenda which compromised the proposal. Vested local interests also played their part in side-lining the idea. In short, the area was ill-prepared for an initiative like this and its sponsors ill-equipped to implement it.

¹⁵ Personal communication with Dartford Borough Council's Development Control Manager, August 2008

8.3 Putting residents in control? The Swanscombe Neighbourhood Renewal Study and Action Plan

8.3.1 Introduction

The Swanscombe Neighbourhood Renewal Study and Action Plan (NRSAP) was set up in a bid to understand the needs of existing residents in Swanscombe and to examine how those needs could be met through the development process. It has been highlighted as an exemplar of effective community involvement in regeneration in the Thames Gateway. The Thames Gateway Evidence Review carried out by Oxford Brookes University picked it out as a rare example of “social regeneration being considered as seriously as physical regeneration” in the Thames Gateway (Oxford Brookes University, 2006). Physical regeneration may be quicker to achieve than social regeneration, it said, but without a concerted effort to promote social regeneration it would be difficult to deliver sustainable developments in the Gateway that were well integrated into the existing urban grain. Social regeneration projects such as the Swanscombe NRSAP, which attempt to “strengthen community capacity to manage the physical environment and engage in the regeneration process”, were fundamental, the review argued, to successful regeneration. The scheme has also been praised in an evaluation of community development work in North Kent by the University of Greenwich (Nelson, Quan, Forrester, Pound, 2005). This study, funded by the EU Urban II Thames Gateway Kent Programme, identified the Swanscombe NRSAP as a valuable opportunity to “strengthen community-based institutions and community engagement” in North Kent.

This section will examine the Swanscombe NSRAP in detail to assess whether it has had the financial and human resources and the institutional and community support necessary to meet these social objectives. Does the project deserve to be seen an exemplar of good practice? Or were the Oxford Brookes and Greenwich studies premature in identifying the Swanscombe NSRAP as an effective vehicle for delivering social regeneration in the Thames Gateway?

8.3.2 Background to the commissioning of the Swanscombe NRSAP

The Swanscombe NRSAP was influenced by the Labour Government’s Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. This provided additional funding, via the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund set up in 2001, to 88 of England’s most deprived authorities. Each of these areas was required to produce an ‘action plan’ that would identify, after extensive consultation with the local community, a set of key actions to improve the area and narrow the deprivation gap

between them and the rest of the country. The delivery of these action plans was led by Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) which included representatives from each main local public, private, voluntary and community organisation. These LSPs, the National Strategy Action Plan, stated, were “essential to co-ordinate services around the needs of each neighbourhood” and would ensure that “resources and policies... translate into real change” (Social Exclusion Unit, 2001b,10). Previous regeneration initiatives had been undermined, it argued, by a lack of joined up thinking at local level. Regeneration initiatives often failed to achieve the impact expected, it said, as only some of the partners involved in their delivery were able or willing to give them the strategic priority and resources they required. LSPs, which embodied the Labour Government’s enthusiasm for ‘joined up Government’, would ensure that such initiatives were delivered in a more coherent and consistent way in the future.

Kent Thameside wasn’t one the areas that received Neighbourhood Renewal Fund money, but the newly established Kent Thameside Local Strategic Partnership saw the Neighbourhood Renewal strategy as a useful template on which to base its own deprivation strategy. It would not only save on design costs and allow for a quicker implementation, it would also give the strategy greater credibility in the eyes of outside funders. Consequently, the LSP’s Kent Thameside Community Strategy published in January 2003 announced that a series of ‘priority communities’ would be identified along the lines suggested by the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (Kent Thameside Local Strategic Partnership, 2003). “Particular attention” would be paid to these priority communities, it said, given the “particular economic, social or environmental issues that make it difficult for them to share in the new opportunities change will bring”. The strategy promised that the LSP partners would “work alongside these communities to help find solutions that work for them.” ‘Neighbourhood Action Plans’ would then be developed to identify and implement relevant schemes in each priority community.

Four ‘priority communities’ in Dartford were identified using the data contained in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2000 shortly after the publication of the community strategy. One of the four communities, Swanscombe, was then selected as the most suitable candidate for the Borough’s first Neighbourhood Renewal Study and Action Plan following consultation with the ODPM’s Thames Gateway Executive. Their decision was influenced by a number of key local and national policy documents which recognised the need to allocate additional resources to Swanscombe in view of its deprivation challenges and its proximity to Ebbsfleet. The Case for Kent Thameside, for example, had highlighted the need for

“A mechanism to safeguard the future interests...of areas such as Swanscombe, Northfleet and Greenhithe with a strong sense of community identity that will be at the centre of major new commercial, transport and residential developments”.

(Dartford Borough Council, Thameside Local Authorities Team, Travers, Kleinman, 1998)

This call was repeated in the Government commissioned Thames Gateway Review in 2001 (Roger Tym and Partners and Three Dragons, 2001). The review, which cited The Case for Kent Thameside, reminded Ministers that “many of the facilities within the existing communities are already under pressure and underfunded” and made it clear that this needed to be urgently addressed if the Government’s regeneration vision for the Gateway was to be achieved.

The decision to select Swanscombe as the site of Dartford’s first Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan was announced at Dartford Borough Council’s General Assembly on 27 January 2003. Swanscombe, the Leader of the Council told members, had been chosen due to;

“Its high level of deprivation; its geographical proximity to the new developments in the Kent Thameside area; and the likely effect the developments on the area.”

(Dartford Borough Council, 2003d)

The fact, he said, that there was already an “enormous amount of activity taking place in Swanscombe in both the voluntary and statutory sectors”, had helped to convince the Council to choose Swanscombe. Over the previous year substantial funding from the EU Urban II Programme, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Children’s Fund had been levered into Swanscombe, creating a pool of resources to deliver the Action Plan. The Action Plan itself, he said, which was evidence of a shared commitment by all the Kent Thameside LSP partners to prioritise Swanscombe’s needs, would help to attract further funding in the future.

Following the announcement, a working group composed of the Borough Council, Kent County Council, Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council, North Kent Police and representatives from the voluntary and community sector was set up to produce a formal brief for the project. The resulting brief had three main elements. Firstly; it stipulated that the NRSAP should include an analysis of how the new development in the Ebbsfleet Valley “will impact on the Swanscombe community”. Secondly; it called for “key actions” to “facilitate the regeneration of Swanscombe in the short, medium and longer-term” to be identified along with potential funding streams and delivery agencies. Finally; it made it clear that the NRSAP

should be “grounded in community consultation” and should include a “methodology for building the capacity of the local community to determine their own future”. Dartford Borough Council then made a successful funding bid to produce the Swanscombe NRSAP to the EU Urban II Programme, with match funding coming from the ODPM and the Council. Stratford Development Partnership (SDP) - which had managed Stratford’s SRB programme ‘Tomorrow’s City’ for seven years and developed NRSAPs elsewhere in the country - was also recruited to lead the development of the NRSAP.

8.3.3 Engaging residents in the Neighbourhood Renewal Study and Action Plan

The resources available for the planning and design of the Neighbourhood Renewal Study and Action Plan (NRSAP) were relatively modest. The total budget was only £20,000¹⁶ while the funding criteria meant that money had to be spent in just a few months between April and July 2003. The Labour administration of the Borough Council was also keen to push the project forward as quickly as possible given the imminence of the local elections.

Under such circumstances it was difficult to ensure that the NRSAP was grounded in community consultation as the brief required. By the time the final NRSAP was published in August 2003, the only direct face to face contact that SDP had had with residents was a half day focus group exercise attended by just eight people. Some face to face interviews were carried out by the team but these were with ‘key stakeholders’ such as local authority Councillors and officers, developers, business and voluntary sector representatives and statutory sector providers.

A written questionnaire was delivered to all 2,500 households in Swanscombe, but despite a freepost return address and a £100 prize draw, only 222 questionnaires were returned; a response rate of 8.9 per cent. This, the NRSAP admitted, was “not a representative sample” of the village’s population and was “lower than anticipated”. Yet its authors should not have been surprised. The yield from written questionnaires is notoriously poor and rarely exceeds one or two in ten - especially in areas with low educational attainment and literacy levels like Swanscombe (Simmons, 2008). The abstract nature of the questions may also have deterred potential respondents. Residents were asked to describe the long-term impact on Swanscombe of the regeneration plans for Kent Thameside rather than about specific events or developments on the immediate horizon. They may also have been put off by the

¹⁶ £5,000 came from Urban Thames Gateway Kent and £15,000 was provided by Dartford Borough Council and the ODPM.

fact that their views were being sought for the purposes of producing an 'action plan', rather than a tangible project.

If members of the Kent Thameside LSP had any concerns about the survey methodology, they didn't share them at any meetings at which the NRSAP was discussed in 2003. Nor were any concerns expressed by Dartford Borough Council. Dartford's new Conservative led cabinet welcomed the NRSAP at their meeting on 16 October 2003 and called it "an excellent opportunity for the people of Swanscombe" (Dartford Borough Council, 2003a). The Council's decision to include the Swanscombe NRSAP as a case study in its self-assessment document submitted to the Audit Commission as part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment exercise, suggests that it was satisfied with SDP's work (Dartford Borough Council, 2003c). Indeed, it highlights SDP's work in "contacting stakeholders active in Swanscombe" and organising "questionnaires, meetings and focus groups with residents". It suggests that the Council's primary concern was simply to demonstrate that a consultation with residents – of one kind or another – had taken place. It appears to have been less concerned about the robustness of the methodology used to carry it out or even the quality of the findings it produced.

The interviews with senior Councillors carried out for this study support this view. They accept that community consultation has become a necessary part of a local authority's work, but their understanding of what consultation is, or what it can be used to achieve is often narrow. Consultation in their view is merely a device, developed on the local authority's terms, for communicating decisions and existing policy priorities to local residents. There is no suggestion that residents' views will have any influence on the decision making process or be used to help shape the direction of future policy. Moreover, Councillors' expectations as to the community's likely level of interest in such consultation exercises are often very low.

The Labour Leader of Dartford Borough Council, who commissioned the Swanscombe NRSAP at the start of 2003 just before Labour lost control of the Council, admitted that the response to the council's consultation exercises on regeneration had often been "very poor". The Council had, he said when interviewed for this study, "issued a number of leaflets and had a number of meetings over the years" to "try to inform and advise about what it is we are trying to do in Kent Thameside" but only a handful of residents had ever attended these meetings or provided feedback on the leaflets. Nonetheless, he felt that the Council was doing everything it could be reasonably expected to do to engage residents. The problem,

he felt, was that “trying to interest people in regeneration is very difficult....you shouldn’t expect too much”.

However one senior director in the Borough Council, who was interviewed for this study, was critical of the Council’s approach to community engagement.

“I think that we’ve been rather conservative with a small ‘c’ in the way we’ve tried to engage the community, and by and large we’re a bit frightened of it as an authority...We haven’t been able to do it; we haven’t found the techniques.... I would say that we haven’t really been pushed by members to find different ways.” (RSC)

In Swanscombe, he said, an added problem was that the local members were unwilling to countenance any engagement with residents that wasn’t directly controlled by them. A case in point was the Community Festival that was held as a result of the Swanscombe NRSAP.

“The festival’s purpose was to get the community together to think more positively about itself; to develop a sense of empowerment so that it could move forward and take a more participative role in what’s going on around it. The festival almost got wrecked because of a political spat over who should launch it, who should be invited to it, how much the officer concerned should be reporting to the various members who might have an interest in it. It made things very difficult and it made the officers very nervous to go out and do the same things again.” (RSC)

This example was symptomatic he felt of the attitude of the Borough Council leadership’s attitude towards community engagement in Swanscombe after the 2003 local elections. Elected Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association Town and Borough Councillors were suspicious of Borough Council officers’ attempts to engage with ‘their’ residents and often obstructed their efforts to do so. As the Residents Association had a seat on the Borough Council cabinet they had the authority to block any engagement initiative or capacity building project they distrusted. In fact, he and his officers were often told by Swanscombe Councillors that such engagement work was unnecessary as they ‘understood’ what the community wanted to achieve from the regeneration taking place.

“If you’re going to find out what the people really want, what their aspirations are and think through how you’re going to deliver that when you’ve got a new development on the way, you’ve got to be talking to them. The Town Council stand as a barrier between us and the people of Swanscombe. They presume to know everything about what the community of Swanscombe thinks and feels. It’s impossible to get past

them to develop a meaningful dialogue of our own.....That's why I don't really know what the community thinks: I know what the Leader of the Residents Association thinks, he tells me every day, but that's about it." (RSC)

It is evident therefore that limited community consultation carried out by SDP while the evidence base for the Swanscombe NRSAP was consistent with the wishes and expectations of the Borough Council's Councillors at the time. Although the NRSAP brief called for the final action plan to be 'grounded in consultation' there was little appetite locally - among elected members at least - to ensure that this recommendation was put into practice.

8.3.4 Formal adoption and implementation of the Neighbourhood Renewal Study and Action Plan

The final Swanscombe NRSAP was adopted by Dartford Borough Council in March 2004. A Swanscombe neighbourhood renewal co-ordinator was also appointed by the Council for a three year period, with the help of funding from the Urban II Programme to liaise between the various delivery partners involved in the action plan. Some of the sheen was taken off this announcement however by the news that the Borough Council's Community Department was to be abolished and that the Council's Director of Community, who had been responsible for initiating the NRSAP, would be leaving the Council. The remainder of her department, which had lost many of its staff over the previous twelve months, was to be absorbed, the Council revealed, into an expanded Planning and Regeneration department.

The range of initiatives identified in the NRSAP was extremely wide. Many of them sought to improve the appearance and character of the village and consequently to try to blur the distinction between the new communities of the Ebbsfleet Valley and the existing community in Swanscombe. A major programme of environmental improvements to the social housing development in Gunn Road was proposed based on "intensive consultation with local residents". Improvements to Swanscombe's street-scene, albeit modest in scale, were also included in the plan. There was even some discussion about developing a strategy to use Section 106 planning gain resources to improve the quality of the existing private sector housing stock; although this was never put into action. The NRSAP also called for the development of a retail strategy to improve Swanscombe's shopping facilities and provide the community with a more clearly defined focal point. Measures to improve access for Swanscombe residents to the employment opportunities and transport services in the Ebbsfleet Valley also featured in the document.

A section on community involvement and capacity building was also included in the final NRSAP. It stated, somewhat ironically given SDP's marked failure to engage residents in the production of the NRSAP, that "robust community involvement ...and the involvement and support of local communities is a pre-requisite in order to achieve successful regeneration". In the final NRSAP, SDP had drawn attention to the "unusual" absence of any tenants or residents associations within Swanscombe. They felt that this was indicative of a culture of "low self-esteem and low aspiration in Swanscombe" and also a consequence of the "strong perception that in the past the Council has not listened to the concerns of Swanscombe residents". This lacuna needed to be addressed they warned if residents were to be able to engage directly in the regeneration process. Consequently, they recommended the establishment of a representative board comprised of residents, representatives from the business sector, the voluntary sector and the statutory sector which would operate along the same lines as a New Deal for Communities Partnership Board. As well as allowing residents to engage in the regeneration process, the board would also monitor and drive forward the recommendations contained in the NRSAP and ensure that there was a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of services. With the right support "the Swanscombe Partnership" might be in a position in three to five years time to act as a 'community trust', the authors hoped, with the power to distribute small grants and manage regeneration funding. And to enable local residents to "successfully carry their remit on the board" and become effective community activists, it was proposed that a capacity building programme should be set up. This would help residents to develop financial and governance skills as well as soft skills like assertiveness and negotiation and fundraising skills.

The Swanscombe Partnership proposal bore a strong resemblance to Blue Circle Properties' call for the creation of an Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust in 1995; a proposal that had already been effectively abandoned by the time the Swanscombe NRSAP was published. The NRSAP authors acknowledge the obstacles that the partnership would need to overcome if it was to succeed. First of all it would need to gain the acceptance of Swanscombe residents, "large numbers" of whom, the authors admitted, "still view the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Association as their representative 'community' organisation" despite its emergence as a political party. Secondly, it would have to win the support of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council: "Care needs to be taken", the authors said, to ensure that the Swanscombe Partnership "avoids duplicating the responsibilities of the local authorities, particularly those of Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council". The NRSAP did not, however, provide any practical ideas as to how such territorial disputes between the two bodies could be prevented. Moreover, the timing of the Swanscombe Partnership

proposal was poor. As the minority partner since May 2003 in the governing coalition on Dartford Borough Council, the Residents Association was in a strong position to rebuff any proposal that threatened its political pre-eminence in Swanscombe.

SDP's analysis, which emphasised the need to create a non political community counterweight to the Residents Association in order to encourage wider community participation in the regeneration debate, was a well considered one. But its policy prescription, which failed to take account of the fate of the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust, or to consider the prevailing political climate in Dartford, was ill-judged. It was a generic solution that was a poor fit for Swanscombe's specific needs at the time.

Unsurprisingly the reaction to the Swanscombe Partnership proposal was muted. When they met to formally sign off the Swanscombe NRSAP on 21 March 2004, the members of Dartford Borough Council's Cabinet ignored the consultants' recommendation for a partnership. Moreover, the Conservative members present made it clear that they wouldn't consider any new administrative arrangement that jeopardised the pre-eminence of the Town Council and their new allies in the Residents' Association. As the minutes noted;

"Members were keen that the Town Council be recognised as a primary force for change within the community and should take the lead on policy formulation whenever possible" (Dartford Borough Council, 2004a).

The new Conservative administration's distaste for unelected partnerships no doubt also helped to hasten the demise of the putative Swanscombe Partnership. A month or so before adopting the NRSAP the Cabinet had implemented a review of the Council's involvement in the various partnerships that had been set up at local and regional level to promote regeneration in Kent Thameside and the wider Thames Gateway. Partnership working in this area was placing "a significant burden on the Council in terms of resource demands" a Cabinet report of 18 December 2003 noted (Dartford Borough Council, 2003b). Not only were these arrangements very "complex", but there were "significant areas of overlap in terms of both functions and membership". A "rationalisation" would help to ensure efficient use of Council resources and also to help streamline the service delivery process. It is no surprise therefore that the Cabinet was unenthusiastic about the creation of another administrative layer in Swanscombe.

Interest in the Swanscombe Partnership proposal may have been limited but it didn't prevent the Borough Council and the Town Council from pressing ahead with other aspects of the Swanscombe NRSAP over the next few years. The Borough Council successfully sought

funding for a number of major projects in Swanscombe identified in the NRSAP from the ODPM's Sustainable Communities Fund in 2004-05¹⁷. It also persuaded SEEDA to commission a master plan for Swanscombe and Greenhithe that would provide the ODPM and its partners with a rationale for sustained long-term expenditure on infrastructural projects within the two villages. The resulting Swanscombe and Greenhithe Master Plan document, which was produced by EDAW, another private consultancy, was published in March 2005 (EDAW Plc, 2005). Like the Swanscombe NRSAP, the Master Plan called for "greater engagement of the local community in the planning and development of the area": It also warned that the implementation of the Master Plan "will not be possible without enthusiastic support from local communities". Yet the recommendations made by EDAW were produced without any obvious consultation with residents at all. All of the discussions it had were limited to a select group of Councillors and officers from the Borough and Town Councils and an unspecified group of other "key stakeholders". Again, this does not seem to have been challenged in any way, publicly at least, by Council officers or Councillors.

8.3.5 Judging the value of the Swanscombe NRSAP

How then should we judge the Swanscombe NRSAP? As a means of helping to lever in external investment to Swanscombe it must surely rank as a success; at least in the immediate aftermath of its launch. Without it the funding allocated to Swanscombe from the Government's Sustainable Communities Fund in 2004-05 probably wouldn't have been made available. One might question how this money was spent but the fact that it was made available at all counts as a considerable achievement. After all, Swanscombe was one of very few existing communities in the Thames Gateway to receive any direct investment from the fund. It suggests that the Government was equally as impressed by the Swanscombe NRSAP as the teams from Oxford Brookes and Greenwich. Just as importantly, the NRSAP was successful in raising Swanscombe's profile both locally and nationally and in encouraging other public and private agencies to invest resources in its regeneration. SEEDA, Kent County Council, the Gateway Knowledge Alliance, Jobcentre Plus, Cisco Systems Ltd, the Urban Fund and Groundwork were among the organisations that pledged support for projects that were set out in the NRSAP.

¹⁷ In September 2004 a bid for Sustainable Communities Plan funding worth £1.49million for projects in Swanscombe was submitted to the ODPM by Dartford Borough Council. In October 2004 the ODPM approved £1million of funding for Swanscombe. The principal projects funded from this allocation were: Improvements to the Swanscombe streetscene £130,000; Improvements to the Gunn Road Estate £374,500; London Rd junction improvements £165,000.

But while the Swanscombe NRSAP's immediate impact in terms of attracting external funding was appreciable, its long-term impact is more difficult to identify. Once the initial flurry of funding activity was over, the NRSAP faded quickly from view. A year after its endorsement by Dartford Borough Council's Cabinet, the NRSAP and its project delivery plan was "amalgamated" with the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Masterplan to form a "holistic project list" that the Cabinet hoped would provide "a clearer framework for action" (Dartford Borough Council, 2005a). The casual manner in which the Council dispensed with the NRSAP, supposedly the centrepiece of its regeneration policy for Swanscombe, suggests it had few real supporters within the authority or in the community. Things may well have been different if SDP had succeeded in ensuring that it was as "well grounded in community consultation" as the initial project brief had stipulated. Had residents been involved from the start in determining what projects should be brought forward for funding through the NRSAP it would not have been jettisoned so quickly. Interest from the community would have helped to sustain the NRSAP's initial momentum by maintaining the pressure on the Council and its partners to find the resources necessary to deliver the projects in the action plan. Yet few residents were aware of what the NRSAP was, or why it existed.

The Swanscombe NSRAP can be seen therefore as another object lesson in how not to engage the community. It was commissioned no doubt out of a genuine desire to improve the lot of Swanscombe's existing residents and to give them some control over the regeneration process. Yet short-term political expediency, namely the outgoing Labour administration's desire to be seen to be taking immediate action within Swanscombe, coupled with a lack of resources, meant that the NRSAP was conceived and executed too quickly with too little input from the community. Once complete, the new Council administration was happy to exploit it for the purposes of satisfying its auditors, and the Government was equally eager to reward the Council for its best practice in promoting social regeneration. No-one seems to have had any interest however in sustaining it once these objectives had been met. The Town Council, wary of any attempt to usurp its authority, undoubtedly played a big role in its demise, but we should be cautious about attributing too much blame to them. The Town Council's reluctance to co-operate with the Borough Council may have provided officers with a convenient excuse (in private at least) for the deficiencies of their engagement strategy, but it is by no means the only factor. The working culture within the Borough Council was hardly conducive to successful community engagement. There was no overt attempt by the Council's directors or by elected Councillors to scrutinise the Council's engagement policy or any concerted call to place the policy at the centre of the

Council's operations. As far as the Borough Council was concerned it was a policy area of marginal importance that deserved only marginal resources and political capital.

Perhaps more could have been achieved if further funding had been made available from the Government for the projects set out in the NRSAP and its successor documents, but the funding tap was very deliberately turned off by the ODPM after the first round of Sustainable Communities Plan funding in 2004/05. According to a senior Borough Council director interviewed for this study the ODPM decided that not enough progress was being made on housing delivery in Kent Thameside to justify the deployment of additional money for existing communities. Without this money, and with little prospect of any other external funder taking the ODPM's place, the conjoined Swanscombe NRSAP and Masterplan was allowed to fade, virtually unnoticed, from public view.

8.4 Conclusions

On the face of it, the community engagement models examined in this chapter would seem to exemplify the sustainable, community orientated regeneration culture that successive governments have sought to instil in this country. The innovative Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust model proposed by Blue Circle was more ambitious than any method being considered at the time by the company's local authority partners in Kent Thameside. If implemented it would have given the existing community the opportunity to play a central role in deciding how the developer contributions generated by the Ebbsfleet development should be spent. It would also have allowed the community to get involved in the management of the new amenities created by the Ebbsfleet development. The Swanscombe Neighbourhood Renewal Study and Action Plan was equally ambitious in its objectives: Not only did it set out with the purpose of identifying projects that would enable the existing community to benefit from the regeneration taking place, it aimed to ensure that its recommendations were grounded in community consultation.

Yet, as this chapter has shown, neither project was ever in a position to achieve these aims. Both were hampered from the start by their sponsors' ambivalent attitude to community engagement. To Blue Circle the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust was primarily a concession to Government demands for 'inclusive regeneration; though it also had a value as a mechanism to help the company retain control over the amenities created at Ebbsfleet. Dartford Borough Council, meanwhile, was more interested in protecting its relationship with Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council, than it was in engaging Swanscombe residents in a meaningful way. Without determined, influential supporters at the heart of each

organisation capable of inspiring others and navigating a path past the obstacles standing in their way, both projects were destined to fail to achieve their engagement goals.

The projects exhibit many of the failings that have undermined previous community engagement exercises. There are strong parallels, for example, between the Stratford Community Forum, introduced as part of the Stratford City Challenge, and the putative Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust. According to Fearnley the Stratford Community Forum, which was set up in order to co-ordinate community consultation and participation, “never quite found its feet, arguably a victim of its origins, established as it was by local authority officers as a pragmatic response to Department of Environment requirements” (Fearnley, 2000, 575). The fact that its “members were operating within an organisation and structure which was not ‘theirs’ curtailed their effectiveness and meant that there “was only limited community-based ownership of key aspects of the Action Plan”. The Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust, also a pragmatic, top-down response to Government requirements, displays the same structural defects as the Stratford Community Forum. Like the members of the Stratford Community Forum, the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust members would have been constrained by a structure imposed from above and dependent on their sponsor for funding and administrative support. This would have made it difficult for them to forge a distinctive identity and remit of their own.

In this sense mechanisms like The Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust, despite being couched in the language of decentralisation and empowerment, are simply another means for powerful government and corporate actors to reinforce their control over local community actors. These arms length bodies are, as Taylor shows - drawing on the work of Foucault and governmentality theorists - often very effective in extending and normalising the political agenda of their sponsors (Taylor, 2007). Inviting local people to participate in the governance process - providing of course that they observe the rules that underpin that process - can help to neutralise resistance and ‘reproduce’ central power in new forms at local level. In this way control over local actors is exercised, not through coercion, but through co-option. The opportunity for local actors to resist the agendas of government or corporate actors and come up with their own alternative narratives does of course exist, but in reality the power imbalance between the two and the ability of the latter to frame the ‘rules of the game’ makes this difficult to achieve (Imrie, 2009).

It is clear, therefore, that there is still a considerable amount of work to do in Kent Thameside before the rhetoric about the importance of empowering local residents to participate in the regeneration process can be translated into reality. To realise this goal,

local authorities and their partners should start by re-evaluating their attitude to community engagement. Effective community engagement takes time and requires authorities to be willing to accept outcomes that are not always consistent with their strategic outcomes, but it is nonetheless a crucial feature of modern Government. Today's society demands a more open, collaborative, inclusive and transparent form of politics and "networked leaders" who have the capacity to "learn, listen and adapt" (Campbell, 2011). Consequently community engagement needs to be prioritised, and not treated as a minor, peripheral part of the governmental process. Local authorities need to learn to "embed a participation culture" into the heart of their operations (Morris, 2006).

Secondly, local authorities and their partners need to reassess the way in which they engage their local communities. Speaking some years after he left the authority, a former Chief Executive of Dartford Borough Council, who was interviewed for this study, was candid in his assessment of the limitations of the engagement strategies used in local government. Local authorities, he felt, not only failed to ask the right questions when they engaged the community, they failed to consider what it was they hoped to achieve through the process.

"Local authorities and their development partners are very bad engaging the community. I think that if you are going to engage people then you've got to look at mutual self-interest. People in Dartford aren't really that bothered about how lovely Eastern Quarry is because they're not going to live there. They're going to be affected by it during its construction. They're going to be competing with the people that live there when they finally move in. So what are their interests in the development? What benefits are there for them? That's something we're very poor at. I don't think that we do enough of 'what's in it for me'. Almost everywhere is like that though; Dartford isn't unique." (CSH)

It is a fair criticism. Many attempts at community engagement fail because more attention is spent on process than on outcomes; or in short the 'how' rather than the 'why'. Very often it is hard to detect why an engagement exercise is being conducted - other than the need to be seen to be consulting residents and thus fulfilling various corporate and project management objectives. A lot of effort is spent on ensuring that the process is sound and that key groups have an adequate opportunity to take part, but rarely do officials stop to consider whether it is an exercise that people would actually *want* to take part in. Unfortunately, there is still a pervasive view in many town halls - as has been shown in this chapter - that whatever you do to engage with the public you will fail to get a response from

the overwhelming majority of people. This attitude is reason we see so many sterile, cynical and self-serving efforts at community engagement.

People will choose to take part in engagement exercises when it is in their interests to do so. If the exercise relates to an issue that will have a direct impact on their daily lives, such as the possible loss of a much needed local service, then they will take part - particularly if it is clear that the outcome has *not* already been determined. They choose to take part because they feel they *need* to, rather than they *ought* to. Once this happens the issue can quickly develop a momentum of its own and energise the community. Even people with a marginal stake in the issue are swept along by its momentum; either because they don't want to disappoint their neighbours or friends or simply because they don't want to be left out. The most successful engagement exercises are effectively appropriated by the community and spawn a network of community activists, many of whom will have had no prior history of activism, who will then go on to fight other battles on behalf of their community.

By embracing community engagement in a more meaningful way and making sure that every exercise is transparent and has a genuine purpose, we can go some way to ensuring that Kent Thameside residents are able to participate effectively in the regeneration process.

Chapter 9 Blurring the boundaries: An assessment of the impact of public sector financed neighbourhood renewal projects aimed at reducing the disparity between Kent Thameside's new developments and its existing communities

9.1 Introduction

In chapters seven and eight we examined the attempts by the Kent Thameside regeneration partners to promote the social and physical integration of new and existing communities and to empower existing residents to participate in the area's regeneration. In this chapter we will consider two key neighbourhood renewal projects in the existing community which sought to achieve both of these objectives.

From the start of the Kent Thameside project in the 1990s new development on the area's brownfield sites has been seen by local politicians as a vital means of generating funds for the renewal of the area's existing communities. For one long-standing Leader of Dartford Borough Council interviewed for this study, the first and foremost goal of the regeneration project was to "create a better quality of life for the people who already live here" through investment in the physical and social fabric of existing communities. By the end of the Kent Thameside programme there would, he hoped, be no overt social or physical disparity between the new and existing communities.

The Council's private sector partners have also underlined the importance of investing in existing communities. A senior Land Securities executive interviewed for this study said;

"We don't want to create isolated new development ghettos that have good facilities that alienate existing communities because they can't answer the question 'what do I get out of this?' We have a positive policy when it comes to investing in existing facilities rather than build new facilities for the sake of it. This will encourage the dual use of facilities by existing and new communities." (RPY)

The Kent Thameside policy framework also reflects this goal. The Kent Thameside Regeneration Framework, for example, refers to the need for "strong links between the existing and the new communities" and called for "new and improved community facilities". The EU's Urban II Kent Thameside Programme, meanwhile, aimed to "build the capacity and confidence of (existing) communities in order to enhance social inclusion and to reduce the disparities with the standards set in the new developments". This desire to blur the boundaries between the new and existing communities by improving the built environment of

existing communities was also instrumental in the establishment of the Swanscombe Neighbourhood Renewal Study and Action Plan (NSRAP) and the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Masterplan (Dartford Borough Council, 2003g, EDAW, 2005). Crucially, both of these plans highlighted the importance of ensuring that such renewal schemes were resident driven in their design and delivery.

This chapter will consider whether the Kent Thameside regeneration partners have been able to translate this commitment to blurring the boundaries between the new and existing communities into action. It will examine two key neighbourhood renewal projects led by the local authorities and their partners that have been implemented in Kent Thameside in the last decade. It will explore the reasons for their selection before going on to look at how they were planned and delivered and whether they were able to meet their identified objectives. The response of the existing residents affected by these projects will also be considered. As well as providing another opportunity to assess the regeneration partners' success in promoting the integration of new and existing communities and empowering existing residents to participate in regeneration, this analysis will allow us to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the local authorities and their partners as delivery agencies.

This chapter will start with an analysis of the Gunn Road Environmental Improvements Scheme in Swanscombe, the best resourced renewal scheme to arise out of the Swanscombe Neighbourhood Renewal Study and Action Plan (NSRAP). Funded by Dartford Borough Council, the Urban II Programme and the ODPM's Sustainable Communities Fund, and led by the Borough Council, the scheme aimed to deliver substantial improvements in the appearance and security of the Gunn Road estate, a key social housing estate in Swanscombe. We will then move on to consider the Swanscombe Heritage Park scheme, a new community park created in 2005 on a site where a world renowned set of Palaeolithic human remains were discovered. Led by Groundwork Kent and Medway, the project received funding from the ODPM's Sustainable Communities Fund and the Single Regeneration Budget and was one of the key environmental schemes implemented as a result of the Kent Thameside regeneration programme.

This chapter will end with a summary of the key findings from the two case studies and a discussion of the lessons which we can take from them to inform future neighbourhood renewal projects in the Thames Gateway.

Map 9.1 Location of the Gunn Road scheme and Swanscombe Heritage Park



Source: © Google (2012)

9.2 The Gunn Road Environmental Improvements Scheme

9.2.1 Introduction

A key issue to emerge out of the community consultation carried out as part of the Swanscombe NSRAP was a widespread concern among residents about the state of the local environment. The final NSRAP report stated that;

“Dissatisfaction with the general environment featured strongly in the consultation, particularly with reference to traffic congestion, dirt, dust and the unkempt state of small green spaces such as road verges....Poor signage, a dilapidated street scene and a lack of definition and focus to Swanscombe have all been frequently raised” (Dartford Borough Council, 2003g).

In response to these concerns the Swanscombe NRSAP recommended a series of steps to “improve the long-term sustainability of the community” such as an immediate programme of streetscape improvements. It also called for a review of existing council led horticulture and street cleaning services and suggested that if standards were not being met - or those standards were “not appropriate in light of major new developments in the area” - that developer contributions should be sought to raise the standards of the contract. In addition, the NRSAP identified a need for greater council tenant involvement in the monitoring and

management of environmental services; noting that “there is virtually no tenant involvement activity from local residents”.

The key project to emerge from these recommendations was the Gunn Road Environmental Improvements Scheme. Building on work undertaken by the Town Council, the NRSAP identified the Gunn Road estate, a development of medium rise flats still largely owned and managed by Dartford Borough Council¹⁸, as being in particular need of an environmental overhaul. Surrounded on all sides by low rise terracing and bungalows, much of which is now privately owned, the Gunn Road estate was widely seen as one of the borough’s more challenging estates.

The estate had a high turnover of tenants with many new tenants being housed from homeless by the council from other parts of the borough. A local GP interviewed for this study, who has been based in Swanscombe for twenty five years, said;

“There tends to be pockets of housing that are managed by the council where there’s been an influx of families that are difficult to manage and also single parent families....If you take the council flats in Gunn Road, I’ve seen them move from a sort of middle aged or elderly population in to a predominantly young population - often single parents: they’ve been labelled as an area of difficult social housing.” (ATH)

At the time when the Gunn Road scheme was being designed in 2003/04, the estate was also experiencing significant crime and anti-social behaviour problems. Around 200 offences had been reported in the previous year, although many others incidents went unreported. Criminal damage was a particular problem with graffiti, smashed windows, together with vandalism and arson to the garages, sheds and bin stores to the rear of the flats being the most common offences. Many offences occurred at night with local youths migrating to the estate from the neighbouring park once it closed at dusk. As a result the estate was in poor repair and had become an unattractive environment in which to live.

¹⁸ Only 1 of the 50 flats on the Gunn Road estate was sold on the open market between 2000 and 2010 (Right Move, 2011)

Picture 9.1 View of the Gunn Road Flats looking south in 2008



Source: Bryan Jones (2008)

Picture 9.2 View of the Gunn Road Flats looking north in 2008



Source: Bryan Jones (2008)

Picture 9.3 View of the Gunn Road Flats looking east in 2008



Source: Bryan Jones (2008)

Map 9.2 The Gunn Road Environmental Improvements Scheme showing location of pictures 9.1-9.3



Source: © Google (2012)

To address these problems the Swanscombe NSRAP promised a major programme which would lead to improvements in the appearance and security of the Gunn Road based on “intensive consultation with residents”. This section will consider whether the scheme was able to achieve these objectives. Firstly, it will look at how successful it has been in creating a public realm which stands comparison with the best in Kent Thameside. Secondly it will consider how effective the project team has been in engaging local residents and delivering a scheme that reflected their needs and aspirations. It will also seek to draw some conclusions about the readiness of the project partners to deliver renewal schemes of this nature.

9.2.2 Planning and implementing the Gunn Road Improvements Scheme

In the run up to final publication of the Swanscombe NRSAP in the summer of 2003 a team from Dartford Borough Council consulted residents in and around the estate and local councillors in order to identify the key outputs and outcomes for the proposed Gunn Road scheme. The Council took its ‘Dartford Talking’ consultation trailer to the estate on two occasions to canvass residents’ opinions about the issues facing the estate and how they could be resolved through the scheme. It then followed this up with an evening meeting at a community hall close to the estate. Six key issues to be addressed emerged from this initial consultation:

- Poorly designed footpaths and walkways
- Insecure and inappropriately located communal gardens
- Hazardous bin stores at basements of the apartment blocks
- Insecure and vandalised garages
- Intruders in the apartment blocks
- Graffiti, vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

As well as improving the security and physical appearance of the estate, the Council hoped that the Gunn Road scheme would provide a means to increase tenant involvement in the management of the estate and strengthen the community. At the time there was “a fairly low sense of community” on the estate according to the Council’s project development framework (Dartford Borough Council, 2003e). Moreover, there was no concerted pressure from residents on the authorities to address the estate’s problems or invest in its infrastructure or indeed any independent initiatives aimed at tackling them emerging from residents. This was due, the project framework claimed, to a combination of high resident turnover, high levels of criminal damage and fear of crime and a degraded environment.

A key output for the scheme therefore was to ensure that estate residents served on the Environmental Development Team¹⁹ which would be set up to develop and deliver the scheme. This team would be complemented by a residents' led steering group that would monitor the scheme. Not only would this encourage the community "to take ownership of the project" and build a culture of tenant participation on the estate, the project framework concluded, it would help to ensure that the "environmental improvements were not reversed by vandals". However, it took the Council longer to set up the steering group than it had expected. By the time the Council's Housing Manager and its Tenant Participation Officer started the process of recruiting residents willing to serve on the steering group in November 2003, the first designs for the scheme had already been produced. And it wasn't until the very end of 2003, when the first phase of construction had been due to begin, that the steering group met for the first time.

The first outline plan for the scheme was developed in house by the Council, before being passed to Architecture Limited for detailed design work (Dartford Borough Council, 2003f). Two designs involving the re-siting of entrance doors, the demolition of some or all of the garages, the removal of bin stores and alleyways and the creation of new bin stores and soft landscaping were then reviewed by the Council's Environmental Development Team before being sent out to residents for consultation by questionnaire. The scheme chosen by residents, which involved the demolition of all the garages, was implemented in part in 2003/04. The project framework states that the Council moved early as it was keen to deliver a 'quick win' that would give residents confidence in the scheme and encourage them to take an active role in its management. However, the remainder of the scheme had to wait until 2004/05 due to delays in producing a bid that met the relevant Urban II criteria for funding. The scheme was also held up for some months as the tenders for the project turned out to be higher than the Council's original project budget of £443,000. An extra £77,000 had to be vired by the Council from other housing capital projects to ensure the project's eventual completion in March 2005 (Dartford Borough Council, 2004b).

9.2.3 Reaction from residents to the scheme

The immediate reaction from residents in and around the estate to the project was positive, but not overwhelmingly so. Residents were pleased that the estate's problems were being recognised and that action to address them was being taken, but at the same time there was

¹⁹ Serving alongside residents would be representatives from Dartford Council, Groundwork Kent Thameside, Kent Police and architectural consultants from Architecture Limited.

some concern about how durable the improvements would be. Some felt that the changes made would soon be reversed by vandalism and anti-social behaviour and others were sceptical about the Council's ability to maintain the estate at an appropriate standard once the improvements were complete. These concerns were forcefully expressed at a meeting between residents, local councillors and the local MP held on the estate in the Autumn of 2003²⁰. The Council's project framework, which admits that Gunn Road "has not received adequate attention in recent years" and emphasises the need "to ensure that adequate resources will be allocated to the maintenance of the estate once the work is complete" suggests that residents' concerns were not unfounded (Dartford Borough Council, 2003e).

Estate residents were equally underwhelmed by the Council's bid to involve them in the management and monitoring of the new scheme. The Council's Housing Manager and Tenant Participation Officer worked hard to build up the membership of the steering group; making personal visits to individual residents to persuade them to join the group. But while the group was closely involved in the discussions that took place in 2004 and 2005 when the scheme was being planned and delivered, it didn't survive for long once the project was complete. The Council's hope that the steering group would provide the impetus for further resident led action on the estate to improve its facilities didn't come to pass. Moreover, once the steering group disappeared, so too it seems did the opportunity for residents to play an active role in the long-term management of the estate.

Nevertheless, the Council and the local MP did receive some feedback from residents. The MP's office for instance received a number of complaints about the appearance and maintenance of the estate following the completion of the scheme. Most of them related to the cleanliness of the estate and the quality of the grounds maintenance. Of particular concern was the state of the new bin stores which, in their view, weren't being cleaned and emptied frequently enough. The condition of the newly planted shrubs and borders around the estate was another major concern: many of shrubs and plants had been ripped out soon after being planted. On the other hand most people seemed to think that the hard landscaping on the estate such as the new car parking area which replaced the garages did represent a considerable improvement on what was there before. Dartford Council also received complaints. A report to the Council's Quality Services Committee in 2009 admitted that estate residents were disappointed with many aspects of the scheme (Dartford Borough Council, 2009). As well as being unhappy with the quality of communal cleaning on the

²⁰ The author attended this meeting in a professional capacity.

estate, and the state of the bin stores, residents were concerned, the report said, about the rapid deterioration in the newly landscaped area outside the flats.

These comments mirror those made by residents interviewed for this study. When asked what they thought about the appearance of Swanscombe's public realm and housing, a small number of interviewees - around one in five - used Gunn Road to illustrate their concern about the overall upkeep of the village. One elderly resident, for example, who lived in a local authority owned terrace next to the flats, complained:

"I like the place but it's altered. You couldn't wish for a better place when we first moved in here. They had all big families, but you never had them out here playing football, they all went down the park....Now you get all the drop outs from Dartford sent down here. They pulled all the shrubs up that were put down here; the trees planted here have all been smashed up." (KBA)

Another resident contrasted the appearance of the estate with that of the new 'buy to let' properties that were being renovated in the village;

"There's some very poorly maintained houses in Swanscombe. You've got those dreadful maisonettes on Gunn Road, which aren't maintained particularly well. But then you've got houses which have been bought by consortia for rent. They're doing them up, which is changing the character." (JMU)

Two other residents questioned the way in which the project has been designed and managed:

"I think there are big problems in respect of the cleanliness of the environment; the repair of the roads: just the general upkeep of the area could be better. I could show you an example up the road where £500,000 was spent at Gunn Road and it has fallen apart within two years; the landscaping is a disgrace." (GBA)

"To a degree the improvements at Gunn Road were successful - taking down the garages did help – but, you know, putting in nice new plants? They were ripped straight back out. The money would have been better going on facilities for the younger kids rather than fancy plants." (PTU)

It appears therefore that although the Gunn Road scheme succeeded in addressing some long-standing concerns of residents, residents felt nonetheless that more could have been done to maintain the scheme once it was complete. In their view an opportunity to transform

the appearance and reputation of the estate had been lost. It suggests that the concerns expressed by officers themselves and residents before the start of the scheme about its future maintenance were well founded.

9.2.4 Discussion

In a bid to safeguard its long term sustainability, the authors of the Gunn Road scheme tried hard to build in many of the best practice criteria set out in the key neighbourhood renewal literature. The Council consulted widely at each stage of the process; secured buy in for the scheme from the Police and other key public sector partners; and sought support from Groundwork, an organisation with a proven track record in engaging supposedly apathetic, 'hard to reach' communities. It also encouraged the community to take long term ownership of the scheme by setting up a residents' steering group and including residents in the Environment Development Team. The Council worked hard too to deliver some 'quick wins' using its own capital funding at the start of the project in order to overcome any latent scepticism among residents and give the scheme some immediate credibility. These techniques have been highlighted in the National Evaluation of the New Deal for Communities Programme and by Power and Richardson in their analyses of the characteristics of effective neighbourhood renewal management (Sheffield Hallam University, 2010, Power, 2004, Richardson, 2008).

Given the lengths the architects of the Gunn Road scheme went to in order to incorporate the best practice lessons from elsewhere into the scheme, the question we need to ask is why did it achieve only partial success? Why, for instance, did the residents steering group fail to survive? And why were residents so ambivalent about the physical and environmental improvements implemented through the scheme?

One possible explanation is the narrow time-scale of the project and the failure to provide resources for capacity building. Much of the literature on effective neighbourhood renewal and management suggests that it takes a great deal of time to create a climate in which residents are able and willing to take responsibility for the management or monitoring of community assets and services. This is particularly so when one is starting from a very low base as was the case with Gunn Road which had no real history of resident involvement activity before the scheme started. A JRF report on Groundwork's role in neighbourhood renewal illustrates this point well (Fordham, Gore, Knight Fordham, Lawless, 2002). Groundwork is an organisation that sees itself as a catalyst for others; it is not one that seeks to establish a permanent presence in an area. Nonetheless, Groundwork's staff "were

under no illusion,” according to the report, “that the communities where they work may need their involvement over a long period of time”. In one estate in Merthyr Tydfil for instance, Groundwork staff spent some three years engaged in capacity building work among residents before they were ready to develop a regeneration strategy.

In the case of Gunn Road, none of these potential difficulties appear to have been assessed or even predicted. The project framework talks at length about the positive outcomes that could be derived from effective resident involvement, but doesn’t put forward an engagement strategy aimed at delivering them. The only action taken by the Council was to direct residents towards a few services aimed at increasing “community participation and communication” run by external agencies elsewhere in Swanscombe. The project framework also refers to proposals for the creation of “further community training centres” in the future and expresses the hope that the new Police Community Support Officer will work to “promote community ownership of the project as well as improving the sense of community within the estate” (Dartford Borough Council, 2003e). This, it seems, represents the full extent of the support on offer to residents.

Dartford Council’s current Housing Manager²¹ has admitted that mistakes were made. According to him the council had allowed the Tenant Participation Officer position to lie vacant for several years and this deprived the residents of a key source of advice, practical support and encouragement. It was this, just as much as “apathy on the estate”, he believed, that was responsible for the failure to keep the steering group running for a sustained period. The Audit Commission has also been critical of the Council’s efforts to promote resident involvement. Its inspection of the Council’s landlord services in 2006 found that; “residents do not influence the service sufficiently and are not yet adequately encouraged to participate in decision making” (Audit Commission, 2006). Meanwhile, the resident involvement bodies that did exist, the commission concluded, had received insufficient support from the Council. Members of the Tenants and Leaseholders Forum, for instance, had been given “little training” and there had been “no attempt to assess training needs. Moreover; there had not been “a sufficient effort to address these weaknesses”.

It suggests that the Council’s interest in resident involvement and empowerment at the time was fairly superficial. Certainly, the Cabinet reports on Gunn Road - which unlike the project framework were written for an internal audience - suggest that consultation and engagement work that did take place was driven more by funding criteria of the Urban II programme, than a deep-seated belief in the importance of the work. On one occasion in February 2004, the

²¹ Personal communication, April 2010

report author even apologises to members for the latest 'delay' caused by the need to consult residents once again in order to satisfy Urban's conditions (Dartford Borough Council, 2004e).

In this context it is not surprising that residents in Gunn Road were slow to get involved in the steering group. It suggests that they didn't trust the Council to take their views seriously or to deliver a project that was capable of addressing the estate's problems.

Arguably more should have been done by the Council to address this absence of trust before embarking on the full-scale project. In short, the 'quick wins' the Council needed weren't necessarily physical improvements to the estate per se, but tangible evidence that they valued residents' opinions and saw them as the primary driver of change. The neighbourhood renewal literature shows that the most successful schemes are often those that emerge from within the community rather than those that are imposed, or at least initiated, from above. In fact, Richardson has suggested that bringing new outside agencies into a community to lead a project can sometimes increase residents' sense of dependency instead of alleviating it (Richardson, 2008). A community is more inclined to assume ownership of a project and sustain it in the long-term, she found, if the concept has been generated and implemented largely by residents themselves. Clark and Southern have put forward a similar argument (Clark, Southern, 2006): In an article comparing the British approach to neighbourhood management and the French system of 'Regies de Quartier', they conclude that the French approach, which is engineered from within the community and not by the state, has much to teach the UK. The RdQ system, which "owes its existence to the political capacity of the people living in a disadvantaged urban area to articulate their own agenda of neighbourhood renewal", has in their view helped to set in progress a new dynamic of partnership working and local institution building that has empowered communities (Clark, Southern, 2006, 188).

However, the Gunn Road scheme was devised and implemented by the Council and its consultants. Although residents helped to decide the details of the scheme - ie where the new bin stores should be located and how they should be designed - the broad parameters of the scheme, and its timetable were decided by the Council. Residents' role was simply to fill in the missing details. The basic structure and components of the scheme were in place long before the steering group was in place. Had the Council held onto its capital funding, and spent a year instead building bridges with the community and putting in place capacity building programmes aimed at giving residents the skills to lead the design process, the eventual scheme would probably have been a stronger one. If nothing else it would certainly

have reflected residents' wishes more closely, whilst their local knowledge might have made sure that the scheme was sufficiently robust to ensure its long-term survival. In addition, the achievement of having overseen the scheme from start to finish, may well have given residents the confidence to go on and initiate other projects on the estate.

The fact that Gunn Road became the first estate in the borough in 2008 to get its own 'Neighbourhood Agreement' was a tacit admission by the Council of the failure of the earlier Gunn Road scheme to engage residents effectively. This agreement was designed to "involve residents in the delivery of local services and encouraging them to take responsibility, in partnership with the Council for their neighbourhood and the local community" (Dartford Borough Council, 2009). Gunn Road was chosen ahead of other candidates because of its enduring problems with anti-social behaviour and the absence of an active tenants association (Dartford Borough Council, 2008a). Launched at a fun-day on the estate, the agreement was signed by over a hundred residents, both social tenants and private residents, and nine local priorities for action for the Council, residents and other partners were identified. Most of them dealt with issues that the environmental improvement scheme had conspicuously failed to resolve. Chief among them was the 'regeneration of the area outside the flats in Gunn Road' which had become run down since the previous scheme with worn grass and missing shrubs. Commitments to improve the standard of communal cleaning and to increase the Police presence on the estate were also included in the Agreement.

There were other issues too though, aside from an absence of a robust community engagement strategy that compromised the success of the scheme. One problem was that the scheme didn't have a champion within the Council who was capable of ensuring that sufficient revenue support was made available to maintain the scheme after its completion. It had its backers within the housing department but they didn't hold enough influence outside the department to secure the necessary additional funding. Had they produced a clear 'exit strategy' following the end of construction, spelling out exactly what needed to be done to maintain the scheme, perhaps they might have been in stronger position to negotiate a deal. Either this was never considered, or other priorities got in the way and officers' attention was diverted elsewhere, as is often the case in front-line services. The Council also had no executive level mechanism in place for reviewing the impact of the scheme once it was complete: a surprising omission given how much Council money was spent on the project. The scheme was not discussed once or reviewed by any of the Council's committees after the capital funding was spent. Consequently the Council deprived itself of an important opportunity to learn from the successes and failings of the scheme and to build those

lessons into its protocols and policies. Another problem was that the responsibility for managing Gunn Road's assets was split between several departments. The task of maintaining the new bin stores for instance - a source of much complaint after the scheme was completed - was divided between the housing department and the waste and recycling service; the latter being responsible for handling any complaints about their condition. This made it difficult to produce a co-ordinated and responsive service to residents: a problem recognised in the Gunn Road Neighbourhood Agreement, which put in place regular inter-departmental Council meetings to monitor progress against the nine priorities for action.

It is clear therefore that more thought should have been given to the management of the project after its completion. The Council's failure to plan ahead and adapt its service delivery mechanisms to meet the scheme's needs undermined the strengths of the project and diminished its long-term impact on the estate.

9.3 The Swanscombe Heritage Park

9.3.1 Introduction

For those with an interest in human evolution, Swanscombe is a place that holds a special significance. It was here in 1935, on the site of a former gravel quarry, that fragments of a human skull, eventually dated at 250,000 years old, were discovered by a local amateur archaeologist. 'Swanscombe Man', as the remains became commonly known - even though they were subsequently identified as female - is the second oldest set of human remains found in Britain and is now on display at the Natural History Museum. The site itself is now under the stewardship of English Heritage and has also been designated as a 'Site of Special Scientific Interest'.

Despite its archaeological significance the site was badly neglected until recently. Few Swanscombe residents, let alone any tourists, visited the site. Its only visitors tended to be either fly-tippers or off-road motorbikers. Restoring the site and creating a facility that's attractive to local residents and capable of drawing in tourists, has long been an ambition of the Kent Thameside regeneration partners. The Kent Thameside Association's first publication, *Looking to the Future*, published in 1995, saw culture and heritage, as well as investment in the area's green infrastructure, as important tools in dispelling the 'chimney stack image of the area' (Kent Thameside Association, 1995). Not only would it make the area more conducive to new business and new residents, but it would strengthen the identity of existing communities and help to reinforce residents' pride in the towns and villages in which they live. A decade later, the Kent Thameside Regeneration Framework also identified

heritage as a key driver “in building a sustainable environment and community for Kent Thameside” (Kent Thameside Delivery Board, 2005). The Government too has recognised that heritage has an important role to play in the regeneration of Kent Thameside: “Preserving and enhancing the Gateway’s rich environmental and cultural heritage” was identified by the ODPM as one of the key principles underpinning its work in the Thames Gateway (ODPM, 2005, 7).

Concern among local residents about the loss of amenity space in recent years due to new development, has provided the regeneration partners with another equally powerful incentive to restore the Heritage Park. The Swanscombe NRSAP referred to the “dissatisfaction” among Swanscombe residents about the “number of local footpaths and traditional walking areas that had been lost as a result of adjacent developments” (Dartford Borough Council, 2003g). It saw the Heritage Park, an underexploited green resource in the heart of the community, as an opportunity to improve amenity provision and also to address the emerging tension between the new and the existing communities about access to green resources.

Picture 9.4 Swanscombe Heritage Park prior to the improvements scheme



Source: Bryan Jones (2004)

English Heritage, meanwhile, has argued that “the rich historic environment in the Thames Gateway is an asset that has a vital role to play in creating new places and improving existing ones” (English Heritage, 2005, 1). It identified Swanscombe Heritage Park, whose archaeological and natural heritage was threatened by “fly-tipping, illegal motorcycling and burned out abandoned vehicles”, as an important regional resource and a priority for restoration (English Heritage, 2005, 24). Over the last fifteen years the Swanscombe Heritage Park scheme has attracted three major funding awards. It received support first of all from Groundwork’s Community Greenspace project in North Kent funded by the Single

Regeneration Budget programme. This project, which was part of the £8 million North Kent Gateway Partnership programme that ran between 1998 and 2006, was set up to “promote accessibility to public green space and encourage the active participation of local residents through organised events”. The Park was also a major beneficiary of the £4.5 million North Kent environment programme launched in July 2003 as part of the Government’s Sustainable Communities Plan. Under this programme Groundwork was allocated a further £370,000 to carry out environmental improvements in the Park including the provision of new pathways, lighting and signage as well as a new entrance featuring a sculpture in the form of a handaxe. Three years later the Heritage Park received another £105,000 from the DCLG’s Bringing Natural Greenspace to the Doorstep programme in order to allow improvements to the park’s security arrangements to proceed.

Thanks to this funding work on the new Heritage park began in 2005. By 2007 Dartford Council was able to report that as a result of the improvements the park had become a “hub for heritage in the borough” and an important green-space for local residents (Dartford Borough Council, 2007a). Groundwork Kent and Medway has been equally keen to extol the success of the project: The Heritage Park is “now finally receiving the attention it deserves as one of Northern Europe’s most important archaeological sites” it declared (Groundwork Kent and Medway, 2010). The “involvement of local people every step of the way”, it said has been “crucial to the project’s success”. “Local residents, schoolchildren and businesses have been consulted and have contributed thoughts and ideas throughout the Park’s development,” it argued.

This section will consider whether these claims are justified. It will look, first of all, at the extent of the community’s involvement in the design, implementation and management of the project. It will also look at local residents’ response to the scheme. Has it been embraced by the community in the manner described? And to what extent has the scheme alleviated local concern about the erosion of community green space as a result of new development in the area? As a major environmental regeneration project that has received significant central Government funding, the Heritage Park provides us with an important case study. Like the Gunn Road scheme it has a lot to tell us about the capacity of the key local regeneration agencies to meet their stated commitments to Kent Thameside’s existing communities. It also provides a useful contrast to Gunn Road in that the principal agency responsible for delivering the scheme was Groundwork, a non-Governmental organisation with a long history of delivering urban renewal projects. Comparing and contrasting the two strategies will provide us with a more nuanced understanding of how social and environmental regeneration is being delivered in Kent Thameside.

Picture 9.5 Entrance to Swanscombe Heritage Park in 2009



Source: Bryan Jones (2009)

Picture 9.6 The hand-axe sculpture in 2009



Source: Bryan Jones (2009)

Picture 9.7 Landscaping features in the Heritage Park in 2009



Source: Bryan Jones (2009)



Source: © Google (2012)

9.3.2 Planning and implementing the Swanscombe Heritage Park scheme

The first significant steps towards the restoration of the Heritage Park were taken in 2001 when Swanscombe Action Group was formed. Led by Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council, the group was set up in a bid to garner support among the key local regeneration agencies for the Park's restoration and to identify a framework for delivering it. Providing a fitting backdrop for Swanscombe's main heritage asset and an improved leisure facility for local residents were the main objectives for the Town Council and its local authority partners in Dartford and Kent. The immediate priority though was to find a solution to the illegal motorcycling and flytipping problems affecting the site. The group succeeded in securing an impressive array of members. As well as the three local authorities, Land Securities, Lafarge

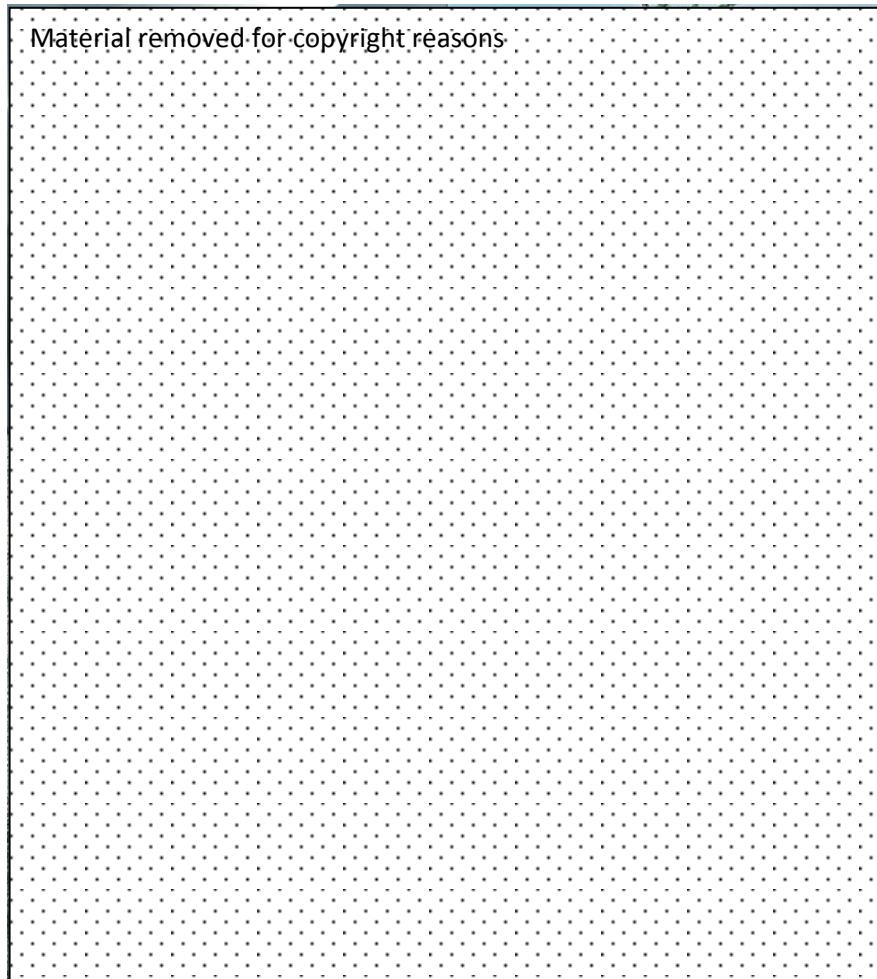
Cement, English Nature, Craylands Primary School and Kent Thameside Delivery Board all joined the group. The other member of the group was Groundwork Kent and Medway which would become the body responsible for planning and implementing the restoration scheme.

After Groundwork's bid for a slice of the ODPM's North Kent Environment Programme was provisionally accepted in 2003, its community development officers then spent the next few months working with the community to put together a development plan for the Park. Local businesses, as well as residents and community bodies were asked to contribute ideas and pupils from the local primary school were recruited as 'Park Planners' for the day.

Groundwork was also instrumental in helping to set up the 'Friends of Swanscombe Heritage Park' in 2004. This group, which was composed largely of local residents, was established to promote community involvement in planning and managing the park and also to increase local usage of the park and its facilities. Its members went on to play a pivotal role both before, during and after the implementation of the scheme.

The eventual scheme got underway in early 2005 and was officially opened that Summer. As well as a new hand-axe sculpture, which was chosen after a vote by the local community, the restored site included a network of stone and tarmac paths, picnic tables and benches and a set of stone interpretation panels providing information about its archaeology. The opening, which was carried out by an archaeologist from Channel 4's Time Team, was a major community event with dozens of local school children among those present. The Friends of Swanscombe Heritage Park followed this up with family events at Halloween and Easter: each of which attracted over a hundred residents. The Friends also organised regular litter picking and bulb planting sessions for local schoolchildren aimed at "giving young people a sense of ownership when visiting the park in their free time" (Friends of Swanscombe Heritage Park, 2010). Seven years on the Friends are still active. They have keep fit events in the Park for adults as well as community litter picking and planting sessions and regular family events.

Picture 9.8 Photo from the official opening of the Heritage Park in 2005 featuring Time Team Archaeologist Phil Harding and local primary school children



However, not everything has run smoothly. After its opening, the Park continued to experience problems with fly-tipping and motorcycling just as it had done prior to its restoration. Even the community newsletter produced by Land Securities, one of the members of the Swanscombe Action Group, admitted that there were still problems to be tackled. In late 2005 'The Link' commented:

"There is still a long way to go to further improve the preserve the park for future generations. The Swanscombe Action Group is currently taking steps to combat fly-tippers and illegal motorcycling which is spoiling the environment for the local community. Local volunteers are also active in developing fund-raising events, community activities and clean-up sessions at the park." (Land Securities, 2005)

In fact The Link was telling only half the story. According to a report to Dartford Council's Cabinet, not only was there fly-tipping and illegal motorbiking, but the new lighting illuminating the sculpture had been smashed and the new interpretation panels defaced (Dartford Borough Council, 2007a).

Faced with this vandalism, the Action Group members came to the conclusion that the security arrangements at the Park needed to be improved urgently. A new scheme including extra fencing to prevent future vandalism and a tree clearance programme to improve visibility across the site was put together and a further funding bid was submitted to the DCLG. The bid also included a plan for the repair of the damaged lights and panels and for the installation of new picnic and play facilities. Dartford Borough Council also pledged to undertake a feasibility study to assess the possibility of putting in new facilities to service the playing pitches in the Park which had fallen in disrepair. The plan was approved by the DCLG and another £100,000 was allocated to Groundwork to carry out the additional works. These works - the final round of improvements to the Park - were subsequently carried out during the course of 2008.

9.3.3 Reaction to the Swanscombe Heritage Park scheme from residents

To be judged a success, the Swanscombe Heritage Park scheme needed to be embraced by local residents. Yet the evidence from the interviews with residents in Swanscombe carried out for this study in 2007/08, suggests that this hasn't happened. Asked if there was anywhere to go in Swanscombe if they wanted to go for a walk or cycle or walk the dog; only a quarter of interviewees mentioned by the Heritage Park specifically. As an expensive, high profile initiative one would have expected more residents to have mentioned the Heritage Park. In fact some interviewees complained that they had no access to green space due to new development - precisely the issue the Heritage Park had been set up to address. Two older, long-term residents said;

"Everything is being built upon! We used to be able to take the dog down to Ebbsfleet, but you've got the railway there now and we used to take him up the woods, but we can't do that now, because they're building up there." (PTR)

"We used to over the side of Stanhope Road, but we (can't now). And there's no woods. They've taken those away for housing. That's going from Leonard Avenue down to the A2. There's nowhere to take the dog off its lead." (SPA)

However, it wasn't just older residents who complained about the dearth of amenity space. One younger resident in his thirties, for example, who'd been living in Swanscombe for five years said;

"Since they've started building the new Bluewater town or whatever it is, they've basically mullered everything and it's all gone. There's only one little path, which is all overgrown and not very pleasant." (RWA)

In fact, only one resident spoke positively about the Heritage Park. She said;

"You've got the skull site I suppose, and you've got the woods and the parks and there's also Bluewater, which you can walk around, so it's not too bad." (SNE)

The remaining residents expressed concern about the anti-social behaviour and vandalism in the Heritage Park. Two female residents with school age children said;

"We went on that walk with the boys behind the leisure centre where the heritage stone is – the oldest skull site – and we thought we'd have a stop but there were some boys on their motorbikes.....there's also graffiti down there on all the signs. I wouldn't feel safe going down there on my own." (EHR)

"The nearest place would be the skull site, but then that has the problem of motorbikes, burnt out cars, needles." (LGA)

Some residents did acknowledge the Heritage Park's positive features. It was well landscaped and had some interesting walks and a lot of effort had been made to organise community events. Yet this made it all the more frustrating that anti-social behaviour was stopping people from making more use of the park.

"You've got the skull site down the road – but a lot of people won't go there because of the yobbo element. There's a lovely walk through there – but it can be a bit daunting with the yobs." (PMI)

"The skull site would be perfect, but it's isolated and you can only use it when they put an organised event on. It should be a tourist site because it's a site of massive historical significance....but it's just ignored - it's a disgrace" (PTU)

The improvements carried out in 2008 have done little to address residents' concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime. The signage, lighting and other equipment are still intact but the anti-social behaviour problems have not gone away. Complaints are still being made to

Kent Police about late night anti-social behaviour by young people in the Park with drinking, littering, graffiti and the intimidation of other residents being seen as particular problems (Kent Police, 2010).

9.3.4 Discussion

The Swanscombe Heritage Park scheme has had a mixed impact. On the one hand the scheme has been the catalyst for the creation of a successful community organisation, led by resident volunteers, that has provided a range of popular family events in the Park. A key factor in the Friends' success has been the support they have received from Groundwork's Community Development Workers. Their presence has been crucial in helping the Friends to set up events, to recruit and support volunteers, and to ensure that the group's momentum is maintained over time. Unlike some community organisations, which live precariously with no obvious goal beyond the delivery of the next scheduled event, the Friends have an established presence in the community, a regular calendar of events and a long term strategy. As well as working with local schools, they have used the marketing and publicity tools available to them to good effect. Land Securities has carried a feature about the Friends' work in Link, its community magazine delivered to every household in Swanscombe, and encouraged residents to become members. Dartford Council has also drawn attention to their work on its website and press releases. Information about the Friends and a complete list of their events can also be found on Swanscombe Heritage Park's own dedicated website.

Although the social events organised by the Friends haven't left any lasting physical imprint on the community, they have left an impact on the people who take part in them. They provide an important opportunity for local people to interact with one another and to forge relationships. The emotional capital that these events generate is arguably just as important a regeneration tool as the physical improvements to the public realm that blur the boundaries between the old and the new.

The test for the Friends will be when Groundwork eventually withdraws its support and allows the group to become self-sustaining. Having been involved in the group for seven years, and worked hard to build up the management capacity and confidence of its resident volunteers over that time, the Friends are in strong position to do so. The group is certainly much better placed to carry on its work than the Gunn Road residents steering group which, as we have seen, received barely any support from Dartford Council and soon disappeared.

Without doubt, the Friends *need* to survive if the Heritage Park is to have a significant place in the life of the community in the future.

The Heritage Park scheme has other strengths too. The quality of the work carried out in the Park for example has been very high. The pathways and the landscaping are of a standard that compares well to the quality of landscaping at Ingress Park for instance. The 'hand axe' sculpture at the centre of the Heritage Park is also a significant piece of public art that provides a fitting backdrop to the archaeological site. It is one of very few leisure destinations based in an existing community that has the potential to appeal to both new and existing residents in Kent Thameside as well as a wider public from across the region. In this sense, the scheme would seem to provide an instance where the boundaries between the old and the new have been very effectively blurred.

Unfortunately, the failure to eradicate the Heritage Park's anti-social behaviour problems means that it has yet to achieve its potential as a leisure and cultural resource. According to a number of Swanscombe residents interviewed for this study, the Heritage Park's problems are a consequence of the progressive erosion of the village's informal leisure spaces such as the woods between Swanscombe and Eastern Quarry. These woods were well used by young people from the village due to their secluded character.

One long term resident, the Chair of Governors of a local primary school, said;

"There's nowhere for the kids to go now to let their hair down. When I was young you had the woods and so on but all that has now gone.... The Council seem to be more interested in the big projects rather than places for kids. Money is not being spent in the right place as far as I'm concerned." (LCA)

The removal of these informal spaces on the fringes of the community, where young people can 'let their hair down' without offending the sensibilities of older residents, has damaged the community. It has turned Swanscombe's formal recreation areas into contested spaces and sharpened tensions between different sections of the population. Many adult residents, who are unwilling to contest possession of these spaces with teenagers, choose instead to avoid them altogether; a state of affairs that leaves them feeling disillusioned and dispossessed.

In this sense the Heritage Park scheme has repeated the mistake of the Gunn Road scheme in that it failed to consider the context of the project and it didn't do enough to identify and tackle any threats to its viability. For a project that worked so hard to engage local residents

during the planning process, this failure to appreciate the scale of the anti-social behaviour threat is surprising. The onus on the delivery bodies to achieve tangible outcomes quickly may be partly to blame as it meant that they had limited scope to address the wider structural issues behind Swanscombe's anti-social behaviour problems. However some blame must also be attached to the failure to embed the project into the core day to day activities and work plans of the main statutory agencies in Swanscombe. Although the project was conceived by the Swanscombe Action Group - a body that included all three local authorities - many of their key front-line officers who had a role in preventing anti-social behaviour or providing leisure services and youth services would only have had a passing involvement in the scheme. It barely received a mention in the committee minutes or agendas of Dartford Borough Council for example during its implementation phase. As a stand-alone scheme funded by a dedicated DCLG regeneration funding stream and delivered by an external non-governmental organisation, front-line local authority officers had few opportunities - and little incentive - to ensure that the aims of the project and its day to day management were consistent with their own work programmes and policies. Nor were they in a position to flag up potential threats and challenges to the successful delivery of the project based on their own experience and local knowledge. Had they been more closely involved in the project - and possibly even partly accountable for its outcomes - then conceivably the anti-social behaviour risk could have been identified earlier and a proactive rather than a reactive strategy to tackle it could have been adopted.

If the Heritage Park scheme had been part of a holistic, carefully co-ordinated area-based strategy, one that placed as much emphasis on restoring the village's informal recreation space as it did on formal space, then it's possible that the scheme's history would have been less troubled. Finding space for informal leisure activities that aren't always popular or acceptable to mainstream opinion, is not a goal that gets much prominence in planning policy frameworks, but it is crucial nonetheless. Secluded areas well away from the eyes of authority for teenagers are every bit as important as well designed play areas for the under fives and picnic spaces for families. When land is scarce however, and has a high commercial value, then the needs of grandparents, parents and their young children tend to be prioritised over those of adolescents and other marginal social groups. So it has proved in Swanscombe. Although Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council has achieved a notable success in persuading Land Securities and its partners in Dartford to create a new 'green buffer' between Swanscombe and Eastern Quarry, it will be very different in character to the old woods that existed previously. In place of the woods, with their hidden spaces and informal paths, Swanscombe's green buffer will consist of manicured green spaces, paths

and formal sports pitches - hardly an ideal environment for the village's teenagers. If the Heritage Park's anti-social behaviour problems are ever to be addressed, then a more inclusive leisure strategy that seeks to accommodate the needs of socially marginalised communities will be necessary.

9.4 Conclusion

The regeneration of the Thames Gateway has been characterised in the main by the regeneration of disused brownfield sites rather than the social regeneration of its existing communities. Social regeneration, despite its critical importance to the success of the Gateway regeneration agenda, has rarely been given the same attention as physical regeneration (Oxford Brookes University, 2006). One study calculated that less than 4 per cent of the Government regeneration funding in Thames Gateway Kent has "related to initiatives which will directly impact on the development of communities" (Nelson, Quan, Forrester, Pound, 2005).

The two neighbourhood renewal schemes examined in this chapter, which sought to blur the distinction between existing communities and new development and to empower residents by giving them a central role in the planning, delivery and management of each scheme, are among the few exceptions to this trend. They may have struggled to meet some of their objectives, but the efforts made to improve the circumstances of existing residents, so unusual in the context of the Thames Gateway, deserve credit.

Both schemes, however, had major flaws. In the case of the Gunn Road scheme the opportunity to build a lasting culture of resident participation in the management of the estate was lost. The Council was unable, or unwilling, to make the necessary time, resources and support available to ensure that the scheme was driven and managed by residents. It also failed to ensure the resilience of its key features or to put in place an adequate plan for its long-term management. This detracted from the environmental benefits of the scheme. The Swanscombe Heritage Park scheme, meanwhile, succeeded in creating an attractive amenity and also in involving residents in the planning and management of the project from the start. The scheme was badly undermined though by a failure to appreciate the threat posed by anti-social behaviour or to respond appropriately to it.

In Dartford Council case, its officers lacked Groundwork's expertise in engaging residents and equipping them to participate effectively in community projects. The Council also did not seem to have the same corporate commitment to promoting resident participation as Groundwork. Whereas Groundwork provided support and training over many years to the

Friends of Swanscombe Heritage Park to help the organisation to develop the capacity it needed to become self-sustaining, Dartford Council gave virtually no support to the residents led Gunn Road steering group. In the case of Swanscombe Heritage Park, the scheme was compromised in part by the fact that the lead delivery agency, Groundwork, was isolated from the main front-line public sector service providers and was not in a strong position to secure strategic support for the project from key officials. As such the scheme was not properly integrated into existing neighbourhood renewal and community safety strategies affecting Swanscombe. If it had been then the scheme might have been able to manage the anti-social behaviour threat more effectively.

Nonetheless both schemes have had some positive impacts. The Heritage Park scheme is a leisure resource whose design and appearance stand comparison with the best of the new developments. Lessons too have been learnt from the Gunn Road scheme by Dartford Council and many of the scheme's environmental and resident participation objectives have now been achieved thanks to the Gunn Road Neighbourhood Agreement signed in 2008. New turf, shrubs and fencing have been installed; the cleaning regime has improved; and residents are now attending and contributing to the regular monitoring meetings set up as a result of the Neighbourhood Agreement (Dartford Borough Council, 2009). Support is also being given to residents to enable them to chair monitoring meetings and set their agenda; the precursor, it is hoped, to the establishment of a formal residents association on the estate. Although Gunn Road's street furniture and fittings are not on a par with a new estate like Ingress Park they are nonetheless well maintained. One would say that the distinction between them has at least been made fuzzier thanks to the improvements scheme.

The two projects illustrate the crucial importance of ensuring that neighbourhood renewal schemes are first of all consistent and well integrated into existing renewal strategies and workplans and secondly that the delivery agencies have both the capacity, the will and the time to achieve its given objectives. A culture of active resident participation, in particular, can take a great deal time and officer capacity to build up, and is only possible if the organisation responsible is willing and able to commit resources over an extended period of time. Thirdly, and most crucially, these projects highlight the importance of ensuring that such schemes are driven by residents themselves and accurately reflect their priorities and needs rather than those of the project sponsors. Without buy in from residents and their active leadership from the start, the impact and enduring value of a neighbourhood renewal project is likely to be minimal.

The problem of course is that the resources to fund such projects have been difficult to identify, particularly in the current financial climate. The two schemes discussed in this chapter are among only a tiny handful of urban renewal projects targeted at Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross in the last twenty years aimed at blurring the boundaries between the new and existing communities. It suggests once again that the current Kent Thameside regeneration model needs to be re-examined if we are to be in a position to challenge the disparities between the new and existing communities.

Part IV

Analysis and Conclusions

Chapter 10 Is the Kent Thameside regeneration model fit for purpose?

10.1 Introduction

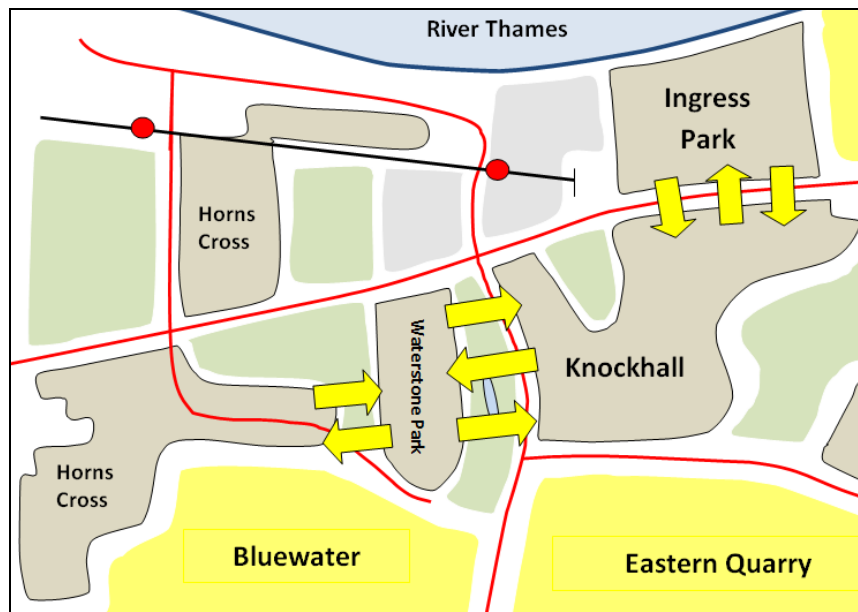
The Kent Thameside regeneration model is predicated on the private sector led redevelopment of large brownfield sites outside the existing residential footprint. As well as providing new homes, new jobs and new infrastructure for Kent Thameside, the model is expected to facilitate the renewal of the area's existing communities. It envisages the creation of iconic, eye-catching communities which will, at the same time, be well integrated into the existing urban grain. It is a demanding prescription, even in a strong economy. It relies heavily on the presence of a buoyant property market, a well-resourced public sector and above all a confident development industry that has access to a strong credit supply.

The aim of this chapter is to examine the viability of this regeneration model. Using the evidence discussed in the third part of this study it will consider whether this model is capable of delivering the integrated, well balanced communities that the Kent Thameside regeneration partners envisage. It will begin by focusing on two specific issues. It will look firstly at the practical challenges involved in delivering an integrated community using this model: a community in which the housing and facilities are well integrated physically and whose residents mix with one another, share the same services and feel part of the same community. It will then look at the costs involved in achieving integration and the renewal of existing communities. The chapter will then move on to discuss some potential ways in which the Kent Thameside model could be revised or strengthened.

10.2 The practical challenges of delivering integrated communities

The evidence from the third part of this study has highlighted the difficulties involved in successfully integrating new developments into the existing urban grain. The analysis of the relationship between Ingress Park and Waterstone Park and the existing communities around them found limited evidence of social or physical integration between the communities (see map 10.1). Very few existing residents had social connections in Ingress or Waterstone Park, or saw the developments as intrinsic parts of the community. Only the primary school in Knockhall provided a reliable arena for social mixing between the two sets of residents.

Map 10.1 Relationship between Ingress Park, Waterstone Park, Knockhall & Horns Cross



Source: Bryan Jones (2012)

The yellow arrows indicate the main visual interfaces between Ingress Park, Waterstone Park, Knockhall and Horns Cross

The absence of any community facilities at Ingress or Waterstone that could be used to bring residents together is seen as one reason for this shortage of social mixing. “A lack of social and community infrastructure” on Ingress is contributing to new residents’ sense of isolation, Penny Bernstock (2008) concluded in a report for Shelter. In future, she said, “community development plans should be drawn up to coincide with residents moving into new developments” and “developments should ensure that residents have access to adequate infrastructure from the outset.” If facilities aren’t provided upfront there is a risk of ending up with a development which is merely a collection of houses with the same post-code rather than a coherent community. Or as an opinion piece in *Community Care*, put it;

“Not so much a community, then, more an incubator for wage slaves.... If sitting in solitary splendour in Ingress Park, watching your three-foot plasma TV screen, king of a des res castle, drawbridge up, moat in place is a glimpse of the ‘new’ community of the future, (the Government) should think again.” (Community Care, 2003)

But while the provision of more facilities on site at Ingress and Waterstone would probably help to strengthen ties between new residents, it wouldn’t necessarily help to integrate new and existing communities. By establishing every facility and service on site, there is a risk of turning the ‘des res castle’ into the gated community whose residents have no need of, or interest in, the people and communities around them. Moreover, the sense of alienation

expressed by many older long-term Knockhall residents when they talked about Ingress would, it is reasonable to suppose, have been even more pronounced had Ingress been given its own school, community centre and health facilities. Giving Ingress traffic priority is one thing; giving it its own suite of public services is quite another. It could reinforce the difference in “lifeworlds” between new and existing residents that is apparent at a number of Gateway developments along the Thames (Davidson, 2009).

Local authority planners and developers in Kent Thameside have found it difficult to resolve this paradox. In the case of Eastern Quarry, Dartford Borough Council has called for the additional community facilities required by new development to be located in neighbouring Swanscombe as well as the quarry. This, the Council states, would provide an opportunity for the two communities to bond. Yet, as a Council Director interviewed for this study admitted, the policy is an unproven one, rooted more in hope, than hard evidence. It is a scepticism that other agencies, judging by his comments, appear to share.

“We haven’t been able to plan with any confidence a way of seamlessly integrating Eastern Quarry with Swanscombe. You’ll actually see in our local plan a simple but very good idea that for Eastern Quarry’s immediate facilities you wouldn’t provide all of them within the quarry, you provide some of them within Swanscombe with good linkages into the quarry. This would provide some kind of framework around which the two communities could learn to bond. It’s a bit hokey I suppose but it’s a kind of start. But whenever you get into a discussion about what kind of facilities and where, you come up against people’s preoccupations about what won’t work.” (RSC)

Similar frustrations were expressed by a senior Land Securities official, who was also interviewed for this study. He stated that the company had been surprised by Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council’s insistence on creating a ‘public space buffer’ between Swanscombe and Eastern Quarry. It was not the right way, he felt, of creating integration between the two communities.

“In the case of Swanscombe we questioned the wish of the town council to create a public space buffer around Swanscombe rather than allowing better integration between the new and existing development; but that was the will of the town council and that was reflected in our proposals.” (RPY)

In short, it appears that there is no clear consensus among local planners, developers and politicians as to which policy model stands the best chance of enabling the seamless integration between the new and the old communities that the Kent Thameside

Regeneration Framework envisages. Even the presence of a specially commissioned Swanscombe and Greenhithe Masterplan which was designed to provide a road map for integration (discussed below) has not delivered a way forward (EDAW Plc, 2005).

While some of these disagreements could potentially be resolved through stronger and more effective leadership from key partners, they also point to problems in the underlying premise. It indicates that the type of large, self-sustaining community due to be created in the Eastern Quarry is, in practical terms, extremely difficult to integrate successfully into the existing urban grain. It suggests that the premise needs to be reviewed.

10.3 The cost of achieving integration

Delivering integrated communities is an expensive undertaking. The 2005 Swanscombe and Greenhithe Masterplan, commissioned in a bid to translate the regeneration partners' aspiration to integrate new and existing communities into a practical programme of action, warned that the price of integration would be a high one. To achieve the overlapping goals of "improving the existing public realm to achieve the same quality as new developments" and "integrating Swanscombe and Greenhithe physically with its surroundings", every available funding source would have to be "maximised", it concluded (EDAW Plc, 2005).

A small pot of funding of around £1 million had been allocated to Swanscombe in 2004 from the government's Sustainable Communities Fund for community facilities and environmental improvements. However, the government needed to find much more funding, the Masterplan stated, if its proposals were to be implemented. The private sector too, it said, would need to find extra resources. It saw the availability of Section 106 funding from developers like Land Securities as a "major opportunity" to deliver benefits for the existing community. Noting that the developers of Ingress Park had contributed £6 million to the restoration of Ingress Abbey, the Masterplan called for further private funding to be levered into "a range of public realm, civic and infrastructure projects" across the area.

At the time, the Masterplan's authors were confident that infrastructure funding would continue to flow in Swanscombe and Greenhithe. More funding from the government, it said, "can be expected in the future". Unfortunately their confidence was misplaced. Aside from a further grant of £105,000 from the DCLG in 2007 for Swanscombe Heritage Park, no more government money was allocated to the villages for urban renewal projects after 2005.

With the annual house completion rate in Kent Thameside lagging behind the government's projections, Ministers were reluctant to sanction further investment in existing communities. The government became "much tougher" on local authorities after the 2005 election,

according to a senior Dartford Council Director interviewed for this study. Only bids from authorities which could show tangible progress towards meeting their housing outcomes were considered he said. This meant that Dartford “couldn’t sustain the funding in terms of the community.” Another distraction for the government, a 2006 Dartford Council Cabinet report alleged, was the 2012 Olympics.

“With the Government’s focus on housing delivery and the 2012 Olympics, the short-term prospects for funding Kent Thameside projects from Thames Gateway spending allocations appear limited.” (Dartford Borough Council, 2006)

Nor was the private sector able to meet the shortfall. It became apparent that the Masterplan had seriously over-estimated the ability and willingness of developers to fund additional infrastructural projects. It had acknowledged that the “high enabling costs for land raising and ecological treatment” of the Swanscombe Peninsula development “may substantially reduce” the developer’s Section 106 contribution. But it made no mention of the escalating cost of preparing Eastern Quarry - Kent Thameside’s largest regeneration project - for development. Its developer, Land Securities, had had to commit £40 million to local highways improvements, simply in order to unblock the Highways Agency’s objection to the development. This severely restricted the developer’s capacity to fund any public realm or infrastructural projects elsewhere. For the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Masterplan, the loss of this funding proved to be a near terminal blow. It still exists as a Dartford Borough Council Strategy, but hopes of realising its ambitious range of projects have all but disappeared. The financial crisis of 2008, which brought development in Kent Thameside to an abrupt halt, put an end to the Masterplan’s ambitions.

The sheer cost involved in realising Kent Thameside’s various regeneration objectives was highlighted by a Land Securities publication in late 2009 (Land Securities, 2009). By this time the company had, by its own estimate, invested over £100 million in preparing Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet for development. And this was before scarcely a brick had been laid. At the time only around 100 of the planned 10,000 homes in the ‘Ebbsfleet Valley’ had been completed.

“The investment we have made in Ebbsfleet Valley goes way beyond money. It’s true that over £100 million has gone into acquisition, planning, development and construction since 2001. But this is also about intellectual capital and emotional commitment. Thousands of man hours to fine-tune the masterplans and obtain the consents. And a serious amount of hard graft to drain old lakes and build new ones, and turn acres of wasteland into platforms ready for building to begin. We’ve shifted 8

million cubic metres of earth, created a lake 1,100 metres long, spent 30,000 machine hours on site, installed 10,000 metres of drainage, laid 3.5 kilometres of access roads and planted 3,817 new trees.”

In contrast, the company spent only £180,000 in existing communities in Kent Thameside via its LINK fund over the same period – a figure less than 0.2 per cent of its total project budget. Set up in 2004, the LINK fund allocated small grants of up to £5,000 to local charities and community organisations for projects promoting lifelong learning, jobs and cultural and community development. Among the organisations supported by the LINK fund was a local riding centre for the disabled, Swanscombe Tigers Football Club, a weekly lunch club for older people and a local children’s hospice.

Welcome though this funding would have been to the organisations concerned, the scale of Land Securities’ investment fell well short of the level of private sector funding anticipated in the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Masterplan. Furthermore, the type of project funded by the company was very different to the urban renewal schemes envisaged in the Masterplan. While the Masterplan looked to the private sector to help deliver improvements to the public realm, Land Securities was more interested in making small, ‘community chest’ style funding awards to well known and well supported local charities and organisations. The physical renewal of the area’s existing communities was not a pressing priority for Land Securities. All the company’s available resources were being pumped into site preparation projects, and there was little funding left to invest in the fabric of existing communities - or, it seems, any desire to find any more.

With the private sector focussed on preparing the ground for the development, and the government committed only to the delivery of the Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme, it is hard to see how the goal of community integration can possibly be achieved. A challenging ambition even before the current era of fiscal austerity, it now looks almost undeliverable. It suggests that if integration is to be funded, the Kent Thameside regeneration model will need to be substantially revised.

10.4 Towards an integrated future: Some possible revisions to the Kent Thameside regeneration model

The previous sections have illustrated the limitations of the current Kent Thameside regeneration model as a vehicle for achieving the integration of new and existing communities: Not only is there no consensus as to *how* existing communities can be

integrated with new brownfield communities, but the available resources to deliver integration are wholly inadequate, and are likely to remain so.

In this section we will consider a number of policy proposals that could help to facilitate the integration of existing communities like Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross and the planned new developments in the Ebbsfleet Valley. For while the Ebbsfleet Valley development timetable has been substantially delayed, it is likely that development will eventually take place. A deal between the government and Land Securities in August 2012 on the Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme, which allows the developer to make a reduced financial contribution to the programme, has now removed the main obstacle to development (DCLG 2012).

However, we will also examine some alternative locations for new housing in Kent Thameside which could be more sustainable, popular and affordable in the long term than the Ebbsfleet Valley and similar such out of town brownfield sites.

10.4.1 Build out slowly from existing communities

With so much money and political capital already invested in developments such as Eastern Quarry it is almost certain that new housing will appear on the site eventually. Land Securities is determined to see a return on its investment and Kent County Council, anxious to protect its rural hinterland from development, will not allow a major urban development site with existing planning permissions to be abandoned. Pressure on the Government, meanwhile, to 'build its way' towards an economic recovery has already forced Ministers to look for ways of unblocking the infrastructural barriers to development in Eastern Quarry (DCLG, 2012).

But while *development* on some scale is almost assured, the *type* of development to be created remains open for discussion. There is an existing overarching masterplan, but the development plans are still at outline stage and a builder has yet to be engaged. In fact Land Securities has already sought to renegotiate the scale and timing of some of the key community facilities in the Ebbsfleet Valley due to the slower than anticipated pace of development (The Gravesend Messenger, 2010).

The local authorities could seize the opportunity presented by the economic downturn to revise the terms of the Eastern Quarry planning permission to promote greater community integration. By asking Land Securities to build *outwards* slowly from southern edge of the residential footprint of Swanscombe and Knockhall, rather than build a self-sustaining community with its own distinct identity and centre, it may be possible to create a genuinely

cohesive and integrated community. Concentrating this development around existing community hubs such as the Swan Valley campus in Swanscombe would help to maximise this potential (see map 10.2). This campus, which contains an under-subscribed secondary school, a primary school, a library, a health centre and a life-long learning centre - all built in the last twelve years, would provide an ideal arena for new and existing residents to interact. It would also remove the need to create new health and education facilities in Eastern Quarry. Some of the money saved by doing this could then be invested in improvements in the fabric and facilities of Swanscombe and Knockhall – as proposed in the 2005 Masterplan. It is a concept that would require some additional land preparation, but aside from this there are no other significant practical obstacles that developers would need to overcome. Moreover, as most of the detailed design work has yet to be commissioned, the developer wouldn't need to pay any additional design fees.

Map 10.2 The relationship between Swanscombe, Knockhall, Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet



- | | |
|---|--|
| ■ Eastern Quarry | ■ Swanscombe and Knockhall |
| ■ Swan Valley Campus | ■ Ebbsfleet |

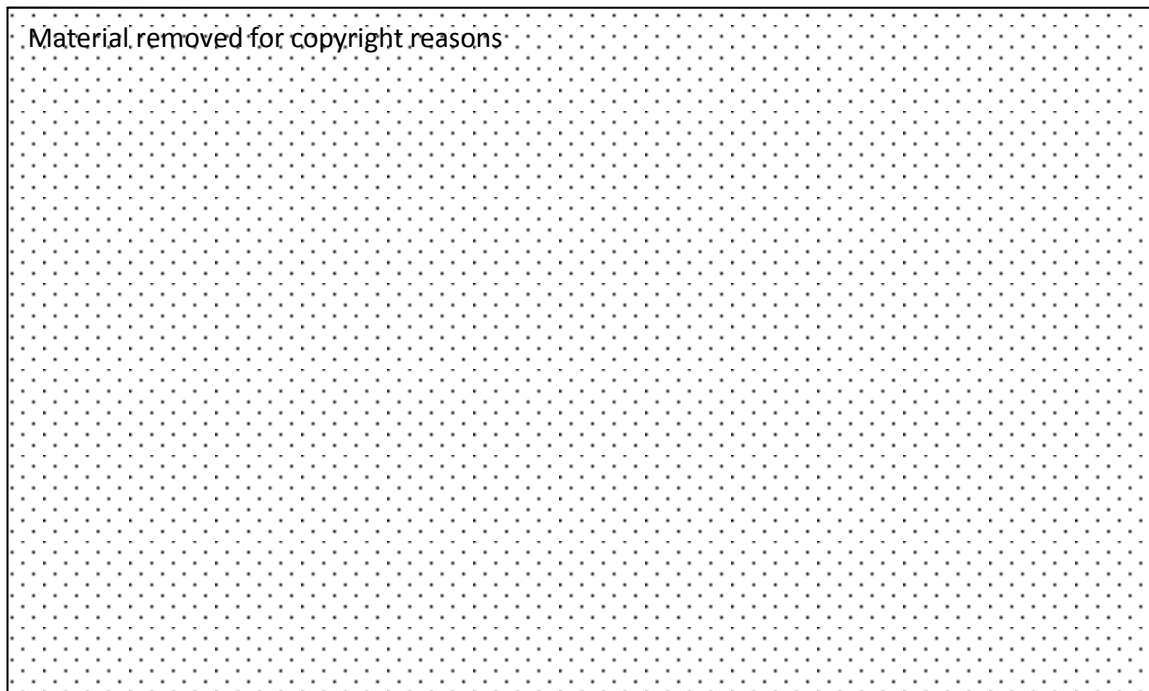
The picture includes the development layout from the current Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet Masterplans

Source: Kent Thameside Regeneration Board (2007)

To date, Land Securities' marketing of the Ebbsfleet Valley has focused, unsurprisingly, on its proximity to Bluewater and the speed by which residents can travel to central London, Paris and Brussels. Potential purchasers are offered the prospect of living in a stylish, modern, 'sustainable' development with unrivalled connections within the South east and with northern Europe (see figure 10.1). Kent Thameside's existing communities such as

Swanscombe and Knockhall, with their tired, “chimney stack” image, are conspicuous by their absence from the company’s marketing literature (Kent Thameside, 1995). They are treated as inconvenient reminders of Kent Thameside’s grey, unfashionable, heavy industrial past that are best ignored.

Figure 10.1 Sales advert for the first phase of 100 houses in Ebbsfleet Valley in 2008



A development that is focused on these existing communities would require Land Securities and their partners to reappraise their attitude to these existing communities. Perhaps most importantly, it would give them a direct vested interest in the renewal of these existing communities. Improvements to Swanscombe and Knockhall’s public realm, their infrastructure and housing stock would become a core corporate objective, rather than just a desirable but low priority objective.

A policy of building out slowly from existing communities therefore could provide the catalyst necessary to make community integration a reality, not just an aspiration.

10.4.2 Respect the history of the present

If integration is to be delivered in Kent Thameside we need new development that respects the memories and experiences of the people that used that land in its previous incarnations.

English Heritage, which has carried out a comprehensive analysis of the Gateway's historic environment as part of its national characterisation programme, believes that heritage can help to realise sustainable growth in the Gateway. Developments that respect and enhance the historic environment of the Gateway are the ones most likely to succeed it argues:

“Understanding the area’s use and character allows for some valuable continuity in the future of the Thames Gateway. Maintaining a feeling of continuity provides communities with roots in their past, stimulating a sense of belonging and pride in where they live” (English Heritage, 2005, 3-4)

In keeping with this sentiment, it recommends that the grade II listed Factory Club near Swanscombe, which until the 1970s was used by Blue Circle cement workers as social club, should be redeveloped and reopened as a community facility (English Heritage, 2005, 27).

Michael Keith, meanwhile, writing about the Thames Gateway, has called for a regeneration narrative that acknowledges the ‘history of the present’ (Keith, 2009). The historical, he says, is an active force in the present. Existing residents are acutely conscious of past narratives and this affects their perception of the regeneration proposals associated with the Thames Gateway.

Kent Thameside’s brownfield sites should not be seen as dead spaces that require activation, but as dynamic entities whose past uses not only continue to influence the present but are still being contested and re-interpreted by existing residents. Instead of an architecture which seeks to give each development an ersatz historical legitimacy, a regeneration strategy is needed that looks beyond the developments’ perimeters and tries to understand the different, and sometimes conflicting ways in which the existing community relate to their past, present and future uses. Reconciling these different perspectives and translating the result into practical action is not easy. We have seen from the case study of Ingress Park and Knockhall significant differences in the way existing residents relate to the site and its previous uses. It is necessary, nonetheless, if the idea of integrated development is to have any meaning or integrity in the future.

Inevitably conflicts between the developer vision for a site, driven by a commercial imperative, and the views of existing residents will arise. But as Syms and Knight (2001) have shown, it is possible to build a consensus which respects the various ways in which the existing community have used the site and which developers can accept. The key, as Raco and Henderson (2006, 499) observe, is to ensure that brownfield sites are not seen simply as “blank slates” or “problem places with limited potential other than demolition, remediation

or starting again” but as sites rich in historical meaning and value for the immediate community. It also requires the development community to show sensitivity to the existing uses of the site, even those which are informal or unregulated. If the site has an existing value as a green backdrop, or as an informal leisure space, this needs to be acknowledged and respected in the development plans.

It is equally important that existing residents are seen, not simply as consultees, but as co-owners of each brownfield site and the co-creators of their future. After all, it is their labour, their physical investment which has helped to create its economic value as a developable resource. They are entitled to a share of this value: either in the form of on-site amenities that they can access, or investment in the physical fabric or human capital of the existing community. This should, moreover, be a key, overriding consideration in each planning application and regeneration strategy, not simply a footnote.

10.4.3 Concentrate more housing in existing town centres in Kent Thameside

Given the amount of media and political attention given to Ebbsfleet Valley and Ingress Park, one could be forgiven for thinking that they are only sites in Kent Thameside suitable for major housing developments. Yet there are other sites, most notably in Kent Thameside's existing town centres which have not only the capacity to absorb more housing, but are better suited for the purpose.

For a start, building houses in existing town centres is likely to be cheaper than constructing houses in the Ebbsfleet Valley as most of the critical infrastructure is already in place. It would also build on the underlying economic strength of the Gateway's existing town centres. A report by the property consultants, GVA Grimley, concluded that the focus on the Gateway's 'economic transformers', such as Ebbsfleet, Stratford and Canary Wharf, has obscured the contribution that existing town centres will make to the Gateway's economic growth (GVA Grimley, 2008). The company calculated that 60 per cent of the employment growth in the Gateway outside the four transformer projects would occur at the ten key town centres in the area; a list that included Dartford and the Medway Towns in Kent. It argued that "sustainable growth in the Gateway can only be achieved through the growth of local town centres as employment, retail, leisure and 'destination' locations.

The benefits of town centre led regeneration in the Gateway were recognised by the last Labour Government towards the end of its period in office. The ODPM's framework for delivering the Communities Plan in the Thames Gateway, published in 2003, focused squarely on developing new communities on brownfield sites and said little about existing

town centres (ODPM, 2003b). However, the Sustainable Communities plan update, published shortly before the 2005 election (ODPM, 2005) and the Thames Gateway Delivery Plan published in 2007 (DCLG, 2007) both underlined the importance of “accelerating the redevelopment of town centres across the Gateway”. Investment in the commercial and cultural facilities and housing stock in existing centres was crucial, they said, to the success of the Gateway.

“Investment in the Gateway cannot be just about more houses, big sites and iconic development. We want to build places where people want to live, work and visit by improving the day to day lives of local residents. This means providing more homes, jobs, transport and shops in town centres” (DCLG, 2007, 47)

This admission was overshadowed in both documents by a discussion of the progress being made at Ebbsfleet, Stratford, Canary Wharf and the London Gateway – the key ‘economic transformers’ of the Gateway. Nonetheless, Ministers did make some funding available to promote town centre redevelopment. They were persuaded to do so, according to a senior Dartford Council Director interviewed for this study, by the feedback from local authorities to the Communities Plan:

“When Prescott announced funding for the Sustainable Communities Plan he invited local authorities to tell him what the money should be spent on. I think he expected us to say what’s getting in the way of new housing delivery and the barriers that needed to be removed. We said that’s not what you should be doing - you need to prepare the ground more broadly for development. That’s why we said prioritise Dartford town centre. We were quite successful in getting money to do that.”
(RSC)

In Dartford, the Government gave several million pounds in support to the ‘Northern Gateway’ development on the site of a former Glaxo Smith Kline production plant and the Lowfield Street development adjacent to the town’s Central Park. Ministers have also assisted the proposed redevelopment of Gravesend’s ‘Heritage Quarter’ (DCLG, 2007). Between them these schemes would have led to the creation of over two thousand new houses.

Unfortunately, the delivery of these schemes has been slower than anticipated. The initial proposals for the Lowfield Street development in Dartford and the Heritage Quarter development in Gravesend were both rejected, by a public inquiry and Gravesham Borough Council respectively, after encountering fierce public opposition. In both cases the local

community felt that the schemes proposed were not in keeping with the character and appearance of the existing town centres. A proposal in the Lowfield Street scheme to drive a road through the town's Central Park proved particularly unpopular. Yet few of the objectors to these proposals, were opposed to the *principle* of greater town centre development. Indeed, all parties present at the public inquiry into the Lowfield Street application accepted that new development was necessary in order to ensure that there was a critical mass of residents in the town centre sufficient to sustain existing services and maintain the centre's economic vitality. It was the quality of development that was in question, not the need for development.

Building on sites in existing town centres is not without its challenges. But the ready access these sites have to the town's public transport services, shops, public services and employers make them the most sustainable, practical and affordable of the housing options available in Kent Thameside at present. As LSE Housing's Framework for Housing in the London Thames Gateway commented back in 2004; "by working out from existing town centres, delivery can happen more quickly, more cheaply and more sensitively. It mixes old with new, helps integrate diverse communities, and supports mixed activities and uses" (Power, Richardson, Seshimo, Firth, 2004, 36). The reuse of redundant urban sites and buildings also helps to ensure that each new development is properly integrated into the existing urban landscape and is consistent with the character of the town centre.

Every town centre in Kent Thameside and the wider Thames Gateway contains redundant or under-utilised sites that have potential to be developed as housing. Some sites, like the Heritage Quarter site in Gravesend, have already been earmarked for housing, but have been held up for design reasons or the reluctance of developers to put new housing stock on the market in the current economic climate. Other suitable sites are owned by the public sector but have been allocated for non housing uses in the relevant local plan and would have to be re-categorised as land for housing by planners. Nevertheless in most cases they would be easier and cheaper to develop than non town centre sites earmarked for housing. If policy-makers wish to unlock housing delivery in the Thames Gateway then it is to existing town centres that they should look.

10.5 Conclusion

This chapter has exposed the limitations of the Kent Thameside regeneration model. While it has succeeded in bringing hundreds of millions of pounds of public and private investment into Kent Thameside, almost none of this money has found its way into its existing communities. The costs of preparing the area's brownfield sites for development and paying

for the necessary infrastructure have been so great that very little funding has been available to promote the integration of new and existing communities. Planned urban renewal schemes have gone unfunded and proposals aimed at blurring the boundaries between the new and existing areas remain unrealised. Attempts to deliver integration have not been helped by the economic downturn - which has slowed down the pace of development and depleted developers' resources - and by a lack of consensus among planners and developers as to *how* to achieve integration.

Nevertheless, this chapter has argued that integration could be achieved if the regeneration partners were to build outwards from existing centres, rather than building large, iconic stand-alone developments. Swanscombe, with its modern health, education and community facilities, and its rich industrial heritage, should be at the centre of the Eastern Quarry development, not on its sidelines. Similarly, Kent Thameside's existing town centres, Dartford and Gravesend, have the capacity and the infrastructure to support far more new housing than is currently envisaged. Their historic centres, with their stock of attractive Victorian and Edwardian buildings, and excellent commercial, shopping and leisure facilities and transport connections, provide an ideal environment in which to locate new development. They deserve far more prominence in the regeneration plans for the Gateway than they have received to date. Their established infrastructure will also allow new development to proceed more cheaply than is the case with brownfield developments like Eastern Quarry.

But whatever development is delivered, existing residents should be closely involved in the decision making process and are entitled to a share of the benefits from it. After all, they are not simply disinterested bystanders but people whose labour has - directly or indirectly - added to the economic value of each brownfield site. Their lives should be enhanced by the new development, not constrained or diminished by it.

Chapter 11 Conclusions

11.1 Introduction

This study has examined the extent to which the regeneration model pursued in the Thames Gateway in the 1990s and 2000s has succeeded in meeting its key regeneration goals of achieving the integration of new and existing communities and empowering existing residents to participate in the regeneration of their areas.

To this end, this study has examined the impact of regeneration on a series of existing communities in Kent Thameside, a key growth area in the Thames Gateway. It has looked in detail at a series of measures aimed at promoting the physical integration of new and existing communities and encouraging social mixing between the residents of each community. It has also considered the impact of a number of strategies designed to empower existing residents to participate in the regeneration of their area and to gain from the opportunities it offers.

This concluding chapter begins with an overview of what this study has added to our understanding of regeneration in the Thames Gateway and the UK. It will then look in more detail at the key lessons relating to Kent Thameside that we can take from this study.

11.2 What has this study added to our understanding of urban regeneration in the Thames Gateway and the UK?

The type of regeneration that took place in the Thames Gateway in the 1990s and 2000s has often divided opinion among academic commentators. Some have described it in pejorative terms as a top-down, neo-liberal attempt to preserve Britain's international competitiveness in the face of the diminishing social capital and skills base of our communities (De Angelis, 2008, Hay, 2004, Jessop, 2002). Its underlying 'growth first' logic is also seen as inimical to sustainable and socially inclusive regeneration with local actors having limited scope to shape their own regeneration vision (Haughton 2003, Turok, 2009, Lombardi, Porter, Barber, Rogers, 2011).

Other commentators, however, have taken a more pragmatic stance. They have argued that good neighbourhood management, a strong planning system and local capacity building measures at local level can make a tangible difference to an area's regeneration outcomes (Richardson, 2008, Power, 2004, Power, Richardson, Seshimo, Firth, 2004). Kent Thameside, for instance, has been identified as an exemplar of social regeneration and as one of the few areas in the Thames Gateway where social regeneration has been pursued at

least as seriously as physical regeneration (Nelson, Quan, Forrester, Pound, 2005, Oxford Brookes, 2006).

This study adds to this debate and our understanding of urban regeneration in the Thames Gateway and within the UK. The case study of Kent Thameside shows that local actors and local policies *can* have an important bearing on the ultimate shape and trajectory of an area's regeneration experience. In the 1990s a powerful and well resourced regeneration association, led by an influential landowner, Blue Circle, ensured that Kent Thameside emerged as the area best placed to benefit from the Conservative government's decision to make the Thames Gateway a national regeneration priority. Not only did it win the right to host the new international station on the channel tunnel rail link, but it succeeded in getting much of what it asked for in the first Thames Gateway Planning Framework launched in 1995. And when new Labour came to power, the Kent Thameside local authorities succeeded, where others conspicuously failed, to win funding from both Westminster and Europe to try to ensure that the property led regeneration of the former cement and paper mills and quarries went hand in hand with the renewal of the area's existing communities.

However, this case study also demonstrates the limits to local autonomy. Kent Thameside's initial success in securing funds for Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross was tempered by Ministers' subsequent refusal to countenance further spending on social regeneration when the anticipated volume of new homes failed to materialise. This imperative to deliver houses quickly and efficiently, which largely ignored the scale of the technical and infrastructural challenge involved in regenerating large ex-industrial sites, severely restricted the Kent Thameside regeneration partners' room for manoeuvre on the regeneration of existing communities. These regeneration ambitions were then dealt a further, and possibly fatal, blow by the banking crisis of 2008.

Turok (2009) has asserted that the government's approach to the regeneration in the Thames Gateway has tended to suppress local priorities and oblige local partnership to conform, in return for occasional grant funding, to a generic regeneration template that is not always in their interests. This study suggests that this criticism is a valid one. The prevailing Thames Gateway regeneration model, which is focused primarily on the large scale property led redevelopment of brownfield sites outside the urban footprint, is not well equipped to meet the regeneration needs of existing communities in an area such as Kent Thameside. Most of the available funding and political focus has been expended on the delivery of the infrastructure needed to make the area's brownfield sites fit for development, rather than on meeting the needs of existing residents.

Nonetheless, despite the deficiencies of the Kent Thameside regeneration model, it is possible that the outcomes of its approach to social regeneration could have been different if key partners, particularly the local authorities, had had the capacity, the time and the experience to implement it effectively. If, for example, more time, resources and political capital had been invested in the community engagement phase of the Swanscombe Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and Action Plan, then it is possible that the community would have felt a greater sense of ownership of the strategy. The strategy could then have been used as a springboard for identifying and implementing urban renewal schemes that not only had strong community support but were led by residents.

Similarly, the Gunn Road Environmental Improvement Scheme in Swanscombe would have had a greater and more sustained impact if the local authority had spent time developing residents' capacity to lead the scheme, and then supported them appropriately once it was underway. It is also clear that more could have been achieved if the value of community engagement had been championed more effectively at a high level within the local authority and efforts had been made to ensure that it was integral to council's policy making and delivery processes. The decision, meanwhile, to prioritise the refurbishment of Ingress Abbey over the provision of community facilities that could have been shared by residents of both the new and existing community, undoubtedly impeded efforts to integrate Ingress Park into the existing community.

The case study of Kent Thameside, therefore, has important implications for the theory and practice of urban regeneration and renewal in this country. It shows that the regeneration priorities of existing communities are unlikely to be achieved using developers' section 106 contributions and intermittent grants from the DCLG and local government alone. In this sense, we can see in the Thames Gateway regeneration model - particularly the one articulated in the 2003 Sustainable Communities Plan, with its demanding housing and commercial delivery targets and its ambitious regeneration goals for existing communities - signs of the same 'irrational exuberance' displayed by the financial markets during the dot-com bubble of the late 1990s (Shiller, 2000).

This case study suggests that for the integration of new and existing communities to occur, it needs to be a *central* regeneration objective rather than a supplementary one that is only addressed once the shape and form of the main brownfield development have been decided and planners have limited room for manoeuvre. Furthermore, the DCLG and other regeneration agencies need to work closely with the rest of government to ensure that there

is a co-ordinated and holistic delivery programme in place capable of addressing the needs of both new and old residents.

Another key finding of wider relevance concerns the level of experience, skills, executive commitment and time available to the organisations delivering regeneration and renewal projects. As the Kent Thameside case study has shown it is difficult to deliver effective renewal schemes in partnership with existing residents in a climate where there is no discernible culture of resident participation, little high level commitment to the concept and limited time and resources to develop the skills and confidence of residents and also staff. Successful renewal and participation schemes require a long-term commitment and sustained resources and also a willingness to put aside the usual political imperative to deliver tangible outcomes quickly within the confines of the local electoral cycle. In short, effective delivery requires a high level political consensus that allows for long term planning and consistent decision making over time.

11.3 The key lessons relating to Kent Thameside from this study

The rationale for the regeneration of Kent Thameside has evolved substantially over the last thirty years

Over the last three decades the rationale behind the regeneration of Kent Thameside has altered markedly. In the 1980s the regeneration of the 'North Kent Thameside' was primarily about reviving a moribund, ex industrial economy that was acting as a drag factor on the South East's accelerating economic growth. By the 1990s, the focus was on maximising the economic potential of new Channel Tunnel Rail Link: 'growth hubs' such as Ebbsfleet were seen by Ministers as an opportunity to create jobs in the Thames Gateway's knowledge and service economy which would provide valuable back office support to the City of London's burgeoning financial and legal sectors. A growing awareness of the importance of sustainable development and the rights of existing residents had also led politicians to demand a more inclusive brand of regeneration than was apparent in the Thatcherite eighties: a call enthusiastically endorsed by the new Kent Thameside Association.

After the millennium, Kent Thameside was at the forefront of the government's increasingly urgent efforts to address the chronic shortage of 'affordable housing' in the South east. So called exemplar developments like Ingress Park were held up by Ministers as proof that it was possible to create attractive development in the Gateway that people from all income groups would be happy to live in. Affluent incomers were drawn in by the allure of high end shopping at Bluewater and fast rail travel to London and the continent from Ebbsfleet.

Existing residents, meanwhile, were told that they too would get their fair share of the benefits that regeneration would unlock. The regeneration partners promised that the new communities would be seamlessly integrated into the existing urban realm. New investment in infrastructure and public realm of existing communities would also be forthcoming in a bid to blur the boundaries between them and the new developments.

The current economic downturn has put paid to these ambitions. A credit squeeze and a fall in property prices outside London has brought residential and commercial development in Kent Thameside to an abrupt halt. And an indebted and investment shy government has not had limited means to step in and kick-start the redevelopment process. Any hopes that existing communities had of new investment have also been firmly extinguished. The optimism and certainty of the last decade has now been replaced by doubt and inertia.

Disappointingly, the opportunity afforded by the downturn to re-examine whether the current Kent Thameside regeneration model is capable of achieving its disparate - and expensive - set of goals has not been seized. All hopes appear to be pinned on the prospect of an eventual economic recovery strong enough to persuade developers to start building again. The needs of existing communities rarely feature in these debates. Their interests have become subordinate to the primary and apparently all-encompassing task of finding a way of getting development moving again. The goals of integration and inclusion, once so central to the Kent Thameside project, are now barely discussed at all.

Kent Thameside's existing communities have changed significantly since the disappearance of the area's traditional heavy industries

Kent Thameside's existing communities still bear the imprint of their heavy industrial past. The pronounced skills deficit that one finds in Swanscombe and Knockhall today, for example, is a legacy of the villages' reliance for over a century on the low skilled, entry level jobs provided by the cement and paper making industries. Yet significant changes have also taken place. In all three villages, for instance, the creation of new private housing over the last thirty years has resulted in the influx of younger and better educated residents who see the villages as a convenient and affordable base from which to commute to work. It is indicative of the villages' gradual evolution from a homogeneous white, blue collar community that was heavily dependent on local employers to a more heterogeneous community that looks increasingly to greater London for employment and leisure opportunities. The economic and cultural insularity that was once a hallmark of these communities is now emphatically a thing of the past.

Generalisations about the ‘existing community’ should be avoided and the views of prominent individuals or groups which purport to speak on behalf of the whole community should be treated with caution

This study has argued that a detailed knowledge of the people who live in Kent Thameside’s existing communities - firstly in terms of how they see their own communities and secondly in terms of how they view the new development taking place - will enable the regeneration partners to respond more effectively to their needs and aspirations.

The interviews carried out with residents in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross in order to meet this objective have revealed a complex society with contrasting social aspirations and reactions to the new development taking place. In addition to highlighting the dangers of pat generalisations by policy-makers about ‘the existing community’, this process has also illustrated the need to be cautious when dealing with individuals and groups who purport to speak on behalf of the whole community. The views of community leaders need to be given due consideration in preparing for any regeneration related activity, but they should not be treated as a proxy for in-depth engagement with all residents.

The Kent Thameside local authorities have struggled to involve residents effectively in the delivery of neighbourhood renewal projects

A notable feature of the neighbourhood renewal schemes pursued by Kent Thameside local authorities in existing communities is their emphasis on resident participation and empowerment. By giving residents a central role in a pivotal role in the planning, delivery and management of such schemes, it is argued, existing communities will gain the skills and confidence they need to take advantage of the opportunities created by regeneration. Yet, in many cases, the authorities have struggled to engage residents in manner they had hoped. Looking back now, it is clear that they were trying to do too much, too quickly. Instead of investing in capacity building schemes and supporting residents while they developed their own solutions, local authorities opted for the immediate implementation of largely officer led schemes. In doing so they betrayed their own lack of community empowerment expertise and their preference, certainly at senior level, for immediate, tangible wins over more nebulous long-term resident capacity building projects. The failure to integrate individual renewal projects into a coherent, long-term, multi-agency strategy, whose goals are clearly understood by each partner, and prioritised by them, has also harmed their delivery.

Lessons are beginning to be learnt, as the progress made since the launch of the Gunn Road Neighbourhood Agreement shows. The Friends of Swanscombe Heritage Park also

provide a good example of what can be achieved with the right resources and a long-term commitment. However, much more work needs to be done before an environment is created which is genuinely conducive to the emergence of resident led neighbourhood renewal projects in Kent Thameside.

The Kent Thameside developers' commitment to community engagement and social inclusion is shallow

Kent Thameside developers have been adept in employing the language of social inclusion, partnership and community focus, but this is often borne of political expediency rather than a deep-seated commitment to community engagement. In most cases they have not had the time, the resources, the knowledge, the high level strategic commitment or the external support necessary to deliver on their community engagement objectives.

Blue Circle's failure to establish the Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust is a prime example. Not only did the company fail to win support for the model among key community partners, but there was no established culture of community participation in neighbourhood management issues in place on which to build. Without this foundation - which the company had neither the resources nor the inclination to foster - the Forum and Trust could not succeed. Ultimately it appears that Blue Circle was more interested in making its development application palatable to central and local government than it was in involving the community in the decision making process.

The developers of Ingress Park and Ebbsfleet Valley, Crest Nicolson and Land Securities, have also both sought to engage existing communities, but this process has yielded few if any tangible benefits for existing residents. Less than a quarter of one per cent of Land Securities' development budget to date has been invested in existing communities, while virtually all of Crest Nicolson's development contribution has been ploughed into the restoration of Ingress Abbey. In short, developers' rhetoric about community engagement has not been translated into practice.

The Kent Thameside regeneration partners have failed to give adequate consideration to alternative land use scenarios suggested by existing residents

The current Kent Thameside regeneration model has been drawn up with almost no reference to the residents of existing communities. True, Land Securities has assented, reluctantly, to Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council's call for a 'green buffer' between Eastern Quarry and existing communities. But that is the extent of local involvement. Indeed, even the concept of the green buffer was proposed without any meaningful resident

consultation. Sites such as Eastern Quarry are treated as blank slates without historical or cultural meaning for existing communities. The regeneration partners have chosen to ignore these communities' legitimate claim to be seen as co-creators of these brownfield sites' future.

As a result alternative regeneration visions for Kent Thameside have gone unrecognised or unheeded. This has alienated certain groups of residents from the regeneration process. The failure, for example, to restore the informal, unmanaged spaces lost through quarrying activities and recent new development has antagonised many residents. The spate of criminal damage and anti-social behaviour incidents at Swanscombe Heritage Park is seen by some as directly attributable to the loss of informal space around the village where young people can meet without supervision or scrutiny. Some older people, meanwhile, who worked in the cement or paper making industry, feel that part of their identity has been stripped away by unfamiliar new developments. These episodes illustrate the need for a far more nuanced and more inclusive regeneration model that looks at Kent Thameside's brownfield sites through a wider social lens.

The Kent Thameside regeneration model is incapable of delivering either the integration of new and existing communities or the renewal of existing areas

This study has demonstrated that the current Kent Thameside regeneration model, which is predicated on the creation of large, self-sustaining developments on brownfield sites outside the existing urban footprint, is not conducive to the creation of balanced, integrated communities. An analysis of the respective relationships between Ingress Park and Knockhall and Waterstone Park and Horns Cross found very little evidence of social or physical integration between the communities. Nor, it seems, is there any real consensus among developers and planners as to how the division between the new and existing communities can be successfully bridged. Some schemes designed to blur the boundaries between the communities have been drawn up, but they have been too expensive or too contentious to implement. The cost of integration, especially in an era of fiscal austerity, has simply been too great.

These findings are consistent with concerns expressed about the level of integration between the new and existing residents in other parts of the Thames Gateway. Poynter, for example, has questioned how widely the regeneration impact of the Olympics will be felt in Stratford (Poynter, 2009). He suggests that it may lead to a growing level of social segregation in Stratford with newly arrived young professionals concentrated around the Olympic site and Stratford City and lower income groups working in the service economy displaced to other parts of Newham. Similarly, Davidson found almost no evidence of social

mixing between the residents of the Royal Artillery Quays development in Thamesmead and the existing community (Davidson, 2009). The 'lifeworlds' of the young and largely professional residents of these new 'Blue Ribbon developments' next to the Thames, bore little relation to those of their neighbours he found. The former worked and socialised out of the area and rarely used any local services or facilities while the latter were far more grounded in the community. The Royal Artillery Quays site, like Ingress Park in Greenhithe, feels physically and socially divorced from the surrounding community. The same sense spatial and social exclusivity has also been observed at the Britannia Village development at the western end of the Royal Docks in Newham. It is described by Butler and Robson as a "discrete, indeed hermetic, development" for young professionals with "nothing by the way of urban infrastructure" (Butler, Robson, 2003, 64).

The challenge of integrating large new discrete brownfield development into the existing – and often lower income – communities alongside them, would appear, therefore, to be one that many growth areas in the Thames Gateway have struggled to meet. It confirms that an alternative regeneration model is required if the Gateway's existing residents are to derive tangible benefits from regeneration in line with aspirations set out in the Thames Gateway Planning Framework of 1995 and the Sustainable Communities Plan of 2003.

Kent Thameside's physical regeneration delivery record compares closely to that of other key growth areas in the Thames Gateway

It has been twenty years since the formation of the Kent Thameside Association. In those two decades many of the key projects envisaged by the Association have come to pass. Bluewater Shopping Centre opened in 1999 and now employs 7,000 people and attracts over 27 million visitors a year. Ebbsfleet International Station, offering high speed services into central London, and Fastrack, Kent Thameside's rapid bus transit scheme, have also been successfully delivered. And almost 2,000 new homes have been created at Ingress Park and Waterstone Park. Yet the delivery record elsewhere has been less impressive. Only a handful of the thousands of promised homes in the Ebbsfleet Valley have been built and the much vaunted commercial development around Ebbsfleet Station remains years away.

Yet the Kent Thameside experience is not unique. The record of many of the other key regeneration areas in the Thames Gateway has also been mixed. In Medway, over 1,000 homes have been delivered on St Mary's Island alongside a major new University campus. But the planned Rochester Riverside development, which is due to include 2,000 homes as well hotels, shops and offices, has failed to get underway due to the economic downturn.

After witnessing three years of inactivity on the site, Medway Council - which has spent almost £40 million on decontamination and flood defence work at the site - dropped its preferred developer, Crest Nicolson, at the end of 2010. However, progress since then has not been much quicker.

There are also strong parallels between the Eastern Quarry development and the proposed Barking Riverside development north of the Thames. Like Eastern Quarry, Barking Riverside, a site with capacity for over 10,000 homes, has been compromised by the declining property market and a failure to provide the necessary upfront transport infrastructure. A joint venture between Bellway Homes and the Homes and Community Agency (which paid for much of the decontamination work necessary to make the site habitable) its future was thrown into doubt at the end of 2008 by the Mayor of London's decision to withdraw his support from proposed Docklands Light Railway extension to Dagenham. Deprived of the DLR extension and the proposed Thames Gateway Bridge across the Thames - another casualty of the Mayor's cost-cutting programme - the local authority was obliged to radically reduce the scale of its immediate development plans for the site.

The only site in the Gateway that has been largely untroubled by the effects of the downturn in the property market and the public sector spending squeeze has been the Olympic site in Stratford. In addition to the new sporting facilities in the Olympic Park and 2,800 new apartments, 8,000 retail jobs have been created at the Westfield Stratford City complex along with a new rail station on the High Speed 1 route. The Olympic Delivery Authority's large contingency fund ensured that the project escaped the worst effects of the credit crunch in 2008 and 2009. When the banks proved unable to fund the cost of the new apartments in the Athlete's Village, the ODA stepped forward with over £820 million of its own money and built them itself. Indeed, some critics have suggested that the pressure to deliver the Olympic infrastructure on time has led to a reduction in the amount of political attention and public funding available to other parts of the Gateway – just at the point they needed it the most (Brownill, Carpenter, 2009).

It is clear therefore that the Kent Thameside regeneration experience has been similar in many respects to that of its neighbours in the Thames Gateway. Kent Thameside has been fortunate in that its main regeneration goal, the delivery of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and the new station at Ebbsfleet, was also a key national goal of the Government. Ministers could not afford politically for this to fail and were prepared to step in on more than one occasion to rescue the project. Stratford and the Olympics aside, no other Gateway area has

benefited from such a valuable guarantee. But aside from the rail link, Kent Thameside has been subject to the same economic vicissitudes, funding shortages and infrastructural delays as every other Gateway regeneration area.

Although the Thames Gateway has had some strong champions in the Cabinet, government departments have baulked at the cost of delivering the infrastructure necessary to turn the Gateway's often toxic and poorly serviced brownfield acres into the modern sustainable communities envisaged in the Sustainable Communities Plan. And while the private sector has endeavoured to plug some of the gap, it was never enough, even before the downturn to meet all of the Gateway's regeneration objectives. Consequently, Eastern Quarry's fate has been shared by host of other major Gateway development opportunities such as Barking Riverside, Silvertown Quays, Greenwich Peninsula and Rochester Riverside.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Kent Thameside timeline

	National	Thames Gateway	Kent Thameside
1979	Conservative Government elected		
1981	Enterprise Zones and Urban Development Corporations created	London Docklands Development Corporation established	
1983	Conservative Government re-elected		North West Kent Enterprise Zone created
1986	Agreement to build a Channel Tunnel reached		
1987	Conservative Government re-elected	Article in <i>The Planner</i> on economic potential of Channel Tunnel for Kent by Martin Simmons published	<i>A Strategy for Kent</i> published by the Channel Tunnel Consultative Committee
1989		<i>The East Thames Corridor Study</i> by Deloitte, Haskins and Sells published	
1990	John Major replaces Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister		Blue Circle gains planning permission for Bluewater Shopping Centre Blue Circle's Swanscombe Cement Works closes
1991	City Challenge launched	East Thames Corridor initiative launched Plan to route Channel Tunnel Rail Link through East Thames Corridor announced	
1992	Conservative Government re-elected		
1993		<i>East Thames Corridor development capacity study</i> published by the DoE	Kent Thameside Association established Empire Paper Mill in Greenhithe closes
1994	Single Regeneration Budget launched		Ebbsfleet announced as location of new international station on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link
1995	National target to develop 50% of new housing on brownfield sites introduced	<i>Thames Gateway Planning Framework</i> (RPG9a) published by the DoE	<i>Looking to the Future</i> published by the KTA
1996		London and Continental Railways (LCR) is chosen to build the Channel Tunnel Rail Link.	Single Regeneration Budget funding awarded for public transport orientated development study <i>Ebbsfleet Community Development: The first steps</i> published by Blue Circle

			<p><i>Ebbsfleet Masterplan for development</i> published by Blue Circle</p> <p><i>Ebbsfleet Development and Environment Framework</i> published</p>
1997	<p>Labour Government elected</p> <p>Social Exclusion Unit set up</p>		<p><i>Looking to the Future update</i> published by the KTA</p>
1998	<p>The New Deal for Communities programme launched</p> <p><i>A New Deal for Transport</i> published by the DETR</p>	<p>Channel Tunnel Rail Link rescued by the Government. LCR sells £1.6 billion of government-backed <u>bonds</u> to pay for the construction of section 1</p> <p>London Docklands Development Corporation wound up</p>	<p><i>The Case for Kent Thameside</i> published by the Kent Thameside Local Authorities team</p> <p>Single Regeneration Budget funding awarded to North Kent Gateway Partnership to promote social inclusion in existing communities</p>
1999	<p><i>Towards an Urban Renaissance</i>, the final report of the Urban Task Force published</p>		<p><i>Looking to an integrated future: Land use and transport planning in Kent Thameside</i> published by the KTA</p>
2000	<p><i>Delivering an Urban Renaissance</i> published by the DETR</p> <p><i>Transport 2010: The 10 Year Plan</i> published by the DETR</p> <p>Planning Policy Guidance on Housing calls for urban densities of over 50 dwellings per hectare</p> <p>The National Brownfield Development target increased to 60% of new housing</p>	<p>Status of Thames Gateway as a “hub for development and regeneration” confirmed</p>	<p>Bluewater Shopping Centre opens</p>
2001	<p>Labour Government re-elected</p> <p><i>The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal</i> launched</p>	<p><i>Thames Gateway Review</i> by Roger Tym and Partners published by the DETR</p> <p>Collapse of Railtrack forces further restructuring of Channel Tunnel Rail Link project</p>	<p>Work on Ingress Park begins</p>
2002			<p><i>The North Kent Area Investment Framework</i> published by the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership</p> <p>Planning permission for Ebbsfleet granted</p> <p>Work on Waterstone Park begins</p>

			Urban II Thames Gateway Kent Programme launched to promote social inclusion in existing communities
2003	<i>Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future</i> published by the ODPM. It identifies four growth areas, including the Thames Gateway.	<p>The first phase of the Channel Rail Link from Folkestone to Ebbsfleet opens</p> <p><i>Making it Happen: delivering growth in the Thames Gateway</i> published by the ODPM. It sets out details of how the Sustainable Communities will be implemented in the Gateway.</p> <p><i>Relationship between Transport and Development in the Thames Gateway</i> by Llewellyn Davies published</p>	<p>The Kent Thameside Delivery Board established</p> <p><i>Towards the futureplace: A community strategy for Kent Thameside</i> published by the KTS Local Strategic Partnership</p>
2004	Kate Barker's Review of Housing Supply published		Construction of Fastrack begins
2005	<p>Labour Government re-elected</p> <p>2012 Olympics awarded to London</p>	<i>Creating sustainable communities: delivering the Thames Gateway</i> published by the ODPM. It sets out plans to increase pace of regeneration in the Gateway.	Kent Thameside Regeneration Framework published
2006		<p><i>Thames Gateway Interim Plan</i> published by the DCLG</p> <p><i>Thames Gateway Evidence Review</i> published by the ODPM</p> <p>Thames Gateway Tsar, Judith Armitt, appointed</p>	
2007		<p>The second phase of the Channel Rail Link from Ebbsfleet to St Pancras opens</p> <p><i>The Thames Gateway: Laying the Foundations</i> published by the National Audit Office</p> <p><i>Thames Gateway: the Delivery Plan</i> published by the DCLG</p>	<p>Ebbsfleet International Station opens</p> <p>Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Infrastructure Programme (STIP) established. Public sector and private developers agree £166 million programme.</p> <p>Planning permission for Eastern Quarry granted. Land Securities to invest £40 million in STIP</p>

2008			Lafarge closes Northfleet Cement Works
2009		High speed domestic services begin on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link <i>The Thames Gateway Core Vision</i> by Terry Farrell published	
2010	Conservative and Liberal Democrat Government takes power	Thames Gateway Strategic Group, composed of local authority and business leaders, was launched	Coalition Government suspends public contribution to STIP
2011			Kent Thameside Regeneration Partnership wound up
2012			Coalition Government renegotiates STIP in order to unlock development at Eastern Quarry Plans for creation of a Paramount Studios theme park on Swanscombe Peninsula announced

Appendix 2 Kent Thameside Residents' Interview Schedule

1. Preamble read by interviewer

First of all I'd like to thank you for taking the time and trouble to complete this questionnaire. This research project relies on the willingness of local residents to take part in it, so I really appreciate your co-operation. I would of course be happy to send you a summary of my findings once the project has been completed if you are interested.

To make sure that I get a representative sample of views from this community, I will need to ask you for some personal details. All of these details will remain completely confidential and will not appear anywhere in the final report. If there are any questions however that you really don't feel comfortable about answering then please do say so, and we will move on.

Are there any questions that you have for me before we start?

2. Residents and their communities

2.1 Personal Information

1. How many years have you lived in your present house?
2. How many years have you lived in Swanscombe / Knockhall / Stone?
3. Where are / were your parents from?
4. Do any other members of your family live in Swanscombe / Knockhall / Stone?
5. How many bedrooms does this house have?
6. How many people live in this house?
7. Is your house rented or do you own it?

(If renting) Do you rent your house from:

- a. Private Landlord
- b. Dartford Council
- c. Housing Association
(eg Moat, Hyde, CDS, London & Quadrant, West Kent, Salvation Army)

(If home owner) Do you own your house outright, or do you have a mortgage or shared ownership arrangement?

8. Which of the following best describes your life at the moment?

- a. I'm a full-time student
- b. I'm in full-time work
- c. I'm in part-time work
- d. I'm unemployed
- e. I'm self-employed
- f. I'm retired
- g. I'm looking after my home and/or family
- h. I can't work because of disability or illness
- i. Other (please explain)
- j.

(If working) What work do you do?

9. Can you tell me what your household income is each year?

- a. Up to £10,000
- b. Between £10,001 - £20,000
- c. Between £20,001 - £30,000
- d. Between £30,001 - £40,000
- e. Between £40,001 - £50,000
- f. Above £50,001

10. Do you get any state benefits?

(If yes) Can you tell me which ones?

11. Can you tell me how old you are?

- a. Between 16-21
- b. Between 22-30
- c. Between 31-40
- d. Between 41-50
- e. Between 51-60
- f. Between 61-70
- g. Between 71-80
- h. Between 81+

12. Do you belong to any of the following local groups or organisations?

- a. A residents' association
- b. A political party
- c. A church or religious organisation
- d. A sports club
- e. A social club
- f. A charitable or voluntary association
- g. A drama, music or dance group
- h. A school governing body
- i. A hobby or craft club or association
- j. A pub team
- k. Other (please give details)

13. Do you have any of the following qualifications?

- a. 'O' level(s);
- b. CSE(s);
- c. GSCE(s);
- d. School Certificate;
- e. 'A' level(s);
- f. Higher School Certificate;
- g. First Degree;
- h. Higher Degree;
- i. City & Guilds;
- j. Professional or work based qualification (please specify what);
- k. NVQ level 1/2;
- l. Foundation/Intermediate GNVQ;
- m. NVQ level 3;
- n. Advanced GNVQ;
- o. NVQ levels 4 and 5;
- p. HNC;
- q. HND;

2.2 Residents' perceptions of their own communities

14. If someone was to ask you where you live, where would you say?

15. Do you like living in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe?

(If yes) What do you like about it?

(If no) What do you dislike about it?

16. Is there anything you would like to see done that you think would improve life in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe?

17. Do you know any of your neighbours?

(If yes) How well do you know them?

18. Is there a good sense of community in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe?

19. What kinds of people live in this road / street / block?

20. What are the shops and services like in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe?

21. Are there good places to go in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe if you wanted to go for a night out?

22. Are the roads, pavements, parks and greens in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe well looked after?

23. What are the sport and leisure facilities like in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe?

24. Are there any good places to go in this area if you wanted to go for a walk or a cycle or to walk the dog?

25. What are the facilities for young people like in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe?
26. What are the schools and health services like in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe?
27. How well looked after would you say people's houses and gardens are around here?
28. What is the public transport like in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe?
29. What is the traffic like on the roads in this area?
30. Do you think the local council does a good job in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe?
31. Have you ever considered moving out of Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe?
(If yes) Is there anything preventing you from doing so?
32. How would you describe Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe to someone who has never been here who wanted to know what kind of place it is?

3. Residents' perceptions of Kent Thameside

3.1 Residents' knowledge of key Kent Thameside regeneration initiatives

33. Which of the following building developments have you heard of?

(Yes / No / Not certain)

- a. Ebbsfleet
- b. Eastern Quarry
- c. Swanscombe Peninsula
- d. Ingress Park
- e. Waterstone Park
- f. St James Lane Pit
- g. Crossways
- h. Bluewater

(If yes) Can you tell me what you know about Ebbsfleet, Eastern Quarry.....?

(If no or not sure, show pictures of proposed development, and ask respondent if they recognise it. If yes ask them what they know about it)

34. Have you heard of term 'Kent Thameside'?

(If yes) Can you tell me what it is?

35. How well informed do you think Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe residents are about the new building developments in Dartford and Gravesham?

- a. Well informed
- b. Aware of only basic details
- c. Badly informed
- d. Can't say

3.2 Impact of new development on existing residents

36. What benefits do you think there will be for Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe from the new building developments now taking place?
37. What downsides do you think there will be for Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe from the new building developments now taking place?
38. Do you think that existing residents in Stone/Knockhall/Swanscombe will benefit as much as newcomers to this area from the new building development taking place?
39. Do you think that the residents of the new developments will mix with the residents of existing communities such as Stone/Knockhall/Swanscombe?
40. For each of the following things, tell me if you think they will a. get better b. stay the same or c. get worse as a result of the new building developments taking place in Dartford and Gravesham. Feel free to say 'not sure' if you are uncertain.
- a. Number of jobs in Dartford and Gravesham.
 - b. Number of well paid jobs in Dartford and Gravesham with good career prospects
 - c. Unemployment in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe.
 - d. Access of Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe residents to well paid jobs in Dartford and Gravesham with good career prospects.
 - e. Average wage of Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe residents
 - f. Public transport links between Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe and the rest of Dartford and Gravesham.
 - g. Amount of traffic on the roads in and around Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe
 - h. Access of Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe residents to good quality training and education opportunities in Dartford and Gravesham.
 - i. Number of affordable homes in Dartford and Gravesham.
 - j. Access of Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe residents to affordable housing in Dartford and Gravesham.
 - k. Ability of young people in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe to buy or rent their first property in Dartford and Gravesham.
 - l. The state of schools, health centres, sport facilities and other community facilities in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe.
 - m. The state of the streets, pavements, parks and greens in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe.
 - n. The state of housing in Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe
41. Compared to neighbouring communities (ie either Stone, Knockhall, Swanscombe), do you think your community (ie Swanscombe/Knockhall/Stone) is getting its fair share of money and resources from the Council, the Government and the private companies building the new developments in Dartford and Gravesham?
- (If no) Why not?
42. Is there anything extra you think the Council, the Government and the companies building the new developments should be doing to help make sure that Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe residents benefit from the new development taking place?

43. Who do you think will benefit the most from the new building developments taking place? Do you think the Council, the Government and the companies building the new developments understand the needs of Stone/Knockhall/Swanscombe residents?
44. On balance, what do you think the impact of the new building developments now taking place in Dartford and Gravesham will be on Stone / Knockhall / Swanscombe?
- a. Very positive
 - b. Overall positive
 - c. Mixed; some positive and some negative issues
 - d. Overall negative
 - e. Very negative
 - f. Not sure

3.3 Extent of residents' involvement in the regeneration of Kent Thameside

45. Which of the following statement(s) about the new development in Dartford and Gravesham apply to you?
- a. I've read leaflet(s), magazine(s), or newspaper article(s) on the regeneration of Dartford and Gravesham.
 - b. I've completed questionnaire(s) on the regeneration of Dartford and Gravesham.
 - c. I've attended local meeting(s) or forum(s) on the regeneration of Dartford and Gravesham.
 - d. I've contacted the council, a councillor or the MP about the regeneration of Dartford and Gravesham.
 - e. I've taken part in other consultation exercise(s) on the regeneration of Dartford and Gravesham not listed above.
 - f. No-one has ever asked me what I think about the regeneration of Dartford and Gravesham.

(If yes to a-e) Can you tell me more about it?

46. Are you happy with the efforts that have been made by the Council, the Government and companies building the new developments to involve local residents in planning the new developments?
47. Is there anything else that you'd like to tell me about the issues we've talked about?

Appendix 3 Key characteristics of Swanscombe interviewees

	House type	House tenure	Ethnicity/Relation status/Gender	Age group	Household Income	Household composition	Benefits	Length of occupation	Occupation	Level of qualification	Community Groups	Local ties
JER	1970s 3 bed ex-local authority terraced house	Owens with mortgage	White Married Female	51-60	£20-30K	Married couple household with two non-dependent children and one part-time grandchild		36 years	Semi-retired. Caring personal service occupation: Runs playgroup	Level 3 qualification: NVQ level 3	Residents Assoc; Local church	Moved to Swanscombe 39 years ago from Surrey; Husband's family from Swanscombe
LGA	Pre-1919 3 bed terraced house	Owens with mortgage	White Married Female	41-50	£20-£30K	Married couple household with two dependent children.	DLA CTC	24 years	Part-time work: Caring personal service occupation: Playgroup assistant	Level 2 qualification: NVQ level 2	Local charity	Moved to Swanscombe 24 years ago from Welling; Husband's family from Swanscombe
SPA	Pre-1919 3 bed terraced house	Owens outright	White Married Female	51-60	£30-£40K	Married couple household with two non dependent children.		28 years	Part-time work: Caring personal service occupation: Playgroup assistant and Primary School lunchtime assistant	Level 3 qualification: NVQ Level 3	Residents Assoc	Born in Swanscombe. Father's family from Swanscombe
PMA	Pre-1919 3 bed terraced house	Owens with mortgage	White Married Female	51-60	£30-£40K	Married couple household with one non dependent children.		22 years	Part-time work: Admin. occupation	Level 1 qualification: City and Guilds qualification	Residents Assoc	Moved to Swanscombe 28 years ago; Husband's family from Swanscombe.

GBA	1950s 3 bed ex-local authority terrace	Owens outright	White Single Male	41-50	£30-£40K	Three person household with one child living with dependent parents		50 years	Full-time work; Public Service Professional; Town Planner	Level 5 qualification; MA		Born in Swanscombe. Father's family from Swanscombe
PTU	1950s 4 bed semi-detached house	Owens with mortgage	White Married Male	41-50	£30-£40K	Married couple household with three dependent children.	CTC	6 years	Full-time work: Public Service Associate Professional: DWP officer	Level 3 qualification: A levels		Moved to Swanscombe 14 years ago from Bexley. Wife's family from Swanscombe.
BFI	1970s 3 bed ex-local authority semi-detached house	Owens outright	White Married Male	41-50	£50K +	Married couple household with two dependent children.		19 years	Full-time work: Business Professional: Transport Consultant	Level 4 qualification: First degree	Residents Assoc; Runs junior Swans. Tigers FC team; former Town and Borough Councillor	Moved to Swanscombe 19 years ago from Abbey Wood
CLA	Pre 1919 2 bed end of terrace house	Owens with mortgage	White Single Female	41-50	£40-£50K	Co-habiting couple household		17 years	Full-time work: Public Service Associate Professional: Local Gov. Officer	Level 3 qualification: A levels	Sports and leisure club	Moved to Swanscombe 17 years ago from Bexleyheath
LCA	1950s 3 bed ex-local authority terraced house	Owens outright	White Married Male	51-60	£20-£30K	Married couple household with one non-dependent child		35 years	Part-time work: Customer Service Occupation: Assistant in ASDA's photo-lab.	None	Swans. Infants' School Governing Body.	Moved to Swanscombe 41 years ago from Gravesend; Wife's family from Swanscombe.

WBA	1950s 1 bed ex-local authority msonette	Owens outright	White Single Male	61-70	Up to £10K	Single person household	ICB	20 years	Long-term sick/disabled Formerly in Elementary Service Occupation: Local Authority Groundsman	None		Born in Swanscombe. Father's family from Swanscombe
SNE	Pre 1919 3 bed terraced house	Owens outright	White Married Female	41-50	£20-£30K	Married couple household with one non-dependent child		20 years	Part-time work: Admin occupation: Branch administrator	Level 1 qualification: CSEs and O levels		Moved to Swanscombe 20 years ago from Stone. Originally from Cornwall.
RWA	1950s 2 bed ex-local authority msonette	Owens with mortgage	White Married Male	31-40	£20-£30K	Married couple household		5 years	Full-time work: Transport Driver: Works for Haulage Company in Crossways.	Level 1 qualification: CSEs		Moved to Swanscombe 5 years ago from Swanley.
YST	Pre 1919 4 bed terraced house	Owens with mortgage	White Married Female	31-40	£40-£50K	Married couple household with two dependent children		9 years	Part-time work: Teaching Professional: Teacher at Craylands Lane Primary School	Level 4 qualification: Teaching qualification	Swans. Infants School Governing body	Born in Swanscombe. Both parents from Swanscombe.
MMU	Pre 1919 3 bed terraced house	Owens outright	White Married Male	61-70	£20-£30K	Married couple household with one non dependent children		34 years	Part-time work: Elementary Service Occupation: Works in John Lewis goods storage area in Bluewater	None	Swans. & Green. Age Concern Committee	Born in Swanscombe. Father's family lived in Swanscombe since 19c.
JMU	Pre 1919 3 bed terraced house	Living rent free	White Single Male	31-40	£20-£30K	Married couple household with one non dependent children		32 years	Full-time work: Teaching Professional: Teacher at independent school	Level 5 qualification: PhD	Reader at St Peter and St Pauls CE Church	Born in Swanscombe. Father's family lived in Swanscombe since 19c.

MBR	Pre 1919 3 bed terraced house	Owens with mortgage	White Married Male	21-30	£30-£40K	Married couple household with two dependent children	CTC	5 years	Full-time work: Skilled Trade Occupation: Electrician	Level 3 qualification: NVQ Level 3	Local cricket club, Swans. Pavilion Social Club.	Moved to Swanscombe 5 years ago from Sutton at Hone: Wife from Greenhithe.
OKA	1950s 4 bed semi-detached house	Owens with mortgage	Black African Married Female	41-50	£40-£50K	Married couple household with four dependent children	CTC	3 years	Full-time work: Business Associate Professional	Level 4 qualification: First degree	Local Sports Club	Moved to Swanscombe 3 years ago from Lewisham.
PMI	1950s 3 bed semi-detached house & 1 bed annexe	Owens with mortgage	White Married Male	41-50	£30-£40K	Married couple household with two dependent children & spouse's father	CTC	3 years	Full-time work: Transport Operative: Civil Service Driver	Level 2 qualification: NVQ level 2		Moved to Swanscombe 3 years ago from Greenwich. Wife originally from Swanscombe
DTR	1960s 3 bed local authority terraced house	Rents from local authority	White Married Male	51-60	Under £10,000	Married couple household	JSA	20 years	Unemployed Formerly in Elementary Admin Occupation: Worked in Local Authority Post room	None		Born in Swanscombe. Both parents from Swanscombe
PTR	1960s 3 bed local authority terraced house	Rents from local authority	White Married Female	51-60	Under £10,000	Married couple household		20 years	Part-time work: Caring personal service occupation: Runs playgroup	Level 3 qualification: NVQ level 3		Moved to Swanscombe 36 years ago from Gravesend. Husband from Swanscombe
MCR	Pre 1919 2 bed terraced house	Owens outright	White Married Male	61-70	£10-£20K	Married couple household		30 years	Retired: Formerly in skilled trade occupation. Worked for engineering firm.	None	Social Club	Moved to Swanscombe 42 years ago from Erith. Wife from Swanscombe.

SWO	1960s 3 bed ex-local authority terraced house	Owens outright	White Married Female	61-70	£10-£20K	Married couple household		37 years	Retired: Formerly in elementary service occupation: Office cleaner	None	Bowls Club	Born in Swanscombe. Both Parents from Swanscombe
KBA	1950s 3 bed local authority terraced house	Rents from local authority	White Married Male	71-80	Under £10K	Married couple household	PC	30 years	Retired: Formerly in Elementary Occupation: Blue Circle Quarry Worker	None		Born in Swanscombe. Both parents from Swanscombe
AWI	1950s 1 bed local authority msonette	Rents from local authority	White Single Male	61-70	Under £10K	Single person household	ICB, HB	11 years	Long-term sick/disabled Formerly in sales occupation: Worked for double glazing firm.	Level 1 qualification: Learn Direct vocational qualification		Moved to Swanscombe 11 years ago from Dartford
EHR	1970s 3 bed ex-local authority terraced house	Shared owners: Moat HA Homebuy scheme	White Married Female	21-30	£20-30K	Married couple household with two dependent children	CTC	3 years	Part-time work: Sales Occupation: Works in M&S at Bluewater	Level 2 qualification: GCSEs, NVQ Level 2s		Moved to Swanscombe 3 years ago. From Erith originally.
SHR	1970s 3 bed ex-local authority terraced house	Shared owners: Moat HA Homebuy scheme	White Married Male	21-30	£20-£30K	Married couple household with two dependent children	CTC	3 years	Full-time work: Skilled trade occupation: Mechanic	Level 2 qualification: GCSEs, City and Guilds qualification		Moved to Swanscombe 3 years ago. From Longfield originally.

Appendix 4 Key characteristics of Knockhall interviewees

	House type	House tenure	Ethnicity/ Relation status/ Gender	Age group	Household Income	Household composition	Benefits	Length of occupation	Occupation	Level of qualification	Community Groups	Local ties
DCA	1950s 4 bed semi-detached house	Owens with mortgage	White Single Female	41-50	£30-40K	Co-habiting couple household with with two non dependent children, one dependent child, one grand-daughter and partner's mother.	CTC	10 years	Full-time work: Elementary trade: Works in ASDA depot in Stone	None	None	Moved to Knockhall 19 years ago from Gravesend
AFU	1970s 3 bed townhouse	Owens with mortgage	White Single Female	51-60	£40-50K	Co-habiting couple household		17 years	Full-time work: Public Service Associate Professional: College Librarian	Level 3 qualification: A levels	None	Moved to Knockhall 17 years ago from Norfolk
CCU	1950s 3 bed semi-detached house	Owens with mortgage	White Married Female	41-50	£30-40k	Married couple household with one dependent child	CTC	23 years	Full-time work: Public Service Associate Professional: Pentecostal Church Missionary	Level 2 qualification: GCSEs; Work based qualifications	Member of local charity	Moved to Knockhall 23 years ago from Stone.
KWH	1950s 4 bed semi-detached house	Owens with mortgage	White Married Male	51-60	£50+	Married couple household		12 years	Full-time work: Business Professional: IT consultant	Level 4 qualification: HND	Member of local church	Moved to Knockhall 12 years ago from Crayford
KFA	Pre 1919 3 bed terraced house	Owens with mortgage	White Single Male	31-40	£30-40k	Co-habiting couple household with 4 dependent children	CTC	1 year	Full-time work: Skilled Trade: British Gas fitter	Level 3 qualification: NVQ level 3	Local cubs group organiser	Moved to Knockhall from Stone 1 year ago

DPA	1950s 3 bed semi-detached house	Owens outright	White Single Male	51-60	£30-40k	Single person household		54 years	Full-time work: Administrative occupation	Level 2 qualifications: O levels	None	Moved to Knockhall from Swanscombe 56 years ago
JLO	1950s 3 bed bungalow	Owens outright	White Married Male	71-80	£20-30k	Married couple household		7 years	Retired: Formerly Transport operative: Thames Lighterman working on Woolwich ferry	Level 4 qualification: HNC	Sports club	Moved to Knockhall 7 years ago from Eltham.
PRA	1960s 3 bed townhouse	Owens with mortgage	White Married Female	41-50	£30-40k	Married couple household		14 years	Part-time work: Elementary trade: Works in ASDA depot in Stone	Level 1 qualifications: CSEs	None	Moved to Knockhall 14 years ago from Welling
MCO	Pre 1919 3 bed terraced house	Owens with mortgage	White Married Male	41-50	£30-40k	Married couple household with two dependent children	CTC	18 years	Full-time work: Transport operative: London bus driver	Level 1 qualifications: CSEs	Local church	Moved to Knockhall 18 years ago from Sutton at Hone
MEL	1960s 3 bed townhouse	Owens outright	South Asian Married Male	61-70	£20-30k	Married couple household		31 years	Full-time work: Health Associate Professional: Mental health nurse	None	None	Moved to Knockhall 31 years ago from Dartford
SHA	1980s 2 bed terraced house	Owens with mortgage	White Single Female	21-30	£40-50k	Co-habiting couple household		3 years	Full-time work: Administrative Occupation: Works in HR department of a charity	Level 3 qualification: A levels	None	Moved to Knockhall 3 years ago from Welling

SSM	Pre 1919 3 bed terraced house	Owens with mortgage	White Single Female	31-40	£30-40k	Co-habiting couple household with 4 dependent Children	CTC	10 years	Looking after home	Level 2 qualification: GCSEs	None	Moved to Knockhall from Chatham 10 years ago
JPI	1960s 3 bed terraced house	Rents from Local Authority	White Single Female	61-70	Up to £10k	Single person household	Pension Credit	40 years (First Occupants)	Retired: Formerly in Secretarial Occupation	Level 1 qualification: Secretarial qualification	None	Born in Knockhall
SWH	1950s 4 bed semi-detached house	Owens with mortgage	White Married Female	51-60	£50k+	Married couple household		12 years	Full-time work: Health Professional: Community Nurse	Level 4 qualification: Qualified nurse	Local church	Born in Knockhall. Moved back to Knockhall from Crayford 12 years ago
GST	Pre 1919 3 bed terraced house	Owens with mortgage	White Single Male	31-40	£40-50k	Co-habiting couple household		5 years	Full-time work: Teaching Professional	Level 4 qualification: First degree; Professional Teaching Qualification	Member of local football team	Moved to Knockhall 5 years ago from Eltham
SED	1960s 3 bed terraced house	Owens outright	White Single female	61-70	£10-20k	Single person household		40 years (First occupants)	Retired: Formerly in Secretarial Occupation	Level 1 qualification: Secretarial qualification	None	Born in Knockhall
ABR	1980s 2 bed terraced house	Owens with mortgage	White Single Male	21-30	£40-£50k	Co-habiting couple household		3 years	Full-time work: Sales occupation	Level 3 qualification; A levels	None	Moved to Knockhall 3 years ago from Welling
TCA	Pre 1919 2 bed terraced house	Owens with mortgage	White Single Male	31-40	£40-£50k	Single person household		17 years	Full-time work: Public Service Professional: Works for Mayor of London	Level 4 qualification: First degree	Member of Residents Association	Moved to Knockhall 17 years ago from Greenwich

DFR	1950s 3 bed end of terrace house	Rents from Local Authority	White Married Male	51-60	£20-30k	Married couple household		17 years	Full-time work: Elementary occupation: Works at Greene King Distribution Depot	None	Member of Swanscombe Pavilion	Moved to Knockhall from Swanscombe 36 years ago
RBA	1950s 4 bed detached house	Living rent free: Tied housing	White Married Male	51-60	£20-30k	Married couple household		18 years	Full-time work: Public Service Professional: Rector of St Mary's Church, Greenhithe	Level 4 qualification: First degree	Various church and community organisation	Moved to Knockhall 18 years ago
BKE	Pre 1919 3 bed end of terrace house	Owens with mortgage	White Married Male	51-60	£50k+	Married couple household with two dependent children		20 years	Full-time work: Teaching Professional: Secondary School Teacher	Level 4 qualification: First degree	Runs Greenhithe Community Market Garden Project	Moved to Knockhall 20 years ago from west London
TWR	1960s 3 bed terraced house	Owens outright	White Married Male	61-70	£20-30k	Married couple household		47 years	Retired: Formerly Business Professional: Part-owned and managed a company that produced Marine Pumps	Level 3 qualification; Marine engineering apprenticeship	Local church	Moved to Knockhall from Gravesend 47 years ago
DBL	1950s 3 bed semi-detached house	Owens outright	White Married Male	51-60	Up to £10k	Married couple household	Incapacity Benefit	53 years	Long-term sick: Formerly Science and Technology Professional: Studio engineer in Broadcasting Industry	Level 4 qualifications: HNCs	None	Born in Knockhall

JFR	1950s 3 bed terraced house	Rents from Local Authority	White Married Female	51-60	£20-30k	Married couple household		17 years	Part-time work: Elementary service occupation: Office cleaner	None	Member of Swanscombe Pavilion	Moved to Knockhall from Swanscombe 36 years ago
RFA	1950s 3 bed semi-detached house	Owens outright	White Single Male	61-70	£20-30k	Single person household		52 years	Full-time work: Administrative occupation: Works for building services firm	Level 1 qualification: Work based qualifications	None	Born in Knockhall
NTI	Post 2000 3 bed terraced house	Owens with mortgage	White Married Male	31-40	£50-60k	Married couple household with one dependent child	CTC	5 years	Full-time work: Public Service Professional: Primary School Teacher	Level 4 qualification: First degree	None	Moved to Knockhall 5 years ago from Sydenham
JHI	1970s 3 bedroom townhouse	Owens with mortgage	White Single Male	51-60	£40-50k	Cohabiting couple household		9 years	Full-time work: Business Associate Professional: Solicitors Clerk	Level 2 qualifications: O levels	None	Moved to Knockhall 9 years ago from SE London

Appendix 5

Key characteristics of Horns Cross interviewees

	House type	House tenure	Ethnicity/ Relation status/ Gender	Age group	Household Income	Household composition	Benefits	Length of occupation	Occupation	Level of qualification	Community Groups	Local ties
RFO	1950s 3 bed detached bungalow	Owns outright	White Married Male	61-70	£40-50k	Married couple household		30 years	Part-time work: Science and Technology Professional: Environmental Engineer	Level 4 qualification: HND	Local church	Moved to Horns Cross 30 years ago from Greenhithe
PWA	1950s 3 bed detached bungalow	Owns with mortgage	White Married Female	61-70	£10-20k	Married couple household with non dependent children		25 years	Retired: Formerly in Secretarial occupation	None	None	Moved to Horns Cross from Dartford 25 years ago
JAR	1950s 3 bed semi-detached house	Private rented	White Married Male	31-40	£40-50k	Married couple household with three dependent children	CTC	4 years	Full-time work: Skilled trade occupation: Makes machine guards for the lift industry	Level 3 qualification: NVQs	None	Moved to Horns Cross 4 years ago from Greenhithe
JMA	Pre 1919 3 bed terraced house	Owns with mortgage	White Single Male	41-50	£30-40k	Lone parent household with two dependent children	CTC	16 years	Full-time work: Science and Technology Associate Professional: Database administrator	Level 4 qualification: First degree	None	Moved to Horns Cross from South London 16 years ago
DBK	1950s 3 bed semi-detached bungalow	Owns outright	White Married Male	71-80	£10-20k	Married couple household	Pension Credit	55 years	Retired: Formerly in Customer service occupation: NHS catering manager	None	None	Born in Horns Cross
JFO	1950s 3 bed detached bungalow	Owns outright	White Married Female	51-60	£40-50k	Married couple household		30 years	Full-time work: Science and Technology Associate Professional: Laboratory Technician	Level 3 qualification: A levels	Local church	Moved to Horns Cross 30 years ago from Greenhithe

BWA	1950s 3 bed detached bungalow	Owens with mortgage	White Married Male	61-70	£10-20k	Married couple household with non dependent children		25 years	Retired: Formerly process operative: Worked for Glaxo Smith Kline in Dartford	Other work based qualification	None	Moved to Horns Cross from Dartford 25 years ago
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Appendix 6 Kent Thameside Key Figures Interview Schedule

1. Personal background

1. Could you tell me for the record what your current job or position is?
2. Could you explain to me the nature of your involvement in the regeneration of Kent Thameside?

2. Kent Thameside regeneration objectives

3. How would you describe Kent Thameside to someone who wasn't familiar with the area?
4. What would you say the key objectives behind the regeneration of Kent Thameside are?
5. Would you say that these regeneration objectives you have described are shared by all the key Kent Thameside regeneration partners?
6. What would you say residents of Kent Thameside's existing communities want to achieve from this regeneration process?
7. The area of North Kent now known as Kent Thameside was first identified as a strategic regeneration priority by SERPLAN, the Department of the Environment, KCC and other agencies in the mid to late 1980s. Have the regeneration priorities for the area set out then changed, in your opinion, in any way since then?

3. Delivering Kent Thameside's regeneration objectives

8. What progress would you say has been made to date in terms of meeting the regeneration objectives you have described to me?

What have been the main successes and failings to date would you say?
9. What have been the main obstacles that have impeded the delivery of these regeneration objectives?
10. Looking back in retrospect, is there anything that you would have liked to have seen done differently in terms of delivering these regeneration objectives?
11. Where do you think the Kent Thameside regeneration project will be in 5 years time?

4. Major developments

12. For each of the following major developments, could you give me:
 - a. an indication of what stage they have now reached; and
 - b. your opinion of the main challenges and obstacles involved in delivering them and ensuring that they achieve their full economic and housing potential.
 - a. Eastern Quarry
 - b. Ebbsfleet Valley
 - c. Swanscombe Peninsula

13. Delays in making sufficient funding available to improve the infrastructure of Kent Thameside – particularly in regard to its road network – have been blamed in some quarters for the slow progress being made up to now on some of Kent Thameside's key development sites.

Is this analysis one that you agree with?

14. Do you think that we have the right system of governance in place in Kent Thameside to enable the successful delivery of these major development projects?

5. Impact of regeneration on existing communities in Kent Thameside

15. The Kent Thameside Delivery Board and before it the Kent Thameside Association have said that they want to “integrate” the new developments and existing communities such as Swanscombe in both a physical, economic and social sense in order to make sure that existing residents “benefit as much as newcomers to this area from the new building development taking place”.

What in your view are the main challenges involved in achieving this objective?

What action is being taken to achieve this objective?

16. A shortage of suitable skills and educational qualifications is frequently cited as one of the main obstacles preventing the residents of Kent Thameside's existing communities from benefiting fully from the opportunities presented by regeneration in the area.

Is this analysis one that you agree with?

17. What measures are being taken as part of the Kent Thameside regeneration strategy to improve the physical infrastructure of existing communities - ie housing, transport services, local amenities, health and education services?
18. What measures are being taken as part of the Kent Thameside regeneration strategy to improve the social or 'soft' infrastructure of existing communities – i.e. the promotion of social, business and community networks and a sense of place identity?

6. Engaging the residents of existing communities in Kent Thameside

19. What efforts have been made to involve the residents of existing communities in Kent Thameside in the planning and delivery of regeneration in Kent Thameside?

How successful would you say these efforts to engage existing communities in the regeneration process have been to date?

7. Conclusion

20. Are there any other comments that you would like to make with regard to the issues that we have talked about?

Appendix 7

Key characteristics of key figure interviewees

	Organisation in 2007/08	Role in 2007/08	Role in the regeneration of Kent Thameside
RSC	Dartford Borough Council	Regeneration Director	Involved in drafting of the East Thames Corridor study By Llewelyn Davies and Roger Tym in 1993. Joined Dartford Borough Council shortly afterwards.
CSH	Self-employed Management Consultant		Chief Executive of Dartford Borough Council, between 1989 and 2001. Closely involved in establishment of the Kent Thameside Association in 1993
JMU	Dartford Borough Council; Kent County Council	Labour Councillor on Dartford Borough Council Labour spokesperson for regeneration, planning and transport on Kent County Council	Leader of Dartford Borough Council between 1998 and 2003. Council leader when Ingress Park and Waterstone Park received planning approval. Key figure in the launch of the Fastrack bus network and the EU Urban II Thames Gateway Kent programme.
MWA	Kent Thameside Delivery Board	Chief Executive of Kent Thameside Delivery Board	Joined the Kent Thameside Delivery Board in 2006. Previously Chief Executive of the London Regional Development Agency
NJO	Swan Valley Community Secondary School in Swanscombe	Headteacher	Became Headteacher at Swan Valley in 2003
ATH	Swanscombe Health Centre	General Practitioner	Became a General Practitioner in Swanscombe in 1980. Served as Medical Director of Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Primary Care Trust between 2000 and 2006
ACH	Countryside Properties Plc	Chairman	Chairman of the company that built Waterstone Park. Also served as Chairman of the Kent Thameside Economic Board and a member of the Kent Thameside Delivery Board.
RPY	Land Securities Plc	Head of Urban Community Development	Responsible within Land Securities for the delivery of the Ebbsfleet Valley development. Closely involved in Kent Thameside since 1995. Worked first for Blue Circle Properties and then Whitecliff Properties. Also a member of the Kent Thameside Delivery Board
SJO	London and Continental Railways	Managing Director of Stations and Property Division	Responsible for the delivery of Ebbsfleet International Station. Also served as Vice Chair of the Kent Thameside Delivery Board and Chair of the Fastrack Delivery Executive.

Appendix 8

Summary table of residents featured in the typology of existing residents

Name	Phase of Lifecycle and Mosaic group	Professional status	Economic status	Relationship status	Housing tenure/type	Educational status	Cars/Public transport use	Local connections	Community interactions	External connections
Group A: 'Just passing through'										
SHA	Early adulthood New Homemakers	Administrative & Secretarial occupation	Household income of £40,001-£50,000	Long-term partnership without children	Owns property with mortgage / Terraced property	Level 3 qualifications	Public transport commuter has car for leisure use	Moved to community in adulthood from outside North West Kent	Routine contacts	Works outside of North West Kent and mainly socialises outside community
TCA	Mature young adulthood New Homemakers	Professional occupation	Household income of £40,001-£50,000	Single person household	Owns property with mortgage / Terraced property	Level 4/5 qualifications	Public transport commuter has car for leisure use	Moved to community in adulthood from outside North West Kent	Routine contacts	Works outside of North West Kent and mainly socialises outside community
ABR	Early adulthood New Homemakers	Sales or customer service occupation	Household income of £40,001-£50,000	Long-term partnership without children	Owns property with mortgage / Terraced property	Level 3 qualifications	Public transport commuter has car for leisure use	Moved to community in adulthood from outside North West Kent	Routine contacts	Works outside of North West Kent and mainly socialises outside community
GST	Mature young adulthood New Homemakers	Professional occupation	Household income of £40,001-£50,000	Long-term partnership without children	Owns property with mortgage / Terraced property	Level 4/5 qualifications	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in adulthood from outside North West Kent	Social contacts	Works outside of North West Kent and mainly socialises outside community
NTI	Mature young adulthood Careers and Kids	Professional occupation	Household income of £50,000+	Married with dependent children	Owns property with mortgage / Terraced property	Level 4/5 qualifications	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in adulthood from outside North West Kent	Routine contacts	Works outside of North West Kent and mainly socialises outside community
Group B: 'Guardians of the flame'										
SWO	Early old age Claimant cultures	Retired, formerly in elementary occupation	Household income of £10,001-£20,000	Married with non-dependent children	Owns property outright/ Terraced property	No qualifications	Has car but uses public transport whenever possible	Born and brought up in the community	Joining community groups	No meaningful relationships outside of community.
DTR	Late middle age Industrial Heritage	Involuntary economic inactivity, formerly in elementary occupation	Household income of under £10,000	Married with non-dependent children	Rents from Local Authority/ Terraced property	No qualifications	Non-car owning public transport user	Born and brought up in the community	Participating in community activities	Limited, infrequent relationships outside of community
SPA	Late middle age Industrial Heritage	Personal service occupation	Household income of £30,001-£40,000	Married with non-dependent children	Owns property outright/ Terraced property	Level 3 qualification	Has car but uses public transport whenever possible	Born and brought up in the community	Co-operation with other community groups	No meaningful relationships outside of community.

KBA	Later old age Claimant Cultures	Retired, formerly in elementary occupation	Household income of under £10,000	Married with non- dependent children	Rents from Local Authority/ Terraced property	No qualifications	Non-car owning public transport user	Born and brought up in the community	Participating in community activities	No meaningful relationships outside of community.
WBA	Early old age Terraced melting pot	Involuntary economic inactivity, formerly in elementary occupation	Household income of under £10,000	Single person household	Owens property outright/ Maisonette	No qualifications	Non-car owning public transport user	Born and brought up in the community	Participating in community activities	No meaningful relationships outside of community.
MMU	Early old age Terraced melting pot	Elementary occupation	Household income of £20,001-£30,000	Married with non- dependent children	Owens property outright/ Terraced property	No qualifications	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Born and brought up in the community	Co-operation with other community groups	Limited, infrequent relationships outside of community
MCR	Early old age Industrial Heritage	Retired, formerly in skilled trade occupation	Household income of £10,000-£20,000	Married with non- dependent children	Owens property outright/Terraced property	No qualifications	Non-car owning public transport user	Moved to community in early adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Participating in community activities	No meaningful relationships outside community
Group C: 'Community crusaders'										
BFI	Early middle age Claimant cultures	Professional occupation	Household income of £50,000+	Married with dependent children	Owens property outright/ Semi- detached property	Level 4/5 qualifications	Public transport commuter has car for leisure use	Moved to community in adulthood from outside North West Kent	Owning and/or managing local facilities/ Working with policy- makers	Works outside of North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community
RBA	Late middle age Ex-council community	Professional occupation	Household income of £20,001-£30,000	Married with non- dependent children	Home tied to employment/Deta ched property	Level 4/5 qualifications	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in adulthood from outside North West Kent	Owning and/or managing local facilities/ Working with policy- makers	Occasionally socialises outside community
GBA	Early middle age Ex-council community	Professional occupation	Household income of £30,001-£40,000	Single person living in multi- person household	Owens property outright/ Terraced property	Level 4/5 qualifications	Public transport commuter has car for leisure use	Born and brought up in the community	Working with policy-makers	Works elsewhere in North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community
TWR	Early old age Suburban Mindsets	Retired, formerly in professional occupation	Household income of £20,001-£30,000	Married with non- dependent children	Owens property outright/ Terraced property	Level 3 qualification	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Owning and/or managing local facilities/ Working with policy- makers	Occasionally socialises outside community
RFO	Late middle age Industrial Heritage	Professional occupation	Household income of £40,001- £50,000	Married with non- dependent children	Owens property with mortgage/ Detached property	Level 4/5 qualifications	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Owning and/or managing local facilities	Works outside of North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community

BKE	Late middle age Ex-council Community	Professional occupation	Household income of £50,000+	Married with dependent children	Owens property with mortgage/ Terraced property	Level 4/5 qualifications	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in adulthood from outside North West Kent	Owning and/or managing local facilities/ Working with policy-makers	Works elsewhere in North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community
CCU	Early middle age Industrial Heritage	Associate professional occupation	Household income of £30,001-£40,000	Married with dependent children	Owens property with mortgage/ Semi-detached property	Level 2 qualifications	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Owning and/or managing local facilities	Works outside of North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community
Group D: 'Happy families'										
PMI	Early middle age Ex-council Community	Personal service occupation	Household income of £30,001-£40,000	Married with dependent children	Owens property with mortgage/ Semi-detached property	Level 2 qualifications	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in adulthood from outside North West Kent	Involvement in informal networks	Works outside of North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community
DFR	Late middle age Ex-council Community	Elementary occupation	Household income of £20,001-£30,000	Married with non-dependent children	Rents from Local Authority/ Terraced property	No qualifications	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Involvement in informal networks	Works elsewhere in North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community
EHR	Early adulthood Claimant cultures	Sales or customer service occupation	Household income of £20,001-£30,000	Married with dependent children	Shared ownership/ Terraced property	Level 2 qualifications	Public transport commuter has car for leisure use	Moved to community in adulthood from outside North West Kent	Involvement in informal networks	Works elsewhere in North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community
MBR	Early adulthood Terraced melting pot	Skilled trade occupation	Household income of £30,001-£40,000	Married with dependent children	Owens property with mortgage/ Terraced property	Level 3 qualification	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Joining community groups	Works outside of North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community
JFR	Late middle age Ex-council community	Elementary occupation	Household income of £20,001-£30,000	Married with non-dependent children	Rents from Local Authority/ Terraced property	No qualifications	Public transport commuter has car for leisure use	Moved to community in adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Involvement in informal networks	Works elsewhere in North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community
SNE	Early middle age Terraced melting pot	Administrative and Secretarial occupation	Household income of £20,001-£30,000	Married with dependent children	Owens property outright/ Terraced property	Level 1 qualifications	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in adulthood from outside North West Kent	Involvement in informal networks	Works elsewhere in North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community

KFA	Mature young adulthood Terraced melting pot	Skilled trade occupation	Household income of £30,001-£40,000	Long-term partnership with dependent children	Owns property with mortgage/ Terraced property	Level 3 qualification	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Joining community groups	Works elsewhere in North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community
JLO	Early old age Terraced melting pot	Retired, formerly in skilled trade occupation	Household income of £20,001-£30,000	Married with non-dependent children	Owns property outright/ Detached property	Level 4/5 qualifications	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in adulthood from outside North West Kent	Involvement in informal networks	Occasionally socialises outside community
YST	Mature young adulthood Terraced melting pot	Professional occupation	Household income of £40,001- £50,000	Married with dependent children	Owns property with mortgage/ Terraced property	Level 4/5 qualifications	Has car but uses public transport whenever possible	Born and brought up in the community	Joining community groups	Limited, infrequent relationships outside of community
SSM	Mature young adulthood Terraced melting pot	Voluntary economic inactivity	Household income of £30,001-£40,000	Long-term partnership with dependent children	Owns property with mortgage/ Terraced property	Level 2 qualification	Public transport commuter has car for leisure use	Moved to community in adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Involvement in informal networks	Occasionally socialises outside community
SHR	Early adulthood Claimant cultures	Skilled trade occupation	Household income of £20,001-£30,000	Married with dependent children	Shared ownership/ Terraced property	Level 2 qualifications	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in adulthood from outside North West Kent	Involvement in informal networks	Works elsewhere in North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community
PTR	Late middle age Terraced melting pot	Personal service occupation	Household income of under £10,000	Married with non-dependent children	Rents from Local Authority/ Terraced Property	Level 3 qualifications	Non-care owning public transport user	Moved to community in early adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Participating in community activities	Limited, infrequent relationships outside of community
PMA	Late middle age Terraced melting pot	Administrative and Secretarial occupation	Household income of £30,001-£40,000	Married with one non-dependent child	Owns with mortgage/ Terraced Property	Level 1 qualification	Has car but uses public transport whenever possible	Moved to community in early adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Participating in community activities	Works elsewhere in North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community
PTU	Early middle age Ex-council community	Public Service Associate Professional	Household income of £30,001-£40,000	Married with three dependent children	Owns with mortgage/ Semi-detached property	Level 3 qualification	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in early adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Involvement in informal networks	Works elsewhere in North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community

LGA	Early middle age Terraced melting pot	Personal Service Occupation	Household income of £20,001-£30,000	Married with two dependent children	Owens with mortgage/ Terraced Property	Level 2 qualification	Has car but uses public transport whenever possible	Moved to community in early adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Joining community groups	Limited, infrequent relationships outside of community
DCA	Early middle age Ex-council community	Elementary occupation	Household income of £30,001-£40,000	Long-term partnership with dependent children	Owens with mortgage/ Semi-detached property	No qualifications	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in early adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Involvement in informal networks	Works elsewhere in North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community
PWA	Early old age Terraced melting pot	Retired, formerly in Administrative and Secretarial occupation	Household income of £10,000-£20,000	Married with non dependent children	Owens with mortgage / Detached bungalow	No qualifications	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in early adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Involvement in informal networks	Limited, infrequent relationships outside of community
JAR	Mature young adulthood Terraced melting pot	Skilled trade occupation	Household income of £40,001- £50,000	Married with dependent children	Private Rented / Semi-detached property	Level 3 qualification	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in early adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Involvement in informal networks	Works elsewhere in North West Kent and occasionally socialises outside community
JER	Late middle age Claimant cultures	Semi retired, Personal Service Occupation	Household income of £20,001-£30,000	Married with non dependent children	Owens with mortgage/ Terraced Property	Level 3 qualification	Has car but uses public transport whenever possible	Moved to community in adulthood from outside North West Kent	Joining community groups	Limited, infrequent relationships outside of community
BWA	Early old age Terraced melting pot	Retired, formerly in Skilled Trade occupation	Household income of £10,000-£20,000	Married with non dependent children	Owens with mortgage / Detached bungalow	Other work based qualification	Car owner occasionally uses public transport	Moved to community in early adulthood from elsewhere in North West Kent	Involvement in informal networks	Limited, infrequent relationships outside of community

Appendix 9 Key renewal policies, strategies and programmes targeted at Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross

Date	Policy	Target Areas	Lead Agencies
1995 and 1997	<p>Looking to the future</p> <p>This vision document envisaged the transformation of the river front along the Thames, from an area characterised by heavy industry, power generation, mineral extraction and derelict and under-used land to one containing a variety and mix of uses, overlooking the Thames in a 'quality environment'. Development would be centred on the shopping centre at Bluewater, Eastern Quarry and the International and Domestic Passenger Station at Ebbsfleet. However, the document also emphasised that the members of the KTA "attached the utmost importance to protecting and fostering the identity of existing communities within the area, and ensuring that existing residents benefit directly from the Kent Thames-side initiative".</p>	Swanscombe, Knockhall, Horns Cross	Kent Thameside Association
1996	<p>Ebbsfleet Community Development: The first steps</p> <p>This developer led framework stated that the Ebbsfleet Valley had the potential to "provide major opportunities to bring social, community and economic benefits to those currently living, working and doing business in the area". It identified five principles that would inform Blue Circle's strategy efforts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership: involving the community, developers, businesses and public agencies in working together to share and achieve common goals and objectives. • Participation: recognising, valuing and actively seeking out participation by members of the community in the development and implementation of initiatives. • Empowerment: encouraging appropriate responsibility, ownership, management and control of community initiatives by voluntary organisations and community groups in order to achieve sustainable development. • Understanding: recognising the inter-relationships and impact of physical development on a wide variety of social, community and economic interests, and planning accordingly to maximise overall benefits. • Opportunity: encouraging initiatives which lead to the integration and sharing of development benefits by all members of the community old and new. <p>The framework set out plans for the creation of an Ebbsfleet Forum and Trust: a community body with resources to deliver community projects aimed at ensuring that existing residents benefited from the regeneration of Ebbsfleet</p>	Swanscombe	Blue Circle
1996	<p>The Ebbsfleet Development and Environmental Framework</p> <p>This framework emphasised need to ensure that the community infrastructure created as part of the Ebbsfleet</p>	Swanscombe	Dartford BC, Gravesham BC, Kent CC.

	development meets the needs of the existing and new communities. It also highlighted the importance of involving the local communities as the development progressed and called for an “Ebbsfleet Forum” to ensure clear communication between the developers, the local authorities and the community.		
1998-2006	<p>Single Regeneration Budget – North Kent Gateway Programme</p> <p>A combined SRB round 4 and 5 programme worth £7.9 million was delivered in Dartford, Gravesham, Swale and Medway LAs by the North Kent Gateway Partnership (NKGPP), an unincorporated body of partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors.</p> <p>It was a community capacity building programme aimed at ensuring the communities of North Kent benefited from opportunities arising from economic and social growth in the Gateway. The programme sought to support employment and training, address low educational attainment and skill shortages, tackle crime and improve community safety and improve community health and well-being.</p> <p>In Kent Thameside the programme supported 18 projects with total funding of £3.1 million. Three projects directly affected Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under One Roof: Kent County Council <p>This project provided day care facilities and a range of early years services to promote the development of child and parenting skills. The project was based in Swanscombe and also covered Gravesend and Northfleet.</p> • Making Connections: North West Kent CVS <p>A community capacity building project targeting areas of deprivation. It supported the Community Youth Association in Swanscombe and Greenhithe, a resource for disaffected and excluded young people and their families. The ‘CYA Action Station’ in Swanscombe was expanded to comprise a Cyber Café for young people, homework club and community advice centre. SRB capital funding was used to purchase computer equipment for the Action Station.</p> • Community Greenspace: Groundwork Kent Thameside <p>This project supported improvements in the local environment and the quality of life of residents through the creation of public open space. Swanscombe Heritage Park was one of the projects to benefit from SRB funding.</p>	Swanscombe, Knockhall, Horns Cross	North Kent Gateway Partnership

2002-2008	<p>Urban II Thames Gateway Kent Programme A European Regional Development Funding Initiative covering 10 wards in Dartford and Gravesham, the TGKP was set up in order to help these wards to “achieve social inclusion in line with the rest of the Thames Gateway region and to share in the prosperity of South East England”. Between 2002 and 2008 €12 million of EU funding was allocated to the programme and a further €20 million in match funding from public and private sources was generated. The programme had three priority themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • achieving social inclusion; • community access to learning; • business infrastructure and regeneration. <p>The programme aimed to “build the capacity and confidence of (existing) communities thereby enhancing inclusion and to ensure that the physical environment of the target area is improved to reduce the disparities with the standards set in the new developments, and to enable existing residents to benefit from urban renewal.”</p>	Swanscombe, Knockhall, Horns Cross	Dartford BC, Gravesham BC, Kent CC
2002	<p>The Eastern Quarry Planning Brief This planning brief stressed that every effort should be made to connect the new community with the existing communities adjoining it.</p>	Swanscombe, Knockhall	Dartford BC
2002	<p>North Kent Area Investment Framework The North Kent AIF, funded by SRB money, described the current conditions in the area of North Kent encompassing Dartford, Gravesham, Medway and Swale and set out a vision of where the area would be in 20 years time. The strategy sought to achieve “a balance between new growth and the development of existing communities...to ensure that all of the people of North Kent have access to high quality, jobs and surroundings”. Planned communities should be integrated, it said, with the existing communities and in order to help all residents and stakeholders benefit from new developments.</p> <p>In existing communities it called for a focus on neighbourhood renewal and strengthening community support infrastructure - including new affordable housing, improvements to the existing housing stock, schools, leisure services, and the environment. It also called for local communities to be fully involved in the process of environmental enhancement by working with them to identify local priorities and implement projects. Sustainable management arrangements owned and undertaken by the community should also be put place it said.</p> <p>Over the AIF period the gap between North Kent's most deprived wards and affluent wards would need to be narrowed it stated. This levelling up process required community confidence building, access to learning and skills, targeting of jobs, community enterprise and voluntary activity through key partners such as churches and faith communities. Divisions between new and older communities would also need to be creatively addressed, partly by ensuring that older neighbourhoods were improved and made</p>	Swanscombe, Knockhall, Horns Cross	TG Kent Partnership

	<p>more attractive but also by making areas as mixed as possible. Improvements in public transport, meanwhile, which was heavily used by the least well off, were also seen as a priority.</p> <p>The AIF calculated that the total gross additional public investment required in North Kent over the period 2002-2021, to achieve the objectives set out in the framework would be around £11.6 billion.</p>		
2003	<p>Towards the future place: A community strategy for Kent Thameside</p> <p>The strategy identified 5 priority communities within Dartford and Gravesham which were experiencing particular difficulties and challenges in the key domains contained in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Unless action was taken to tackle these challenges, the strategy stated, these existing neighbourhoods wouldn't be able to share the future prosperity generated by the new homes and jobs being created in Kent Thameside. Designation as a priority community was intended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to encourage members of the LSP to focus existing resources on the area • to help attract external funding • to involve existing residents in each area in the design of new interventions and • encourage regular evaluation of the action taken in each area 	<p>From January 2003: Swanscombe</p> <p>From July 2004 Swanscombe and Knockhall</p>	Kent Thameside Local Strategic Partnership
2004	<p>Swanscombe Neighbourhood Renewal Study & Action Plan</p> <p>This neighbourhood based strategy was designed to 'enable stakeholders to ensure that the major threats to the sustainability of Swanscombe' posed by new development in the area are turned into 'substantial opportunities' for the community. A series of local priorities for regeneration were identified by consultants through consultation with residents and other stakeholders.</p> <p>An action plan with 4 key themes - housing and the environment, community safety and crime, accessibility and transport and jobs and business - and 30 projects linked to these themes was then drawn up. The Action Plan aimed to make Swanscombe a place that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is attractive and in which people want to live; • Is safe and has visible, responsive and proactive policing; • Is comfortable and welcoming; • Is focused on achievement, not just educational attainment; • Provides a better future for all, economically and socially; • Has affordable housing; • Is confident and aspiring; • Takes and makes opportunities from the regeneration area; 	Swanscombe	Dartford BC

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is well integrated and 'part of' the regeneration area, not isolated; • Has a better range and quality of employment opportunities • Has a positive image; • Has good access to better local facilities; • Has an empowered community. 		
2004	<p>Dartford Regeneration Strategy</p> <p>This strategy was launched by Dartford BC in order to ensure the co-ordination of the council's efforts with those of its regeneration partners. It aimed to ensure that development was locally appropriate and that the existing communities of Dartford benefitted from the new developments, socially and economically. Particular emphasis was placed on community capacity building, business support, lifelong learning, improving public transport and investing in culture and recreation.</p> <p>An associated Action Plan called for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The acquisition of a disused library building for the development of a Swanscombe 'One Stop Shop' and lifelong learning ICT facility. • The recruitment of consultants to undertake a transport study for Swanscombe and Greenhithe. • The creation of a Community Enterprise Hub in Horns Cross with workspaces for local business start-ups. 	Swanscombe, Knockhall, Horns Cross	Dartford BC
2004, 2005 and 2007	<p>ODPM/DCLG Sustainable Communities Plan Funding</p> <p>In June 2004 the ODPM announced that £4.5 million for a North Kent Environment Programme was to be made available from the Sustainable Communities Plan Fund. £370,000 was also allocated to Groundwork for improvements to Swanscombe Heritage Park. In November 2004, a further £37.5 million was made available to Thames Gateway Kent. In this funding round Dartford BC was awarded £1 million for community facilities and environmental improvements identified in the Swanscombe Action Plan and by the local councils. It was spent on the following projects in Swanscombe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • London Road junction improvements • New town council office sewer connection • Keary Road allotment fencing • Water supply to Craylands Lane future sports pavilion • Structural surveys of Church Rd Community hall, Old Swanscombe Library and the Grove Community Centre • Refurbishment design of the Grove Community Centre • Gunn Rd Estate refurbishment • Swanscombe street signs, litterbins and entrance signs <p>In March 2005, another £2 million was assigned to Thames Gateway Kent to assist the development of 5 new Vocational Centres – including one at Swan Valley School in Swanscombe.</p>	Swanscombe, Knockhall	Dartford BC, Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council, Groundwork

	In September 2007, Kent Thameside was assigned £1.8 million by the DCLG for green space and countryside improvements. Swanscombe Heritage Park received a further £105,000 from this fund.		
2005	Swanscombe Delivery Plan This document incorporated the outstanding Swanscombe Action Plan projects and other initiatives that had received funding from the ODPM's Sustainable Communities Fund into a single delivery plan. At a later date it also incorporated projects identified in the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Masterplan.	Swanscombe	Dartford BC
2005	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Masterplan The masterplan, produced by a team of external consultants, aimed to provide a blueprint for future development and investment within Swanscombe and Greenhithe. It looked at how the physical fabric and character of the community could be enhanced and also sought to identify ways in which Swanscombe and Greenhithe could be physically integrated with the new communities surrounding the villages. It proposed, for example, the creation of two 'activity corridors' linking key 'facility clusters' in Eastern Quarry, Swanscombe and Swanscombe Peninsula and the existing villages. These corridors were intended to make it easier for the residents of each community to take advantage of the employment, commercial and leisure opportunities in each area and prevent artificial divisions between each community from opening up.	Swanscombe, Knockhall	SEEDA, English Partnership, Dartford BC
2005	Kent Thameside Regeneration Framework The framework built on existing plans for the area and identified the key project areas needed to drive forward regeneration. Six principal strategic objectives were identified including the "integration of new and existing communities". The framework stated that in order to create a sustainable environment, the community agenda needed to be given a major focus within the overall regeneration framework. It envisaged that this would be achieved through the provision of new and improved community facilities and services. This would help to deliver a safer environment, promote health and healthy living and offer the range of cultural and leisure facilities appropriate to the area's status as a focus for growth in the SE. The framework also highlighted the importance of community involvement in regeneration. It stated that local communities had to be genuinely involved in the regeneration process if the root causes of deprivation were to be addressed successfully with a lasting effect.	Swanscombe, Knockhall, Horns Cross	Kent Thameside Delivery Board

Between 2001 and the start of the economic downturn in 2008 there were marked variations between the average house prices in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross. Figure 1, which incorporates house sale price data derived from the Land Registry via the property company Right Move (Right Move, 2011), shows that prices in Knockhall consistently outperformed those of Swanscombe and Horns Cross. The average price in Knockhall peaked at £196,000 in 2008 – nearly £40,000 more than the average in Horns Cross and £30,000 more than in Swanscombe. Knockhall's greater proximity to Bluewater and to Greenhithe Station, which has faster and more regular rail services into London than Stone Crossing of Swanscombe Stations, may be partly responsible for these higher prices. It is also possible that Ingress Park, a relatively highly priced new development immediately to the north of Knockhall²², had a knock on, inflationary effect on house prices in Knockhall. It suggests that investors at the time saw Kent Thameside as a property market with considerable potential for future growth and were willing to invest in properties in hitherto unfashionable areas such as Knockhall.

After 2008, however, the average price in Knockhall fell sharply and almost reached parity with Swanscombe and Knockhall in 2010. In contrast, the average price across the South east proved more resilient after the downturn. By 2010 the average price in the South east had recovered to £209,000 in 2010 – over £50,000 ahead of Knockhall. This appears to indicate that investors became more risk averse and were less willing to invest in emerging property markets such as Kent Thameside. It does not seem that the start of high speed rail services into London from Ebbsfleet International Station in 2009 has had any appreciable inflationary impact on property prices in the area.

A more complicated picture emerges however when one looks beyond the overall average property prices in each area and focuses instead on the prices of each property type and the volumes of properties sold (see figures 2-8). This data reveals a dearth of detached house sales in all three villages - which has the effect of driving down the overall average property price in the villages. In Horns Cross, the overall average property price is further deflated by the fact that most sales in the village are of relatively inexpensive one and two bedroom flats. In Knockhall and Swanscombe, meanwhile, the market is dominated by terraced house sales. In fact, the average price of a terraced house in Knockhall is consistently *higher* than the South east average in most years, even after the economic downturn. And in

²² In 2007 3-4 bedroom terraced houses in Ingress Park were on the market for between £350,000 - £400,000 – a price significantly above the local average.

Swanscombe average terraced houses prices are only slightly behind the South east average. This data suggests that the Kent Thameside market is stronger and more resilient than the overall average price appears to indicate – although there is no evidence here either of an inflationary ‘Ebbsfleet effect’ on prices.

Figure 1 Change in average house prices between 2001 and 2010

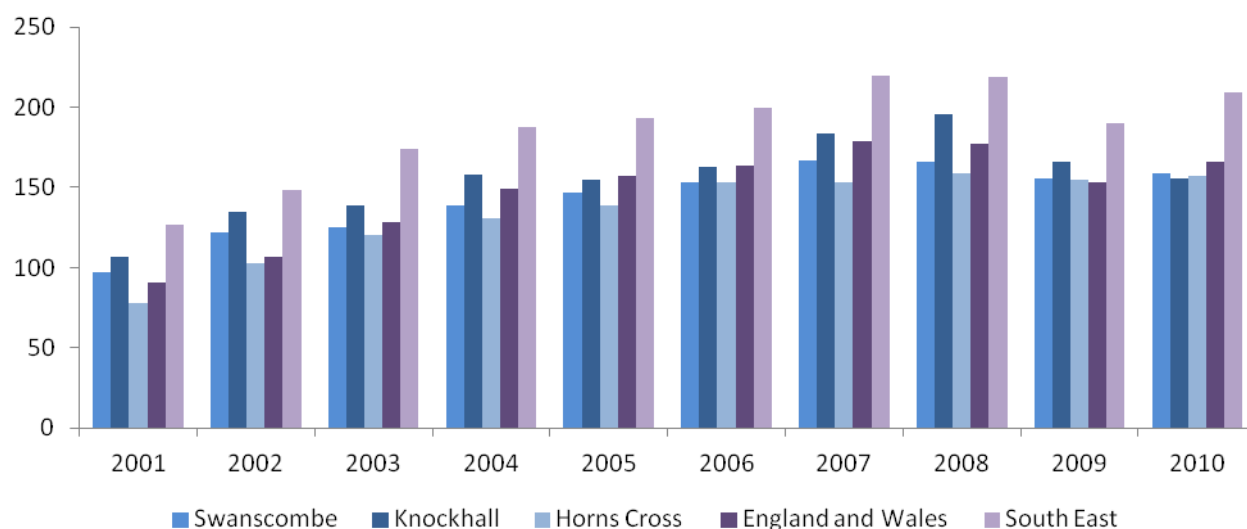


Figure 2 Change in average flat prices between 2001 and 2010

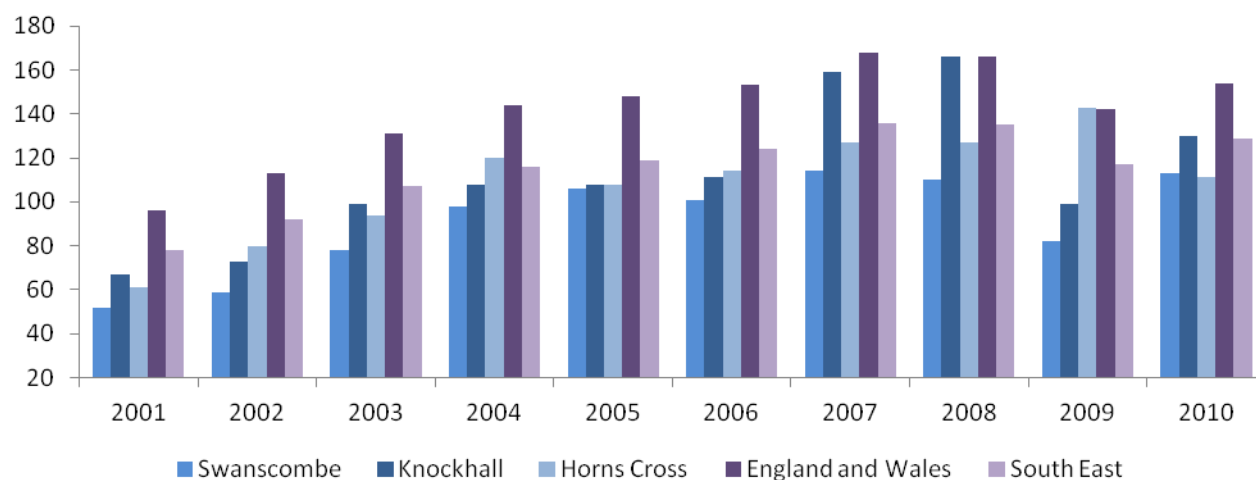


Figure 3 Change in average terraced house prices between 2001 and 2010

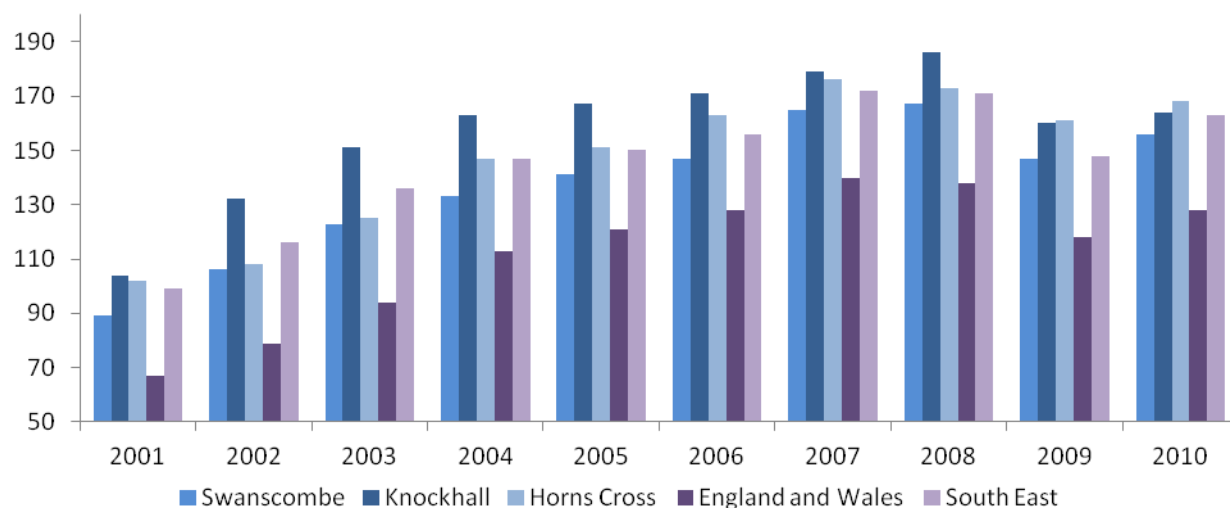


Figure 4 Change in average semi-detached house prices between 2001 and 2010

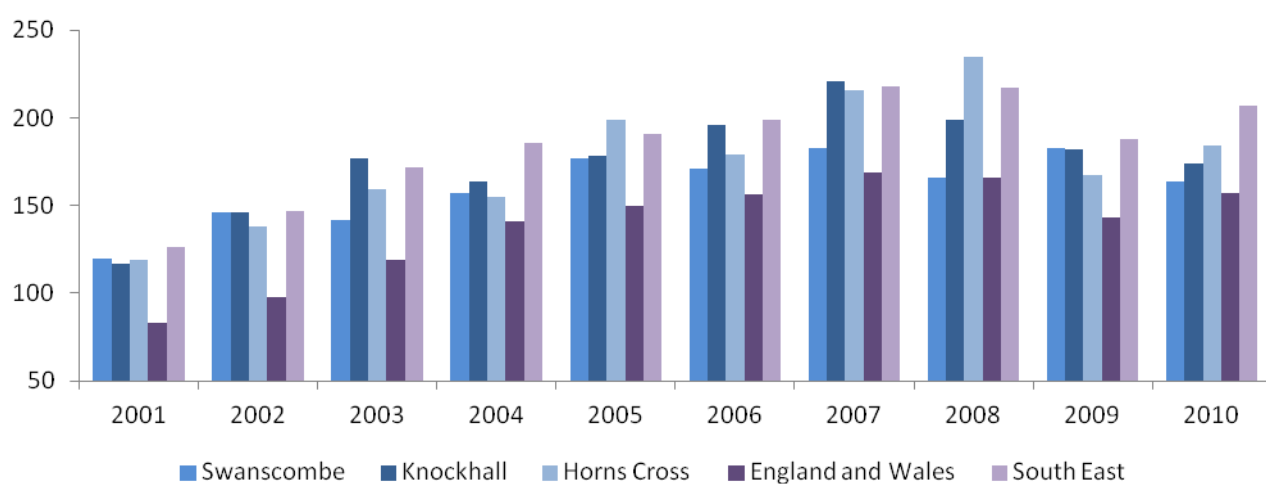


Figure 5 Change in average detached house prices between 2001 and 2010

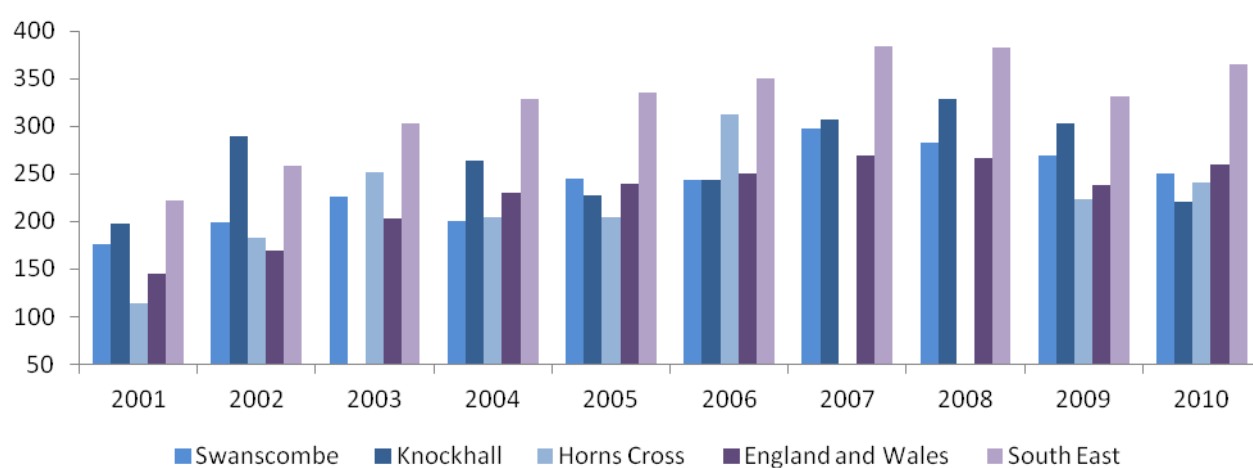


Figure 6 Number of houses sold in Swanscombe between 2001 and 2010

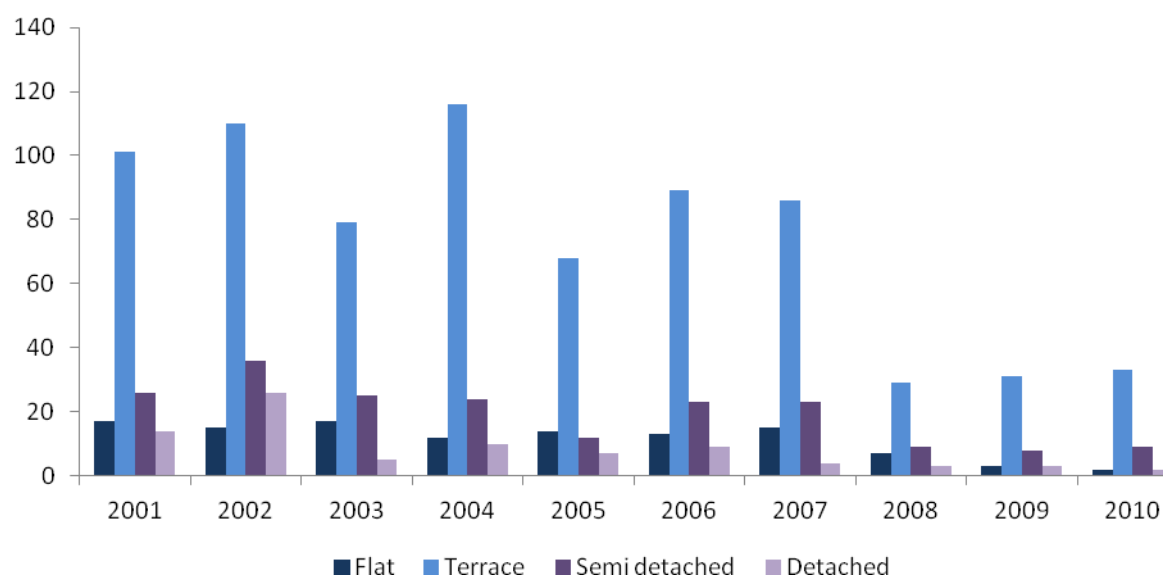


Figure 7 Number of houses sold in Knockhall between 2001 and 2010

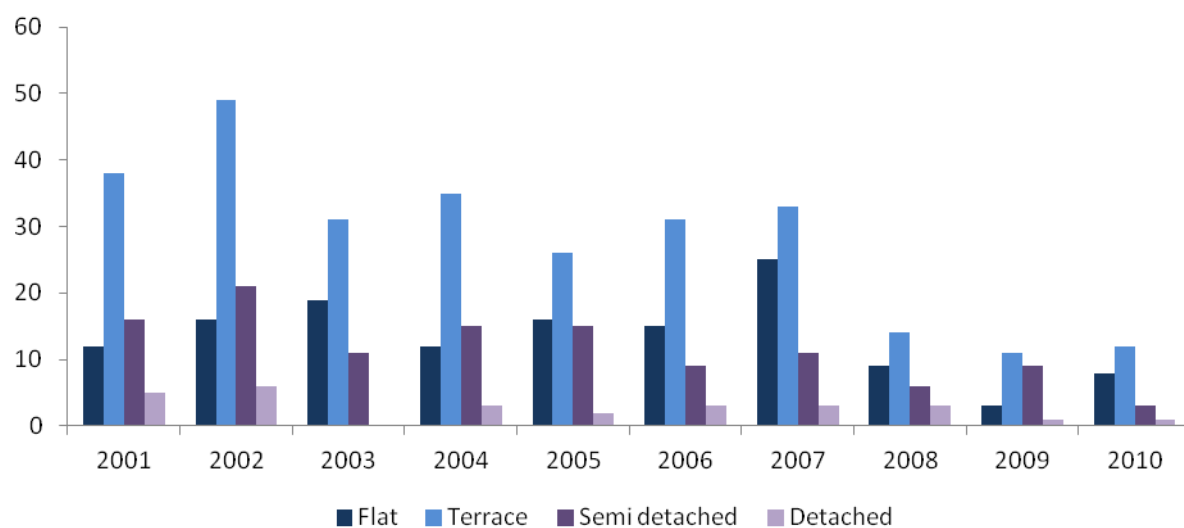
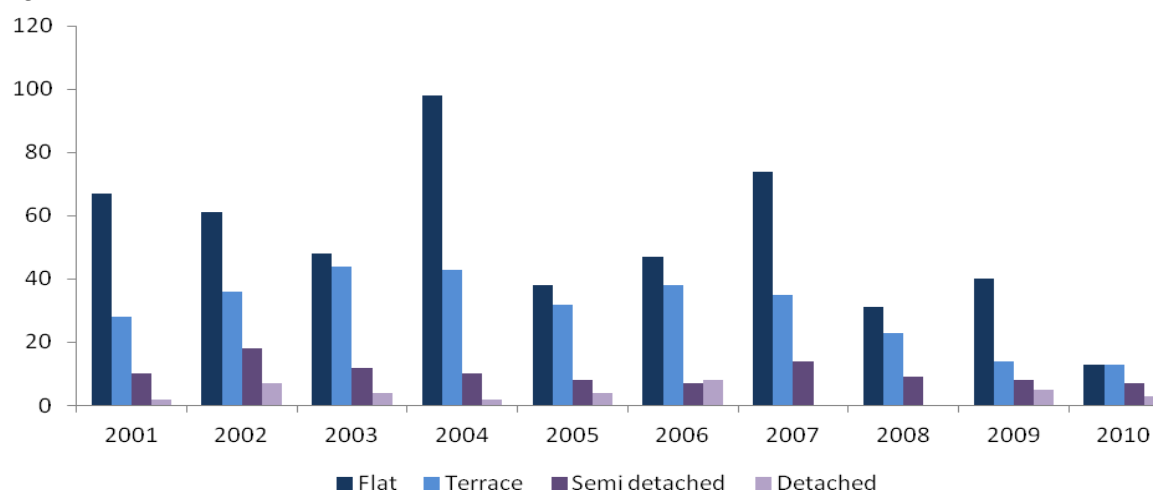


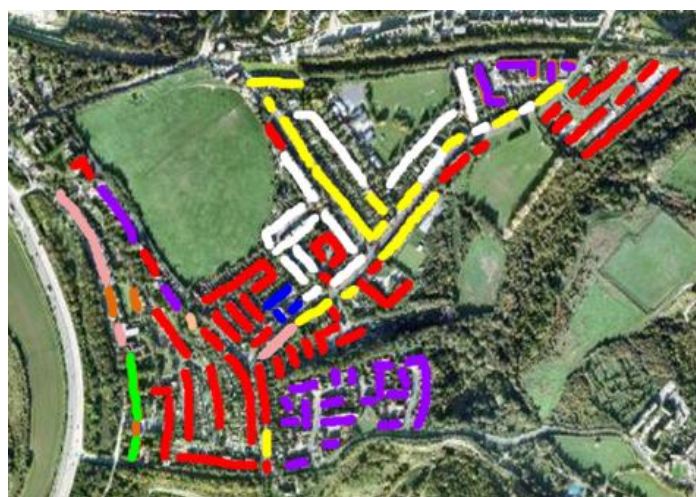
Figure 8 Number of houses sold in Horns Cross between 2001 and 2010



Appendix 11 Distribution of dwelling types in Swanscombe, Knockhall, Horns Cross



- Terraces built pre 1919
- Terraces and semi-detached houses built 1920-40
- Terraces and semi-detached houses built 1945-80
- Flats built 1945-80
- Terraces, semi-detached and detached houses built 1980-2000
- Terraces, semi-detached and detached houses built 2000-2010
- Detached Villas built pre 1919
(Majority now converted into modern 1-2 bedroom flats)
- Flats built 1980 and 2000



Source: © Google (2010)

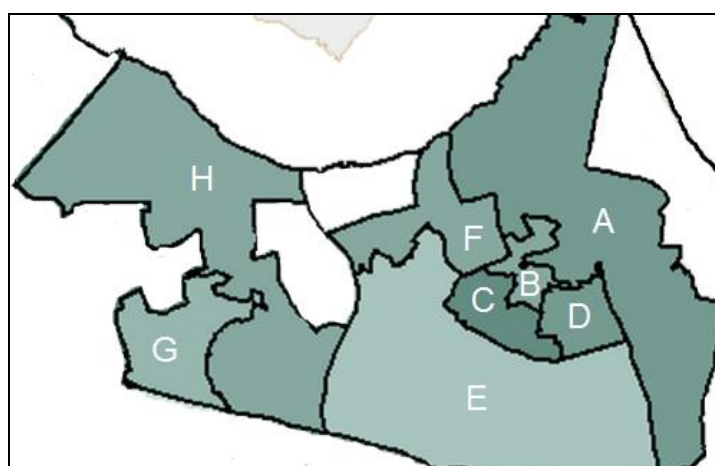
Appendix 12 Indices of Multiple Deprivation for Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross

Figures 1 to 3 set out the position of each lower level super output area of the three villages in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation rankings (DCLG, 2011b).

Although only one super output area, Swanscombe Central West²³, is consistently among the most deprived areas in the overall IMD rankings, five areas appear at least once among the 20 per cent most deprived areas in the Education Skills and Training domain²⁴ (see figures 4-6) .

All four Swanscombe super output areas score poorly in this domain with Swanscombe Central West featuring in the 10 per cent most deprived areas in both 2004, 2007 and 2010. The slight improvement in these scores between 2004 and 2010 may be connected with the improved key stage 4 scores at the local secondary school (Swan Valley Community School²⁵) and increased proportion of students remaining in education after 16.

Map 1 The Lower Level Super Output Areas in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross



A	Swanscombe East
B	Swanscombe Central North
C	Swanscombe Central West
D	Swanscombe Central East
E	Knockhall South
F	Knockhall North
G	Horns Cross South
H	Horns Cross North

²³ This super output area in the south western corner of Swanscombe is largely composed of local authority owned housing including a number of three to four storey flat developments (see Figure 6.9)

²⁴ This domain examines key stage 2-4 attainment scores and also records the proportion of young people who fail to stay in education after 16 as well as the proportion of adults with few or no qualifications.

²⁵ 63% of students achieved 5 A* - C GCSEs in 2010 compared to 45% in 2007 and 22% in 2004

Figure 1 Position of the lower level super output areas in Swanscombe, Knockhall and Horns Cross in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation rankings in 2004, 2007 and 2010

Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2004					
Lower Level Super Output Area	Overall IMD Rank	Income Deprivation Domain Rank	Employment Domain Rank	Education, Skills and Training Domain Rank	Barriers to Housing and Services Domain Rank
Swanscombe East	9232	12111	14988	4517	5043
Swanscombe Central North	10887	11288	16211	2241	6737
Swanscombe Central West	6064	4911	7386	2053	3036
Swanscombe Central East	16137	17680	23815	6116	10311
Knockhall South	18349	18289	26491	12201	5254
Knockhall North	9085	9791	13206	4513	6639
Horns Cross South	15914	15638	19065	8862	4940
Horns Cross North	14308	16796	20710	7913	1747
Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2007					
Swanscombe East	10432	12025	16020	6816	7006
Swanscombe Central North	12024	13083	14201	4027	12325
Swanscombe Central West	6643	5767	6287	3125	6503
Swanscombe Central East	14344	14953	17809	6732	14086
Knockhall South	21424	23368	24770	14511	7779
Knockhall North	11733	11518	14737	6271	8067
Horns Cross South	16388	16832	19179	7336	13548
Horns Cross North	14651	18538	20611	8880	2548
Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010					
Swanscombe East	10872	11537	13778	7223	12545
Swanscombe Central North	14210	13147	14365	6008	18354
Swanscombe Central West	7092	5403	8306	944	11450
Swanscombe Central East	12396	10262	16079	5805	20788
Knockhall South	19938	21576	22464	16045	9859
Knockhall North	13412	12367	16159	6870	15459
Horns Cross South	17211	17288	19282	6919	19656
Horns Cross North	16051	18103	20703	10145	4150



Among the 10% most deprived output areas (1-3249)
 Among the 20% most deprived output areas (1-6498)
 Among the 30% most deprived output areas (1-9747)

There are a total of 32482 lower level super output areas in England. In the IMD rankings '1' is the most deprived and '32482' is the least deprived.

Figure 2 Overall Indices of Multiple Deprivation rankings in 2004

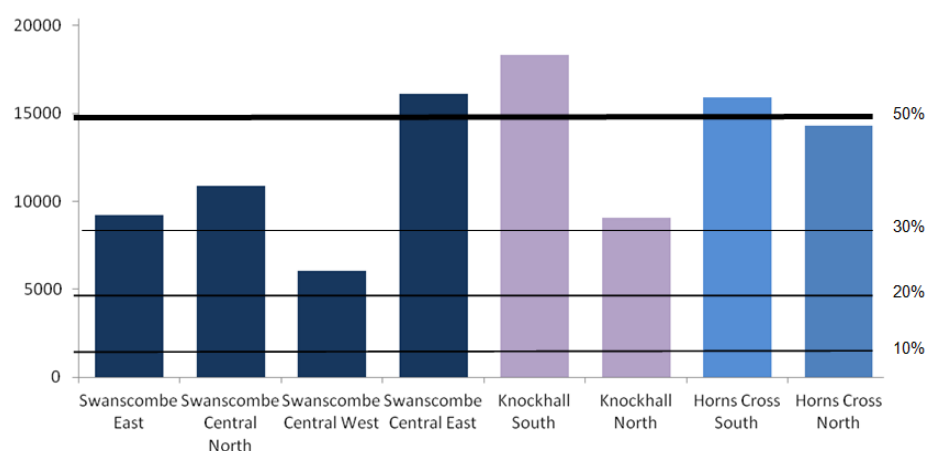


Figure 2 Overall Indices of Multiple Deprivation rankings in 2007

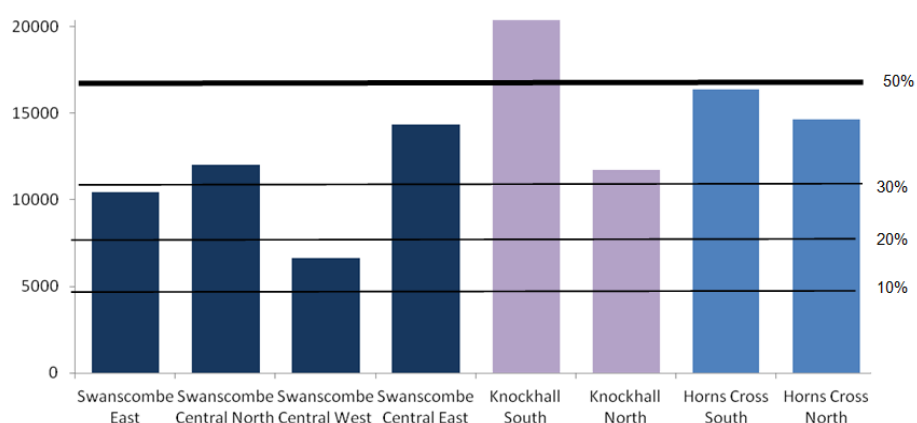


Figure 3 Overall Indices of Multiple Deprivation rankings in 2010

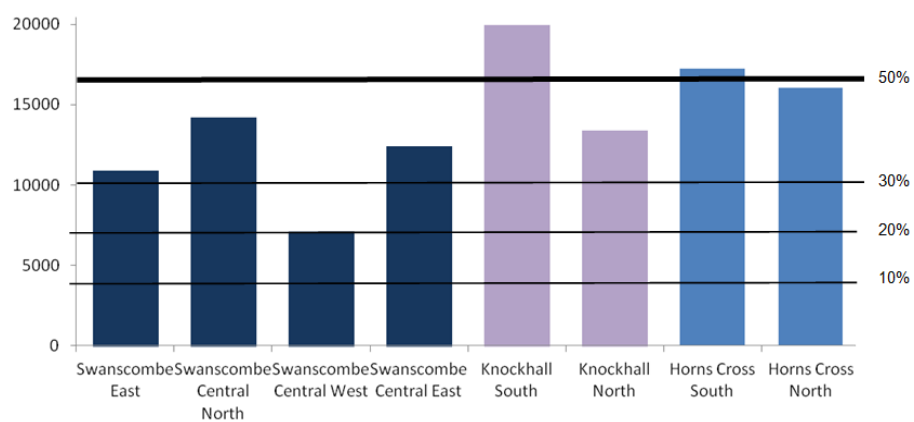


Figure 4 Education, skills and training domain rankings in 2004

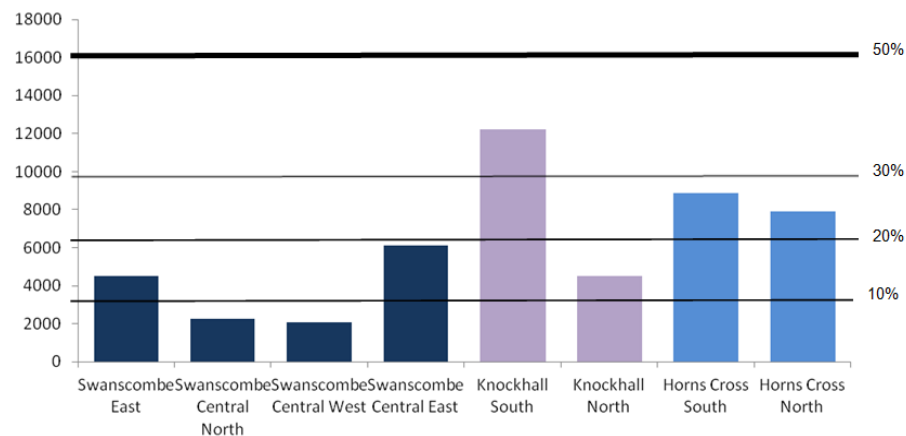


Figure 5 Education, skills and training domain rankings in 2007

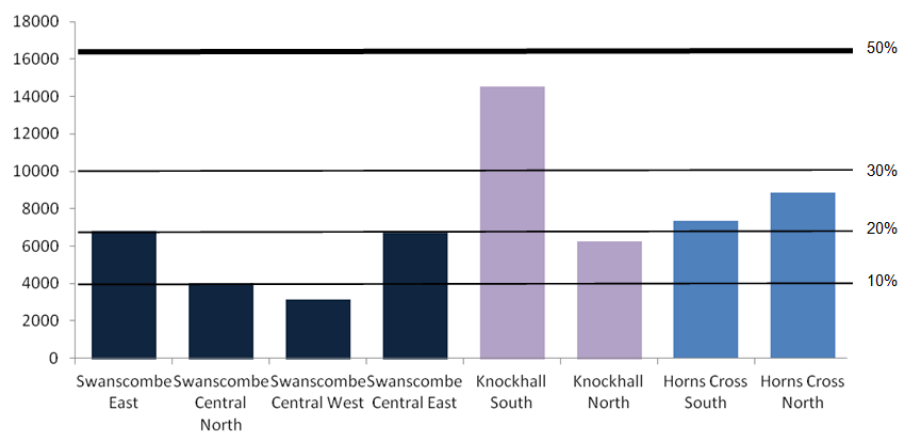
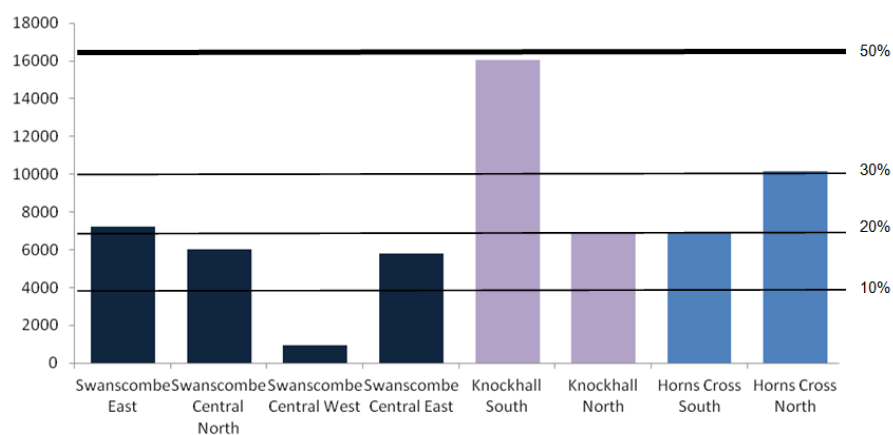


Figure 6 Education, skills and training domain rankings in 2010



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