Olympic sport and the local community: a sociological study of Stratford, London

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Olympic Sport and the Local Community: A sociological study of Stratford, London

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University

By Helen Symons

2016

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Abstract

London 2012 was the 30th Olympiad, and the third time that London had hosted an Olympic Games. The rationale for hosting the Games was to undertake a large-scale regeneration of Stratford and the East London region. The research explored the experiences of community representatives who live and/or work in East London. The research was inductive and focused on the empirical findings of the research via a sociological lens. Three overarching research themes (urban regeneration, socioculturalism, governance and economics). The original contribution to knowledge relates to the limited amount of research previously conducted which take into account all three of these overarching themes. 19 semi-structured interviews were conducted and analysed alongside official documents and newspapers using narrative thematic analysis and critical discourse analysis. Two main findings emerged from the analysis; Marginal Gains and the Ripple Effect. It is recognised that the positivity found throughout the presented narratives may have been present due to the time period in which the research was undertaken. Future research should focus on whether the time period has an influence on the experiences of community representatives and whether similar (economic and governance) is experienced by future host cities.

Keywords: Olympics, sport mega-event, legacy, gentrification, community development, urban regeneration
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Chapter One

Introduction

For two weeks in the summer of 2012, London was thrust further into the spotlight of the globalised world. The attention was focused on the sporting spectacle that ‘London 2012’ provided. The Olympic and Paralympic Games heralded a new opportunity for the main host locations of Stratford, the London Borough of Newham and the wider East London region. The main threads of conversation within these host locations were drawn from wider Olympic-related discourses, and were linked to the possibilities that hosting the Olympic Games for the third time would bring to the poor, post-industrial areas of the capital city in the 21st Century (Brown, 2012). Historically East London had been at the epicentre of global trade and commerce. During the Second World War it faced daily bombing campaigns by the Germans in the hope that the industrial centre would slow down the British war effort against the Axis forces. From the late 1960s onwards, the long and painful deindustrialisation of East London left a deep legacy of unemployment and high levels of deprivation across local communities. Hosting the Olympic Games for London seemed to promise a new opportunity to improve this part of London, and much of the wider South-East of England.

For some, the Olympic Games were seen as the panacea to the socioeconomic problems being faced in East London for the simple reason that the Olympics were not just a sporting spectacle. Toohey and Veal (2007, pp. 6–7) explain that

The Olympic Games are no longer – if they ever were – just a sporting event: they are a cultural, political and economic phenomenon. Particular interests see them as a media event, a tourism attraction, a marketing opportunity, a catalyst for urban development and renewal, a city image creator and booster, a vehicle for ‘sport for all’ campaigns, an inspiration for youth and a force for peace and international understanding.
As a sport mega-event the Olympic Games permeates many facets of the globalised world.

The research that has been undertaken into the Olympic Games has predominantly been focused on the impacts or evaluations of hosting the sport mega-event, with reference to communities (bottom level representatives) or national government and associated organisations (top level representatives). Yet focusing on either or both of these levels of representatives misses out a crucial section of our society: the community representatives such as business owners and entrepreneurs, prominent community members, local and regional authority employees. The research for this thesis has been concentrated on these community representatives. These social groups are of particular interest because they have experienced the entire Olympic-hosting process, from the bid stage through to hosting the Olympic Games and then on into the post-event ‘legacy’ period. These community representatives all live and or work in the locations surrounding the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. They have first-hand knowledge of the challenges and benefits that are experienced throughout the Olympic seven-year cycle. These community representatives have also been involved in the entire process and potentially could gain or lose out from hosting the event.

The Olympic Games are not seen as just a sporting spectacle, as the mega-event is promoted as an opportunity for host cities to develop their communities, cityscape and nation. In fact, many of the ideas presented by Toohey and Veal are used by bidding nations as a way of pursuing public support for their desire to host this mega-event. The International Olympic Committee (hereon, IOC), the organisation which owns and runs the Olympic brand, views these additional aspects of Games-hosting with the greatest seriously. The IOC use the Olympic Charter as a way to officially acknowledge the responsibility of host nations to ensure community development becomes a crucial component of hosting the event. The second ‘Fundamental Principle of Olympism’ highlights the requirement for community development to be incorporated within the hosts’ strategies, by stating that
The goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity.

(International Olympic Committee, 2015, p. 13)

The inclusion of community development obligations means that the host city needs to plan the social impacts that hosting the Olympic Games can have. London has been no different and indeed it has a long-term association with the Olympic Games which dates back to the initial stages of the newly established Modern Olympic Games.

London and the Olympic Games

London is the only city so far, to host the Modern Olympic Games three times, having done so in 1908, 1948 and 2012 (Jackson, 2012). Prior to the 2012 Olympic Games, London’s association with hosting the event was directly tied to stepping in, as a response to a cover for natural disaster or after the culmination of a global war. The city hosted the 4th Olympiad in 1908 after Rome had to pull out due to the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Post-war London hosted for the second in 1948, as the ‘Austerity Games’ in 1948 were staged against a backdrop of food shortages and a city still blighted by the ravages of war. While being organised and run on a small budget, the Games were also the largest media event that the BBC [British Broadcasting Corporation] had ever covered by that point, using broadcasting experience gained throughout the Second World War (Hampton, 2008). Each of the times London has hosted, the city has used the opportunity to develop or redevelop sections of the cityscape. The 1908 Olympic Games saw the combination of hosting the Games alongside the Anglo-French Exhibition. As part of the exhibition the British Olympic Association requested a large sports stadium to be built in the ‘White City’ development in central London in preparation for hosting the Games (Fussey et al., 2011). The 1948 Olympic Games did not develop specific Olympic or sport venues, rather the Games were involved and held during period of mass urban reconstruction due to the damage sustained through the Second World War (Fussey et al., 2011). The Olympiad in
2012 has been no different, urban regeneration has been central to the London Games since the inception of the bid in the early 2000s.

London has been a global city for centuries, it was the hub of embarkation and disembarkation for trade ships in the 18th Century and the site of the burgeoning industrial revolution later on (Marriott, 2012). The Metropolitan Building Act of 1844 prohibited any toxic and noxious industries from being undertaken within the boundaries of London (the growing city rather than what we would now associate as the London Boroughs). Therefore, many of the unpleasant and harmful industries were relocated to outside the boundaries of the city. Examples of the noxious trades found in East London include industries such as tanning, iron works and iron mongers, ship building, munitions, along with other industries related to international shipping, trade and commerce. The movement of these industries also meant that there was a population increase throughout this time which had a strong negative pressure on the facilities and infrastructure that was meant to serve these growing numbers (Belton, 2015). The industrial revolution brought through the influx of people to the East London region also led to an increase in socioeconomic deprivation (Poynter, 2016)

The post-industrial city began to emerge in the mid-20th Century through the decline of the heavy industries. The post-industrial epoch marks the move from the traditional industrial to a service-orientated society (Bell, 1996). In East London this was marked in particular by the decline of the dockyard industries. The post-industrial era also brought forth a renewed interest in state intervention and engagement with ‘community development’. The concept derived from previous colonial practices and models of assimilation learnt from the integration of European immigrants to the United States of America. These practices were designed as an intervention in order to counteract the social disorganisation within local communities that occurred due to processes of deindustrialisation which were being faced by major cities (Byrne, 2001). East London is a prime example, and has experienced many attempts at urban renewal and regeneration as a form of community development from the 1980s through to today.
Deindustrialisation, the attempted shift to a post-industrial economy, and the associated transition from manual to service-sector work, have all had a profound influence on the local communities of East London and the wider cityscape. The closure and removal of both heavy and light industries – such as rope making, ship building, manufacturing and tanning starting in the 1960s - had a direct impact on the East London region, leading to growing levels of socioeconomic deprivation. The latter was highlighted in the London 2012 bid as a major social problem that could be confronted by staging the Games in that location. The bid was designed to take advantage of using the Olympic Games to provide, amongst other things, a legacy of urban regeneration and redevelopment (Poynter, 2016). Legacy is a phrase that is ubiquitous within Olympic discourses, and emerges as a recurring theme throughout this thesis.

*Sport mega-events and legacy*

Sports mega-events have been previously used to rationalise the host nation’s social welfare and regeneration programmes. Each Olympic host nation has seven years to consolidate their bid plans and to transform these aspirations into reality. The need to plan for these development opportunities is related to the idea of sport mega-event legacy. Davies (2014) highlights how regeneration and legacy are phrases that are used and associated with sport mega-events. London 2012 has been no different; the justification of hosting the Olympic Games was set out from the beginning to allow for a large scale regeneration of the East End of London. It is common for mega-events to be analysed in terms of their ‘measurable’ legacies such as the economic evaluations and venue usage (see research conducted by Davies, Mangan, Szymanski and others referenced throughout). It is important to define the term ‘legacy’ in order to set the boundaries of what is being considered throughout the following thesis.

The definition of legacy to be used throughout this thesis has been an amalgamation of ideas provided by Davies (2012b) who states that legacy is used as a way to justify investment into a particular area. In addition, Toohey (2008) explains that a ‘games legacy’ is used as an example of good practice in order to
garner confidence and bid for future events so that it can maintain the continuation of publicity and income generation from hosting the initial sports mega-event. However, as Preuss (2007) points out, the terminology regarding legacy is subjective which can affect the judgement of the value of the term. Agha et al (2012) explain that the misunderstanding of the term due to the aforementioned subjectivity means that there is a limit to the accountability of those organisations involved in the implementation of any legacy plans. Davies (2014, p. 48) combines all of these definitions and critiques into one succinct idea:

In practical terms, legacy is used widely by policy-makers and event organisers to refer to a range of ongoing economic, social or physical outcomes that occur as a result of hosting an event. In reality, the term legacy is often used very nonchalantly and as a matter of course, with the given assumption that events will leave a long-lasting tangible (and positive) impact on the urban landscape.

The subjectivity associated with defining legacy is a central concern throughout the thesis. Davies’ (2014) definition has been taken into consideration throughout the thesis because each of the selected community representatives will all have a variance on their understanding, use and personal definition of the term ‘legacy’.

The Research Problem

The focus of this thesis encompasses urban regeneration, sociocultural issues and governance and economics as points of consideration throughout. The study uses a broad definition of community representatives in order to gain a wide understanding of experiences through a cross section of the communities who reside within the area. Community representatives are people who are prominent within their communities as either leaders or organisation representatives or have worked within the public/civic sector. The community representatives sit within 5 different cluster groups, and these are government officials, local government officials, prominent community or business members, local media personnel, and legacy officials. The aim of the research is

To gain an understanding of the experiences of selected community representatives in relation to the regeneration of the Olympic Park site as a part of the Olympic redevelopment plans.
The research aim has been broken down to incorporate three main thematic areas of discussion: urban regeneration, sociocultural issues, and governance and economics. Each of these themes generated their own research question:

- **How have the selected community representatives experienced the urban regeneration of the local area?**
- **How have the selected community representatives been affected by the cultural evolutionary processes as a part of the wider community development plan?**
- **How does economic and political decision-making affect the selected community representatives as a part of the regeneration process?**

The three research questions have been taken into consideration at each stage of the thesis. Experience is a central part of the research aim and questions because sport mega-events have a long-reaching influence on the communities that are in the vicinity of the event space, in this case the Olympic Park.

The focus of the research was on the idea of ‘experience’ rather than ‘impact’. The word ‘impact’ implies an immediate effect, it refers to a short timescale of events. There is an expectation that there is an instantaneous result from an event if you consider impact. It is inappropriate to consider an impact when you are looking at the influence of a sport mega-event, like the Olympic Games, on the host city’s people and cityscape. By using the word ‘experience’ it is possible to consider many of the aspects related to urban regeneration. There will be a variety of experiences throughout the communities found in the location of the Olympic Park.

Experience is personal, it is a lived event that has implications that reach across the daily lives of the communities, potentially over years rather than over a short time-period, as would occur in the form of an expectation of an immediate action or reaction to hosting a sport mega-event. In addition to the longitudinal element, ‘experience’ is not just a finite phase, it implies that it is possible to continue to learn from the challenges and the actions associated with before, during and after Games. It is arguable that ‘experience’ implies a level of
passivity from the community representatives. The passivity suggests that the representatives are disempowered. However, the research has used ‘experience’ because the study is focused on the lived event and as previously mentioned ‘experience’ implies a longitudinal association and there is no other word that the researcher feels best fits with the research aim and questions. Similar time periods to these three have been used throughout the thesis and with the different comments of the participants as points of reference. The three time periods allow participants to consider time frames outside of the traditional Olympic cycle to discuss their experiences and to trace any changes in those experiences.

*Boundaries of the Research*

As noted, the thesis focuses on the selected community representatives rather than the impact of the Olympic Games on the host city. It was also important to ensure the semi-structured interviews considered three time periods – pre-2005, 2005-2012 and post-2012. The first period, ‘pre-2005’, relates to the participant’s experiences of living and working in the areas surrounding the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park prior to London winning the bid to host the Olympic Games. ‘2005-2012’ correlates to the construction of the Olympic Park and the morphogenesis of the former post-industrial landscape in Stratford. ‘Post-2012’ was used as a signpost for the participant to discuss their experiences of regeneration since the conclusion of the Games in 2012. By using the three time periods it was possible to trace any changes to the experiences of the selected community representatives.

In addition to the boundaries of selecting community representatives, it was imperative to create a geographical boundary to the research. The initial plan was for the boundary to be solely constituted by the Stratford peripheries of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. However, due to the research fatigue or potential localised resistance encountered when contacting potential participants, the geographical boundaries had to be extended. The location of the research undertaken stretched from Stratford Town through to Hackney Wick, into Homerton and down to the Docklands. There were two exceptions to these
boundaries which were two participants who worked in organisations located in central London. The terms ‘area’ and ‘location’ have been used interchangeably throughout the thesis to designate the locations mentioned by participants. The extension to the boundaries meant that London Borough of Hackney was also included. Hackney was one of the five Olympic Boroughs as it sits on the North West peripheries of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. The other four Olympic Boroughs were Newham, Waltham Forest, Tower Hamlets, and Greenwich. I have also sought to ensure the anonymity of respondents where relevant.

The following page includes a map as a visual representation of the largest section of the research area. It is noted above that the research area extended into the City of London as well as into the Docklands, neither of which is shown on this map due to their dislocation in relation to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site. In order to protect this, when I report within the thesis the home location of the interviewees, the subsequent names of places have been reduced to vague areas of the cityscape, whilst also still providing some idea of locations within the research boundaries.
Map representing the research location

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**Organisation of the Thesis**

The thesis has developed three predominant overarching themes (urban regeneration, socioculturalism, and governance and economics). Each of these three themes form the basis for the literature review and discussion chapters. Each literature review chapter then breaks down further to include subthemes, which became apparent from the included literature as common topics. The discussion chapters then present the emergent themes that have developed from the interview, newspaper and documentary analyses. The inclusion criteria for themes stems from the prominent ideas that presented throughout the literature review process. Themes that were excluded occurred once the data had been analysed to meet the themes that emerged. Any themes that did not emerge from the data was removed as extraneous to the research (such as ambush marketing which is a central discussion topic within sport mega-event research).

The thesis has been organised into 10 chapters ranging from the introduction to the conclusion and future research recommendations. Each chapter has been titled and relevant subheadings included to help with navigating through the thesis. This introduction has set out and contextualised the research problem and questions. The literature review chapters of the thesis will set out and discuss the themes generated from considering the three research questions. Each of the research questions have been taken as the basis for each one of the three literature review chapters. Chapter two will explore urban regeneration as a topic. Chapter three will investigate sociocultural issues which are linked to community development as well as urban renewal and finally chapter four will examine governance and economics. Each of these chapters will relate their main theme to the role and experience of hosting sport mega-events, in particular the Olympic Games.

Chapter five examines and sets out the research methodology and methods employed throughout the fieldwork phase and analysis of the work. The research has employed a critical realist approach, as it recognises the link between the social construction of the social world and the realist acknowledgement that some
‘entities’ will exist independently from the social world (Bhaskar, 2013). The research used semi-structured interviews in combination with a study of news media articles to add to the detailed interviews with local research participants. The data was analysed in two ways. Firstly, a narrative thematic approach was used to discover the emerging themes relating to the experiences of the selected community representatives. It was then apparent that there were a number of discursive threads which were being utilised by the community representatives, therefore a discourse analysis was completed.

Following the research methodology and methods, I provide the research findings and discussion, which have been combined in order to fully explore the interview data and news media. The discussion section has been broken down into three chapters to match the literature reviews chapters. The initial discussion chapter, chapter six, is a presentation of initial results. A community profile has been completed as is found in appendix A. The literature had all indicated the diversity of the region and the information gained from creating the profile helped to reinforce points made by the selected community representatives. Chapter seven analyses the discussions relating to urban regeneration. Chapter eight focuses on the sociocultural issues relating to the urban renewal plans, and chapter nine is concentrated on the governance and economics elements of the discussion.

The final chapter of the thesis is the conclusion. The conclusion pulls together the themes found throughout the findings and discussion chapters. There were two predominant themes – the ripple effect and marginal gains. The ripple effect was brought up in the interviews as stemming from a post-Olympic Games confidence in East London which has allowed new development opportunities to be undertaken. Marginal gains have arisen from the mainly positive experiences of the selected community representatives. There has been a level of positivity expressed by the participants which has been attributed to the timeframe for the semi-structured interviews (mid-2014 – early 2015). During this time the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park was beginning to be opened up fully to the public and a majority of those initial phases of construction had been completed. The
development of the ‘Olympicopolis’ and the International Quarter had yet to be
finalised through the planning stages at the time of the interviews. The research
took place at a peak time for positive experiences of the Games. I will argue that
this fills a significant knowledge gap on how mega-events are experienced by
local community representatives in the immediate aftermath of hosting.
Chapter Two
Literature Review – Urban regeneration

Introduction

The chapter’s objective is to contextualise and to start to answer the following research question:

*How have the selected community representatives experienced the urban regeneration of the local area?*

The following chapter will discuss the role of urban geography in relation to the regeneration of an Olympic host city. The bid to host London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games was predicated upon the need to regenerate the eastern region of London. The Stratford and New Town site was selected due to the process of deindustrialisation that the area had suffered, and as an attempt to spark a successful transition into a post-industrial part of the capital. The deindustrialisation of East London led to a region that was faced with socioeconomic challenges. The challenges included high levels of unemployment, higher levels of recorded crime, low quality housing, substandard education and low mortality rates. The three of the Olympic Boroughs (Newham, Tower Hamlets and Hackney) were placed in the top 20 most deprived boroughs on the index of multiple deprivations national scale in 2010 (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015). In order to gain a better understanding of urban regeneration and its associated discussions it is imperative to begin with comprehending the fundamental basis of regeneration practices. We therefore need to set out a definition of urban geography – a subject which has been a main concern to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic hosting committees and organisations – as this will establish the parameters for this thesis.

The definition of urban geography to be used here is presented by Pacione (2009, p. 3) who states that it is the study of the dispersal of towns and cities and the “social-spatial similarities and contrasts which exist between and within them”. Latham et al (2009) explain that as a sub-discipline of human geography,
urban geography as Pacione describes it, is linked to the social development of space and its use by the residing communities. Thus, importantly in this context, the communities who use the space will be directly affected if there are changes made to that space. The changes may be seen as beneficial or detrimental by different communities. One significant part of urban geography and its physical manifestations is the study of one area of spatial change - ‘regeneration’ – which is central to this thesis.

Using the above definitions from Pacione and Latham et al, it is important to recognize that urban regeneration affects not only the physical landscape but also the social landscape within the city. The two facets need to be discussed in conjunction with one another because they are intricately linked; a change to the physical cityscape will have an impact on the social landscape and vice versa. In order to manage the discussion this chapter will be divided into two distinct sections. The first section will consider the physical urban changes and how a cityscape develops in relation to societal requirements (urban morphology and regeneration). The second section takes into consideration the impact of the physical changes on the social mix of the area (gentrification, polarisation and securitisation).

**Regeneration**

Regeneration was recognised as a central concern of the post-Olympic Games sustainable legacy. It was highlighted throughout the bidding process that East London was a suitable candidate to host because the area required investment in its infrastructure and redevelopment of previously designated industrial land. In order to understand regeneration, it is important to use a definition to frame the discussion.

Roberts (2000, p. 17) defines urban regeneration as a

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

Regeneration’s purpose is therefore to amalgamate both aims and ‘action’ in order to improve ‘economic, physical, social and environmental’ changes to a specific location. Hall (1998, p. 137) furthers this by clarifying that regeneration projects “tend to be spatially autonomous”, meaning that the projects are developed within a specific area or within boundary lines and not linked to other projects being undertaken within the same city. The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in Stratford, London was initially set out as a spatially autonomous project in terms of its development within the wider boundaries of London where it is set in a specific part of the London Borough of Newham; previously it was an industrial landscape covering 314 hectares (Bond, 2006). However, it is not solely spatially autonomous within the boundary of the borough itself. The wider London Borough of Newham has been undergoing regeneration for more than 30 years. Furthermore, the Olympic Park encompasses multiple project areas which cover four London Boroughs (Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest and Hackney), so in the wider context the project, in its East London location, is not working in anonymity, but with partners in order to harness the regeneration in an outward movement from the epicentre of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Degen and Garcia (2012) explain that urban regeneration’s success is contingent upon remembering that this type of development is rooted in the history and culture of the specific place undergoing the process. The ‘Barcelona Model’ of regeneration recognises the link between the history and culture of an area (in this case the city of Barcelona) and the potential for success in the area’s development. The model relies upon civic and private investment and intervention in order to start mass regeneration projects through a public and private partnership (Scherer, 2011). The ‘Barcelona Model’ followed from the experiences of regeneration which stemmed from hosting the 1992 Olympic Games. MacRury (2008) points out that after hosting the 1992 Games, the city of Barcelona integrated the event facilities and venues into functional units within

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2 See chapter three for more on the social history of the area.
the cityscape, which is why it is seen as a ‘model’ for regeneration projects. Brunet (2009) mentions that Barcelona is also praised for its balanced urban regeneration legacy planning alongside economic investment in the city. Barcelona was able to successfully regenerate derelict parts of the city including its waterfront; in doing so, the city council were able to attract tourists and tourist development, thereby securing continuous investment into the city (Degen, 2004). There was a long-term plan for the facilities and venues, which included a strategy for sustainable funding to ensure their future use was secure. Davies (2012b) highlights the importance of creating a strategy for long-term use of facilities as good practice in legacy planning.

However, Cohen (2013) explains that although Barcelona has been hailed as a success, the process of urban renewal actually meant that deprived portions of society were driven from the low income areas of the city and that house prices were driven up by 250 per cent between 1986 and 1992. The regeneration did succeed in gentrifying the port area of the city. However, Cohen points out such changes were to the detriment of the already established communities who were living and working in the surrounding areas. The Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (2007) provides statistics on the number of families affected by the Barcelona 1992 Olympic Games. The report states that a total of 624 families were displaced, many of whom were rehoused in alternative accommodation separated from their wider family and social networks. The decision by the authorities to separate family groups and established social networks was said to be made out of the fear of creating ghettos, which had occurred in other Spanish developments in the 1980s and 1990s.

Ghettoization is an extreme form of social and ethnic segregation within the limits of the cityscape. It is the physical manifestation of the potential by-product of gentrification, social polarisation. The creation of a ghetto stems from the designation of specific locations which are exclusive to specific ethnicities in the city (Pain et al., 2001). The distinct socio-spatial divide has an effect on the

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3 See gentrification section for more detail about social polarisation
wider social division of space and a “fragmentation of the urban fabric” (Mazzoleni, 2010, p. 232). Many of the residents of ghettos are migrants who have limited resources and are unable to afford living in the more affluent areas of the city (Knox & Pinch, 2010). The displaced families in Barcelona were migrant families, such as the Romany populace (Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions [COHRE], 2007). The displaced marginal communities are politically weak and are therefore unable to mount or mobilise a defence of their interests. A similar point is highlighted by critics of the London 2012 Olympic Games, whereby the Traveller community was pushed out to make way for the development of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (Cheyne, 2010).

It is argued by Degen and Garcia (2012) that the ‘Barcelona Model’ was successful at the time because of the changes to the political leadership and agenda in Spain. Politically, the post-dictatorial period put an emphasis on dialogue between the public and those in governance. The dialogue allowed for cultural and community-based considerations to be included within regeneration plans. Civic culture has now changed and globally there is less focus on cultural and community inclusion in regeneration projects, and more emphasis on “strategic planning/ economic development planning” (Marshall, 2000, p. 314), which is why for the poorer communities the ‘Barcelona Model’ may not be seen as the most effective model for regeneration. Spain also formally entered into the European Union during this time. The entry to the union meant that there was an increase in foreign interest and capital available to the real estate sector to catalyse development and regeneration opportunities (Slavin, 2006). Overall there were many different factors which were feeding into the rise of Barcelona’s world-city status. It is therefore challenging to isolate the 1992 Olympic Games as the real cause or catalyst for this rise in status.

Urban Morphology

A subtheme of regeneration is urban morphology. Urban morphology is the study of the formation of cityscapes and how these cityscapes evolve through time to meet the requirements of the community. The use of land changes
throughout the generations who reside or work in an area. As Hillier (2008, p. 217) explains

The design and planning of the built environment is about adapting the physical and spatial surroundings for human purposes; to make communities work, to facilitate business, to make organisations efficient, to support family life… Design and planning of the built environment is an evolution of the built space in order to meet the needs of its latest residing community. Primarily this is focused on socioeconomic developments and how the built environments (including open spaces) create or affect the ‘fabric’ of society (Bosselmann, 2008; Carmona et al., 2010). Urban morphology is important to consider in relation to the regeneration of East London because the social space is intricately tied into the physical space of the cityscape. East London is a constantly evolving landscape in order to meet the needs of its latest residents; indeed, this has been pattern for centuries⁴.

Morphogenesis is derived from urban morphology and is aligned to the historical development of space within urban areas. Land usage changes depending upon the needs of the society to reshape or create a new urban landscape (Marcos, 2012). It is noted by Knox and Pinch (2010) that every phase of urban development is impacted by different social, economic and cultural influences which aid in the joint processes of expanding outwards, and the internal reformation or restructuring of the area. Therefore, the socially constructed world translates its requirements on to the physical landscape. A cityscape would not successfully regenerate if there was no link to the social or cultural needs of the local communities, whether that is communities who are well established or communities who are being attracted to the site.

Since the end of the Second World War the urban landscape within London and its boroughs, has seen a great change. The idea of using high-rise developments to meet the needs of growing communities in relation to overcrowded housing has been seen in the post-war regeneration of East London. Architecturally, the new high rise developments in East London were called

⁴ See Chapter 3 for social history of East London
‘Streets in the Air’, and were designed to create communities similar to those found in the bombed out terraced houses (Moran, 2012). As an example of morphogenesis, the ‘Streets in the Air’ initiative was not seen to be as successful in meeting the needs of the community as the families became more insular due to both the design of the buildings but also from the development of new technologies, such as television. Adams (2012) explains that post-war urban planning up until the late 1960s focused on the dispersal of communities to suburban settlements. The dispersal involved little consideration of the economic and social requirements of the relocated communities, which meant that residents could become socially and financially disadvantaged from the move.

Another aspect of the morphogenesis of the urban landscape in East London has been the transformation of the public transport network. Mejia-Dorantes and Lucas (2014, p. 241) explain that

Transport infrastructure investment is often characterised as having an important role to play in the regeneration process, largely due to a commonly perceived relationship between improved accessibility and increased economic activity.

Mejia-Dorantes and Lucas add that there is limited empirical evidence to guarantee that there is a direct link. Their paper considers the 1998 extension to the Jubilee Line, an underground train line which connects the east of London to Waterloo station and beyond into west and central London. The authors state:

[The extension] is approximately 16km long and added 11 new stations….The 11 JLE [Jubilee Line Extension] stations are located in some of the poorest areas of London, with most of the wards in Southwark, London Bridge, Isle of Dogs and Lower Lea Valley…areas falling within the 10% most deprived wards in London.

(Mejia-Dorantes & Lucas, 2014, p. 243)

The extension of the Jubilee Line into Stratford was not linked to the prospect of the Olympics being held in London, but it was certainly an additional point of consideration in relation to the accessibility of the Olympic Park area of London. Regenerating the surrounding area of the extension to the line was an assumption that this would occur without any additional policy or planning implementation (Mejia-Dorantes & Lucas, 2014). The assumption that there would be additional
redevelopment was made because of the continual process of regeneration that was present across the East London region at the time of the extension being built.

The development of public transit networks enables greater connectivity and accessibility to the newly developing areas of the cityscape. It is recognised that urban mobility, through the development of transportation systems, “appears as a crucial element for urban prosperity” (Rousseau, 2012, p. 140). By improving the urban environment, it is possible to enable greater development within the regenerating area in order to improve investment prospects. Furthermore, the development of public transit networks as part of a “pre-existing culture of urban renewal linking the city and the outskirts” (Pflieger et al., 2009, p. 1435) enables more access across the cityscape. The greater the access or connectivity across a city means that there is an improvement in the mobility of different parts of the city. Greater mobility means that it is possible for the development of social capital. The urban morphology and development of public transport networks can be enabling factors in the gentrification of an area of a city.

Gentrification

The changes that occur due to the morphogenesis of the area can lead to a process of gentrification. Lees (2008, p. 2449) explains that gentrification …is increasingly promoted in policy circles on the assumption that it will lead to more socially mixed, less segregated, more liveable and sustainable communities. Gentrification is defined as the urbanisation of an inner city area, to increase affluence and land usage and to encourage the settlement of more middle-class residents, in order to continue a stream of income into the local area (Brouillette, 2009). A key aim behind gentrification relates to encouraging a ‘social mix’ and a re-establishment of ‘social balance’. The United Kingdom has run state-sponsored gentrification programmes in order to encourage the middle-classes to return to the city, particularly in inner-city locations marked by substantial deindustrialization. The idea behind the programme is to aid in the reduction of “socio-spatial segregation and strengthen the ‘social tissue’ of deprived

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5 See chapter three for more on social capital
neighbourhoods” (Lees, 2008, p. 2452). The re-establishment of ‘social balance’ is thought to be achieved through the introduction of middle-class resettlement. The stated ideal is that such resettlement would then increase opportunities for greater social inclusion and interaction between the settling middle-classes and the already established lower classes within the area which in turn augments the levels of social capital6 (Walks & Maaranen, 2008). However, research into the actual impacts of gentrification processes points towards some significant disadvantages for working-class residents. That is, gentrification is generally associated with the white middle-class displacing local, largely working-class communities (Webber & Butler, 2007; Maloutas, 2011). The displacement of one social class for another can potentially create a major issue in the gentrifying area, such as Newham, because of the high level and constant transition of its local population and the large multicultural demographic within the community.

Multicultural diversity is a concern, in order to be able to transition from community to community representatives it is necessary to set down ‘roots’. Black and Minority Ethnic groups are most effected by gentrification because the traditional locations where they would settle have disappeared.

In order for an area to successfully regenerate, Ley and Dobson (2008) explain that there must be a ‘middle class’ demand for investment in the area. To secure demand the land usually needs to be located within an area that is close to middle-class suburbs or places of work. Otherwise there will be no direct benefit for the middle-classes after investing in a deprived neighbourhood in order to initiate the regeneration. The idea of creating social mix through gentrification is reliant on each social class accepting the other. If each social class fails to mix then social segregation can be a by-product of the gentrification process where communities become split by their socioeconomic status. Lees (2008) explains that it is not realistic to presume that different social classes will mix and integrate when they are living in close proximity.

6 See chapter three for more on social capital
The 1980s saw the first stages of regeneration of the East End of London, which was initiated by the then Conservative Government led by Margaret Thatcher. The stated aim of these regeneration policies was to encourage more affluent people to move into the newly developed and repurposed areas. During this time, the financial and business sectors moved east to Canary Wharf which created a shift of focus eastwards and a polarisation across the established communities towards the influx of people from the more ‘affluent West London’ (Cohen, 2013). The wider process of gentrification centred particularly on the ongoing redevelopment and regeneration of the docklands (Butler, 2007). The migration of City workers to East London meant that the “lines of tension between West and East were dramatically realigned” (Cohen, 2013, p. 112). It is important to recognise that the process of regeneration and gentrification of the East of London has been an on-going process of different projects over the last 30 or so years. The Olympic regeneration project is the latest to be initiated in the area. The process of gentrification is expected to impact directly upon the acknowledged urban identity of a place in order to attract the gentrifying communities.

Urban identity

Lindsay (2013) argues that urban renewal or regeneration allows for urban identities to be redefined and renewed. The definition of urban identity provided by Tölle (2010, p. 348) encapsulates the idea that a “place identity of a city as a whole…turns an urban space into a distinguishable place.” Place identity as a concept therefore encompasses the way that meanings are attached to particular places; this can be from different perspectives that are held by “residents, business people, policy-makers and tourists.” (Kneafsey, 2000, p. 36). These definitions of urban or place identity register how the local population or an individual of a specific location attaches personal meanings which have been derived from their social interaction with the built environment.

Place identity is defined by Harner (2001, p. 660) as arising “when the shared beliefs about place meaning for the majority match the ideological beliefs
of those in power.” In order for the identity to develop there must be collaboration between all the various groups, those with power and those with limited power. Larsen (2004, p. 945) extends Harner’s idea by stating that “place identity, by extension, is seen as a by-product of power consolidation”. Therefore it is reasonable to argue that place identity is an evolving construction dependent upon the group with the most perceived power in the associated society (Harner, 2001). The evolution of the cityscape and associated place identity is therefore affected by population churn; social groups and organisations which are in charge of the regeneration can be recognised as the catalysts for this gentrification. The groups involved could be locally based or a ‘global’ organisation which has moved into the area to relocate or as part of a regeneration project.

Place identity is an important consideration for this research because the London 2012 Olympic Games has allowed the area of Stratford to develop and regenerate at a fast pace which has caused major changes to the cityscape in a short timeframe due to the associated deadlines with hosting a sports mega-event. One of the significant alterations to the cityscape has been the development of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park from its original post-industrial landscape. The change to the cityscape has the potential to redefine the urban identity of the area and create new attachments to the social spaces within the cityscape as it morphs to its new format. Furthermore, using Harner (2001) and Larsen’s (2004) ideas about the formation of place identity, we may see the IOC as constituting the ‘global’ faction which held the most power and were able to exert their dominance over the local community. The dominance over the local landscape from the Bid and Organising Committee alters the place identity on both a local and global level. The urban morphological changes have occurred in Stratford and the wider Olympic Boroughs due to the implementation of specific criteria required to host the Olympic Games.

The types of place identity that were being promoted or set to be promoted related to the idea that Stratford and the wider East London were open for

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7 See the Olympic Charter for more information about the requirements of a host city
business and investment. The region had been largely untouched by developers since the 1980s Thames Gateway and Docklands regeneration projects. There were three prominent identity based ideals that were part of the second promise set out at the beginning of London’s journey to host the Olympic Games in 2012. The promise set out to

**Promise 2 – Transform the heart of East London**

Headline ambitions:

*Transforming place* – create a well-planned and well-managed environment in and around the Olympic Park which will attract business investment and promote recreational and cultural use for years to come.

*Transforming communities* – build over 9,000 new homes, a large proportion of which to be affordable, and provide new sport, leisure, education and health facilities that meet the needs of residents, business and elite sport.

*Transforming prospects* – help 20,000 workless Londoners from the 5 Host Boroughs into permanent employment by 2012, and create 12,000 job opportunities in the area of the Park post-Games.

These were all set out by the government as part of the initial bid as well as in the following legacy documents. East London had a reputation for criminal behaviour and a stereotype of being run down and deprived. Government officials wanted to use the Olympic Games as a way of improving the image of East London in order to open up opportunities to develop tracts of post-industrial land across the region. In order to make these promises a reality it was important that the stereotypes relating to crime and violence were diminished; securitisation was one method of achieving this aim.

**Securitisation**

Securitisation is another consideration for host cities of sport mega-events. The securitisation of a location within the cityscape is an important tenet of the wider regeneration process. The concept of securitisation has developed from the threat of terrorist activity, in this case in relation to sports mega-events, and the implementation and deployment of policies and methods to counter any possible
perceived threat (Hassan, 2014). Toohey and Taylor (2012, p. 325) explain that the concept of securitisation has transformed from its initial position relating to defence of the state to now encompass the safeguarding of “political, environmental, and social spheres”. From the viewpoint of critical social scientific perspectives, securitization has significant political dimensions; hence, hosting sport mega-events in the 21st Century means

The construction of a sizable security infrastructure ostensibly designed to prevent acts of terrorism. This security apparatus can also be applied to other concerns such as low-level incivilities and, most notably, silencing political dissent.

(Boykoff & Fussey, 2013, p. 3)

Securitisation as a concept is important to define because longitudinally it is necessary to present a safe and secure environment to prospective visitors, spectators and residents. For that reason, it is essential to combine these definitions of securitisation to provide a working definition that will encompass the various elements of this research in relation to the discussion of urban geography.

The fast paced realignment and polarisation of East London reinforced a reputation of insecurity which created an en masse migration of East London residents out of the area (Cohen, 2013). Securitisation therefore becomes a central consideration in relation to regeneration because it directly impacts both morphogenesis and the gentrification of an area. Tsoukala (2006) and Houlihan and Giulianotti (2012) argue that security planning for sport mega-events has been a major consideration since the 1972 Munich terrorist attack, and has since been exacerbated by the September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States. There are a large number of Muslim and Asian communities within the Borough of Newham which have been the potential focus for anti-terrorist policing and security. According to the 2011 Census Asian people make up 43% of Newham’s population; and 32% of the population of the Borough are Muslim (Office for National Statistics, 2013a,d). Shaw (2008) states that each Olympic cycle since 2001 has seen a dramatic increase in spending on security for both Winter and Summer Olympic Games. However, the threat of terrorism is only one facet
concerned with the securitisation of the Olympic host city. Cornelissen (2011) argues that sports mega-event organisers have to focus on the needs of both the international community (delegates, athletes and visitors) and the local community to ensure their safety from terrorism and localised crime.

*The Potential for ‘Control Creep’*

In order to win the right to host the Olympics, cities must persuade IOC members and other community representatives that there will be a marked increase in security in the areas where events are to take place. However, ‘control creep’ is one potential by-product of these security measures being put into place. The idea of control *creep* implies that the general public will have a limited awareness of how this process occurs. For example, for the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the organisers placed Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags into some of the tickets for the most high profile events, such as the Opening Ceremony (Fussey & Coaffee, 2011). The tags would therefore allow the ticket holders to be tracked throughout the Olympic host city. This is a form of ‘control creep’ because the ticket holder would not be aware of the tracking device within the ticket itself. The Olympic Games, or other sport mega-events, are the catalysts used to employ further security procedures, processes and infrastructure, such as new CCTV provisions, armed guards, an increased police presence, under the guise of securing the mega-event from any perceived threat. The long-term implementation of these measures means that the communities and wider populations who have access to the area become used to seeing these measures and used to them being implemented (Fussey et al., 2011).

Localised security considerations are highlighted by Boyle and Haggerty (2011, p. 3187) who explain that the securitisation of Vancouver in preparation for the 2010 Winter Olympics involved efforts to “regulate poverty, homelessness and other visible signifiers of inequality and disorder incongruent with the host city”. These observations fit with Cornelissen’s point regarding securitisation in relation to the local community. In Vancouver, many homeless men and women were forced to relocate outside of the city (Shaw, 2008; Young., 2012). Furthermore, Samatas (2011) and Tsoukala (2006) emphasise that both Athens
and Beijing undertook massive security-based development prior to hosting their respective Games. Coaffee, Fussey and Moore (2011) also contend that in London, localised security was important due to the promise to regenerate the host area (Stratford) and encourage inward investment to counteract the high levels of deprivation. London saw the implementation of official Olympic traffic routes across the city as part of its risk management planning. These routes had a negative impact on the local population and businesses due to the limitation of public access to certain areas of Stratford which meant, for example, that business deliveries could not reach their destinations (Giulianotti et al., 2015).

London’s process of securitisation has been different to other host cities such as Athens, because of the historical development of counter-terrorist measures already implemented over the last 30 years (Coaffee et al., 2011). The 2004 Games came just three years after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York. In Greece a new security system was fitted into the country’s security infrastructure, which included installing 1,400 cameras as well as other computer-based technology (Tsoukala, 2006). In addition to security measures and technology being installed, policy was also executed. In fact it is noted by Samatas (2011, p. 3352) that in Beijing

…according to the Geneva-based Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, China’s Olympic focused urban destruction programme has at times evicted as many as 13,000 people per week by razing whole neighbourhoods.

This represents a staggering number of evictions in order to secure local neighbourhoods. Although the wider audiences saw these plans as a positive response to the growing security demands, it was the opposite for local communities. In Athens, Amnesty International were consulted in order to guarantee that the Greek authorities ensured the protection of local civil liberties and rights due to the severe increase in security measures being set up (Tsoukala, 2006). The main concern with the London developments related to the potential for ‘control creep’ due to the cameras and other security measures being centred on the Stratford area. It is noted that this would only become worse after the Games because of the process of gentrification which was polarising the local
community further (Fussey et al., 2012). The securitisation of space is also tied closely to the commodification of urban space by sport mega-events.

Commodification of Urban Space and the Olympic Games

In addition to the securitisation of the surrounding neighbourhoods, securitisation has occurred within the stadia that are hosting sporting events. In cities like London that are heavily shaped by neo-liberal economic and social policies, commodification can refer to the marketization of space, whereby it is possible to turn urban space into a valuable commodity (Liu & Lin, 2014). It is arguable that the process of securitisation has enabled the commodification space to develop. Munoz (2003, p. 384) defines the commodification of urban space as a process deriving from the securitisation of space, especially in connection with “semi-detached environments”. A ‘semi-detached environment’ is a location which has created a differentiation between the urban space and the rest of the surrounding cityscape. It is arguable that the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park can be considered as a semi-detached environment because it is in contrast to the rest of the cityscape. The commodification of space does not simply just refer to urban landscapes, but it can also be applied to spaces within venues, such as stadiums.

Giulianotti (2011) notes that the corporate commodification of sporting events (in this case the English Premier League, but the argument may be extended to the Olympic Games and other mega-events) has developed in part from the securitisation of the football stadium and the surrounding area. Securitisation has meant that the urban space of the stadium has been transformed from a ‘fan-friendly’ space to a space marketed towards corporate ticket holders, in effect a process of gentrification within the stadium itself. The process of securitisation was implemented in order to reduce the violence (both physical and verbal) between different spectator groups, but also served to create stands with high-priced seats that might be sold primarily to wealthier spectators. Although the Olympic Games are the focal point of the presented research, it is important to understand the wider implications of the commodification of space in the mega-
event area. Furthermore, the Olympic Stadium’s main tenant is set to be West Ham United Football Club, on lease of 99 years. Therefore, the scope of the analysis can be widened to take into consideration the future use of the stadium for Premier League football matches in direct comparison with the previous Olympic use of the venue.

Cohen (2013) argues that commodification of space (for example of a stadium or space outside of the stadium) is viewed differently by those who have been excluded or exploited by the process of turning the local space into a valuable commodity. Cohen states that commodification actually creates a tension within an area and undermines the process of securitisation by fuelling malcontent within communities and can lead to more violent behaviour (demonstrations, riots and looting for example). It has been seen in the Spanish football leagues that fans have reacted negatively to the commercialisation of football and their perception of the erosion of links between fans, local communities and football clubs (Spaaij & Viñas, 2013). The increases to ticket prices at football clubs, is highlighted by Spaaij and Vinas as one of the main points of contention because it creates a division between the wealthier middle-classes and the working classes in relation to the affordability to attend the football matches. It can therefore be argued that the working classes perceived themselves to be excluded by the commodification and growing commercialisation of football, which is stimulating feelings of malcontent within the fan-base of clubs. This argument is not new and has been a topic of discussion since the 1990s.

Conclusion

The role of urban geography in the regeneration of an Olympic host city has been shown to be a multifaceted area of consideration. Regeneration’s success in its broadest sense is acknowledged to be contingent upon balancing the history and the culture of the specific area undergoing the process (Degen & García, 2012). Regeneration can also be used in the process of redefining or renewing an urban identity (Lindsay, 2013). Part of the renewal of an urban identity, from a physical urban geographical perspective, links to the adaptation of an urban space
to meet the needs of the community residing within it, which is known as morphogenesis (part of urban morphology) (Marcos, 2012). Each of the factors discussed above is directly linked to how urban geography can be used to understand the process of infrastructure change in terms of regeneration.

In addition to the idea that regeneration can bring about changes to the physical landscape, there can also be alterations to the community. The accessibility of a city can determine the mobility of residents and impact on the investment in infrastructure within the city. The improvements in public transport networks can aid in the gentrification of an area by improving the accessibility of areas previously considered to be remote. By definition, gentrification is a process that can directly impact on the social stratification of a community. From a societal position, gentrification is the process of encouraging more affluent members of society to move to the regenerated area (Brouillette, 2009). Unfortunately this does not guarantee a social balance of residents; social polarisation may occur and lead to the socio-spatial segregation or even ‘ghettoization’ within the area due to distinguishing social factors such as socioeconomic status, lifestyle and so forth (Pacione, 2009). As part of the gentrifying process, securitisation processes are also put in place, in part to ensure that the new, relatively more affluent residents feel safe. The concept of securitisation has developed from its initial beginnings relating to the defence of the state, to incorporate the safeguarding of “political, environmental, and social spheres” (Toohey & Taylor, 2012, p. 325). The difficulty is ensuring that a culture of control does not develop which arises from the implementation of securitisation programmes (Coaffee et al., 2011).

Furthermore, the gentrification of an area may also aid in the development of the commodification of space. The commodification of space is the process of turning urban space into a valuable commodity (Liu & Lin, 2014). It is particularly important to note that the commodification of space is central to the hosting of a sport mega-event. Invariably the host city and the IOC will be ‘selling’ sponsorship rights to venues, billboards before, during and after events
have taken place. The process of the commodification of space is a by-product of the securitisation of space, whereby the value of that space has increased (Munoz, 2003). Placing a value on urban space can also aid in the rebranding. In this case, rebranding refers to the understanding of how people perceive and relate to the idea of place identity; the difference between the two positions is that urban identity relates to the physical environment whereas rebranding is associated with the individual’s perceptions of an area.

The chapter has broadly discussed the urban regeneration theme, the most prominent being gentrification. Gentrification has the most effect on the development of the cityscape, and the local communities. A requirement for gentrification to occur is the securitisation of space. The securitisation of space is a contributing factor for changing the perceptions of ‘outsiders’. Urban identity is adjusted and the ‘outsiders’ perceive the location to be safer, stable and welcoming to more affluent individuals. The reverse of the perception change is the loss of identity for the ‘original’ communities who are residing and working in the location. The two distinct groups within the gentrification process means that there will be two broadly different experiences – those incomers will see it as positive and will perhaps gain from the urban regeneration and the original communities who will lose out and have a negative experience. It was mentioned that in the 1980s the docklands redevelopment created social polarisation, which is a concern for the establishing Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and Stratford City communities because of their close proximity to the original Stratford Town. There is the potential for social alienation because of the money and affluence being drawn to the Stratford City developments in and around the park in comparison to the more deprived neighbourhoods in Stratford Town.
Chapter Three

Literature Review - Sociocultural Understanding

Introduction

This chapter will establish an exploration of chosen sociocultural issues that have emerged throughout the reviewed literature. The aim of the discussion is to engage directly with and answer the research question related to sociocultural considerations:

How have the selected community representatives been affected by the cultural evolutionary processes as a part of the wider community development plan?

The discussion will cover three predominant areas;

- Defining ‘community’ – which will consider our understanding of the terms multiculturalism and social capital, which are two of the components proposed as rationale behind the ideas of social stabilisation.
- Social history – a contextualisation of the historical links to the diversity and community development of the wider East London region.
- Covert cultural cleansing – the potential by-product from the desired changes to the community composition.

The aforementioned areas of discussion have become apparent from the reading undertaken as part of the literature review process. Understanding how a community evolves and develops with a consideration for the area’s social history is important in order to understand the finer workings of the current community and, in the context of this thesis, its community representatives. Understanding how communities develop socially will enable us to extend our grasp of the impact of gentrification on local residents and communities, as discussed in Chapter Two. To assist that understanding, I draw on the concepts of social capital that have been developed by prominent sociologists, specifically Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam.
Defining Community

It is important to define the concept of ‘community’ because it is the bedrock of understanding how residents, visitors and workers interact within their social environments. ‘Community’ can hold several different meanings, but it is generally refers to a common social bond or social interaction which creates a network (Gilchrist & Taylor, 2011). Sociologists have defined the term in multiple ways with slight nuances between the different contexts and philosophical standpoints. The ideas proposed by Coleman, Putnam and others regarding social capital are the key for understanding community, and how the members of that community react to ‘external stimuli’ such as the exceptional experience of hosting sport mega-events like the Olympics. Here, while recognizing the diversity of approaches, I work with the definition provided by Gilchrist and Taylor.

Understanding Social Capital

According to Durkheim, a cohesive society can be created once social links and bonds are made between individuals (Durkheim, 1972; Morrison, 2006; Novy et al., 2012). The links and bonds mean that an individual no longer belongs solely to one community but can be part of multiple communities, which therefore widens their opportunity for personal improvement. Putnam8 (2000) reflects this idea as part of his work on social capital in relation to the development of communities. Putnam mainly measured social change through the use of longitudinal quantitative methods. The long-term study of multiple points in time helped to improve the reliability of the data he was collating from different researchers involved in his study. He was able to study change through the survey data and organisational data sets to see any significant alterations in social change.

Putnam puts forward the idea that the network that an individual is part of will determine the strength of the links and bonds which that individual can create in order to improve personal opportunities and social mobility. For example,

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Putnam is a highly influential social scientist best known for his work on social capital, particularly his book *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*.
family ties are considered to be strong in comparison to ties and links created at work. ‘Social capital’ can be split into two distinct strands whether a tie is considered to be exclusive (bonding capital – family ties, common language within a subculture) or inclusive (bridging capital – work connections, community focused groups). It is noted by Putnam (2000, p. 23) that

Bridging capital can generate broader identities and reciprocity, whereas bonding social capital bolsters our narrower selves.

Here Putnam is distinguishing that bonding social capital can be used to develop a strong community identity, whereas bridging social capital allows an individual to network with different communities in order to develop further beneficial opportunities (such as new employment opportunities or chances to develop entrepreneurial activities). Thus if there is a deficiency of bridging capital, then the network the individual belongs to will be more exclusive and therefore a barrier is created. It is this idea of community and social capital development that will be considered in relation to the stated aims of the London 2012 Olympic Games which is included under the theme of community engagement and empowerment.

An alternative definition of the creation of social capital is provided by Pierre Bourdieu, who works from a rather more critical, European perspective as opposed to Putnam’s more Americanised view. Bourdieu views social capital as the outcome of an amalgamation of competitive resources (cultural, economic or symbolic capital) possessed by an individual or a group, which have been garnered from membership of networks and the links and relationships created through acquaintanceships in these various networks (Field, 2008). Bourdieu (1986, p. 51) builds on this by stating

The volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent thus depends on the size of the network of connections he can

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9 In a very early analysis, Sorokin (1998, p. 75) explains the difference between European and American sociology lies in the emphasis placed on epistemology – “The bulk of the sociological works in America are marked by their quantitative and empirical character while the bulk of sociological literature of Europe is still marked by an analytical elaboration of concepts and definitions, by a philosophical and epistemological polishing of words.” While Sorokin was referring to the first half of the 20th century, the point is still relevant in relation to the development of sociological work between the two continents.
effectively mobilise and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected. Bourdieu points more towards the different, competitive ways in which the individual may seek to build social capital, whereas Putnam is interested in the types of links and bonds, which can denote different experiences of social life and mobility.

Both Bourdieu (1986) and Putnam (2000) work from a macro-sociological perspective, which means that they are most concerned with how structure affects or shapes the individual capacity to become more socially mobile. Bourdieu in particular sees social capital as a resource to be used by individuals (in addition to the other aforementioned types of capital) to improve their standing in the social hierarchy, amid claims to ‘distinction’ within different social ‘fields’. An example would be how the middle-classes might use cultural activities, such as going to restaurants, cinema, theatre, sports activities, use of leisure spaces, to mark themselves off from the working-class people. This connects directly with the idea of gentrification and polarisation – that is, cultural, social, symbolic and economic capital are all used by the higher social classes to mark themselves off from lower classes, potentially creating two or more ‘opposing’ communities rather than building one singular community across an area like Stratford.

In addition to both Putnam and Bourdieu, Coleman has also forwarded a theory relating to the development and generation of social capital within communities. Coleman (1988, p. s97) explains that his aim is

…To import the economists’ principle of rational action for use in the analysis of social systems…including but not limited to economic systems, and to do so without discarding social organisation in the process. The concept of social capital is a tool to aid in this.

Coleman therefore sees social capital as a tool or resource which relies upon integrity and an expectation that there is a reciprocal relationship within the network in which the individual resides (Field, 2008). Thus for Coleman social capital is a recourse that underpins how people collaborate in order to develop their own position within their community. For instance, Coleman (1988, p. s99)
provides an example from an article on page one in *The International Herald Tribune* of 21-22nd June 1986. Coleman explains using a radical South Korean student activist group as his example that

’Radical thought is passed on in clandestine study circles, groups of students who may come from the same high school or hometown or church. These study circles...serve as the basic organisational unit for demonstrations and other protests.’

Coleman’s example ties together Putnam’s conception of social capital. His example uses ‘groups of students’ as the basic organisational structure for the protest groups, is similar to Putnam’s idea of generating homogenous bonding capital. These are exclusive homogenous groups, which is intimated at by the word ‘clandestine’, if it were an open forum it would link to Putnam’s idea of heterogeneous or bridging capital.

Coleman continues his analysis by stating that

The same “high school or hometown or church” provides social relations on which the “study circles” are later built. The study circles themselves constitute a form of social capital – a cellular form of organisation that appears especially valuable for facilitating opposition in any political system intolerant of dissent...The organisation that makes possible these activities is an especially potent form of social capital.

In Coleman’s example, social capital is created from the initial network that the members of the “study circles” originally came from, in this case their “high school or hometown or church”. Then the members build upon this resource to create a network and collaborate with additional “study circles” in order to organise political protests and other activities.

Coleman’s position differs to Bourdieu (1986), as Bourdieu is far more reliant upon social capital being a resource that is available dependent upon the individual’s connections or opportunities to garner cultural, economic and symbolic capital. Bourdieu sees social capital as more about the inequalities and the social differentiation found throughout society. He sees it as a competitive environment whereby those who accumulate the most capital (social, economic, cultural) will have more opportunities available to them as their network is larger.
Although Putnam’s (2000) definition of social capital is similar to Coleman’s, there are still differences. Putnam, using a longitudinal quantitative method, assumes a much more positive position of how social capital is developed and used in comparison to both Coleman and Bourdieu. The difficulty in developing a more ‘positive’ theoretical position means that it assumes that everyone is equal, whether you come from a privileged or deprived background. It fails to account for any social inequalities or differentiation. It is Bourdieu (1986) who recognises that the acquisition of social capital is dependent upon the size of an individual’s network. Bourdieu recognises that inequalities within society exist, and that this will impact negatively on an individual’s ability to increase their own social, cultural or symbolic capital. In short, Bourdieu is working from a neo-Marxist position and is therefore more focused upon the links between social capital and social stratification, with particular attention on the underlying conflicts between classes or sub-classes. Social capital is therefore seen by social scientists as an important element to consider when discussing community development. In order to try to understand the implications and influences of social capital it is important to gain an understanding of the social, cultural and historical development of a community or area within the cityscape.

_Social History and Multiculturalism_

_Social History of East London_

The social history of East London has been developing over many centuries. The social history of the area is important to understand because of the implications and influences it has on the future of decision-making. The social history of the area creates a multi-layered social fabric within modern society. I have chosen to discuss the social history of East London from the late 18th Century through to the present day. The specific time period has been selected because it is the era when the Industrial Revolution truly began. The Industrial Revolution had a long lasting impact on the social development of East London.
The 18th Century saw an early form of societal concern to improve the less salubrious areas of the city of London, notably the East of London. The hierarchical social system saw the implementation of legislation designed to clear up the local areas but in reality these laws were disbanding the more rural ways of life which were dominant during the 18th Century and leading to processes of urbanization as people were pulled into industrial work. Olsen (1999, p. xiii) describes rural life in the 18th Century, as

…machine filled textile mills began to replace hand spinning and weaving in the home…English men and women lauded the new factories for their productivity and mighty machinery…moving to a new parish with more jobs, or buying cheaper manufactured foods or sending his daughter to work in a factory to earn more than she could as a servant.

The 1788 Paving and Cleansing Act10 was introduced and

At first glance this was part of an attempt to improve road communication in the interests of commerce, but the offences identified reveal that it was simultaneously an attack on forms of an older popular culture that had no place in a modern metropolis. (Marriott, 2012, p. 71)

It is arguable that the introduction of this and other legislation signalled the beginning of the modern city and the expectations of certain factions of the society. Marriott provides a description of early urban regeneration, which resonates with Olsen’s (1999) explanation of the introduction of the factories and mills which were removing traditional jobs (for example, spinning and weaving) from the home. Furthermore, it is arguable that urban regeneration was started by the middle and upper classes, so that they could build and shape community practices according to their own moral standpoints. According to Nail (2008, p. 46) “urbanity had been synonymous with refinement, culture and good manners…while rusticity was associated with uncouthness, hence inferiority.” Nail presents an image of the 18th Century social stratification, where the new urban areas were shaped by the middle and upper classes to fit their own social and moral requirements. Those in the upper and middle class strata were the social

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10. 1788 Act for ‘paving, cleansing,&c. squares, streets, &c. within the Parish of Christ Church and for removing nuisances and obstructions therefrom
decision makers and therefore held the power in society to decide what social and cultural practices were deemed to be appropriate in the emerging communities.

The 18th Century onwards also saw the development of mass industrialisation and mechanisation of traditional trades and industries. The profound effect of these processes was experienced across all sections of society and in both rural and urban areas of the United Kingdom. The Industrial Revolution meant that traditional jobs became mechanised with the introduction of new technologies and the development of factories and moved away from agricultural dominance (Wyatt., 2009). Along with the mechanisation of work, the development of the railways, large steam ships and the introduction of telegraphs also impacted the development of Great Britain. The introduction of the steam ships led to an exponential growth of the development of the docklands into what is now known as the East End of London. The development of new larger docks, such as the Royal Albert Docks and quays meant that the larger ships could be serviced more efficiently and the docklands built in the marsh lands could also be linked to the railways (Ball & Sunderland, 2002). The docklands and the links to the transport infrastructure have significantly influenced the development of the modern day Borough of Newham in the East End of London.

The highlighted events are only a small snapshot of the development of the area during this period. But, these important events catalysed the move eastwards of capital, industry and workers, and showed that the land to the east was seen as a valuable commodity for development during the Industrial Revolution. Industrialization also moved the focus from the urban centre to the peripheries of the city. It is arguable that this is a similar situation to the current period, as Stratford, Newham was chosen to be the host city of the 2012 Olympic Games and the focus of modern London shifted east for very similar reasons. It should be noted that the mid to late 20th Century, which will be discussed in a little more detail, saw a long process of deindustrialisation which provided the critical political-economic pretext for locating the Olympic Games in Stratford, Newham and its surrounding area.
London is a city of reinvention and regeneration. Many areas have redeveloped and gentrified over the years and East London is no different. From the mid-20th Century, East London underwent major changes that were both infrastructural and cultural. The mid part of the century saw global war and the mass destruction of cityscapes across the world. The East End of London, due to its industrial history, was badly damaged during the Second World War from bombing raids and needed to be rebuilt. Instead of describing the many changes which occurred in the early part of the 20th Century, the discussion will begin post-Second World War as this is the point which the area significantly changed through technology advancement, mass immigration and deindustrialisation of the East London area.

Historically, East London has had a multicultural and diverse population. The greatest influx of migrants to the area was post World War Two, when there was a great demand for migrant workers to help with the reconstruction efforts. Many of the migrant workers were brought to the United Kingdom from the British Colonies (Wimmer & Schiller, 2003). The docking of the ‘Empire Windrush11’ ship in 1948 is recognised as inaugurating mass migration to the United Kingdom in the post-war years (Mead, 2009). However, it was not just the colonies which provided workers in labour shortage areas of employment, there were many Europeans who had been displaced by the war and who found work in the United Kingdom during periods of reconstruction (McDowell, 2003; Mead, 2009). James (2014) explains that areas such as Stratford played host to migrant workers who had come from across Europe from countries such as Albania, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania.

The increase in number of migrants entering the United Kingdom can be tracked in line with particular historical events or implementation of legislation such as after the Second World War (McDowell, 2003; Mead, 2009). The collapse and fragmentation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) from 1989

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11 The name of the ship has since been used to describe this period of mass migration from the colonies – ‘Windrush Generation’.
onwards, and the subsequent enlargement of the European Union through the entry of post-Communist nations, transformed the migration patterns across Europe with major impacts in the UK, particularly in London (Hollifield, 2006). In the initial years of the new millennium the strong economy and political free market agenda made the United Kingdom seem like a suitable destination for migration from the new accession states, such as Poland (acceded 2004) and Hungary (acceded 2004) (Fox et al., 2012). These opportunities for mass migration have contributed to the multicultural diversity of Stratford and New Town and across the wider Borough of Newham. The 2005 Olympic bid presented by the London team emphasised this cultural diversity to the IOC (Falcous & Silk, 2010).

Another issue that greatly altered during the 20th Century was the preconceived ideas about social life and deviancy in the area. Hood and Joyce (1999) undertook research into the perceptions of crime and social change across the generations of East London inhabitants. The selection criteria for the research were that the respondent had to be aged between 15 and 25 in one of the three time periods selected for inclusion. The time periods included those aged 75 or over (1930s generation); those aged between 55 and early 60s (1950s generation) and the youngest group who were brought up in the area during the 1980s and early 1990s (1980s generation). The research found that there were links to the disintegration of family ties to the local area and the development of a consumerist lifestyle. The insularity of modern life in the 1980s and early 1990s was starkly different to that of the generation born in the 1930s. It is noted that there was a “shifting balance between…externally and internally generated social controls and…the opportunities for material self-advancement through illegitimate means” (Hood & Joyce, 1999, p. 157). The loss of social control can be attributed to the loss of the community structure during the rebuilding of the East End of London that took place after the Second World War. The replacement housing projects were focused on high-rise buildings which eventually degenerated and became areas of greater deprivation and opportunity for illegal activities (Marriott, 2012). Previously, different generations had looked after and
kept an eye on their own and their neighbour’s children but the insularity of modern life and the change in the way that housing was provided meant that this local knowledge and trust was lost.

Furthermore, the rise in consumerism has also impacted the image, perception and real life of the East End of London. Consumerism, which developed in the years after the Second World War, was also found by Hood and Joyce (1999) to have made an impact on the perceptions of crime and on the perpetuating social acceptance of black market items. The cultural desire to gain material wealth has grown exponentially across modern life. East London has not been exempt from the growth in consumerisation. Even though the communities are seen to be experiencing levels of deprivation, there is still a desire to be part of the consumerist culture. Consumerist values encapsulate the ‘keeping up with the Joneses’ mentality whereby individuals believe they must own or have the latest clothing brands, cars, electronics and so forth in order to be recognised as successful in the wider community. It is arguable that these consumerist values could incite illegal behaviour through burglary to obtain certain sought after products or open up a black market trade for the desired items. The knock-on effect of these actions within communities is a rise in the crime rates. By discussing the historical context of the development of East London, it is now possible to further examine the idea of covert cultural cleansing.

_Covert Cultural Cleansing_

Jakubowski (2012, p. 370) explains that ‘cultural cleansing’ is pursued “in the name of ethnic national and more precisely cultural purity”. ‘Cultural cleansing’ means that the gentrifying classes are imposing their cultural identities upon the local community. Therefore ‘covert cultural cleansing’ is the notion that regeneration projects can surreptitiously ‘cleanse’ the local community of its historically rooted cultures. Regeneration can create a process of gentrification (discussed in the Urban Geography chapter), which drives out the ‘original’ community and encourages the migration of the middle-classes or middle incomes
into the area. From a cultural perspective the process of cleansing can be considered from two different standpoints:

- Multicultural/intercultural policy making
- Employment

Multicultural and Intercultural policy-making can create tensions within a community. The idea that community and cultural fragmentation can occur depending upon the type of cultural policy-making will be discussed. Employment is an additional factor that needs to be considered because it has been seen in the discussion regarding social history, that the changing of employment opportunities has also affected the sociocultural facets of the local communities.

**Multicultural Policy**

East London is recognised for its diverse communities and it has already been highlighted that this diversity has been developing since the mass immigration periods in the 20th Century. In order to understand multiculturalism, it is important to explain the development of multicultural policy in the United Kingdom. The first steps to multicultural policy development were started in the 1970s with antidiscrimination and racial equality legislation (Wieviorka, 2012). Lassalle (2011, p. 235) explains that

> The doctrine of multiculturalism was institutionalised when Tony Blair’s New Labour came to power in 1997…Multiculturalism claimed that citizen’s adherence to mainstream culture was not essential to ensure national cohesion; that cultural diversity was a good thing for the country and should be valued and encouraged…all cultures should be equally respected…

In this quote Lassalle presents multiculturalism as an idealised state whereby cultural diversity is accepted and celebrated as a method of ensuring national solidarity between the different cultures present within the United Kingdom. Multiculturalism in this sense is very positive, and captures the assumption that by allowing individual cultural development national cultural unity will occur and that ethnic minorities will be able to improve their social mobility and visibility.
In the United Kingdom, visibility has been seen via the inclusion of ethnic minority representatives in the media and in sport (Panayi, 2004).

Parekh (2001) is critical of multicultural policy when he explains that the United Kingdom’s diversity is not just as a result of immigration. It has developed over centuries from regional community identities that now converge to create the national identity. This is found throughout the nations that make up the United Kingdom which have their own regional community identities (Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England). Parekh (2001, p. 694) sees the United Kingdom as a “community of individuals and communities”. From this perspective, the idea of a single ‘national identity’ is misinformed, hence it is better to promote a national citizenship that is not constrained by a single ethnicity. According to Parekh (2003) citizenship allows for the diversity of multicultural communities to be part of and not excluded from the national identity that is presented on the global stage. Parekh’s analysis is presented by Lassalle (2011) who states that multiculturalism will reduce discrimination and provide nationally recognised cohesion and identity. By using the word citizenship, Parekh (2001, 2003) is appreciating that singular identity is a naïve construct which leads to a conflict of accepted identities because each incorporated culture will want to be seen as dominant.

Although multiculturalism has allowed for a greater visibility of ethnic minorities in the media, there is still a limited representation within the power structures of major institutions such as governments and leading corporations (Panayi, 2004). In additional, terrorist attacks which have occurred since 2001, for example the London bombings in July 2005 which were perpetrated by a group of British Islamists against British citizens, has further weakened the credibility of multiculturalism in the United Kingdom (Falcous & Silk, 2010; Lassalle, 2011). Following on from these acts of terrorism, the British Government enacted legislation that focused on restricting opportunities for individuals to commit terrorism. The attacks also created a culture of blame which further segregated
Muslim communities and diminished the influence of multicultural social policies (Rehman, 2007; Lassalle, 2011; Wieviorka, 2012).

The 2005 act of terrorism in London perpetuated a negative stereotype and led to the questioning of an individual’s interpretation of their own ‘national’ identity (Falcous & Silk, 2010). According to Wieviorka (2012), multiculturalism was implemented to recognise and celebrate the diversity of British society in relation to European and Canadian policy development. It is suggested that a policy of multiculturalism may allow an individual to identify with more than one ‘national’ or ‘cultural’ identity. However, the counter-argument is that multiculturalism can actually be a destructive factor in a shared national identity, in part by creating segregated cultural or ethnic subcultures that develop due to prior racist or alienating behaviour from different subsets of the communities (Milbank, 2009). It is arguable that following the migration of colonial groups into the United Kingdom, many migrants have become embedded over time into ethnic enclaves, and in the early part of the 21st Century, particularly after the terrorist attacks post 9/11, this process has intensified.

It is arguable that the creation of these subcultures damages support for multiculturalism, as these policies are not encouraging integration and social cohesion. The segregation of these subcultures links to Bourdieus’s (1986) understanding of social capital as dependent upon an individual’s access to certain societal networks in order to gain greater levels of capital. Furthermore, the segregation of communities might be explained with reference to Putnam’s (2000) definition of bonding capital whereby networks are created between individual’s with similar backgrounds which in turn produces exclusivity across the wider community. Therefore, this process has led to limited bridging capital being created with other ethnic groups, particularly with those who are part of the ‘majority’ community.

An alternative to multiculturalism is interculturalism. Interculturalism aims to recognise the diversity found within modern cultures and the requirement
for ‘majority’ and ‘minority’ communities, groups, and wider populations to continually negotiate and renegotiate their positions in order to preserve the basic values and traditions of both ‘sides’ (Bouchard, 2011). Interculturalism works on the basis of duality, which similarly to multiculturalism, works from a diversity perspective and recognises that there are multiple cultural identities within a nation. The difference between the two positions can be seen in their word stems; ‘inter’-culturalism and ‘multi’-culturalism (Taylor, 2012). ‘Inter’ refers to the recognition of integration, whereas ‘multi’ refers to the identification of multiples. Furthering the point, interculturalism recognises that there is a majority culture and a minority culture, whereas multiculturalism only recognises that there are multiple cultures within a nation. Therefore, interculturalism understands that it is necessary to manage the relationship between the majority and minority cultural positions (Levey, 2012). Bouchard (2011, p. 443) furthers this understanding by explaining that

…the idea of a minority must be understood, in a very general sense, to designate a cultural nexus or community life that carries on in coexistence with the majority culture and the borders of which are often quite fluid.

The duality that is created from the ‘cultural nexus’ is the relationship that needs to be managed and continually negotiated.

If the relationship was not managed then, as in a multicultural context, there would be divisions within society whereby one cultural formation fights to become the dominant culture, intensifying an ‘Us and Them’ mentality which has been seen in other nations where multicultural policies are pursued. Similarly, interculturalism is not without its own set of disadvantages. The equilibration of majority and minority cultures can also cause an ‘Us and Them’ divide. The division occurs when one cultural position does not trust that there will be equal negotiation between the majority and minority cultural positions (Taylor, 2012). Each individual culture within society wants to exert its dominance in order to ensure it can maintain its current way of life. The maintenance of equity between major and minor cultural groups within the community is an important consideration because it has an impact on community development. It is in
contrast to the initial ideal of incorporating and integrating a variety of cultures under one national identity.

In relation to Stratford and Newham, it would be difficult to use an intercultural approach to policy development because of the diversity of cultures present across the borough. Multicultural policies would have the potential of being more successful for community developers in the borough because it recognises that there are multiple cultures. In contrast, intercultural policy would expect a ranking of minor and major cultures to be applied which would be inappropriate due to the number of different cultures present within the geographical area. Ranking the cultures implies that one culture is more important than another which would lead to tension between the cultures. The escalation of tensions could create social polarisation which would exacerbate the cultural issues with one culture vying over others to be seen as dominant.

**Conclusion**

The chapter has discussed three central points; the definition of community in the context of this research, the social history of East London and the potential for covert cultural cleansing. It has tried to answer the research question

‘How have selected community representatives been affected by the cultural evolutionary processes as a part of the wider community development plan?’

The question opens up the discussion surrounding the effect of culture and the community development plan on the community representatives. The main points have been chosen as being important to the discussion of the impact of socioculturalism as part of the impact of hosting an Olympic Games, while the theories of Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam have been particularly useful in enabling us to understand the role of social capital with respect to community relations.

Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam all provide slight variations on what social capital is and its use in the study of the development of communities.
Bourdieu’s (1986) work ‘The Forms of Capital’ has been taken as the most influential development of social capital theory in relation to community development. Bourdieu presents the idea that different forms of capital have a value that is in relation to the size of the community member’s own network. The idea stems from the idea that capital (social, cultural, economic etc) is an asset to an individual in terms of their social mobility and development and the opportunities in which the individual has access. Putnam’s (2000) work used a macro view of social networks and how social capital can be garnered for individuals. Putnam’s work does not take into account social stratification and the affect it has on the creation of social capital and associated opportunities. Coleman (1988) works from the opposite end of the spectrum and is focused on the individual (a micro focus). He sees social capital development as stemming from the collaboration with others within communities to gain status and opportunities. The research undertaken requires an acknowledgement of social stratification in relation to the regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park because the process of gentrification has been highlighted as one of the potential outcomes of hosting the Olympic Games. It is therefore important to take stratification into consideration, which is what is found when considering Bourdieu’s work on social capital.

In relation to Stratford and Newham, there has historically been a high level of what Putnam would term – bonding social capital. It is arguable that high levels of bonding capital generate an exclusive community. It has been difficult to access communities found not only in Stratford but across the East London region. Community development has therefore been hard to implement because the people working in the field are seen as interlopers and are perceived as trying to change the local cultures traditionally found within the region. The development of the cultural quarter within the confines of the Olympic Park will enable local communities to engage in and improve their own levels of cultural capital. However, if you use Bourdieu’s theoretical position, community development would improve because the local communities will have better
access to all forms of capital especially cultural capital with the development of the cultural quarter (Olympicopolis) on the park.

The social history section has been used to provide a context to the current regeneration of the East London area. It has been discussed that the social history of the area has seen an evolving cityscape, both physically and socially. The development of East London as a hub for trade and industrialisation stretches back to the late 18th Century and the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution (Marriott, 2012). However, in recent decades it has also been the site of rapid deindustrialisation and the point of mass migrations (Wimmer & Schiller, 2003; McDowell, 2003). After the Second World War, the United Kingdom required a process of reconstruction in order to repair the loss and damage to important infrastructure throughout the country. The East London docklands became the main disembarkation points for the migrant workers who were being brought in from either the British Colonies or from displaced European states (McDowell, 2003). All of these events have had an effect on East London as an area and have been part of the creation of the social fabric found there. East London became more diverse as migrants throughout the decades have settled in the area and established their lives in the United Kingdom. Stratford and Newham are constantly changing and developing their culture. The Industrial Revolution, as previously mentioned, had a high impact on the area for centuries, and finally the process of deindustrialisation has led to the most recent incarnation as a post-industrial city. These periods have all affected the communities residing in the town and borough. All of these events have added to the social fabric and affected the community representatives on some level.

The influx of migrant workers during the 20th Century meant that policies needed to be created to ensure that cultural cleansing did not occur. It was not until the New Labour Government of 1997, that the term ‘multiculturalism’ was devised as a policy position within the United Kingdom. Lassalle (2011) notes that multiculturalism is an idealised position which celebrates cultural diversity as a method of safeguarding national identity and solidarity. However, it is not
without its disadvantages. It has been discussed by Milbank (2009), who mentions that actually multicultural policy creates segregated cultures and destroys a shared national identity. Bouchard (2011) and Levey (2012) present an alternative to multiculturalism - Interculturalism. Interculturalism recognises the need to manage the relationship between majority cultures and minority cultures in order to create a balanced national identity. It appears that this may be a more realistic policy position to maintain, especially in consideration to the cultural diversity found within the United Kingdom.

The research question at the start of the chapter asked how the community representatives had been affected by the cultural evolutionary processes as part of the community development plan. I have discussed the various aspects of community development and the impacts on the local communities. Historically, Stratford and Newham have welcomed the introduction of new cultures to the area, and these cultures have been accepted and become part of the social fabric. The literature has not suggested anything different with regards to hosting the London 2012 Olympic Games. The real change for the community representatives has come from the newly establishing cultural groups. The challenge of balancing multicultural policy, community development and limiting the opportunity for covert cultural cleansing is difficult. Covert cultural cleansing is hard to balance when there is a desire for less population churn and greater opportunities for communities to access social, cultural and economic capital. It is arguable that the cultural evolutionary process has been a subconscious one. The question cannot be fully answered, through just a search of the literature. There is a small gap which this thesis hopes to fill with regards to understanding how selected community representatives have been affected by the cultural evolutionary processes as a part of the wider community development plan.
Chapter Four

Literature Review – Exploring Governance and Economics

Introduction

This chapter will discuss the economic and political decision-making processes in relation to the selected community representatives with reference to the regeneration of Stratford. The London 2012 Olympic Games commenced two years after a general election which saw a change in national political leadership, after a 13 year period of single party political rule. The chapter aims to discuss and move towards answering the following research question:

*How do economic and political decision-making affect the selected community representatives as a part of the regeneration process?*

The question has developed from the review of the literature surrounding the socioeconomic considerations relating to community development and sport mega-events. The first section of the chapter will discuss the foundation of the political and economic ideologies and the impact that these have on the decision-making process. Understanding the fundamentals of political ideology helps set out the potential for conflict between the chosen ideology of the political leadership of the nation state, the regional government and the IOC in relation to hosting the Olympic Games. The part of the chapter will discuss the use of economic tools of evaluation and analysis as a way of justifying hosting a sport mega-event. Furthermore, there will be a discussion regarding the commercialisation and the importance of ensuring there is an economic return from hosting an Olympic Games. The local communities are reliant upon effective governance and economic decision-making to drive forward the opportunities that arise from hosting an Olympic and Paralympic Games.
Economic and political decision-making are central facets to the structure of a western democratic liberal nation. The ideologies that underpin economic and political decision-making influence the process of policymaking. It is important to consider the economic and political ideological foundations as the basis for garnering support to host a sports mega-event such as the Olympic Games. Throughout the last century, approximately, economic theory has had two main strands in liberal capitalist societies: Keynesianism and neo-liberalism. These theories both have different underpinnings and therefore provide two different ways of seeking to resolve economic problems (Postone, 2010). Both of these theoretical positions have been utilised as the basis for the United Kingdom’s national economic policies since the mid-20th Century. The most recent economic position used by the Conservative, New Labour and the recently dissolved Coalition Governments have centred on neo-liberal based policy design. The Olympic movement requires a much more Keynesian approach to the structuring of financing at the Olympics. In what follows, neo-liberal and Keynesian theories are compared and contrasted in relation to hosting sport mega-events.

Keynesianism and Neo-liberalism

Keynesian economic theory was developed in the inter-war period by John Maynard Keynes, in response to the economic issues faced by the country after the First World War and the 1929 economic crisis (McKibbin, 2013). Fundamentally Keynesianism advocates state monetary intervention in order to balance out and stimulate the economy during economic difficulties, as it does not consider a self-regulating market to be effective (Resnick & Wolff, 2010). Keynesians work on the basis that encouraging spending, through government-funded projects, will ensure that employment levels will remain buoyant and therefore wages will be spent and reinvested into the economy, creating a cycle of money flowing through the economy staving off any potential recession (Wapshott, 2011).
Keynesianism recognises the link between employment levels and keeping money flowing through the economy rather than encouraging money to be ‘stagnant’ by being left in savings accounts (Wapshott, 2011). Keynesian policies emphasise the importance of using state intervention to create publically funded projects to ensure that employment levels remain high; in turn, as the public’s trust in the economy is restored, those in employment will spend their wages to complete the cycle needed to run an economy effectively. However, it is arguable that using Keynesianism as a rationale for hosting mega-events is a façade of benevolence. Keynesianism if focused on helping people which is in contrast to mega-events which are centred on improving areas previously thought to be undesirable in order to catalyse development and encourage a movement of middle income people to move to the location.

It can be argued that government strategies for hosting sport mega-events tend to connect strongly with Keynesian economic theory ideals. Sport mega-events provide an ideal opportunity for these types of publically funded projects to be introduced. The Manchester Commonwealth Games spent over £200 million on sporting venues and £470 million on transport infrastructure to host the Games in 2002. It was noted that these Commonwealth Games were the first time the UK had integrated a sport mega-event with large-scale urban regeneration. The investment into Manchester from the games was estimated to have created an additional 2,900 jobs in construction and other service and entertainment industries (Gratton & Preuss, 2008). The aim was for the Commonwealth Games to have a lasting effect on Manchester rather than the impact being just limited to the time period of the games. The difficulty according to Gratton and Preuss is the limited official data available. There was no post-Games evaluation period to provide official statistics regarding the actual impact of the games on Manchester and its surrounding neighbourhoods.

The global economic crisis of 2008 led to a period of economic recession in the United Kingdom. The expense of preparing to host the London 2012 Olympic Games came during a period of national austerity measures. The
austerity measures were implemented to try and combat the economic crisis the country was facing at the time. It is stated that more than £6 billion worth of contracts were won by contractors, meaning that approximately 40,000 people worked on the development of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and Athlete’s Village sites in preparation for hosting London 2012 (Thornton, 2012). However, to put some wider context on government investment in the Games, it is also recognised by Thornton that some of the jobs created at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and associated Games sites would have been created in other areas of the economy if the event had not been staged in the first place. Alternative locations across London and the UK may have benefited from investment had the investment not been focused so heavily on East London.

Neo-liberalism is the other strand of economics associated with the United Kingdom over the last century. According to Saad-Filho (2010), neo-liberal economics has three predominant policy aspects. The first consideration is focused on the micro-level which assumes that the market is efficient and the state is inefficient, hence the state is avoided as a vehicle for economic activity. The second is macro-level, and posits that world economics is marked by capital mobility and globalisation, leading to a liberalisation of foreign trade and domestic finance policies. The final consideration is that neo-liberalism uses interest rate manipulation as the main tool of economic management. Interest rates are manipulated in part to encourage the general public to save money and therefore reduce the level of personal debt within a country (Duménil & Lévy, 2004). Neo-liberalism therefore is interested in two main areas - free markets and free trade - which can be achieved through the privatisation or denationalisation processes of state-owned organisations, encouraging private enterprise and entrepreneurship (Harvey, 2005). Neo-liberal theorists also tend to argue that the economic marketplace is oligopolistic rather than monopolistic, thus creating choice for the ‘consumer’.
Potential Conflicts Between Neo-liberal and Keynesian Structures

Keynesianism and neo-liberalism are two opposing strands of economic theory; however, they are central to Western economic development as well as to Olympic Games economic policy design. It is arguable that the last 30 years have seen the British economy dominated by neo-liberal policies, no matter the political ideology of the reigning government. Thus, the ‘Third Way’ politics of New Labour maintained neo-liberal economic policy developed by its Conservative predecessors, in using competitive markets to drive policy instead of the traditional preference for state intervention to stimulate economic growth (Flynn, 2007). Shaw (2008) explains that hosting the Olympic Games is reliant upon public funding in addition to the private investment by corporate sponsorship, which indicates that the Olympic Games require Keynesian economic policy to be implemented in order to be able to successfully bid and raise the necessary capital to host the Games. One clear exception to this use of state intervention for hosting the Olympic Games relates to the Los Angeles 1984 event, which was predominantly funded by the private sector (Shaw, 2008; Giannoutakis & Stotlar, 2011).

It is important to recognise both theories in relation to the Olympics because the IOC require a state commitment to the governance and operation of the event (International Olympic Committee, 2011). The state commitment in London 2012 related to not only public funding but also to the Compulsory Purchase Orders pursued by the then London Mayor, Ken Livingstone in order to acquire the required land space for the initial development work to begin (Muir, 2005). The use of compulsory purchase orders is a direct example of state intervention as there were set values placed on the locations of the businesses and residents were relocated; the fees paid were reportedly below the actual market value of the land (Harrison, 2006). Compulsory Purchase Orders are also an example of the conflict that arises between neo-liberal economic policies and the Keynesian approach. However, conflict is not necessarily the outcome when the two economic policy ideologies are combined; they can in fact be integrated, though with the neo-liberal approach having the upper hand. London has seen the
two policy ideologies combined in order to continue the development of the Olympic Park site.

Giulianotti et al (2015, p. 103) argue that neo-liberal and Keynesian approaches were combined in the form of a “New Right two-step” approach towards hosting sport mega-events. The researchers state that a primarily ‘Keynesian’ approach is used to initiate public spending on the required infrastructure such as stadiums and transport networks. Then a Neo-liberal approach becomes the dominant driving force that benefits from the creation of privatised and commercial spaces across the cityscape. They go on to further this argument through their concept of ‘festival capitalism’ which refers to

“aspects of a major public event that are organised to advance private, commercial, and free-market interests, usually with strong financial, political, and discursive support from civic authorities, such as through large subsidies, infrastructural investments, and broader ‘regeneration’ policies.”

(Giulianotti et al., 2015, p. 103)

It is argued that this two-step strategy towards hosting sport mega-events is comparable to the American experience within elite sports of

‘corporate welfarism’, wherein civic authorities spend billions of dollars of public money on new sport stadiums and infrastructure to attract or to retain privately owned franchises [major league sport clubs].

(Giulianotti et al., 2015, p. 103)

The prime example provided by Giulianotti et al, is the Olympic Stadium. The new venue was developed with public funding, including its refurbishment post-Games, in order to be a suitable space for the new tenants, West Ham United Football Club. This privately-owned English Premier League club moved into the stadium in 2016 as the main tenant on a 99-year lease.

Corporate Welfarism in its broadest sense is focused on the state helping to fund businesses and organisations – a practice which, from a purely neo-liberal point of view, could be argued to distort or undermine the competitive free market (Farnsworth, 2013). The imbalance that this creates could have a detrimental
effect on the ability of the host nation to finance the Olympic Games. However, the IOC requires a financial commitment from the host nation to ensure that the event is successfully delivered on time. London has become committed to the ‘Convergence Agenda’, which is a framework to encourage socioeconomic development in the most deprived areas of East London that are undergoing regeneration which stems from hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012.

The Convergence Agenda

The Convergence Agenda is part of the strategy to ensure a sustainable legacy is created in East London after hosting the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Scanlon et al (2010) explain that ‘Convergence’ has emerged as part of the Strategic Regeneration Framework, which set out the intended aims and aspirations for the hoped-for longitudinal benefits from hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012. Davies (2012b, p. 319) expands upon Scanlon et al’s (2010) presentation of Convergence by stating that

Convergence will…mean halting a century of decline. It is an ambitious target and one that will require not only the reconciliation of 100 years of decline in just 20 years, but a pace of change that is greater than the average rate for all of London by 2-3 times.

The creation of post-industrial East London has meant that communities which were reliant on the heavy industries for employment and livelihoods have been left to decline for generations. The aim of Convergence is to bring these deprived East London communities into line with the rest of London’s socioeconomic growth and development. The challenge is for the policy to develop a socioeconomic rate of growth at such a pace that it exceeds the growth rate of the rest of London.

Davies (2012b) highlights that Convergence will be assessed from the progress made on the indices of deprivation throughout the next 20 years. The progress to be made will show the communities in East London having access to the same economic and social opportunities as those across London. However,
Davies also mentions that the evaluation of the success of the Convergence Agenda must be considered in relation to population churn. Davies recognises that the displacement of existing communities will have an impact on the perceived success of the agenda because the newly established, more affluent communities will reflect success on the metrics against which Convergence is measured. Population churn may skew the results of Convergence and present it as an effective tool for regeneration and community development when the reality may be entirely different. In effect, Convergence is another policy based method of encouraging gentrification to occur within the cityscape. Convergence is placing a ‘seal of approval’ on the displacement of established community groups, by providing a policy tool for its initiation.

Economic Analysis of Sport Mega-Events

Economic analysis is central to hosting a sport mega-event. Economic models and analyses are often used to establish support for hosting events such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games. It is important to consider alongside national economic policy positions how policy-makers use economic modelling to determine whether a mega-event is worth bidding for. Sports mega-events are widely believed to offer host cities and nations an opportunity to stimulate their economic prosperity (Baade, 2006). Economic legitimacy is an important consideration for any host city in order to garner domestic support for hosting an event. Analysis can be either ex-ante (before the event) or ex-post (after the event). Internationally there have been a variety of different sport mega-events, from the Football and Rugby World Cups events to the Olympic Games, both Winter and Summer, evaluated using ex-ante and ex-post studies to ‘show’ the impact of the events on their host economies. The following discussion will be limited to a basic overview of economic evaluation methods as it is only tied to a small explanatory part of this research.

Basic Methods of Analysis

Ex-ante analysis is undertaken prior to the mega-event taking place; this type of analysis is usually implemented to help garner support for hosting a sports
mega-event or building a new stadium. Therefore ex-post analysis is carried out after the event or stadium development has been completed (Bellinger, 2007). Ex-post models provide an opportunity to analyse whether the promises made prior to hosting the event have occurred. As ex-post analysis focuses on the impact post-event, it can be difficult to derive the actual impact from hosting the mega-event. Ex-ante models can be unreliable in their estimation of the economic impact of an event, which is why great care must be taken when considering the potential or estimated economic impacts that are used to gain support to host an event (Baade & Matheson, 2004). Usually, it is found that analysis focuses on estimating spectator attendance at sport mega-events as a method of analysing the economic impact of the event (Matheson, 2006).

One of the more favoured methods of analysis is using multipliers to estimate the economic impact. There are other methods which include: input-output; cost-benefit analysis; or Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) modelling. Briefly, input-output modelling has been favoured for use in estimating economic impacts for sports mega-events. The model relies upon the use of fixed prices which makes the model restrictive (Kasimati & Dawson, 2009). The model assumes that costs and prices will remain fixed throughout the Olympic cycle of seven years. It is inappropriate to assume that prices will remain fixed throughout this period because there are wider economic factors that can intervene, such as a global economic crisis. Furthermore, hotel room prices may increase closer to the event being held due to the increasing interest in attending the event. It is this inflexibility that makes the model unreliable in terms of its use and the reason why different models are being considered as its replacement.

A cost-benefit analysis studies the expenses of hosting the event in relation to the benefits connected to the event (Agha et al., 2012). The difficulty with cost-benefit models is the potential for confusing a cost for a benefit. Matheson (2006, p. 138) explains that when public funds are used to develop infrastructure for an event then “it is common error in cost-benefit analysis for the costs of infrastructure improvements to be counted as a benefit not a cost”. The error in
aligning the infrastructure improvements means that they are no longer deemed a ‘cost’ to the tax payer and are then shifted to show as a ‘benefit’ which provides misinformation when analysing the event. Sport mega-events provide some particularly strong examples of such confusion, such as when facilities are paid for and built with public money, but these ‘benefits’ are rarely used afterwards by the public, thus constituting an obvious ‘cost’ to the public purse.

CGE modelling is a complex method of analysis and it has had minimal use due to its complexity and limitations with respect to how it is formulated (Partridge & Rickman, 2010). Although there are other models, beyond those presented above, the ‘Multiplier Effect’ model is particularly important and widely used by economists to look at sport and other public events. Thus, I turn to discuss the multiplier effect with respect to London 2012.

The Multiplier Effect

Multiplier analysis has been used to evaluate the overall economic impact of sports mega-events on both international and domestic levels (Davies, 2010). The multiplier effect is an economic tool of analysis used to help explain the impact of new expenditure within the economy (Von Allmen, 2012). An example of this would be the hosting of the Olympic Games. The multiplier effect is widely referred to in order to garner support for mega-event bids; it indicates the potential economic benefits of the event for the host community. It follows Keynesian economic doctrine, which relies upon the assumption that “for every buyer there is a seller….when income is received this will in turn be spent on goods and services” (Szymanski, 2011, p. 91). The multiplier effect allows a calculation to be made with regards to expected costs and future profits. It presumes that even a small amount of funding provided to a location will have a large economic impact. Matheson (Matheson, 2006, p. 140) uses a basic example to explains that the direct impact is the initial injection of funding into the local area, which then initiates rounds of spending. He expands his definition of the multiplier effect by stating that

“The sum of all rounds…of spending is known as the ‘indirect impact’...The amount by which the indirect impact increases the
direct impact is known as the ‘multiplier’. If a $100 direct impact induces a $100 indirect impact for a total of $200 effect, the multiplier is said to be 2 since the indirect impact doubles the total effect.”

Therefore, the multiplier is the number that signifies what the indirect and direct impacts are multiplied against to create the sum total. This fundamental tenet of the Keynesian multiplier effect assumes that the income that is received will be spent within that particular area, which therefore increases economic returns for that location. However, the multiplier effect does not fully take into account that a mega-event is a unique event and therefore it is unrealistic to maintain that money will not ‘leak’ from the immediate areas of the mega-event’s location. ‘Leakages’ refers to money leaks out into other areas of the host city, therefore meaning that the expected income may be less than predicted for the local area (Von Allmen, 2012). The leakage could account for the inability to find affordable accommodation within the immediate area of the sport mega-event being held.

However, the multiplier effect is flawed in its set up. In addition to ‘leakages’, the creation of ‘phantom demand’ by the use of the input-output models that use the multiplier effect compounds the predicted economic impact. Phantom demand is generated from the model using fixed prices to generate the estimated returns. Hotel rooms are an example of generating phantom demand. The multiplier effect uses fixed prices, which were correct at the initial stages of the ex-ante analysis. However, these prices increase nearer to the event, which impacts the model as it then assumes that the increase in hotel room costs are indicative of higher demand rather than just an increase in costs (Kasimati & Dawson, 2009). The model assumes that the prices will remain fixed and not alter due to the mega-event, meaning that property rental prices, hotel room prices and cost of living will remain constant and not alter depending on the event or the national economic situation. Furthermore, Von Allmen (2012) states that using the multiplier effect may also drive up estimates of the direct effects or impacts of a sports mega-event. The escalation of these estimates relates to the focus on the revenues of the business and additionally associated businesses. Revenue is not an indicator of the economic impact of the event; revenue is simply a gauge of sales.
Economic impact should include other factors beyond revenue such as employment. The use of the aforementioned economic analyses must be considered from a critical standpoint. Economic evaluation of a sport mega-event should consider more than solely the financial revenues or potential revenues. Revenues are associated with sales, which have a short term impact on a local economy. Von Allmen was correct in highlighting the need to focus on additional elements such as employment. An increase in employment would provide a longer term effect on the local economy because employees will spend their money where they work.

In relation to London, the IOC accepted the bid in 2005, and approximately three years later there was a global economic downturn. The use of the multiplier effect is not flexible enough to allow for increased or decreased prices at the time of the event; for example, for hotels, the room rate may double near the time of the event, and therefore the model assumes that one room has been rented twice rather than once. This then produces an increase in use, when in fact there has not been (Porter & Chin, 2012). In addition to ‘phantom demand’ and ‘leakages’, there are issues relating to ‘crowding out’, whereby the higher prices for the duration of the event drive people away from the area (Gratton & Preuss, 2008). ‘Crowding out’ can create leakages because the model assumes that ticketed visitors are going to spend their money and time in the immediate location of the event venue(s). Mills and Rosentraub (2013) explain that it is unrealistic to expect visitors to remain in the sole location of the mega-event. Visitors are not constrained to remain there and in some cases have to stay outside of the immediate vicinity of the mega-event due to the high costs of accommodation and food, or other attractions across the city. The one thing that the Multiplier Effect accepts is that there will be visitors who will create a viable audience for focused marketing, whether that is from the global sponsor organisations or for the host city itself. The economic analysis of sport mega-events also brings into sharper focus the growing commercialisation of these events.
The Olympic Games provides an opportunity for a global marketing campaign for sponsors and host cities. The Los Angeles 1984 Olympic Games are seen as the first commercialised games, due to its predominant private sector funding (Homma & Masumoto, 2013). The commercialisation of the games has developed due to the ‘sale of rights’ (for symbols, signs, slogans and other associated links to the Olympic Movement) which are held by the IOC. ‘Commodification’ is defined by Moor (2007) as the commercial activities of a sports team or event, which encompasses issues relating to the income generation from rights being sold by the rights holders as well as increased costs of ticket prices. Commercialisation and commodification are important to consider here because as a ‘brand’ the Olympic Games are recognised globally. The idea of a ‘brand’ itself is about commercialisation (de Chernatony, 2009). The reach of the ‘brand’ in terms of commercial marketing can be seen through the monitoring of the global television viewing statistics that are produced.

The IOC generates data on global television audiences that allows for the claims to be advanced on the huge worldwide reach of the summer and winter Olympics. The broadcasting of events throughout the games timeframe has a global audience, with an average reach into 220 territories. The Beijing Olympic Games in 2008 reached an estimated audience of 4.3 billion people which equated to 63% of the World’s total population (International Olympic Committee, 2009). The 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympic Games were broadcast to 2.1 billion people and if the additional extended coverage programmes were included then the transmission would have been viewed by almost 3 billion people (International Olympic Committee, 2002). The viewership data has come from the IOC and therefore it must be highlighted that it is their own claim about the impact of the Olympic Games. These figures could be tested more robustly to determine the impact of viewership on hosting an Olympic Games.

The outreach of the Olympic Games to the world’s population provides a desirable and lucrative marketing opportunity which enhances the opportunity to
commercialise the event brand. The audiences of the Olympic Games are unique, and the mass media can take advantage of this by acknowledging that

...the social construction of the Games has economic consequences, one of which involves the transformation of the audience from sport followers to a commodity with an economic value expressed in terms of its size and composition.

(Girginov & Parry, 2005, p. 71)

Therefore, the Olympic Games is seen to hold a commercial ‘value’ that is unique to the Olympic cycle which can be utilised by the associated partners and sponsors.

The rights held by the IOC and its subsidiaries are supposed to create a competitive market and tendering process. The rights mean that the holder can be officially seen as holding a direct association with the Olympic Movement throughout their tenure period as host city (Szymanski, 2011). However, the retention of these rights means that a monopoly is created, which in effect impedes the creation of a market with fair access to the Olympic emblems, phrases and symbols (Shaw, 2008).

**Host City and Nation Branding**

Anholt (2007) explains that the process of nation branding is no different to the processes of branding a product; such branding must also be closely considered by cities (particularly ‘global cities’) which wish to compete in a globalised market. Gold and Gold (2008) contend in opposition to Anholt that place branding is more difficult than product branding because as Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005) state place branding involves more than just attaching a name to a product. Place branding requires instead an understanding of how people perceive the area: “how they make sense of it...physically, symbolic or other elements they evaluate in order to make their assessment...” (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005, p. 507).

Bodet and Lacassagne (2012) explain that hosting mega-events can provide an opportunity for place branding to occur. Branding allows for the development of new positive place associations for the targeted demographics,
namely; local communities and tourists. Eshuis and Edwards (2012) explain that the recent increase in place branding has occurred through the commercialisation and commodification of the city. Zhang and Zhao (2009) state that city rebranding is a long process which requires more than one high profile event and relies upon the ability to present a new image which combats any previously perceived negative image.

Chen (2012) notes that China used the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008 to rebrand the nation and the city of Beijing on both international and domestic levels. The rebranding was achieved by using the media coverage and the mega-event itself to attract tourists and to present itself culturally to international audiences. Significantly, such coverage is important as it is noted by Chen that the media are regulated within China. However, the longevity of rebranding is reliant upon retaining the image of being a prior Olympic host city. Gold and Gold (2008) explain that the sustainability of these links is difficult for ‘one-off’ mega-events because of the exclusivity of the event itself and the migration of the event focus to a new city for the next Olympic cycle. The authors state that it is easier to continue links with mega-events if there is a recurrence in event-hosting, as occurs for example with an internationally recognised marathon (e.g. London or Boston Marathons). It is arguable that the recent visit by Prime Minister David Cameron to China in order to set up trade agreements between Europe and China (Watt, 2013) has been made possible by nation rebranding exercises since hosting the Olympic Games in 2008.

Van Ham (2008) discusses the limitations of retaining links to a mega-event, by highlighting the frailty of brands and the vulnerability to bad press representation. Panagiotopoulou (2012) also recognises the problems in using a mega-event as the catalyst of nation rebranding due to the short time that the event is held and the difficulties in managing both internal and external images. Gold and Gold (2008) provide an example of this vulnerability when discussing the case of the 1972 Munich Olympics, which were marred by the ‘Black September’ terrorist attacks, and the 1976 Montreal Olympics which were seen as financially
disastrous. Both of these examples represent the challenge of balancing a host’s association with an Olympic Games which has had a negative response to the event in relation to its ability as a host nation or city to rebrand in a globalised marketplace.

Conclusion

The chapter has discussed a variety of points in relation to economics and politics with regards to hosting a sports mega-event. Firstly, it is very difficult to reconcile two different economic policy positions in order to ensure a successful Olympic Games is held. The combination of a national neo-liberal position and the IOC’s requirement of a more Keynesian aligned approach means that a balance must be found between the two positions. The IOC’s preference for state intervention by the host nation makes the host nation fully accountable from a financial position and not vulnerable to the private sector markets. The Keynesian ideal of state intervention is designed to ensure that the economic market is continually stimulated (Resnick & Wolff, 2010), whereas a neo-liberal approach relies upon the freemarket to create a competitive environment to ensure the stimulation of the economy (Saad-Filho, 2010).

In addition to the discussion about the differences in economic and policy design, analysis and evaluation methods were discussed. The analysis and evaluation methods are used as a way of justifying or legitimising the decision to bid and host a sports mega-event (Baade, 2006; Matheson, 2006). It was noted that there are a variety of difference methods of analysis and evaluation – Input-Output; Cost Benefit, Computable General Equilibrium. The discussion focused on the Multiplier Effect as it is used as part of other methods of analysis and evaluation in addition to its use in its own right. The Multiplier Effect is employed to help explain the impact of expected new income within the economy (Von Allmen, 2012). However, it does not take into account its inflexibility which creates phantom demand or leakages from the local economy to which the effect is being applied (Gratton & Preuss, 2008; Kasimati & Dawson, 2009; Mills & Rosentraub, 2013).
Finally, commercialisation of sport mega-events and the use of mega-events as a brand management tool for a nation have been discussed. The commercialisation has developed exponentially due to the global mass audiences which therefore increases the value of the event for their sponsors (Girginov & Parry, 2005). The wider the audience the more attractive it is to sponsor the Olympic games as it provides an opportunity for global outreach to nations which may or may not be reached by other more conventional methods of advertising. Similarly, the wide audience reach also means that a nation can rebrand through the development of the sport mega-event. However, local businesses who sit within the immediate area of the host site within the city are legally unable to use or make connections with the hosting of the Games (Shaw, 2008). Therefore, the only way to make use of the hosting of the Games is to rely on the promise of increased footfall within the area of the local businesses. Harnessing the increased footfall is difficult when the business cannot use any marketing aids denoting that the business is in the vicinity of the Games, as the legislation recognises any attempt without official partnership to be a bid at ‘ambush marketing’ (Shaw, 2008).

The chapter aimed to discuss and work towards answering the ‘how do economic and political decision-making affect the selected community representatives as a part of the regeneration process?’ The chapter has not fully answered the research question, but it opened up the discussion to take further into the fieldwork. One of the points being taken forward in the thesis relates to the influence of political and economic ideologies on the decision-making process. The IOC require a Keynesian approach to policy development whereas the government’s decision-making process is guided by the principles of neoliberalism.
Chapter Five

Research Methodology and Research Methods

Research Methodology

Introduction

The following chapter focuses on the research methodology and methods used within this thesis. The aim of the research was

‘To gain an understanding of the experiences of selected community representatives in relation to the regeneration of the Olympic Park site in Stratford as a part of the London 2012 Olympic redevelopment plans.’

In order to explore the research aim, it was important to set out explicitly the methodology and the underpinning it provides to the research. The following research was conducted as a qualitative study that explores the research aim and research questions.

Crotty (1998, p. 3) identifies four elements of research which are used to rationalise a researcher’s decision making process and provide a philosophical understanding of their own assumptions. The four assumptions are as follows:

- **Methods**: the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data related to some research question or hypothesis.
- **Methodology**: the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of methods, linking the choice and use of methods to the desired outcomes.
- **Theoretical perspective**: the philosophical stance informing the methodology and thus providing context for the process and grounding its logic and criteria.
- **Epistemology**: the theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspective and thereby in the methodology.

Here, Crotty is defining what each element relates to in the research process, how they are interlinked and how they inform the researcher’s decisions. I have used
Crotty’s assumptions as the basis for developing the research methods and methodology contained in this thesis.

The objective of the research has been to analyse how Stratford has been able to use the Olympic Games as a catalyst for regeneration. It has been considered from the selected key community representatives’ positions focusing on the narratives and accounts of their own experiences. A qualitative methodology has been required due to its ability to yield rich and detailed data in relation to a set of particular themes. As the framework is based around a qualitative methodology, the approach chosen was to conduct a narrative inquiry. A narrative inquiry is case-centred, which means that it is chronologically focused on specific instances, actions, genres and conversations (Riessman, 2011).

By taking this approach it allows the researcher to understand the sequences and consequences of actions or events which have been selected by the narrator as ‘meaningful’ for a specific audience (Conle, 2000; Robson, 2011). Furthermore, it must be recognised that we can only study the social world if we take into consideration the context, time frame, location and date of the event or area being studied (Bourdieu, 1998). As the research is focused on the 2012 Olympic Games, there are defined time periods being discussed; prior to the bid (pre-2005), the bid to hosting the Games (2005- July 2012) and after the Games (August 2012 onwards). By compiling the narratives, it has been possible to identify common themes that have been compared and contrasted in order to recognise continuities and differences in the narratives between the different selected community representatives.

**Research Framework**

I chose to use a narrative inquiry framework for the research because as Conle (2000) explains narratives are open-ended which are centred around the experiences of the narrator. Therefore, the focus of the research is centred on the actions and intentions of the participant and enables the researcher to become
reflexive and make connections between their own experiences in relation to what the participant has experienced.

I have personal experience of how the ability to be reflexive is an important part of the research. I have been brought up in the surrounding area to the host towns of the London 2012 sailing events, and have seen and experienced how a sport mega-event can be used to make significant changes to local infrastructures as a catalyst for regeneration and redevelopment. This familiarity means that I have been able to empathise with the selected community representatives on the issues and experiences that they raise with regard to ‘living with’ this mega-event. However, although narrative inquiries allow for experiences to be placed into a sociocultural context, they can change longitudinally after each re-telling of the story. There is a possibility that the excitement generated by hosting the event will be carried forward into the post-Games time period which will potentially lessen negative views and feelings about the event and the following regeneration.

The research groups or chosen clusters encompass a cross section of community representatives who have been directly impacted by the London 2012 Olympic Games in Stratford and the Borough of Newham. It is important to consider the selected community representatives because often sports mega-event research is focused on ethnographic data or it is centred on the evaluation of an event from an economic or political perspective with the result that the experiences and narratives of the community representatives themselves are overlooked. The selected community representatives have been directly involved in the planning, organisation and implementation of the games or living in the area surrounding the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, thus their narratives are essential to the understanding of the lived experience of the event and the potential for fulfilling the promised legacy.
Ontology and Epistemology

Ontology and epistemology make up the foundations of the research. Ontology concerns itself with the ‘nature of the world’, whereas epistemology is focused on ‘how we know’ knowledge (Willig, 2008, p. 13). These assumptions will inform the work through the choice of research questions, methodology and methods (Grix, 2010). The combination of ontology and epistemology provides the research paradigm. The research paradigm used is critical realism. Critical realism acknowledges that the world is not solely made up of events, experiences, perceptions and discourses but that there are underpinning structures, power relationships which exist whether or not these are experienced or recognised (Patomäki & Wight, 2000). Critical realism combines realist ontology with epistemological relativism in order to avoid the epistemic fallacy (Bhaskar, 2008; Al-Amoudi & Willmott, 2011). Bhaskar (2011, p. 13) explains that the epistemic fallacy in the following way:

Ontological questions can always be reparsed ['analysed'] in epistemological form: that is, that statements about being can always be analysed in terms of statements about our knowledge (of being), that is sufficient for philosophy to ‘treat only the network, and not what the network describes’.

Bhaskar is highlighting that it is not possible to have an experience without someone being there to actually experience it. and tying the external world to the internal world (Patomäki & Wight, 2000).

By using realist ontology, the researcher understands that our knowledge is not infallible. It is recognised that people can make mistakes or misjudge their natural surroundings or the social context of situations and environments. The ontology acknowledges that if the world was a construction of our knowledge then our knowledge would be infallible because individuals could never be wrong or make mistakes (Robson, 2011). According to Bhaskar (2012) this has its foundations in neo-Kantian philosophy which maintains that knowledge is a social process, but it is a process which is designed to depict the stratification of the world.
The neo-Kantian position advances an interpretivist epistemology. Interpretivism argues that quantitative research cannot produce the depth in understanding needed to fully comprehend sociological issues (Gilbert, 2008). This position allows the researcher to gain an understanding of the research participant’s situation in relation to particular sequences of action or consequences of events (Robson, 2011). In terms of this project the interpretivist epistemology means that I have been able to use qualitative research methods in order to gain a deeper understanding of the different community representatives’ perspectives regarding the regeneration and redevelopment of Stratford and Newham since the success of the 2005 bid to host the games in 2012. An example of this would be asking probing questions to the community representatives’ with regards to the compulsory purchase orders that were used to acquire the land for the site of the athletics stadium (Bond, 2006). Using quantitative methodologies would not have allowed the in-depth level of reflection from the community representatives on this issue, and which is crucial for this thesis.

Research Methods

As previously mentioned by Crotty (1998) and concurred by Robson (2011), research methods are the processes and procedures which enable data collection and analysis to take place. I have used a qualitative method of data collection because as Creswell (2007, p. 40) explains “quantitative measure and the statistical analyses simply do not fit the problem”. The research problem in this case is exploring the experiences of the selected community representatives in relation to the London 2012 Olympic Games. As a fully qualitative research design, a quantitative design would be inappropriate as it would not provide the required level of depth needed to answer the research aim or questions. I have focused on the opinions and experiences of selected community representatives. The following part of the chapter will further develop the explanation of the research design and methods employed throughout the research.
Research Design

The case study has been chosen as the research design because according to Yin (2009, p. 18) “a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context…” Yin (2011, p. 4) further elaborates this idea by stating that the case study “aims to produce an invaluable and deep understanding that is an insightful appreciation of the case(s) – hopefully resulting in new learning about real-world behaviours and its meaning”. It is assumed that case study research design will provide an opportunity to garner an in-depth meaning and understanding of a particular social phenomenon.

However, there are negative aspects in the use of case study designs. The negativity in social research stems from an historical ‘misunderstanding’ of case studies being used solely as a pilot to any further study rather than a design in and of itself. In addition to this misunderstanding, a lack of ‘trust’ has developed in relation to the credibility of the procedures used by some researchers. The lack of credibility has been derived from an inherent bias which has developed from the researcher’s minimal imposed structure of procedures where they “seem to find what she or he had set out to find” (Yin, 2011, p. 6).

Although there are negative aspects to using a case study design for research, I still chose to use this method because the research is focused on Stratford, within the London Borough of Newham, and I required an in-depth understanding of how the area is regenerating and redeveloping, if at all since hosting the 2012 Olympic Games. I have been able to implement a set of procedures to combat these negative aspects in order to ensure that my research remains credible. Defining the exact parameters of the case study can do this, for example it is focused on Stratford, London and is centred on the changes occurring since winning the right to host the Olympic Games in 2005. In addition to providing a definition of the case study parameters, I have ensured that a broad range of participants are included in the study to make sure that a variety of
experiences and opinions are incorporated prior to making any conclusions about the data that has been collected.

An example of a case study design being used in Olympic related research is provided by Kaplanidou and Karadakis (2010) who focused on the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games. The research concentrated on understanding the legacies of an Olympic host city from a community representative’s perspective. The community representative held roles in organisations related to the delivery of the promised legacies and were employed as directors, executives or in management positions. The research used a case study design, semi-structured interviews and convenience sampling to gather the data regarding the interviewees understanding of Olympic legacy. The research was able to compare the findings with other literature on sport mega events and legacy delivery. Although this study is similar to my own research, I am being more rigorous in my sampling technique and have approached and interviewed 19 community representatives who have been selected as meeting the sampling criteria. Furthermore, the community representatives who have participated have not just be sampled from organisations related to the delivery of the legacies, but also include community organisations, local businesses, local government and civil society representatives.

**Sampling**

As the research is designed as a narrative inquiry, the sampling method will be well considered to ensure that the participants have a ‘story’ to tell. The sampling method requires the researcher to be reflective regarding the sampling process. I have used both cluster and snowball sampling methods. Cluster sampling is a method which allows the researcher to categorise groups of participants into ‘clusters’ which are representative of the community being studied (Bryman, 2012). By using cluster sampling I have been able to explore the selected community representatives’ own experiences and also make a consideration and interpretation of their roles and involvement in the development of the legacy plans. Snowball sampling allows contact with other participants who
are known to participants who are already part of the study (Creswell, 2007). This means that the participants are part of a wider network or community and can therefore suggest others who have been part of similar experiences (Gilbert, 2008); in this case they have experience of the regeneration of the London 2012 Olympic Games. Participants recommended other people within their own field who they thought may be willing to participate and provide answers to help develop the research further.

**Sampling Criteria**

The process of selecting participants began by spending time in Stratford and its surrounding communities. Part of the search for participants involved using Google to find local community groups, community organisations, business forums and local and regional government representatives. I reached out to over 30 organisations or representatives covering both religious, civil and political sections of the community. The representatives and organisations who responded to telephone and email contact have been included in the research. It is known from the Community Profile (see Appendix A) that Stratford and the wider Borough of Newham is diverse in terms of its ethnic mix. It became apparent that the majority of participants have been white, European participants. One small group of participants who took part in the research from the Borough of Hackney were of Afro-Caribbean descent\(^\text{12}\).

In order to be able to organise cluster sample groups, it is important to set out specific criteria. I have approached people and organisations that work or deliver services in the following areas:

- Public – local authority roles such as law enforcement/security, local political representation and the wider central political representation through the representative ministry and education providers

\(^{12}\) The pseudonyms used are Anglicised to reflect the real names of the participants – this is the reason why there do not appear to be a multicultural diversity of pseudonyms used.
• Private – local business owners (including both current and former – those who have been moved from the area), local business forums, global business representatives who have moved to the area
• Voluntary sectors – charitable and volunteer-based organisations working in the area.

Some of the selection criteria will rely on snowball sampling to gain access, such as being able to contact business owners who have left the location of the Olympic Park.

From the aforementioned areas the following criteria have been used in this case study. Selected community representatives are expected to fit at least one of the following:

• Work as part of the local authorities or public services in Stratford or the Borough of Newham, with a direct role relating to a) the Olympic Games or b) the regeneration or redevelopment of Stratford since winning the bid to host the Games in 2005.
• Work in central government departments/organisations that cover the wider London area which had a direct impact on the decision making process in Stratford and the Borough of Newham.
• Be part of the local business community who may or may not have been affected by the changing urban landscape of the area.
• Be an organisation that has a direct influence on the regeneration or redevelopment of Stratford, particularly part of the Olympic Park development.
• Be an organisation that is moving into the area because of the development of the Olympic Park and the arising opportunities.
• Be an organisation that has moved from the area due to compulsory purchase orders or other forced eviction from the Olympic Park site.
• Be part of the media who have been regularly covering the events and changes of Stratford since winning the right to host the 2012 Olympic Games.
The cluster groups were assembled with the following criteria in mind. There were a total of 19 interview participants involved in the research.

Table 1 Cluster group criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster group</th>
<th>Community representatives to contact</th>
<th>Notes/Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local authority/politician/positions of civil authority i.e. Police Service n=3</td>
<td>Local councillors who are elected as representatives of the communities Council employees who work in regeneration/planning/policy positions</td>
<td>Local council representative who have been involved in the regeneration project since the bid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional politicians (including relevant departments) Greater London Authority n=1</td>
<td>Elected representatives of the East London residents who work in a centralised political position</td>
<td>Or details of someone within the departments who can participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local business owners/board members for the partnerships/forum n=3</td>
<td>Local business forums/partnerships/chambers of commerce type organisation</td>
<td>Ideally provide snowball samples for local business owners who could be approached to participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legacy Organisations n=2</td>
<td>Legacy focused organisations – those involved in regeneration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education providers n=1</td>
<td>Higher Education Providers</td>
<td>Higher Education Institutions moving or already established within the local area to the Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media n=1</td>
<td>Local media outlets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community members n=8</td>
<td>Prominent local community members</td>
<td>Run or take an active part in community groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are seven cluster groups, four of which have more than one participant in each. The decision was made to use newspaper and media articles alongside official documents in order to improve the reliability of the interview data.

- Newham Recorder – the local newspaper n=3 articles
- The Guardian – national broadsheet newspaper n=21 articles throughout the thesis
- The Evening London Standard – a regional newspaper n= 4 articles used throughout the thesis
- The Independent including the i paper – a national broadsheet newspaper n=5 articles used throughout the thesis
- The Daily Telegraph – national broadsheet newspaper n= 3 article used throughout the thesis
- The Washington Post – a newspaper from USA n= 1 article
- The International New York Times – a newspaper from USA n= 1 article
- The BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation – n= 5 articles used in thesis
- The Observer – a broadsheet newspaper – n= 1 article
- The Times (London) – a broadsheet newspaper – n= 1 articles
- National Geographic – a popular magazine – n=1 article

The following is a list of the official documents used or analysed throughout the thesis:

- Metropolitan Masterplan Development Framework (London Borough of Newham)
- Population churn and its impact on socio-economic convergence in the five London 2012 host boroughs (Department for Communities and Local Government)
- Inspired by 2012: The legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games (joint UK Government and Mayor of London report)
The following information sets out details of the participants in each cluster group. The information has been kept brief and pseudonyms have been used to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants. The exception to this is John Biggs (known now as John), who as an elected member of the London Assembly felt that he should be kept on the record and known as part of the research. He gave permission for his name to be used throughout the thesis.

**Cluster Group One: Local authority/ politician/ positions of civil authority**

**Jane** – involved in local authority planning, Newham resident since 2008  
**Sam** – local councillor, worked in Newham, long term resident in Newham  
**Keith** – local councillor, worked in Newham, long term resident in Newham

**Cluster Group Two: Regional politicians**

**John Biggs** – London Assembly member for East London, long term resident of East London

**Cluster Group Three: Local business owner/ board member for partnerships and forums**

88
Amy – Chief Executive of a business forum, worked in and around Newham, long term resident of Newham

Bob – Involved with a business club and other financial organisations, did a lot of work in and around the Canary Wharf and Docklands development since the 1980s

Ben – business manager for a transport hub in Newham, worked with Olympic organisations in the run up to hosting the Olympic Games, resident of East London

Cluster Group Four: Legacy organisations

George – Chief Executive of a legacy focused organisation, worked in and around Newham and wider East London

Cyril – legacy organisation employee focused on regeneration, worked and lived in Newham (including in community focused role) for more than 20 years

Cluster Group Five: Education provider

Bill – responsible for the move of his Higher Education Institution to East London

Cluster Group Six: Media

Mark – founder of new local media outlet across East London, long term resident of East London

Cluster Group Seven: Community members

Fred – prominent community member, worked in and around Newham and East London, long term Newham resident

Penny – prominent community member, worked in previous regeneration projects in Stratford, Newham and long term resident of Newham

Roger – community member of East London for more than 20 years, active in his community group

Molly – community member of East London for more than 20 years, active in her community group
Emily – community member of East London for more than 20 years, grew up in East London and takes an active part in her community group

Thomas – community member of East London for more than 20 years, worked in local authority/civil sector, takes an active role in his community group

Data Collection

A multitude of different qualitative and quantitative data collection methods could be used to carry out this research. However, I have chosen to exclude quantitative approaches to data collection because I am interested in exploring the narratives of the different community representatives. A positivist research paradigm would not be a satisfactory underpinning to collect community representative narratives because it assumes that all reality is experienced in the same way and is not interested in exploring the motives, interpretations and meanings that social actors attribute to their social environment (Robson, 2011). Different individuals will experience situations in different ways depending upon their positions within society and this must be taken into consideration throughout the research. Although positivist research has its own merits in terms of research that has a quantitative focus, I am disregarding this approach because my research is qualitative. The research has been designed to explore the social world and the generation of narratives of the selected community representatives in order to gain a greater understanding of their experiences.

Data collection methods within a qualitative research paradigm can vary from interviews (structure, semi-structured or no structure) to participant observation and also qualitative focused surveys. I have decided to forgo participant observation as this is a very time consuming method of data collection and it is not always possible to distinguish ‘natural’ behaviour from a participant’s reaction to being observed (Robson, 2011). Furthermore, conducting observation in research can be challenging due to issues of gaining access to the required research group(s), as well as time management difficulties due to the amount of time required to conduct an effective observation of a group (Creswell, 2007). This method of data collection would be more suited to an ethnographic study.
I have also decided not to use surveys or questionnaires; although questionnaires can be used to collect limited qualitative data it is important to recognise their limitations. According to Bryman (2012) questionnaires can miss out on data through incomplete answers to questions and ‘respondent fatigue’ whereby the questionnaire contains a lot of long questions which require a lot of time to answer. A questionnaire may also not be appropriate for participants who have a limited ability or knowledge of the English language (Bryman, 2012). Stratford and the Borough of Newham are known to contain high levels of migrant populations, which may contain communities with little or no knowledge of the English language due to their demographics or time spent in the United Kingdom. In addition to limited response rates from the local community, it is also possible that the selected community representatives would not have the required time or inclination to complete an extensive survey or questionnaire due to their own business commitments.

Semi-structured interviews have therefore been used as the method of data collection. Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to be more flexible with their interview guide (Robson, 2011), which is why I chose to avoid using a fully structured interview guide. This means that the researcher can rearrange topics for discussion or allow further probing of areas of interest that become apparent throughout the interviewing process. The flexibility of the interview guide will help to further develop the narrative because a greater understanding of the stories and experiences of the participants will become more apparent with further probing of areas of interest. The data collection has been focused on the collation of narratives of community representatives who have been selected due to their involvement in the regeneration of Stratford since the Olympic Games bid. An unstructured interview would also be inappropriate because it only relies upon topics of interest to stimulate discussion points. If I were to use topics of interest to stimulate discussion, it would be more difficult to compare and contrast the answers of the different community representatives included in the study (Bryman, 2012).
Data Analysis

Riessman (2008, p. 28) explains that

In constructing a transcript, we do not stand outside in a neutral objective position, merely presenting ‘what was said’. Rather, investigators are implicated at every step along the way in constituting the narratives we then analyse.

What Riessman is highlighting is the intrinsic role of the researcher in the collation of transcript materials. Researchers are involved in some way with the creation of the narrative, and therefore this will impact the impartiality of the researcher when analysing the transcriptions of their own interviews. Narrative inquiries can be analysed in numerous ways, thematically, structurally or even dialogically. The most important idea of analysing narrative based data is the attempt to contextualise it to the situation of the narrator.

To build on the point of contextualising the data which is yet to be analysed, it is important to take into account the time period. The research is studying an event which has happened in the ‘immediate past’. Ricoeur (1985, p. 144) explains that “…thinking about the pastness of past is to dull the sting of what is at issue…”. The point that Ricoeur is making is that the role of ‘time’ in relation to the participant’s narratives can provide an altered image of the event being studied. The time period in this case is certainly classified as the ‘immediate past’, whereby the event has been somewhat distanced from a participant’s conscience and has potentially diluted their narratives. The acknowledgement of the impact of the ‘immediate past’ on a narrative will help to contextualise the experiences of the participant in relation to the research.

A narrative thematic approach to data analysis will be undertaken, as this is focused on the particular phenomenon (in this case hosting the Olympic Games). The analysis will be centred on the content of the narratives rather than its formation. This means that the important part of the narrative will be the description of events, the participants in the events and also what are the
underlying factors involved in the story (Gilbert, 2008). In addition to thematic analysis, narrative analysis could also be used. Narrative analysis enables long accounts of experiences and stories to be considered as a whole due to the difficulty in breaking the narratives down into individual themes. It has been found that long accounts of experiences include multiple themes which cannot be fragmented into separate themes (Bryman, 2012). It is therefore important to consider these multifaceted themes in their entirety rather than split them down into its component parts as this will mean potential loss of important information regarding the participant’s experience.

In addition to the narrative thematic analysis I have also utilised discourse analysis. Chatziefstathiou and Henry (2012) suggest that critical realist approaches to research can be used in combination with critical discourse analysis. By combining these two methodologies it is possible to avoid diminishing the study of the presented Olympic narratives to just discourses; instead, this mixed approach allows an examination of the correlation between social structures and customs. I have employed this approach because I am interested in the proliferation of discourses being used by the selected community representatives rather than the intricacies of how discourses are created. Discourses are layers of information and structures of knowledge which people draw upon, to underpin their understandings, explanations, and actions in different social contexts. In order to understand the patterned usage of different discourses it is important to consider the context of the statement and the speaker. Furthermore, it is imperative to find the limits of the statement and work out how it correlates to other parts or patterns contained within the wider discourse. Lastly the statement must be looked at in order to consider what it excludes in relation to the wider discursive patterns (Ritzer, 1996, 1997).

Fairclough (2005, p. 923) argues that critical discourse analysis suits a critical realist ontology and epistemology because

The concern in research is with the relationship and tension between pre-constructed social structures, practices, identities, orders of discourse...on the one hand, and processes, actions,
events on the other. People with their capacities for agency are seen as socially produced, contingent and subject to change, yet real, and possessing real causal powers which, in their tension with the casual powers of social structures and practices, are a focus for analysis.

Fairclough’s point highlights the similarities between critical discourse analysis and critical realism. Both critical discourse analysis and critical realism recognise the link between the physical world and its influences and the socially constructed world. The acknowledgement that the social world is both a physical manifestation and a social construction enables the researcher to better understand the narratives provided by the participant. The discourses being drawn upon by the participants of the research are influenced and generated by both the socially constructed world but also the physical world.

The semi-structured interviews that were conducted with different participants all followed a similar process. The interviews engaged with the main substantive themes which had emerged from the literature on staging sport mega-events. These themes included, for example, gentrification, regeneration, post-Olympic Games confidence, legacy, and political and economic ideology amongst others. Each participant was asked broad, open questions about these thematic areas. As the interview developed, each participant was able to expand on thematic topics and develop their own narratives. A few of the highlighted themes were discussed in relatively greater depth by participants. However, branding was expected to be discussed but none of the participants engaged with that topic as they had little to no experience of the subject in relation to the hosting of the Olympic Games.

Reliability and validity of the research findings

The reliability and validity of the research findings is an integral part of the research process. It is an integral part but difficult to maintain its rigour because of the qualitative nature of the project. Qualitative work is challenging to replicate because it focuses on the social world where conceptions and perceptions
differ between social actors. People experience similar events or actions in slightly different ways. It was Habermas (2014, p. 253) who said that

Everyday routines and habituated communication work on the basis of certainties that guide our actions. This ‘knowledge’ that we draw on performatively has the Platonic connotation that we are operating with ‘truths’ – with sentences whose truth conditions are fulfilled. As soon as such certainties are dislodged from the framework of what we take for granted in the lifeworld and are thus no longer naively accepted, they become just so many questionable assumptions.

Habermas is explaining that our everyday routines and communications which guide our actions and knowledge of the social world. It is important to acknowledge that our opinions and experiences can be influenced by our social world. The validity of the findings could be questioned because of the difficulty in replicating the research. However, if this is understood from the outset of the research then it is recognised that the answers from the participants of this project will differ to answers provided by other participants in similar research projects.

The main question of validity for this research relates to whether the participants have presented their opinion, view or experience or whether the answers provided are an outcome of the interview environment (Peräkylä, 2011). An outcome of being in an interview environment can create issues of social desirability which can cause participant bias due to their wish to respond with information that they believe the researcher ‘wants’ to hear, (Robson, 2011). The bias can be derived from both positive and negative viewpoints dependent upon which position the participant believes is more favourable to the researcher’s perspective. The issues of social desirability and bias can be countered by ensuring that more than one person is interviewed from each cluster group and by limiting the release of information about the research project (Robson, 2011). By interviewing more than one person from each cluster group, I can compare and contrast the themes which arise from each interview and triangulate these themes against the responses from others within the same cluster group (Holstein & Gubrium, 2011). By ‘triangulation’ I mean that I am able to consider the similarities and differences between the interviews provided by participants
within the same cluster groups to check for reliability in answers. I have also used official documents and newspaper articles to help triangulate the conclusions drawn from the research due to the limited access to the research population gained due to research fatigue or localised resistance in Stratford.

One challenge of the research relates to the ethnicity of the participants. The research participants were predominantly white and from the United Kingdom. There were a small number of British African Caribbean participants from one research cluster group. It has been noted that East London is highly diverse and multicultural which has not been fully represented in this research. It is reflective of the position of ethnic minorities in the area and the high levels of population churn that affects these minorities. The churn means that the minorities are less likely to be settled and to be able to establish themselves in positions that are held by the community representatives interviewed in this research (i.e. key political figures, local civil society employees). It could be attributed to the predominance of white ethnicities working in the organisations and sectors of community representatives. The difficulty in gaining access to a variety of community groups and organisations has also impacted the diversity of the research participants. The majority of the participants spoke of the diversity found within the research locations, unfortunately due to research fatigue or localised resistance I was unable to gain access to take these groups into consideration as part of the research. Their experiences would have added to the overall understanding of the experiences of community representatives in Stratford and the communities on the peripheries of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Ethical Considerations

It is important to consider ethical issues that relate to collecting data from human subjects. In this thesis, the participants have been fully informed of the aims and objectives for the research project and know that participation is voluntary and that they will be able to withdraw their data at any time up to the point of submission. Full consent was requested from each participant as suggested by Ryen (2011). The participants were also fully informed about how
the data was to be collected (via semi-structured interviews) and stored. The interview data was stored as per the university regulations which included password protection for the data stored on the computer system while any hard copies of data were locked away in line with the provisions of the Data Protection Act of 1998. Participants were also aware that the interviews were to be transcribed and made fully anonymous as suggested by Robson (2011) in order to try and protect their identities. The participants were also made aware that because of the specific nature of their own roles within the local communities and organisations involved that it may still be possible to be recognised by third parties. Every care was taken to minimise the risk of this potential recognition happening. The open access availability of the thesis will be considered prior to the submission of the thesis to the Institutional Repository. I was also aware of the need to be mindful of any power structures and relationships that the participants may be a part of and therefore great care has been taken to ensure full anonymity and confidentiality in the recording of the interviews and the writing up process. Pseudonyms have been used to help maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of participants. Ethical clearance from the Ethics Board convened at Loughborough University was gained prior to any fieldwork or data collection occurring.

Conclusion

The research methodology and methods section has set out the mechanics of the thesis. The research is qualitative based using a critical realist research paradigm. The utilisation of semi-structured interviews has enabled me to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of the selected community representatives in relation to the regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site in Stratford, Newham. As Bourdieu states it is not possible to be a qualitative researcher without some sort of underlying bias. I have reflected and taken into account my own sets of bias, especially my own empathy for their experiences due to my links with growing up and experiencing the London 2012 sailing events in Weymouth and Portland, Dorset.
The results and discussion have been combined in order to help fully explore the experiences of the selected community representatives. Implementing a narrative enquiry based design has allowed the context of the interviews to remain during the thematic analysis and the discourse analysis stages. The following discussion chapters will set out the data and its analysis taken from the semi-structured interviews with the community representatives. Furthermore, the interview data will be compared and contrasted against newspaper/media articles and official documents. The thesis will then culminate in a conclusion that will set out the findings of the research as well as highlight future research and the limitations of this study.
Chapter Six

Results

Introduction

The following chapter presents the themes that emerged from the interviews. The flow charts combine the themes that were discovered through the literature review in relation to the themes that emerged from the interviews. The first level is the overarching thematic topic, from there the branches breakdown to show the main themes that developed throughout the literature review; the next levels present the themes that emerged from the interviews. Each flow chart will be representative of each literature review chapter.

Urban Regeneration Thematic Flow Chart

The following flow chart sets out the thematic breakdown of the urban regeneration theme. The top of the flow chart presents the themes from the literature review (regeneration; morphology; gentrification; urban identity). Off each of the literature review themes are the themes that emerged from the interview data, for example ‘regeneration’ links to ‘accessibility’, ‘consultation’ and ‘regeneration’.
Figure 1 Urban regeneration flow chart
The sociocultural issues thematic flow chart is smaller than the urban regeneration chart. It is possible to claim that the size difference between the flow charts is related to the importance placed on these topics by the Community Representatives through the discourses that the representatives have drawn on to create their own narratives. It is notable that the flow chart contains themes that are interrelated across the chart. It was difficult to untangle these themes; therefore, there is crossover between the areas of discussion.

Figure 2 Sociocultural issues flow chart
The flow chart shows the themes that have developed from the literature review and emerged from the interview data. It is noteworthy again that many of the themes interlink between the individual sections highlighted in the literature review. It was challenging to separate out the themes within the sections when there is a great deal of interrelation.

Structure of the results and discussion chapters
The results have been broken down into their respective narrative emergent themes. The narrative emergent themes are important because they provide a broad insight into the experiences of the selected community representatives from before the Olympic bid acceptance in 2005 through to the time that the interviews were taking place, predominantly throughout 2014 and early 2015. The time
period therefore covers the experiences in the immediate aftermath of hosting the London 2012 Olympic Games.

The results showed that there was an awareness of discourses being used by the selected community representatives. These emerged as part of the underlying narratives and patterns of ideas that were being provided by the participants throughout the interviews. The analysis of the interview data has presented the emergence of two predominant discourses:

- Official/Government – drawing from official promotional information that is found within the public realm.
- Community – sceptical threads of narratives that are generated from both historical and lived experiences.

The participants tended to lean and draw from one prominent discourse more than the other as part of their broader narratives. It is suggestive of a classic structuralist position. Bourdieu’s conception of structure is useful because it provides a framework that is aligned with the idea of which discourses the community representatives are accessing and using as the main part of their narratives.

Conclusion

The chapter has presented a visual breakdown of the themes that emerged throughout the literature review and data analysis process. It is possible to recognise through these charts the links between the different thematic topics. The links are important because it is representative of the interrelating topics highlighted by the discourses and narratives presented by the Community Representatives. The social world is complicated and intertwined across the different disciplines displayed throughout my thesis. The breakdown of themes have informed the format of the following results and discussion chapters. Each primary thematic area (i.e. Urban Regeneration) is presented and discussed in depth throughout the following three chapters (chapters seven, eight and nine).
Chapter Seven
Results and Discussion
Urban Regeneration

Introduction

The following chapter discusses urban regeneration and the experiences of the selected community representatives. The theme that emerged from the literature review. Sport mega-events are known for expressing an intention to create legacies in terms of physical, social and economic benefits. London 2012 was no different, as already mentioned the major facets of London’s bid highlighted the potential of hosting the games in order to transform the urban cityscape from a post-industrial landscape to a more open green spaced environment within the limits of the cityscape. The idea behind the transformation was to improve community cohesion and enhance wealth and prosperity in order to stabilise the current communities through physical regeneration. Physical regeneration is not a new phenomenon for Olympic Games host cities. Barcelona 1992 was the last city widely deemed to be successful at delivering on this aspiration, although as I noted earlier it is not possible to specifically attribute the regeneration of Barcelona and its rise in prominence as a global city to hosting the Olympic Games in 1992 (Degen and Garcia 2012).

Over a period of 12 months semi-structured interviews were undertaken with the selected community representatives (n=19) in London. Using narrative thematic analysis techniques has allowed for an understanding of the experiences of the selected community representatives. Five subthemes identified from the narratives provided by the participants:

- **Legacy** – any information pertaining to the future plans for the location, any mention of the word legacy or linking to the bid legacy promises.
• **Regeneration** – previous experiences of regeneration projects and the social history of the area, methods of regeneration, and regeneration plans linked to the Olympic Games bid.

• **Accessibility** – physical connectivity through transport, community connections and the development of new routes around Stratford linked to social acceptance of such access.

• **Community** – demography descriptions, diversity, local people and inclusion, gentrification, communication and message delivery

• **Governance** – central and local government perspectives or experiences of public and private sector based funding, ideology, policy provision/design

As seen in figures one, two and three the subthemes have been divided to include emergent themes. The following chapter will set out the results and discussion relating to the overarching Urban Regeneration theme.

The semi-structured interviews used three specific time points to help understand how the selected community representatives have experienced the regeneration of the local area (Stratford, Newham and surrounding communities). The distinct time periods used (pre-2005; 2005-2012 and 2012 onwards) help to place the points of discussion within a specific ‘time zone’ which can be used to contextualise their comments. The distinction between the physical and social/business changes will aid in the development of the discussion due to the multiple links between the various themes, which have emerged. The three main themes focused on throughout the thesis - urban regeneration, sociocultural issues and governance and economic issues - are intricately connected, so some parts of the discussion are relevant to more than one area of discussion. Therefore, the presentation of the thematic results will be separated into the individual themes mentioned above.

The idea of using sports mega-events to rebrand a locality has been discussed in the literature review, as it is an area of significant interest for earlier research. It was expected that participants would refer to Olympic rebranding
issues in the area. However, there was very little mention of branding or rebranding of the physical location, although branding was discussed briefly relating to attracting organisations and large brands. Accordingly, the discussion chapter section focused on branding is short. Unlike the literature review, the short section on branding has been moved to the governance and economics chapter because it has become apparent that the participants’ related the idea of branding to commercialisation rather than city or nation rebranding.

Legacy

The legacy of the London 2012 Olympic Games was a central facet of winning the bid to host the games. The candidate city bid evaluation explains that “The Olympic Games would be a catalyst for the redevelopment of the Lower Lea Valley, a 200 hectare rehabilitation and regeneration project in East London. Along with major new public infrastructure, this redevelopment would provide long term benefits for the residents of London, including employment, housing, educational and recreational opportunities and the development of sport.”

(International Olympic Committee, 2005, p. 64)

It was recognised that “Whilst the development of the Olympic Park as part of the Lower Lea Valley regeneration is to take place irrespective of the outcome of the bid, the Olympics Games would accelerate the process…” (International Olympic Committee, 2005, p. 64). In other words, the regeneration of the Olympic Park site has always been planned with or without hosting the Olympic Games, but it was highlighted that hosting the Games would enable the regeneration to happen at an accelerated rate. This commitment to regeneration helped to make the bid’s claims on this point to appear more realistic, while also signifying to local people that the borough would not be abandoned if the bid was unsuccessful. As it is a part of the bid process, the IOC and associates are only being given details of the positive aspects to the regeneration procedures. There is no definitive methodology provided about how the regeneration and redevelopments will affect the local communities. The bid document is itself very ‘top-down’ in orientation, and does not present information relating to the community level other than in the
form of some basic quantitative data on issues such as affordable housing, multiculturalism, and regeneration (Government, 2004).

Legacy has already been highlighted as difficult terminology with a broad definition base, which holds different meanings to different people. Kevin Jenkins (2013), writing a section for the Newham Recorder, explains through his opinion piece that in order to successfully attain an Olympic legacy it is important to clearly define what ‘legacy’ means. Jenkins wants someone to

“document what the legacy is, those responsible for delivery, the targets to be achieved and how success will be measured.”

Jenkins continues to explain

“Without this clarity and focused determination there is a real danger that the future communities across east London will not win the ultimate medal – sustained regeneration.”

Jenkins was writing at the beginning of 2013, soon after the event, while the participants of this research were interviewed afterwards from spring 2014 through to February 2015. Yet a clear definition was not created as during the research each participant community representative had slightly different understandings and experiences of legacy. This fluid definition of legacy was underlined in this project by the fact that the legacy could initially be separated into two topic

- Consultation and planning – long term plan
- Creating post-Olympic confidence (intangible benefits)

The two aforementioned topics recognise that the term ‘legacy’ is a broad ranging topic for discussion and holds multiple meanings for each individual. The meanings differ, as expected, between the different community representatives and their involvement with the hosting of the London 2012 Olympic Games. The two subthemes will be discussed individually.

Consultation and Planning

John, who has waived his right to anonymity, as he believes as an elected representative of the London Assembly for East London, uses a metaphor to
explain his thoughts about the future of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site and the planned developments. As Biggs puts it,

“...the Olympic legacy should be, ‘here’s the footprint’, how do we want it to evolve?”

The footprint metaphor is a curious take on the idea of legacy because it is representative of the physical changes left behind, but also represents the difference between the area of the footprint and the rest of the environment. The recognition of the footprint idea could mean that it is understood that the tract of land the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park sits in within the Lee Valley, will be characteristically different to the rest of the urban cityscape. The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park will leave venues and other related infrastructure for future generations to use and enjoy, that is markedly different to the rest of the local area which surrounds the park (in the adjoining boroughs; such as Stratford, Hackney, Hackney Wick as well as other neighbouring areas). The park is different to the rest of the built up urban environment that surrounds it, which really reinforces the idea of the footprint and its physically recognisable difference to the rest of the cityscape. The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site’s distinctiveness within the wider landscape means that it provides a unique selling point for the authorities involved in its development as it is being used to attract a more affluent, middle income community to develop within its boundaries.

Cyril, a former local council member and now a regeneration expert with a legacy focused organisation, explains that the legacy was planned right from the beginning and the Olympic Games itself, was woven into the already developing plan for regenerating the local area in Stratford and the wider London Borough of Newham:

“...we knew broadly speaking in regeneration what all of us, what we wanted to happen...when the Olympics kind of idea came along we thought, yep actually that will help us to achieve our ambitions...the Olympics definitely came into a pre-existing programme...”

Cyril highlights that the Olympics fitted into a ‘pre-existing programme’, but he is not any more specific about the length of such a programme. Cyril in this sense
draws upon a widely used discourse between those who have been involved in regeneration and other local level community development. Cyril’s commentary here is reinforced by George, who also worked in a legacy focused organisation, and confirms here that the planning for the regeneration legacy was thought about and initiated from very early stages of the bid process.

“…when the bid went in, it was interned in 2005…all the work that led up to the bid; legacy was the heart of it.”

George furthers his explanation by stating that when he is asked about the success of London;

“…if anyone asks me what’s the one thing – it’s planning.”

The planning element is recognised as an important part of the perceived success of London as a host city in terms of implementing a legacy plan. Both of these respondents have been involved and active in implementing regeneration projects previously in Newham, so their comments carry the weight of experience. Cyril and George both discuss planning and its importance, however, neither of them is specific about which aspects of planning have been most useful to the legacy development post-Games. They both talk in generalised terms acknowledging the wider discourses surrounding the perceived successes of London 2012 and its implementation of post-Games development and facility use.

Newspaper articles has been used to access different threads of discourse. Anthony Faiola, in his article for The Washington Post (an American newspaper), taps into the wider discourses surrounding the Olympic Games and the park’s regeneration, and illustrates that the London 2012 committee

“…made these Games relatively compact, focusing on one area in clear need of urban regeneration. But they’ve also started planning for the legacy of the Games years earlier than other host cities. This is novel, and London’s approach could emerge as a model for future host cities.”

Faiola has accessed a standard discourse which places the Olympic Games as an autonomous space whereby the legacy of the location post-Games is a secondary thought. Anthony has failed to access the discourses drawn on by both Cyril and
George which emphasise the history of regeneration in Stratford and the wider London Borough of Newham. Cyril’s comment regarding the Olympic Games fitting into an already existing plan for regeneration is noteworthy because of the wider discourses which generally cast sport mega-events as catalysts, or autonomous regeneration projects which sit alone in the cityscape. However, Stratford and the wider borough have been undergoing a process of regeneration and redevelopment which dates back to at least the 18th Century, while the most recent large scale regeneration plan outside of the Olympics programme was the on-going redevelopment of the docklands since the 1980s. The hosting of the Olympic Games is not being recognised by Cyril as the focal point or as a main catalyst for a regeneration legacy in the area. The Olympic Games are being shown by Cyril as part of a much wider regeneration programme that has been in the process of being undertaken across many years. John also reiterates the idea that Olympic legacy planning has had to fit into an already established regeneration plan for the area. He explains that in his opinion

“…there were prior visions for Stratford shopping centre for example. Flown off the back of the Central and Jubilee line and those things are widely accepted for accelerating by the Olympics which would have happened eventually, so it wasn’t from a zero start.”

It is interesting that Cyril, George and John all present the Olympic Games as a factor which helped to continue the regeneration plans in the area but not the main reason for the regeneration. The existence of plans already in partial motion means that the Olympic Games in this scenario are entering into an already established plan and regeneration movement in the area of East London in which Stratford and the wider London Boroughs sit. Anthony Faiola (2012), writing for the Washington Post, reinforces the aforementioned points regarding planning and explains to his international readership that

“Grand plans to transform depressed parts of East London predate the city’s Olympic bid. But by planning for post-Games uses years earlier than some previous host cities, observers say, London has managed to speed up regeneration in Stratford by at least a decade. The developers of the massive new mall [Westfield], for instance, opted to start construction six years earlier than initially planned to tap into Olympic fever.”
Veronica Wadley, from The Independent, also agrees with Faiola’s perspective regarding the driving forward of the development and regeneration;

“East London’s regeneration has been brought forward decades. From Stratford to Lower Lee Valley to the Royal Docks, we are building 11,000 homes, and creating 8,000 new jobs. London has secured billions of investment since 2012.”

Both Wadley and Faiola have started to identify the wider discourses which are emphasizing the acceleration of the regeneration plans, however both writers have failed to acknowledge fully that the regeneration has been an on-going concern for the borough for generations of residents. As journalists, Wadley and Faiola will find it more difficult to access the locally generated discourses and therefore lack the local knowledge regarding the development of the cityscape, and therefore miss the links between past regeneration projects and the Olympic Games programme.

The planning for the regeneration designs for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and associated developments has been undertaken through a process in planning called ‘Convergence’. Four participants bring up the notion of convergence as part of their discussion and experiences of the regeneration processes that have been happening in relation to the Olympic Games. Convergence is according to Davies (2012b), a framework which is designed to aid in the socioeconomic and sociocultural amelioration of an area that sits highly on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the framework, convergence will be assessed with reference to any improvements made to the positioning of the host boroughs on the Index of Multiple Deprivations. In a different context, the concept of convergence has been used to explain particular globalization processes, associated specifically with patterns of ‘convergence’ or ‘sameness’ that arise across different societies, for example in terms of shared cultural tastes for particular sports, films, music or consumer products. In this sense, ‘convergence’ is widely viewed as a ‘top-down’ process, in which politically and economically powerful societies, corporations and organizations are able to shape global cultural tastes or consumption patterns – for example, for American clothing apparel or European sports (Giulianotti 2016).
What these two definitions of convergence share is a focus on ‘top-down’ political and economic processes, pointing towards how weaker communities are to be assimilated into a wider model through a procedure over which they have relatively little control or influence.

Convergence has been set out as part of the Newham 2027 Core Strategy (2012, p. 19) when it states

“Recognising that this is a situation common to other boroughs locally and the opportunity for transformation presented by the investment in the Olympic and Paralympic Games, Newham and the four other host boroughs in East London have joined together to develop a shared vision. Together the boroughs want to ensure a real and long lasting legacy so that within 20 years those communities who host the Games achieve convergence with the rest of London, having the same social and economic chances as their neighbours across the rest of the city.”


“The common theme which runs through all of these actions is the determination to create the most enduring legacy of 2012 in the communities of the Host Boroughs and to do that by ensuring that over the next 20 years the residents of the Host Boroughs will come to enjoy the same life chances as other Londoners...However, the single most important factor in reducing disadvantage is getting more residents into work and better paid work. There is not more important factor to be addressed in tackling the persistent long-term deprivation in the Host Boroughs.”

The official aim of the framework is to improve lifestyles and opportunities for the residents of the Host Boroughs. The framework is described as the

“...strategy for achieving Convergence of the socio-economic conditions of the people of the host boroughs to that of the average for London.”

(Mayor of London, 2011, p. 3)

The framework contains the recognition that there is a disparity between the Host Boroughs and the rest of London in terms of socioeconomic development and
opportunities. The participants in the research discussed the idea of convergence and provided different experiences and opinions about its effectiveness. The Core Strategy was created in order to partly develop the convergence framework, therefore the latter is only focused on the areas of disparity and inequality. The idea of convergence was discussed by some of the research participants.

Participants hold divided opinions on the convergence agenda. Two of the participants, John and Bill, provide a positive outlook which was aligned to their role and experiences with local level politics. Penny is sceptical of the effectiveness of such an agenda she recognises that it is a top-down approach, which in her experience (more than 20 years) of local regeneration projects has a limited effect on local initiatives. Jane, who works in local authority planning has a more critical perspective on its effectiveness but does admit that there are some benefits attached to working under a framework. John, Bill, Penny and Jane’s perspectives have been taken into consideration and will be discussed further.

John, who was the elected member of the London Assembly, provides some context to the development of the convergence agenda by explaining that

“...as part of the sign off towards the end of the Olympics, the boroughs were in a position to help to try to shape the view of the Olympic legacy should be and in terms of talking about how you encapsulate and easily define the desire to raise skills and employment and so on issues. ...the Five Borough Partnership Board...developed this principle of convergence which the Mayor of London signed up to, which the Government signed up to.”

John is providing some information on how the principle of convergence has been developed. He is drawing information from the wider official discourse to help explain the development of the concept. It is notable that all the host boroughs were involved in its development, and that as a principle it has been signed up to by all levels of the political hierarchy, local authority, regional and central governments. He uses the phrase “as part of the sign off”, which implies a contractual obligation that has been reached by the latter stages of hosting the Olympic Games. Furthermore, he articulates that it is essential to “define the desire” to uplift the socioeconomic opportunities available to the local
communities. However, he is not explicit about how they aim to achieve the upskilling. It is never more apparent than when he goes on to state

“So in principle we’re going to do stuff to help convergence on a whole range of things. Whether it’s life expectancy, income levels etc. and there are some areas of progress and others not. But it’s provided…a scoreboard, yep for the area if you like in the very simplest terms. So we can see what progress we’re making in comparison to other parts of London.”

Although he does not specify exactly what actions will be taken, he does explain that the actions will be to work towards life expectancy, income levels and other measures found on the indices of multiple deprivations. It is the criteria of the indices which the convergence agenda is working to improve, and Newham has seen an improvement between 2010 and 2015\textsuperscript{13}.

The concept of the ‘scoreboard’ indicates that it is preferable to have quantifiable measures to assess progress and benefits. A quantitative measure will provide a visual tally of progress for each of the boroughs involved. However, it is arguable that by using numerical data to quantify a score against the rest of the Greater London area will provide limited answers. Critically, the actual value is debatable because it lacks in-depth information about the communities and how the measures are impacting their lives. Furthermore, it is not possible to use the statistics to fathom whether the improvements have occurred due to a process of gentrification rather than actual improvements to the original ‘deprived’ communities. John also states that

“The idea of legacy through convergence is, I think, very powerful and easy way to describe what’s happening. And if it’s done in the right way, by the right political leadership…based on the vision which says we can raise the skills level of the area or the employability of the area or the healthiness of the area then that will achieve a win, win; because it will be less dependent \textit{on government resources and benefits}, more wealth creation and so on.”

Here, John is advancing a very positive view of convergence. He is placing the weight of success on the point that if the idea of convergence is run by a political

\textsuperscript{13} see Appendix A for context as part of the community profile
leadership with the ‘correct vision’, then it will have a positive impact on the communities, at least from a quantitative perspective. Biggs continues to draw from and expand his perspective from the wider policy focused discourses which are providing a positive view of the convergence framework. Biggs’ own personal discourse is exclusive, he is drawing from the positive, policy-centric discourse. It is possible that due to his role in regional government he is excluded from more community, local level discourses which means that he is only able to draw from the policy-centric discourses.

Bill, a member of a Higher Education Institution, explains that his organisation has been drawn to the aspirational view, to a “deep connection to what the politicians called the convergence agenda”, which intersects with his establishment’s vision. The Institution has been attracted to the convergence agenda because of their commitment as an organisation to community engagement and developing social enterprise. Community engagement and developing social enterprise fits in with the convergence agenda because these elements are aiming to aid in the amelioration of the socioeconomic status of the communities living in the borough. Bill and his institution have accessed the policy-centric discourses provided by government organisations and found a correlation between those strategy discourses and the discourses he and his institution draws from on a daily basis.

However, as a consequence, he and his institution is an organisation that is developing its own position within the locale, and therefore may not have the local connections and networks developed in order to access locally developed discourses on the event. As the institution becomes more embedded in the local community, their access to local discourses will become easier. As the organisation and its people interact and work with the local people and organisations they will become more established and integrated into the social structure of the surrounding community. Policies and official discourses endorse the government’s positive public relation friendly position. These highlight the benefits and advantages that are being or have been made with regards to the
whole project. It is a top-down process that is imposing these ideals and plans on the local communities. On the other hand, the local discourses are generated in response to these top-down measures. These discourses are bottom-up focused and are used by local communities to help critically understand their experiences of, in this case, the urban regeneration as part of the Olympic Games.

An opposing view of convergence is held by Penny, a prominent community member who has been involved with community regeneration since the early 1990s. Penny associates convergence with gentrification;

“...the big plank of legacy is convergence...all the grotty statistics of the East End Boroughs will actually improve to reach the London average. This is where I did the research...if there is gentrification then you can find that if you’re only looking at percentages, your percentage on a lower income goes down but the actual life experience of those people, the same people are still there in the same numbers on a low income, it’s just they’re a smaller part of the whole.”

Penny has recognised that statistics could be showing a positive improvement on the convergence scoreboard because the incoming more affluent residents are the improving factor. Penny has contextualised how convergence is perceived at the community level. She has accessed a competing discourse to the one presented by John and Bill. Penny’s narrative is more critical about the use of quantifiable data than the official policy-centric discourse used by John and Bill. She draws on the local discourse that statistical data is invalidated by gentrification because the numbers are no longer generated from the same demographics. Penny is drawing her narrative from more than twenty years of experience of working in regeneration programmes as a prominent community member. Her experience has allowed her to assess critically the discourses that she can access and draw information to support her own discourse, as well as develop an objectivity regarding the official discourses and their proposed impacts or effects on the local communities. Dave Hill (2013a), writing for the Guardian online, agrees with Penny’s position and explains that one of his interviewees identified

“some evidence of progress towards the Olympic host boroughs’ common goal of economic and social ‘convergence’ with the rest of London, but thought it likely this was ‘largely driven by demographic change rather than improving skills and employment rates for existing residents…”
Both Dave Hill and Penny attribute the statistical improvements shown to have been happening because of the implementation of the convergence agenda, to gentrification. They are both sceptical of the official data and highlight the likelihood of the official data being effected by population churn rather than meaningful progression.

Penny continues to state

“...convergence is the big one, that’s the long term one you know. People will look at physical regeneration, but you know in terms of actual regeneration legacy, its convergence, aspiring to be average which is a bit grotty but that’s the reality.”

Penny is highlighting that convergence is only the framework to aid the East End of London in reaching the London average in terms of life expectancy, employment and the other measures of positive social development. Penny’s use of the word ‘grotty’ implies she is contradicting John and Bill’s positions. Penny sees the convergence agenda as ‘aspiring to be average’, rather than a positive tool for improvement which is how both John and Bill see the agenda. John and Bill are looking at convergence from a top down perspective, whereas Penny is seeing the results of convergence from a practical or everyday standpoint. She is seeing the physical incarnation of the decision making process which stems from the convergence agenda or framework. Penny is living and surrounded by working class communities, whereas John and Bill are working with middle-class community representatives. Penny sees first-hand the real-time effect of the agenda whereas Bill and John see the statistical improvements rather than real life impact of the policy.

Similar points are made by Dave Hill (2015) from the *Guardian*, who writes

“Along with its fellow ‘growth boroughs’ Hackney, Tower hamlets, Greenwich, Waltham Forest and Barking and Dagenham (formerly called the ‘Olympic boroughs’), Newham is pursuing the 20 year goal of ‘convergence’ with the rest of London in terms of social mix and life chances. According to the latest figures, the six as a whole are on course as measured by 12 out of 21 indicators, but are falling short on nine. The data does not disclose if the
positive changes show things are improving for longstanding residents or a reflection of more affluent people moving in. Wales makes no bones about desiring a larger middle class – ‘I want them in the schools saying, this isn’t bloody good enough!’ – but he’s long been concerned about losing the home-grown variety through population churn, with locals who get on in life then moving out. He is encouraged that Newham’s local household panel survey suggests this is slowing down.”

In effect, Dave Hill connects the points made by Penny, and questions the validity of the results. Hill directly questions whether the data is just showing a process of gentrification or real change for the long standing local populations. He connects the idea that gentrification on some level is desired by the current London Borough of Newham’s mayor – Sir Robin Wales.

Dave Hill is accessing a discourse that is intimating that the Mayor desires a gentrified community. In Wales’ opinion, the middle classes will demand the local authorities to uphold and provide a high level of community services, such as education and health care. Wales’ discourse is connecting the idea that a growing middle class will help to ensure accountability concerning local authority or government funded services. Wales is using social capital development as the basis for his point of discussion. Wales is acknowledging the idea that the incoming middle classes will bring with them new opportunities for existing communities to gain greater levels of capital. He is stating that their higher levels of social capital will enable the incoming middle classes the opportunity to leverage the local authorities or government funded organisations to improve their services.

In contrast, Hill is drawing on more than just the discourse provided by the officials and Wales. Hill is combining the official discourse provided by the Mayor with the discourses presented by the local communities. He is sceptical of the official data and statistics, which the Mayor is using, by questioning its validity in relation to the slow stabilisation of the local population churn. The discursive thread of Hill is more akin to the discourse that Penny has been

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14 see Putnam, Bourdieu or Coleman’s work on social capital for more detail
discussing. Hill has been able to access a community level discourse, which is critical of the convergence framework and rejects the official discourse, which presents convergence as the method of improving equality and reducing deprivation across the East End of London. Another group that accesses community level discourses are the Focus E15 Mothers Group. The Focus E15 Mothers Group, are a campaign group that was set up to protest against the closure of sheltered accommodation in Newham and to oppose the movement of families to alternative locations outside of the London Borough of Newham. E15 relates to the postcode of The Focus sheltered housing hub. The group uses social media to disseminate the narrative of their campaign. Through the distribution of their story online, they present a community level discourse that is critical of the imposed top-down policy from the local authorities. In a newspaper article, one the group’s campaigners was quoted in the Newham Recorder (Recorder, 2014) as saying “we will fight for as long as it takes to stop the privatisation of London and stop social cleansing.” The campaigner’s narrative uses part of the over-arching gentrification discourse that is critical of the process and intimates at the initiation of ‘social cleansing’.

Julian Cheyne, writing for the Games Monitor website, presents a discourse, which has the community as its focus, when he states that

“The convergence agenda had been intended to prevent the Olympics being a repetition of the Docklands disaster which brought few if any benefits to the local population. In reality, this ‘Agenda’ according to which the Olympics was supposed to deliver a legacy through the regeneration of an ‘entire community for the direct benefit of everyone who lives there’ was dead before it was even written as this destruction of local industry had radically skewed the possibility of a ‘legacy’ for local people.”

Cheyne is using past experience of the Docklands regeneration as a thread to his narrative and to reinforce his opinion. He is drawing from a set of critical discourses that date back to the 1980s and the start of the docklands regeneration and redevelopment. The loss of local industry becomes a limiting factor in the local population’s socioeconomic development. The destruction of industries that are linked to generations of families, potentially leads to higher rates of blue collar
unemployment within the local communities. The loss of employment opportunities coupled with the rising cost of living exacerbates the displacement of established community clusters who have been settled for generations in the area. Cheyne is attributing the loss of these residents and industries to the inability to provide a legacy for the local people because they are no longer living and working in the areas surrounding the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site. The loss of industry and potential for higher rates of unemployment could increase the likelihood of displacement, as people can no longer afford to remain in the area. Workers will have to move from the location in order to gain employment elsewhere.

There is another perspective to take into consideration that is the position held by Jane, who as previously mentioned works in local authority planning. In relation to the discussion, she is responsible for implementing the decisions that have been made on the convergence agenda. Jane, as a practitioner, explains that

“I suppose it’s been a driver for things and buzzwords. The things like convergence framework and so on. All the kind of work to do with creating a lasting legacy was centred on this concept of convergence. And that as I say has been stitched in to what we are working for in the rest of the borough which is probably already there but hasn’t been badged in that way. It’s something to sort of hit developers with, you know, in a concerted way because you are doing the same thing across the borough… that’s something that is shared by all the hosts.”

Jane is providing a slightly sceptical viewpoint, by highlighting the idea of ‘buzzwords’ being associated with the concept and the idea of ‘rebadging’ practices already being undertaken. Jane is using the discourses associated with convergence as a method of leveraging the developers. Jane explains that although many of the convergence framework elements have been part of the planning agenda for some time, now that it is all badged under one theme, she is able to leverage developers with it to ensure their cooperation in order to win tenders for development opportunities within the borough. The concept in this scenario is beneficial because it sets a standard and an expectation, which must be met in order to be successful with their development planning. The point here is that the framework provides a set standard for development, which will establish a fixed
practice across all the host boroughs, rather than a focus on just Stratford, or the London Borough of Newham in terms of legacy continuation. Jane continues on to explain that

“Convergence will only happen if you can either increase your speed of economic development to faster than the rest of London or slow the rest of London set up. So it’s a massive ambition.”

The underlying aspiration of convergence therefore is, as Penny states, to aid East London’s development to a level with the rest of London. The attainment of socioeconomic parity with the rest of London will potentially come at a price for East London. The community discourses presented through the chapter in relation to convergence have all intimated towards a culture of homogeneity. Both sides of the convergence debate have presented different threads of a gentrification discourse to make their points. On one side of the debate, the increase in middle-class settlers to East London will raise the amount of money going through the local economy and will expect services to be delivered at a high standard. However, in opposition you have the E15 Mothers Group and Penny who see the incoming gentrification as a negative. The campaigner from the Mothers Group, as quoted in the Newham Recorder, likened the agenda to ‘social cleansing’.

Post-Olympic Games Confidence

A post-Olympic Games confidence has been highlighted by participants as a legacy from hosting the games in 2012. The confidence in the local area has been emphasised as an element of the legacy from the 2012 Olympic Games because development in the surrounding area and boroughs has continued at a pace post-Games. Graham Ruddick (2012), writing for the Daily Telegraph explains that

“In the longer term, it is possible that we will see increasing amounts of overseas wealth flowing into the area, not just from investors buying new build properties but also displaced west Londoners taking the value of their property east and getting much more for their money…If that happens, then the Government and LOCOG, the London 2012 organising committee, are likely to fulfil their legacy pledge to regenerate East London…”
Ruddick is accessing the wider gentrification discourse on potential success of the London 2012 Olympic Games legacy. The discourse that he has drawn from summarises the conception that wealthier groups are perceived as a positive contribution towards a sustained Olympic legacy are displacing the local populations. Another part of legacy discourse is the idea that legacy is arguably driven by the continued focus and development which occurs post-Games. Another way of explaining post-Olympic Games confidence is through the analogy of a ‘ripple effect’.

George – “…the aim is to have that ripple effect. It’s exactly what we want to do.”

The analogy of the ripple effect links to the idea of ripples in water, whereby the ripple is outward moving and affects areas further out from the epicentre. The analogy works with hosting the Olympic Games as the epicentre in Stratford and the starting point of the ripple. For example, now there are alternative developments and regeneration plans being put forward and started in areas away from Stratford; as Mark states

“…then we hear Hackney Wick is going to go through a massive development…”

The Hackney Wick regeneration has been mentioned in relation to the redevelopment and regeneration prospects of ‘Fish Island’. David Spittles (2015), writing for the Evening Standard (London) explains

“It is the staggering regeneration of neighbouring Stratford that has altered its fortunes. Not only is Fish Island a beneficiary of all the new infrastructure and local amenities, it is a key component of an ambitious master plan for the wider Hackney Wick area, one that is bringing a new overground station and up to 5,500 new homes. Crucially, London Legacy Development Corporation, which owns a lot of the land, has taken control as the planning authority and is fast-tracking change.”

The ripple effect is therefore a facet of legacy and the confidence in the area because the plans would not be considered if there was not any investment or interest in the East of London as a development centre. Spittles is tapping into part of the official discourse which is aligning successful regeneration of additional
sites in the borough as being attributed to the hosting of the Olympic Games. It
should be noted that the ripple effect example provided by David Spittles, is in
fact directly linked to the already established regeneration programme initiated by
the London Legacy Development Corporation, as he states that it is land which is
still under their planning authority and control. Spittles’ discourse has excluded
wider discourses that put forward the idea that regeneration has been an on-going
project for the London Borough of Newham for approximately three decades prior
to hosting the Olympic Games in 2012.

Bob, who is involved in commerce and its development in the area has
recognised the outward movement of developments and directly links it to hosting
the 2012 Olympic Games in Stratford.

“I mean the immediate area of the Olympics site; the impact has
been you know very very sort of comprehensive throughout the
whole area. Canning Town is another example and there is
massive regeneration going on in Canning Town and that is
spreading as well into the Royal Docks…”

He goes on to explain that the developments which are rippling outwards are
necessary to continue the future growth and expansion of the East of London.

“…it’s had a knock on effect the Olympics site, definitely. I think
that it sort of runs up the Lee Valley and if you know there’s lots
of residential activity going on at the moment and that of course is
very necessary and a very very good thing… These things have a
knock on effect, satellite things happen.”

The concept of encouraging ‘satellite things’ to happen emphasises indirectly the
thought of the outward ripple movement from the initial development and
regeneration site out across the wider borough. It is also representative of the idea
of an evolving confidence in not only the immediate vicinity of the Queen
Elizabeth Olympic Park site, but also further sites away from the park. The word
‘satellite’ emphasises the outward momentum of confidence. It implies a personal
belief and a limited link to the actual Olympic Games.

Bob’s narrative presented here is a positive view of the ripple effect and
the role that hosting the Olympic Games has had on the regeneration of Stratford
and the surrounding boroughs. Bob’s narrative however, excludes the acknowledgement of the on-going regeneration programmes that have been developing since the 1980s. It is remarkable that he excludes these elements from his rhetoric because previously he worked with lobbying groups and helped to develop the organisation that he is now working with, which was involved heavily in the development of the London Docklands and Thames Gateway regeneration programmes throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Potentially his exclusion of these discourses could be related to a form of participant bias, whereby he presents discourses that only relate to the topic under discussion in the interview.

Jane also mentions that from a planning perspective, it is imperative to recognise and drive forward the area by utilising the ‘buzz’ that has developed since hosting the Olympic Games.

“…certainly going forward the drivers are recognising that there are quite a few areas that have that major buzz…for Crossrail and the challenge is to make sure we particularly deliver in the best way possible and presumably deliver the jobs…”

‘Buzz’ can be attributed as another way of recognising the new found ‘confidence’ for development and investment opportunities. Jane’s discourse here links the idea of using the ‘buzz’ for not only gaining momentum in the physical regeneration plans, but also to help establish more jobs and employment opportunities in the area. The discourse that she is accessing is one of positivity which is engaging with future projects in order to fully harness the ‘buzz’. The discourse however does exclude reference to the Olympic Games as one of the drivers that has created the ‘buzz’. The concept of ‘buzz’ is also talked about by Amy.

Amy explains that

“We’re working on establishing a business improvement district and it’s an idea that’s been around for quite a long while…the council were looking at this business improvement district as a business centre, they’re mechanism for engaging people, and the businesses here just went no I’m not interested. And soon as the games it’s really kind of taken off. It’s really come and grabbed
people’s imagination and so we’re now actually gonna go to ballot in October…”

The Olympic Games according to Amy in this case, has also helped with the development of more ‘intangible’ based projects, such as the development of the business district. Although the business district is not linked in any way to the Olympic Games, the confidence that has arisen from hosting has enabled projects such as this one to gain momentum. Amy uses a thread of local level discourse that is positive of the official discourses as part of her narrative. She believes that the renewed sense of confidence in Stratford has helped to grow the business opportunities on offer to local people. Amy’s narrative is barely detracting from the official discourses presented by the authorities in charge of delivering the legacy and the Olympic Games before hand. For Amy, the Olympics presented an opportunity for development for her rather than a negative loss as it has been for some residents. However, Amy is not immune from the community level discourse, as she has lived in and around the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park area for more than 20 years.

Another area of confidence has been seen in the investment opportunities, which have been taken up by domestic and international organisations. Many of these new investment opportunities have links to other regeneration projects that are linked to the ‘ripple effect’. The outward movement of the effect as previously discussed means that the investment confidence is not just situated in one part of East London, in this case Stratford, London Borough of Newham, it is moving out and away from Stratford and even the London Borough of Newham into surrounding boroughs. Cyril mentions that “…if you look at Sugar House Lane or Strand East which was down towards the Bow flyover, big area of land before the games that was purchased by Inter-IKEA, the IKEA Pension fund…in the East Village the Qatari investment that came, if you look at Stratford High Street a lot of investment for residential from overseas investors. The Excel exhibition centre with the Abu Dhabi investment grew. The Chinese investment in what will be the Albert Business Park came, German investment in Siemens Crystal down at the docks. So you know the Emirates investment in the airline…in infrastructure you see quite a large, a really large
amount if you add it up its beaten the £9 billion to put the games on the games in private sector investment coming to this area…”

Cyril highlights the notion that the cost of hosting the Olympic Games in 2012 has been bettered in private sector investments in the short period of the post-Games era. Cyril has used the multiple investors to contextualise the official discourses. Cyril’s use of discourse is presenting the positive image of the post-Games experience, whereby there are multiple private sector investors being attracted to developments in the area through the expanding ripple effect movement outside of Stratford. He has chosen to use these investments as way to combat the alternative discourse that focuses on the economics and the costs of hosting the Olympic Games. The competing economic discourses feature two main threads, those that are positive and emphasise the level of investment growth post-Games; and there are threads of discourse that consider the cost of hosting was not worth the public expenditure. Cyril has accessed these positive, confidence driven discourses to present in his narrative because of his job role and involvement in shaping the regeneration legacy of Stratford and the wider borough of Newham.

**Regeneration**

Regeneration has been an ongoing process arguably since the late 18th Century when the area was originally developed in order to accommodate the docks. Ever since that time, the area has been evolving to meet the demands of the communities and wider society. One of the aims of the Olympic bid was to regenerate the deprived East London area. Anthony Faiola (2012), who writes for *The Washington Post*, explains the differences between London’s regeneration and Beijing’s redevelopment

“For the Beijing Games four years ago, China rolled out an astounding $40 billion citywide upgrade that saw the rise of architectural glories even as whole neighbourhoods were displaced. In contrast, observers say, London’s $15 billion effort is shaping up as the most targeted attempt in a generation to improve life in a poor area of a host city.”

Faiola is providing a viewpoint of the regeneration process for London versus Beijing from an international perspective. Faiola has contrasted the host nation’s
plans and methods of redeveloping a city space. The viewpoint of London’s differing regeneration plans fit with the historical evolution of the area. The social history of the area has been brought up in discussion by participants, whether it is referring to the 18th and 19th centuries or the more recent past of the mid to late 20th Century. Therefore, it is important to ensure the following points are discussed:

- Historical significance of regeneration in the area
- Regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site
- Alternative regeneration plans which have been linked to hosting the Olympic Games by the participants

**Historical Significance of Regeneration**

It has already been mentioned that historically the East London geographical area has been under a process of constant evolution. Marriott (2012) has explained that the Industrial Revolution meant that East London was at the centre of trade and industry due to the development of the docklands. The industrialisation of the late 18th Century and onwards to the point of deindustrialisation in the mid-20th Century meant that the heavy, noxious industries were occurring away from the main development of the City of London in the East of London areas. Roger, a community member from a church located in the London Borough of Hackney, explains the state of the landscape and grounds

“I mean you know that the area was the industrial area of London right back to what Roman Empire and before. That was always the bad area…but and obviously all these sort of weird and wonderful things that took place during the Victorian era, trying to invent future – petrol, plastic bags all that kind of stuff. So you can imagine quite a few mistakes were made along the way. And they didn’t think about the effects on the environment then…so basically the soil had everything from arsenic through to you name it, it was in it…”

Sam, comparably to Roger, expresses that in his experience

“Stratford was a great hub for light manufacturing, back in the day if you wanted a job in light manufacturing or whatever, you always found a job in Stratford…obviously with the changing nature of, you know, Britain those jobs went.”
Both Roger and Sam have chosen to use a discourse in their narratives that draws historical context to express their perspectives regarding the process of deindustrialisation of Stratford and the wider East End of London. By the mid-20th Century the docklands and Stratford were becoming less important and the area was losing its heavy and light industries and becoming deindustrialised. The East End of London transitioned into its position as a post-industrial cityscape. It is important to recognise the effect of the social history of the area as well as understanding the impact of previous regeneration projects on the communities involved.

By the late 1970s and very early 1980s, the London Docklands Development was being implemented. George, who worked as part of a legacy organisation, explains that

“It started in '81 that was the Dockland Corporation set up under Michael Heseltine. He was the minister who brought it through in 1981. He set up London Docklands Development Corporation that was the year of the act.”

George is explaining that the last large regeneration plan for the area was in the 1980s and created the Canary Wharf area within the docklands area. He explains that it was a different process throughout the development. He says that

“But it was very different…I mean the Local Authority fought tooth and nail, they had seats on the board and on planning and they never took them up. It was sort of hostile in and um I mean I can see the failings. If you look at Canary Wharf, comes as this bright shining business district. For security and other reasons the surrounding estates wasn’t any spending on them so it was very them and us feel there.”

George implies that it was a top down approach. The Government officials imposed the regeneration plans on the local communities with little discussion because the Local Authorities refused to engage with the project. George states that

“It was very insular and that’s one of the things we’re trying not to do. We’ve always sort of mentally and physically thought of this park without borders. You can wander on to the park now 24/7 so
there’s nothing to stop you walking onto the park at night if you want to do that.”

The insular nature of the previous large-scale regeneration plan has been noted as an ineffective model, which was considered to be a failing element in the Docklands regeneration project.

Mark, who has set up a charitable media organisation in Hackney Wick, explains that the Canary Wharf development was actually a polarising event for the community

“[Canary Wharf] that made a huge change...that divided East London a little bit because you had this amazing area that it’s you know really quite sort of 22nd Century buildings and the Docklands Light Railway going through it. And it was exciting stuff. And right next to it you’ve still got council housing, really deprived area on the Isle of Dogs and that same area.”

Mark here has recognised that regeneration of areas can cause social polarisation, which occurs due to the distinct differences between two competing social groupings. The lack of social interaction between the groups means that it is not possible to build what Putnam (2000) recognises as bridging capital, whereby each social group creates links and bridges into other communities, which can benefit each party involved. Putnam (2000, pp. 22–23) provides a clear definition of bonding and bridging social capital

Bonding social capital is good for undergirding specific reciprocity and mobilizing solidarity. Dense networks in ethnic enclaves, for example, provide crucial social and psychological support for less fortunate members of the community...Bridging networks, by contrast, are better for linkage to external assets and for information diffusion...Moreover, bridging social capital can generate broader identities and reciprocity, whereas bonding social capital bolsters our narrower selves.

In theory the development of social capital, bonding, and bridging capital, should provide strength to the community and allow for more opportunities to strengthen and develop each strata of the community. The lack of bridging social capital, between the two groups of these communities (Canary Wharf and the Isle of Dogs), means that neither group gains any social or cultural resources from the other. The social polarisation develops due to the two homogenous communities,
which have strong bonding social capital that is exclusive to each group. It is noteworthy that Mark uses the Canary Wharf development of the 1980s and 1990s as part of this discourse. He is providing evidence that similar regeneration and development projects have happened before and that the by-product of those projects was a segregation of communities. It is arguable that Mark is questioning whether there will be similarities between the Canary Wharf development and the regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Cyril, who works alongside George at the legacy organisation, explains that the 1990s were the turning points for the regeneration in the Lower Lea Valley, which is where the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park is located.

“...we were already aware in the sort of mid 90s I suppose...Central London was growing and it was growing eastwards. The first steps had been under the egress of the London Docklands Corporation...the Royal Docks had sort of started but had stalled...the shopping centre that you can see [meaning Westfield Stratford City development] the residential development around it were already pretty much formed by the late 90s...But we didn’t really know uh particularly with Stratford what was going to unlock it.”

Cyril is contextualising the idea that actually the regeneration plans were still being developed right through the 1990s before the idea for hosting the 2012 Olympic Games had been considered. Cyril’s observation has been backed up by Dave Hill (2015), writing for the Guardian, who states

“In the past, politicians had fretted about the park’s setting. It was one thing to point out that the capital’s centre of gravity was moving east – a shift that had been visible since the rise of Canary Wharf – but another to make the case that this whole new piece of London landscape, half the size of a borough on an unfashionable transition zone between inner and outer London, could be a thriving new business frontier. The International Quarter looks set to demonstrate that it can.”

He also maintains that the Local Authorities had already begun the planning on the Westfield Stratford City and associated developments prior to winning the bid in 2005. Cyril also explains that “…we knew that if it was really going to be successful we had to tip the balance in to getting private sector investment”, the requirement for this investment stems from the need for land assembly (meaning
the decontamination, clearing and preparing of the lands being used to build the Olympic Park on) to deal with the historical past mentioned previously by Roger. Jane, who works in local authority planning, reinforces the information provided by Cyril by stating

“…Stratford City was in place before the Olympic bid was won, so there were things going on before. The Olympics sort of accelerated it…There’s been many years of focus on that area trying to bring about change, it just so happens that it was just beginning to take off as we got the Olympics.”

The participants are all detailing the amount of regeneration work that had been done prior to or a substantial way through the planning process prior to gaining the Olympic Games in July 2005. The image that is being presented by the participants thus far is one of a post-industrial landscape with limited resources to try and modernise the town and surrounding areas. Mark concurs with the other participants that prior to the Olympic Games

“Stratford has a 1970s concrete shopping centre like all towns had in those days…didn’t really have any big names…The area that is now the Olympic Park was a complete dump. There were loads of uh sort of car breakers yards, you know piles of cars everywhere.”

What is more important is the idea that prior to winning the Olympics Games bid, the Stratford area was already in the process of developing multiple projects aiming to regenerate parts of the town. The area has in fact over the last 30 years been undergoing a regeneration process which has not necessarily been received as a positive experience. However, it has been recognised by George, who is working in a legacy organisation, that previous regeneration projects like the Thames Gateway and the associated Docklands projects have been seen as less than successful because of a lack of local integration. The top-down approach to regeneration used as the framework for the Docklands developments created social polarisation. The polarisation was a by-product of the original working class communities failing to merge in with the newly establishing middle-class community. The segregation of communities was seen as one of the downfalls of the Docklands regeneration project.
The London Borough of Newham has produced the ‘Stratford Metropolitan Masterplan: Development Framework’ as a way to combine the regeneration project happening across the borough in its ‘Arc of Opportunity’. The masterplan states:

“Stratford, Canning Town and the Royal Docks together, form Newham’s Arc of Opportunity, Europe’s largest regeneration project. The Arc of Opportunity will drive forward regeneration in Newham, building on the borough’s strengths – its regional, national and international transport connections, its development potential, diversity, youth and ambition in addressing the challenges that Newham faces – worklessness, deprivation and a transient population.”

(Wales, 2011, p. 5)

The masterplan’s objectives are to

- “Develop Stratford into London’s eastern gateway
- Secure the benefits of Stratford City and the Olympic Park for local residents
- Link together Stratford City, the Olympic Park in legacy, the existing town centre and local communities to create an integrated and coherent Metropolitan Centre
- Ensure the existing town centre shares the economic growth of Stratford City and the Olympic site
- Strengthen the Council’s powers to ensure high quality development.”
The masterplan provides parameters of the ‘Arc of Opportunity’, whereby it states that it includes Stratford, Canning Town and the Royal Docks. All of the areas examined as part of the Arc have been mentioned by participants of the research. The aim of the masterplan is to help join up the regeneration areas within Stratford to create a ‘Metropolitan Centre’ which in turn is designed to help develop and utilise economic growth of the newly developed Stratford City and Olympic Park sites.

Cyril, who works in regeneration organisation, explains that

“I think you have to trace the games, the confidence in the investment particularly from overseas…if you look at Sugar House Lane or Strand East which was down towards the Bow Flyover. Big area of land, before the games that was purchased by Inter-IKEA, the IKEA pension fund…to redevelop the residential neighbourhood for international and cultural places…If you look along Stratford High Street, a lot of investment for residential [developments] from overseas investors. The Excel Exhibition Centre with the Abu Dhabi investment grew. The Chinese investment in what will be the Albert Business Park came. The German investment in Siemens Crystal down at the docks…the Emirates investment in the airline…”

Cyril mentions four large global redevelopment groups in the above narrative. Cyril is framing his opinion regarding the importance of these developments with the ideals presented in the masterplan. His previous links with community level politics and his current role working in regeneration, has shaped his experience and had an effect on his narrative. He will have bought into the masterplan and now he is placing a different emphasis on its importance. He is attributing the success of attracting new large-scale developments to not only the masterplan but also the confidence gained from hosting the Olympic Games. The discourse that he is drawing from is part of an official thread, one that promotes the confidence that has been generated from hosting rather than prior local level planning. It is understandable why he would draw from the official discourses because of his own role in the regeneration organisation that he works and the local community.
The discourse is emphasising the investment from outside businesses and organisations to the borough from the Olympic ripple effect.

Bob, who works within business development, mentions other development opportunities happening in the area.

“Canning Town is another example and there is massive regeneration going on in Canning Town, and that is spreading into the Royal Docks…I don’t know if you’ve been to the Newham Town Hall? You’ve seen what’s going on there and you’ve perhaps seen the Siemens Crystal…it is a huge urban sustainability centre. Siemens, are a German company, spent something like £60 million on it and it’s absolutely fascinating. Obviously there’s more hotels opening up all of the time and that has been driven forward even further by the Olympic Games…”

Bob mentions the Canning Town regeneration, which is a project that was not mentioned by Cyril. Both Bob and Cyril focus on the new investment and development opportunities that are opening up in the East London area. Both mention the high profile development of the Siemens Crystal. However, Bob also focuses on the smaller Canning Town regeneration project. The difference in their perspectives means that they individually place a different weighting of importance on the projects mentioned. Bob’s role in his organisation means that he is concentrated on all development opportunities that arise in the East London area, that includes opportunities that are not directly associated to hosting the Olympic Games in 2012. Bob is going to champion the smaller developments because of his role in the development of local business opportunities. Canning Town is an example of a project that is a smaller scale programme and not directly associated with hosting the Olympic Games. Cyril on the other hand is going to evidence his discourse by using official examples of regeneration that are directly linked to hosting the Olympic Games in 2012. Cyril is limited in his narrative because he is duty bound to present the projects that are directly associated to his organisation as these provide credit. Bob scatters his narrative with smaller regeneration programmes as evidence to reinforce his opinions. He is able to access smaller threads of regeneration discourse that are not associated with the official discourses. However, he still praises the Olympic Games as
helping to produce more opportunities for the East End of London to use to regenerate.

Finally, there is Mark, who works in a community-level media organisation. Mark is arguably the closest to being a part of the lower level of the strata or social hierarchy. Mark has also lived in the London Borough of Newham for 27 years. Mark states:

“IKEA are building what we jokingly call an IKEA Village…one of these things they’ve done in other countries…Over on the East side of that area above the Thames, you’ve got London City Airport and quite a lot of waste ground there…but also lots of people have lived there a long time. You’ve got Tate and Lyle who have got a famous factory there at Silvertown. We’ve got the Excel Centre which is one of the biggest city exhibition centres now…that whole area is now going to be redeveloped…and this you know, concerns people have about trying to buy property, being bought off plan by overseas investors in China just as investments.”

He mentions the large IKEA development but also highlights that in the area of the other large redevelopment projects mentioned, there is a large expanse of waste ground. Mark voices the local community’s concern about foreign investors buying directly off plan at the developments. It is reminiscent of of an ‘us and them’ form of argument, whereby a distinction is made between wealthy incomers who acquire prime local assets and the rest of the community who already live and work in the area.

Mark is using his discourse to voice his concerns about the focus on the incoming investors and the reduction in opportunities for local people. Bob provided some promotional material that presents the exact plans for the location mentioned by Mark. The Chinese are implementing the development of the ‘ABP: Royal Albert Docks’ as a new business district. In the material (pages 40-41), it is stated that there will be 9,585 new homes built as part of the development, as well as a “mixed use district” at Greenwich Peninsula, which is stated to provide an additional 10,700 new homes. Mark through his narrative has recognised that the new investment by the Chinese ABP group is focusing their
attention on attracting people who will buy the properties as an investment, who potentially live abroad or do not live permanently in the property. Mark emphasises that “…lots of people have lived there a long time.” but the promotional material does not mention the current residents or anything related to local communities. Mark is accessing a local community level discourse that is highlighting that the development will not aid the London housing crisis due to the price and the emphasis on property as investments.

Regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Site

The regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site was advanced as a major planning objective in the Olympic bid document which was accepted by the IOC in 2005. Stratford, and arguably the wider London Borough of Newham was recognised to be in a state of disrepair and needed a focus to reengage with the regeneration plans which had been continuing throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. Alyson Rudd (2014), writing for The Times, states that Denis Hone (the former chief executive of the London Legacy Development Corporation) in an interview explained that

“…the overhaul of the region is only halfway through a 60 year cycle…We could make Stratford more like the capital of this area of east London in the way Canary Wharf never achieved with its focus on financial business.”

Many of the participants who have taken part in the research have all been residents or worked in the area for a long time prior to the Olympic Games bids. It is important to consider the experiences of living and working in the area prior to winning the Olympic bid as it sets up a point of comparison between the before and after of the Olympic Games.

The time period mentioned is also the phase which had the most effect on the participant’s experiences as they lived through and alongside the redevelopment and regeneration. Fred a local community member states that

“…it’s hard to think back now, so much has changed…Stratford in those days was an area nobody wanted to live, really. It was just the dregs…”
Anthony Faiola (2012) writes in the Washington Post, that

“…an ugly lattice of toxic canals, dilapidated warehouses and piled-up scrap heaps has been replaced with the Olympic Park – London’s largest new green space since the 1700s.”

John, explains the very initial stages of the bidding process

“I was first elected to the London Assembly in the year 2000 and roughly 2000 or 2001 I had a meeting with my um occasional friend Ken Livingstone [who was then the elected Mayor of London] about the Olympics, and the British Olympic Association had produced two bids for the Olympics for London. Uh one was in the sort of Wembley area and the other one in East London area and um I remember the meeting. There were two or three other people present as well. It was sort of a briefing room with a conversation about things. We were very clear that we supported the bid which supported regeneration in East London and not one that was Wembley based bid. So the very starting point the principle was um an Olympic bid which was a catalyst for regeneration in a whole number of ways for East London…”

The very initial conversations therefore were focused on the regeneration of the East London area. Dave Hill (2015), writing for the Guardian, explains that

“Livingstone was famously candid. Uninterested in sport and never a big fan of Blair, he characterised the bid as ‘the only way to get billions of pounds out of the government to develop the East End.’”

Hill is highlighting that Ken Livingstone used a high profile sport mega-event to garner long term, sustainable investment from government into the East End of London. It indicates that the Keynesian approach should be adapted to draw a distinction between local and national public sectors with regards to investment. Hill’s commentary is reinforcing John’s actual experiences as he stated above that the focus and interest in the bid was if it would be focused on the East End of London. Hill is intimating through his use of discourse that the only way to persuade Blair’s New Labour government, at the time, was to use a Keynesian approach to regenerate the East End of London, was to host a sport mega-event. The Keynesian approach meant that there were opportunities for the East End of London boroughs to receive public funding to redevelop the areas that would not normally be available. Hosting the Olympic Games meant that there was an
extended period of time, the seven years of the Olympic cycle, whereby funding for redevelopment for the chosen host location was almost guaranteed.

It has been recognised in the Newham 2027 Core Strategy (2012, p. 19) that the London Borough of Newham has an abundance of Brownfield sites

“Fortunately Newham is in an ideal position to maximise the opportunities for economic development; it is able to provide London with a large supply of brownfield development land over the plan period to 2027 to help meet its targets for new housing and economic growth.”

The idea of regeneration is further explained by George, who worked as a Chief Executive for a legacy based organisation:

“…what you have to realise this site wasn’t picked down here because it was an easy development site. It was picked by Ken Livingstone; the then Mayor of London and had absolutely no interest in sport whatsoever. His interest in this area of land where local communities were separate the park was covered in pylons, it was covered in uh, shopping trollies, tyre mounds, transport garages and depots and things. It was impenetrable for local people, it was a real obstacle in this area. It was picked for that purpose because the Mayor knew he could get huge amounts of Central Government focused in this area and it could have a really transformational change.”

The aforementioned industrial past meant that the land assembly would be a complex process of decontamination and clearance of the post-industrial landscape. Up until approximately 2005 the land designated for the development of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, was still home to semi-industrialised industries. John who between the years 2004 - 2008 was the Deputy Chairman of the London Development Agency explains that

“…as the bid was cranking up, our role at the LDA [London Development Agency], so a non-exec board position, was quite involved in initially the land assembly and some of the more heavy lifting remedial works. Contending with um contaminated soil, levelling things out um…mending rivers and things um underground and power cables which was a big deal…”

It is noted by Anna White (2015), a columnist for the Sunday Telegraph, that it was found to be difficult to get land assembly issues, like burying pylons, dealt with prior to winning the bid to host the Olympic Games.
"In London it accelerated private initiatives and turned them into political imperatives’, says Hugill. ‘I tried to persuade [the energy company] EDF and the National Grid to bury pylons in Lower Lea Marshes in order to clear the Westfield Stratford site for building. I had little success until after the Olympics was won and the contract was awarded to bury the pylons’’

White who has interviewed Hugill, explains that in his experience land assembly contracts were harder to approve as there was little interest in working in that location. It is implied that winning the Olympic Games bid meant that there was now a level of gravitas to the request for the pylons to be buried. The Olympic Games became a justifying factor in negotiations because it is a globally known and generally respected brand.

The Olympic Games is often credited with being the catalyst for the regeneration of Stratford and the wider London Borough of Newham. Sam, a local council member, expresses that in his opinion

“Ken Livingstone summed it up well, the Olympic Park area had 30 years of infrastructure investment in just seven years.”

Sam is using an official line of discourse presented by the previous London Mayor (elected from 2000-2008). He poses the idea that winning the right to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012 enabled Stratford to gain investment in infrastructure development in a short amount of time. He does not exclaim that the Olympic Games catalysed the regeneration process in and around the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in Stratford. He argues that hosting the Olympic Games brought a focus on infrastructure development which had a finite timescale attached. Aside from Sam, however, the participants, who are connected very closely to the community, have presented an alternative perspective through their discourse that simply casts hosting the Olympic Games as a method of restarting previously stagnated regeneration plans. Amy, who leads a consortium of local businesses, explains that people believe

“…the Olympics kicked off the regeneration of Stratford and it didn’t, because the first thing that really kicked regeneration off was the Channel Tunnel rail link and High Speed 1.”
Amy continues to explain that for the Westfield/Stratford City project there was a lot of land wastage in the area around the newly developing Stratford International Station. The surrounding area was seen as deprived and lacked connections to the wider area which the local council were trying to regenerate. Once the international station was developed the Westfield site was the next big regeneration planned site. However, the Olympic Games were seen as beneficial because Amy credits the Olympic Games for catalysing the Westfield development which probably would not have happened because “at that current time…it was the economic downturn”. Amy argues that the economic downturn would have stopped or delayed projects at any other time, but because the Olympic Games were going to be hosted in Stratford the interest and projects were kept going.

The land assembly was significant, which is why Fred’s proclamation at the beginning of this section of the drastic change to the area is explained across the different clusters of community representatives who participated in the research. Molly, Emily and Roger, who are members of a church in the neighbouring London Borough of Hackney, explain from a local resident’s perspective what the land assembly looked like and what their understanding of what was happening on the site before and after the developments to create the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Molly, Emily and Roger are three members of a church in the neighbouring London Borough of Hackney, and in a group discussion, they stated:

“Emily: I learnt to drive where they have done the Olympic Games, and you think that was just a dump of all dumps. You went over there to learn to drive cos no-one drove round there so you could do your three point turns and reversing round the corners. Um…it was like the worst like car dumps and used cars ugh…it was unbelievable.
Roger: It was the worst industrialisation you could ever imagine…
Emily: ever ever imagine over there…
Roger: but it was so bad that the workload they had to do to clean up the area was absolutely significant. I mean…
Emily: There was toxic…
Molly: …it took a year.
Roger: “...yeah some areas were so toxic they had to have hazmat suits [personal protective equipment to deal with toxic or dangerous substances].”

Jane also makes a comment on the land contamination “Inevitably most of Newham development land is highly contaminated and has quite a lot of risk...so if you like some aspects of sustainability have to be designed in and the Olympic Games was a particularly good benchmark and showcase...”

Jane, from a Local Authority planner’s perspective, is highlighting the idea that there are difficulties when dealing with highly contaminated land while undertaking regeneration projects. The Olympic Games had no choice but to be a front-runner in its processes and procedures, which has now set a precedent for future developments. However, Jane also mentions that there is a cost involved

“...obviously where quite a lot of public money went because it costs huge amount to do that remediation to that standard...but it is something we do push for more broadly through the London Town and supported ultimately by building regs [building regulations].”

The method of land assembly for the Olympic Games has set a precedent for future developers to follow. In Jane’s discourse, in which she presents her professional opinion, there is now an expected standard for developers to meet when working towards “remediation” and those standards are supported by the building regulations.

The land assembly and construction for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park was an extensive and as previously mentioned complex undertaking. Fred comments that it obstructed his ability to take his normal cycle routes around the area

“...there was huge amounts of construction going on on the Olympic site, and I mean that had direct effects in that I used to...I had a regular cycling route through Carpenters Road to Hackney which was cut off basically. You couldn’t go through there...”

The development of the site meant that social transit routes around the cityscape were being closed off from public access. Sam expresses the opinion that

“I think the lead up to the Games was a nightmare, an absolute nightmare...It was like a building site, a constant building site, roads were cut off, you couldn’t do this, and you couldn’t do that. That was the irritating factor, but everyone knew why.”
Sam uses a discourse that has originated from the local population whereby they were living and experiencing first-hand the disruption to everyday life. Sam provides the image of the building site as his main point of contention, but does acknowledge that the local populations knew and understood why the closures were required. He follows up from this thread of discourse with “People could see the light at the end of the tunnel.”

These issues were recognised early on by the authorities that there would be problems and they tried to counteract the effects of the closures. Fred explains “You know they made a big effort to bring stuff and take stuff away by river or by train to avoid clogging up the roads, so actually it wasn’t visible on the roads all round here.”

Roger furthers Fred’s comments “They were painstaking I’d say over what they did to actually try and support the local area…it’s changed all construction…we’ve noticed all construction since then has improved.”

Emily even mentions that in comparison to the disruption caused by the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site development, “there’s way more disruption when you get some idiot in the Blackwall Tunnel broken down!” The comparison between a notorious place for traffic congestion and the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park construction is interesting as Emily is emphasising the point that the construction work, although disruptive was actually bearable. George explains that “Both at the ODA [Olympic Development Agency] and here we have people in the organisation whose job is to do community relations…some of that’s just about we have an event and what’s the impact going to be.”

George furthers the idea of the importance of communication with the local communities “if you are basically honest with people they respect that and you know if you stand up and say look in the next 6 months we’re going to have a lot of construction work going on over here it will be noisy, the hours of operation are from this hour to this hour. If there is working outside of those hours, here’s the hotline number and yes there will be road closures and you will have lorries and things so you need to be aware of that…they sort of you know
they’re not going to be deliriously happy but they sort of get it and understand that it’s for a period of time…”

He reflects that honesty is the best way of dealing with large scale construction works such as those completed to transform the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. George believes that it is not possible or sensible to provide people with lies and half truths about what construction work is going to be happening as it will cause problems later on. He explains that

“I’ve never been worried about having an open and honest debate with people. You always get the sort of person you never going to please or whatever but on the whole, average tips have been pretty good.”

He is highlighting the idea that communication is central to the success of a construction project and to ensure that the local communities have the best experience possible. He also intimates that not all community members will be amenable to the changes or engage with the project, unless they are complaining about part of the project.

Sam’s final comments refer to the development and regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site:

“I think the Park in 20 years’ time will be a very small footnote...You can’t have something like the Olympics on your doorstep and say that happens over there and we don’t have any impact...It forces you to say what can we do and how can we maximise the opportunities for our residents”

Sam uses his narrative to try and personally contextualise hosting the Olympic Games. He argues that hosting the Olympic Games was an opportunity for East London, he also compared it to the

“development of the docklands over a hundred years ago”

He has used an historical discourse to contextualise the idea that East London has been undergoing development for more than a century but also that development is beneficial if the opportunity is grasped and used to its fullest potential. It is an official discourse that he is using in his narrative which is presenting a positive expectation of hosting the Olympic Games but that is to be anticipated considering his role in the local council.
Stratford, London Borough of Newham, was highlighted as a potential host for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games because of the development to its public transport network. The success of the bid was centred around how accessible the Stratford was to the rest of London. Accessibility can be subdivided into two distinct categories. The first sub-category relates to the physical aspects to accessibility – the connectivity of the cityscape. The second sub-category relates to the importance of the social facets that influence movement around a city. The two categories became apparent from the discourses presented by seven participants. In addition to the discourses provided by the participants, a selection of newspaper discourses has also been included to aid the discussion.

The development of the public transport system across East London is recognised as a key feature of engaging East London with the rest of the city of London. The public transport network has over recent years been extending further and further eastwards. The expansion has meant that the East of London has become more widely connected to the rest of the city and neighbouring boroughs. Ben, who works within the transport industry and was part of the Transport for London team during the Olympic Games, explains that

“…the Overground [railway services] really helped connect East London, the DLR [Docklands Light Railway] when it opened down here that transformed community. Cross Rail similarly will have a transformative impact because it will connect this part of London with Central London in 15 minutes.”

Accessibility to the area is central to the ability to attract residents, workers and business investments. George agrees that during the Olympic Games “people came here…they realised it was pretty easy to get here…all the different transport links.” George’s narrative is reminiscent of a marketing campaign for Stratford and Newham, which is a possible by-product of his role at his respective regeneration organisation. He is drawing from an official marketing discourse to express his views about accessibility and connectivity. He is using an example in
his narrative to present his perspective that the ease of access to the area was a surprise for visitors. According to Emily Dugan (2013), who writes for The Independent, “Stratford is now second only to King’s Cross as the most connected part of London.” Dugan is accessing an official marketing discourse thread too. The example Dugan uses provides a scale to the level of connectivity which adds some gravitas to the point that is being presented. It also interlinks to Ben’s discourse, where he presents his perspective with regards to travel times.

Penny, a prominent community figure involved in the community aspects of regeneration, puts forward one reason for the success of the Olympic Games bid

“…its why we got the Olympics really, because of all the transport links and everything else…the Station [railway station] used to be underground with a horrible [said with emphasis] subway through the shopping centre [meaning the Stratford Town Centre shopping centre built in the 1970s]. It stank, it was disgusting and the Jubilee Line [Transport for London Underground railway line] was coming in and wanting to build a western concourse. So, there was a thought that we could put all the bits together [including City Challenge money they had already been awarded]…it was our biggest project….it took a huge percentage of the budget.”

The redevelopment of the railway station, including prior work to redevelop the bus station earlier in the 1990s, meant that Stratford became more accessible from a public transport network perspective. Penny attributes these redevelopments as one of the reasons why Stratford won the Olympic bidding process in 2005.

In relation to other Olympic host cities, Sydney which hosted the Olympic Games in 2000 is mentioned by George.

“Sydney struggled…at Homebush [the site of the Olympic Park]. Out there it was considered, you know by London standards the journey’s nothing, but it was considered out of the way wasn’t it?”

Sydney’s Olympic Games was held in a suburb of the city, which similarly to London was developed on regenerated land. The difference between the two host cities was the transport networks. Stratford and the wider East London appear to be much better connected in comparison to Sydney from how George was
speaking. Public transport is also mentioned by the local authority planner, Jane. Jane details the idea that “development opportunities lie right on top of highly accessible transport”. Transport networks are therefore inextricably linked to future planning opportunities. Andrew Neather (2014) of the Evening Standard writes:

“Before the Olympics bid, despite reasonable transport links, Stratford stubbornly refused to regenerate…The Olympic site operation cleaned more than two million tonnes of soil across more than 240 hectares…”

He later mentions “…only with good transport links does the project become viable.” He is agreeing with Jane, that the Olympic site became a viable option for development due to the transport links and the investment in clearing the highly contaminated site prior to its development.

Amy, a leader of a business consortium, explains that prior to the redevelopments the railway station was “like a little cutting you just went under the ground…it was just literally a hole in the ground…” Penny also adds that from a business perspective

“…local businesses were saying we can’t recruit because you know we can’t bring people in through that, they just say this is horrible I don’t want to work here. People didn’t want to go home, um firms were paying for people to get Taxis to Plaistow because it was just so horrible…”

Penny’s experience of public transport is similar to that of Roger, Emily and Molly who live the other side of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in Hackney. They all explained their experiences of the public transport network prior to the redevelopment of the area

“Emily: …there’s always been transport… Molly: …I think there was just a general feeling that this area had been, Hackney as a whole had been forgotten… Roger: …transport links weren’t great…there was public transport but you couldn’t go to where you wanted to go easily for a local person.”

If it is difficult for the local residents to travel around the local area, then it would be very difficult for other people to travel in to the area to work or visit. Public transport is highlighted as a key part of the redevelopments. Molly adds to her
discourse; in which she states that the transport network is now more accessible for those with mobility issues

“Also with the updating they’ve done actually if you’re disabled you can use it now.”

Roger, Emily and Molly all explained in their discourse that disability access for their local stations in Hackney was “non-existent”, which is a word all of them used to describe their experiences, as one of them has mobility issues, of using public transport for disabled users. Their discourse is highlighting the idea that the upgrades that have been implemented to their mind have made the transport network more accessible for those with disabilities and it has opened up the connectivity throughout London and the boroughs.

Jane discusses the importance of transport network development in the London Borough of Newham. Stratford in particular has an old gyratory road system which is not conducive to encouraging cycling as a means of transport. The idea is to “rejig the road environment to make it a major cycling way.” By ‘rejigging’ the current road system and changing it from a one-way gyratory system back into a two-way directional system, it is hoped that it will open up new pathways around Stratford town and encourage more cycling and pedestrian routes to improve the flow of foot and bicycle traffic in and around that area of the town.

Prior to the Olympic Park regeneration and the new plans to alter the gyratory road system, there were amendments to the bus station during the time the train station was being developed. Penny explains that during the consultation for the bus station there were local community meetings held. Penny recited an anecdote about how the regeneration at that time was very top-down focused and the plans were being imposed on local people.

“…this was very early days, consultation leaflet was put through your door on Friday to say what you’re going to do on Monday you know…as the chap was giving the presentation a voice piped up from the lovely lady…it won’t work’; ‘I can assure you this had been tried and tested with all the latest modelling…’; ‘it won’t work’; ‘madam if you’d just like to talk to me afterwards I’ll explain it all to you…’; ‘it won’t work because the number 87 bus doesn’t go that way…’...suddenly we had proved that the local
community knew the area better than the consultants who sort of travel in.”

The story emphasises that the local community, who travel through their town every day, has an understanding of the way that people move around their city space. Penny’s discourse is providing a classic case of local, bottom-up knowledge failing to be acknowledged and used by what is perceived to be an imposing top-down decision-making system. The local knowledge in this case was invaluable as it meant that the problem could be rectified prior to any construction works taking place. The importance of community communication and engagement was recognised at an early stage in the London Olympic Park development. As previously mentioned by George, the authorities have been in contact and communicating with the local populations to ensure the project is engaged with at every stage of development.

Keith, a local council member, reinforces the point being expressed by Penny when he talks about the stadium and the redevelopment of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. He explains that in his experience the local council were not

“...listened to...we said we believe it should be a football stadium.”

Keith uses his narrative to express his disappointment in the lack of consideration given to the local people’s voice. Keith has access to a broad spectrum of the discourses that are to be found within Stratford because of his role as a local council member. He is drawing attention to local level issues by using the associated discourse rather than relying on official discourses to express his discontent with the limited use of local knowledge. He is talking about the use of the stadium once the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games had been completed, where there was some concern over who would take over the stadium. It has since been leased to West Ham United Football Club, who are the majority leaseholder. According to Keith Newham Council is also “renting one third of the stadium, with their £40 million loan investment”. The acceptance of the loan has enabled Newham Borough Council to take a stake in the future use and development of
the stadium side of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. It is arguable that Keith’s
mention of the stake in the stadium is a method of him ensuring that it is
understood that the local council will now have some say over the future plans
whilst the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site remains under the control of the
London Legacy Development Corporation. This might be seen as another sign of
a top-down approach towards urban planning, which results in community
members and the local council officials feeling that they have no control over the
alterations that are proposed and enacted.

Discussion
The chapter has presented the participant experiences and discourses
regarding the urban regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and
surrounding locations. It has been mentioned that the legacy for the park site has
been planned for since the earliest stages of the preparations to host the Olympic
and Paralympic Games. John the then London Assembly Member for East
London likened the regeneration process to the evolution of a footprint in his
discourse. George, Cyril and John all note in their discourses that the regeneration
of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site had to fit into a pre-existing
regeneration programme which dated back to the 1980s. Part of integrating the
Olympic Park into the wider regeneration programme initiated the development of
the convergence agenda. The discourses presented by the participants ranged from
pro-convergence to questioning its efficacy. Bill and John drew their points of
view from the official discourses that present the agenda as a positive force for the
continuation of the regeneration, especially with the “right political leadership”.
Scanlon et al’s (2010) links to the discourses presented by Bill and John in their
narratives. Scanlon et al present the idea that convergence focuses on aspirational
benefits concentrating on specific elements (such as socioeconomic status and
sociocultural development). Penny used community level discourse to present her
alternative perspective. Penny opposes gentrification on moral grounds, she is
actively living and working with those who are most affected by the process.
Dave Hill questioned the agenda’s potential as a driver for gentrification and the
statistical methodology for measuring the agenda’s success. Penny described the
agenda as “grotty” for “aspiring to be average”. Davies’ (2012a) research is more akin to Penny and Dave Hill’s commentary because it questions the ability to halt a century of decline in under 20 years. Davies is challenging the notion that convergence, as a policy/agenda, can reconcile East London with the rest of London. Jane’s discourse drew from her professional experiences working in planning, when she explained that for her convergence was like a ‘buzzword’, but it provided her with a framework that future developers must adhere. All of these people are sharing and drawing from a community level discourse that is sceptical of the event and the associated policies.

The post-Olympic Games confidence subsection discussed the idea of the ripple effect and the outward movement of development opportunities being taken up in neighbouring locations to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site. Jane’s discourse centred on her noting of the ‘buzz’ since hosting the games. Amy also mentioned in her discourse the idea that the business district she is working to develop has become a popular concept since hosting, which is in contrast to pre-Olympic Games opinions in the Stratford High Street area of Stratford. George, Bob and Cyril discuss a variety of developments that are taking place in and around the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site and they attribute these opportunities to the focus hosting the Olympic Games brought to East London. It is notable that all five of these participants draw from the official discourses when highlighting the confidence post-Olympic Games. All of the aforementioned participants are going to draw from the positive and official discourses because of their role and status in the local community. George, Bob and Cyril, due to their roles, are all pro-development investment in the surrounding locations to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Jane and Amy are also very much reliant in their roles to draw from the official discourses. Jane, who works in local authority planning, and Amy, who is leading the development of a new business district, both want and need new developments to be started in the area to ensure a financial and regeneration future for the area. Therefore, it is not a surprise to see the only negative discourse was brought forward by Ruddick writing for the Daily Telegraph. Ruddick used the discourses that he could access to make links to
gentrification. He attributed the potential for gentrification to occur because of the focus eastwards and the West of London and other investors from outside London now see value for money in investments placed in new developments in the East End of London. Ruddick’s social commentary is related to Walks and Maaranen (Walks & Maaranen, 2008), whereby they attribute the concept that resettling the Middle-Classes in East London will enable established local communities for social gain. Putnam’s (2000) research on social capital is also related to Ruddick’s commentary, because it assumes that bridging social capital can be developed between the incoming middle-classes and the existing, established local communities. The new bridging capital allows the existing communities to open up new opportunities by interacting with the incoming more affluent communities.

When focusing on the actual regeneration concepts of the urban regeneration chapter it was necessary to break the section down into smaller more focused points of discussion. Regeneration is a large subject field and it was important to focus on the themes that were generated through the narrative thematic analysis to narrow the field down. Roger, George and Cyril all highlight through their discourses that the East End of London has been undergoing a process of development and regeneration for generations. The process of regeneration is not a new experience for them as they have either been resident or worked in the East End of London for more than 20 years each. Brouillette (2009) state that urbanisation and regeneration can be a process that is used to encourage middle-class resettlement to more deprived locations. It is the fundamental to initiating gentrification.

Mark used his discourse to discuss the social polarisation of communities as new more affluent residents moved into the Docklands developments. Mark highlighted that from his perspective he sees the docklands regeneration of the 1980s and 1990s was viewed locally as a failure because of the lack of social integration between the local populace and the incoming middle-income residents. Mark’s experience is similar to research presented by Koutrolikutou. Koutrolikutou
(2012) explains that the lack of integration is due to the socioeconomic and sociocultural distinctions between local community and the incoming middle-classes. These distinctions create barriers between the communities, which challenge the ability for the communities to integrate.

Developing his discussion further, Mark uses his discourse to emphasise the community concern at the alternative development groups that are moving into the surrounding boroughs, such as the Inter-IKEA group and ABP London Docklands Group. Mark taps into the community level discourses when he presents his opinion that these new developments are not necessarily intended for local communities. Bob, through his business contacts, provided official sales and marketing brochure for the ABP London Docklands Group. The brochure made no reference to local communities. There was a mention of the number of houses to be included in the development and the potential number of jobs it hoped to create. However, there was no distinction between types of housing expected to be built as part of the mixed use development zone. These two developments do not appear to be concerned with integrating communities, it is arguable that these developers are not worried about the ideas of social integration presented by Walks and Maarenen (2008) and Koutrolikou (2012).

The actual regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site was again noted to be part of a larger regeneration agenda by the participants. Both John and George mention in their separate discourses that hosting the Olympic Games was only going to be supported in the political hierarchy if it was focused on the regeneration of the East End of London. Amy also uses her discourse to present the idea that hosting the Olympic Games restarted a stagnated regeneration process rather than acted as a catalyst for the region. The number of times participants have mentioned the regeneration theme as part of an on-going through their presentation of discourses used in their narratives is significant. It is significant because the participants revealing these ideas through their discourses are found in different cluster groups involved in the research. Land assembly was another theme which developed from the discourses of the participants. Emily,
Roger, Molly and Fred draw from community level discourses which note the impact the land assembly had on local people and their navigation of the cityscape. As part of Emily, Roger and Molly’s discourse they draw from stories of shock at the condition of the land, Roger mentioned that the workmen clearing the site had to wear “hazmat suits”. The suits are personal protective equipment used to protect the wearer from hazard materials. However, not all the participant’s saw the disruption of the land assembly as a negative experience, Jane, drawing from her access to professional planning discourse, explains that the work undertaken to decontaminate the land has been beneficial as it has set a standard and precedent for all future building regulations and expectations for developers to meet.

Accessibility was another prominent theme which was subdivided by two categories; the physical aspects to accessibility and the social aspects to accessibility. Ben and George both highlighted in their discourses that Stratford is one of the most well connected locations in London. Stratford has become a transport network hub. It was expected for both Ben and George to discuss this aspect as they are both working from the official discourses. Ben was previously involved in the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games transport planning for Transport for London. He is likely to still draw from those official discourses as he still has a role with a different transport focused organisation. Ben and George’s experiences tie into the work produced by Rousseau. Rousseau (2012) explains the importance of accessibility of the cityscape. Accessibility enables citywide prosperity to develop because people are able to move easily between, in London’s case, the different boroughs that increases the geographical area where people can spend their money. Penny draws from a community discourse, but also intertwines her discourse with direct experience of regenerating the transport system in Stratford. Penny drew her discourse from her previous experiences working on the ‘City Challenge’ regeneration project in the 1990s. Penny’s discourse adds to the discussion thread regarding the on-going cycle of regeneration.
Penny brings practical experience as evidence to her discourse, which was evident when she used an anecdote to highlight her concerns about the limited use of local knowledge when regenerating Stratford station. Through Penny’s anecdote it was possible to see her using her discourse to comment on the limitation of top-down structural approach to regenerating local community spaces. Her discourse showed her concern for the ignorance that non-community planning authorities bring when deciding on the best plans and models for regenerating the cityscape. It held an implication of disempowerment in the first instance that the top-down approach was imposing the plans, however, the lady involved in the anecdote becomes empowered due to her local knowledge and her willingness to speak up and criticise the plans being presented at the community meeting. Penny’s discourse drew on threads of discussion, which tried to provide an explanation of the challenges local businesses faced prior to the redevelopment of the train and bus station at Stratford. The anecdotal evidence presented by Penny links to Knox and Pinch (2010) and Mejia-Dorantes and Lucas (2014) work that discusses the principles behind Morphogenesis. Each phase of the restructure of the cityscape is influenced by social, economic, and cultural factors. In the case of the anecdote, only local communities would know that specific bus routes would affect the future direction of development opportunities.

Official documents highlight that morphogenesis is a central part of the development plans for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Lord Coe stated:

> Our simple vision to use the Games as a catalyst for change has touched and transformed the lives and communities of millions of people across London, the UK and around the world.

(London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic, 2012)

Although this quote is not solely referring to the urban geographical changes, it does emphasise that the plan for a legacy has always been to use the Games as a catalyst. A similar point is made in a report published by the Mayor of London (2013, p. 33) entitled ‘Inspired by 2012: The legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games’ in 2013. This report provided a section detailing the headline of achievements, the first of which stated:
An accelerated process of urban regeneration has taken place in East London during the past decade. The report discusses the achievements made in the subsequent 12 months since hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and sets out the legacy plans for future development on the actual Olympic Park site and its surrounding locations.

The report goes on to state its objectives, two of which are

**Place:** To create one of London’s most dynamic urban districts, attracting investment from across London and beyond, becoming a location of choice for current residents and new arrivals, acting as a fulcrum for wealth creation and entrepreneurship, and linking the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park estate with surrounding neighbourhoods.

**People:** To create local opportunities and transformational change, promote regeneration and convergence for East London, and ensure value for money for taxpayers.

The report recognises the importance of morphogenesis by ensuring that both ‘people’ and ‘place’ are discussed and planned in relation to the legacy of the Olympic Park site. Furthermore, it has been noted in the media (for example, *The Guardian*) that the original plans for redevelopment of the housing provision included high-rise buildings; this initial plan was altered in order to provide buildings that are used by and create a community (Hill, 2012a). The amendments to the housing provision are an example of morphogenesis and the recognition that communities may require different housing options to those outlined at the initial planning stages.

Amy’s discourse also added to the threads presented by Penny and the ideas surrounding morphogenesis of the cityscape, when she explains that prior to the regeneration there was limited transport network infrastructure; the station was effectively just railway sidings. When combined with Penny’s discourse it is plausible that the lack of infrastructure could have a detrimental impact on local businesses ability to effectively employ people from neighbouring towns and boroughs. Jane furthers the discussion when she talks about social movement through the cityscape and why in her opinion it is important to open up new routes to the community. Jane’s discourse presented the plans for the changes to the
existing gyratory system. Jane’s discourse ties in with Emily, Molly and Roger’s discourse when they discussed their views on the accessibility for community members with disabilities. As part of their discussion Emily, Molly and Roger used their discourse to explain the challenges they faced prior to the infrastructure improvements and the greater number of public transport options available to them as residents in the London Borough of Hackney. Connectivity and accessibility have been widely discussed as parts of the participant’s discourses, highlighting the impact not only on physical regeneration but also on the social movement through a cityscape. Pfieger et al (2009) reinforce these points because it is noted that transport infrastructure developments improve mobility through the cityscape. The opening up of the cityscape via public transport networks then has an influence on economic and social activity within a wider area because people are able to travel more easily between the boroughs of the city.

The main thread, which has developed throughout the chapter’s discussions, has been the failure to utilise local level knowledge at any stage throughout the hosting process. The discourses that have been used all point to a collective community critique of what is perceived to be an imposing use of a top-down decision-making structure. The experiences provided in the narratives from the participants across the social hierarchy highlight the one way, top down approach to the whole regeneration process. Those participants who are working and living in the local communities presented the idea that the authorities involved in the hosting and regeneration could have used local knowledge more effectively. Penny used an anecdote about the regeneration of the railway and bus station in the 1990s in Stratford. She used her personal experience of regeneration to reiterate the same experiences she felt she was facing during the whole Olympic Games process. Penny felt as though the top-down approach to decision-making failed to take into account the local idiosyncrasies of an area when planning large-scale regeneration.

Conclusion

The selected community representatives have used their narratives to express their experiences of Olympic regeneration. The community
The community representatives presented juxtaposing experiences regarding the intangible elements of Stratford’s regeneration. There were two clear positions that emerged as the chapter developed. There were the participants who accessed and used official discourses as part of their narratives. These official discourses were pro-gentrification. These participants saw the Olympic Games as an enabling factor in encouraging the establishment of middle-class communities within the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site. Gentrification was presented as stabilising for a population that is historically known for its high levels of churn. In opposition to gentrification, participants and newspaper articles were sceptical of the actual benefits being expressed through the official discourses. These community level discourse threads were being used to question official policy design and discourses in participant narratives in relation to real life experiences.

It has been interesting to see the subdivision emerge through the community representatives. It could be assumed that as community representatives, their experiences and use of discourses would be similar. This was not the case and it is important to continue to explore these social issues through the following sociocultural issues chapter. The sociocultural issues chapter will pick the gentrification discussion back up and contextualise it in relation to social and community development.
Chapter Eight
Results and Discussion
Sociocultural Issues

Introduction

The sociocultural issues chapter comprises three predominant subthemes

- Community
- Gentrification
Communication

The three subthemes have been compiled from the narratives given by the selected community representatives and official documents, and from the analyses within the literature review. The chapter aims to work towards answering the research question

‘How have the selected community representatives been affected by the cultural evolutionary processes as a part of the wider community development plan?’

The discussion will cover points from the evolution of the communities through to the experiences of the changing cityscape on the communities and their experiences of the regeneration process. Gentrification has been included in this chapter because the participants have spoken and drawn from discourses that have a sociocultural dimension rather than purely an urban regeneration or cityscape redevelopment position. The three time periods (pre-2005, 2005-2012 and post-2012) used with the participants has also helped to contextualise the different themes by setting out specific eras to consider.

Community

The community profile discussed earlier has shown in statistical format that Stratford and the wider London Borough of Newham is a diverse set of areas. The statistics provide an insight into the demographics of the populations that reside in Newham and Stratford. The experiences of the local communities are an important consideration when discussing the associated regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and hosting the 2012 London Olympic Games. Sam directs his narrative to establish the idea of his experiences of community engagement in Stratford.

“I would say the community has always been engaged…if you look at the East End it’s an area where people are very entrepreneurial, have always got on. Always been an area of different groups getting on. I don’t think the Games have made us even more cohesive, I just think it’s given us another route to be cohesive.”
Bill highlights that there are levels of deprivation which are being faced by the local communities in the East of London

“...there’s no question that the evidence is overwhelming that people who live in the east and Hackney and Stratford are disadvantaged in all sorts of measures, whether that’s household income, life expectancy, literacy rates...compared to those who may live in postcodes further west.”

Although there have been improvements in the measures of deprivation mentioned by Bill, the area is still facing considerable levels of deprivation. Thomas, who works in the community health sector, explains in his narrative that stereotypes relating to the deprivation of East London are still prevalent but

"...the factors underpinning that stereotype is being deteriorated and it’s eroding gradually...People are putting more shops now in Hackney, wanting to engage in business, in real business.”

Thomas explains that there is still a stereotype relating to the levels of deprivation previously faced by the communities. However, he also highlights the idea that the stereotypes are starting to be ‘eroded’ and the communities are starting to engage with each other and the opportunities that are becoming available. The engagement element is interesting because Fred brings the idea up of social mix between the various ethnicities. Intriguingly, Sam, a local council member, sees the idea of deprivation differently to Thomas and Bill. Sam uses his narrative to question the definition of depravity.

“I wouldn’t say deprived just less financial resources. The idea of depravity [short period of silence] the people there, their spirits are as high as ever.”

Thus, Sam draws a contrast between financial deprivation and social deprivation. He equates deprivation with fewer economic assets or wealth. He wants to make the distinction that the communities of Stratford and East London are not lacking in ‘community spirit’. As a local council member the differentiation is significant because it is setting the community attitude apart from their financial situations and lack of provision or services available to them. He wants to show the communities who live in the area in a positive light and set them aside from the traditional stereotypes to which Thomas refers.
Fred, emphasises the point that the community as a whole is highly diverse

“I mean you get more of the kind of traditional white working
class East End type people down in the South of the borough,
round this area you get more of the African-Caribbean heritage,
and over in the North-East of the borough you get more of the
South Asian sort of heritage people…what I think is good is that
there are no ghettos, everyone goes everywhere, and we all mix
together.”

It is interesting that Fred brings up the idea that it is a diverse area, but also that
the ethnicities mix together. It is reinforcing the previous comments by Thomas,
whereby he mentions that old stereotypes are being broken down slowly. Thomas
does not specify which stereotypes, however it is possible that the former
stereotype of disgruntled ethnic groups is one of the elements he is combining to
explain how stereotypes are being broken down and changing. Due to the time
constraints of completing the interview in the allotted period it was not possible to
explore fully all areas of discussion with Thomas.

John highlights another part of the evolving stereotypes. John explains that
London, as a whole city, is constantly undergoing change. In his narrative, he
provides an analogy which presents his view that

“…the morphology of London will change in time... obvious
element being riverside development where historically in the
industrial past, people living by the river would be smelly, dirty; a
nasty place to be. Nowadays it’s [living by the river] seen as a
pleasant lifestyle boutique choice.”

His narrative places an historical context to the point that he is making about the
evolving cityscape. He is tapping into a discourse thread that expresses that
previously people living and working by the river were seen to have undesirable
lifestyles due to the industrial nature of their work. However, he intimates that the
stereotype of riverside living has now evolved to become a desirable lifestyle in
the post-industrial city. He is implying that the stereotype of riverside living has
morphed to be a show of affluence rather than one of deprivation. The discourse
that John has drawn from relates to gentrification.
Gentrification

Gentrification could have been included in the regeneration section of the results chapter. It was decided that it would fit best in the community thematic section, as…..[justify!!].

Anthony Faiola explains in his article for the Washington Times that “Community activists have cautiously welcomed the Games. But for some poor residents in Stratford, fears of being pushed out are an already materializing reality.”

Faiola is discussing the idea of residents being displaced as part of the regeneration and redevelopment. The displacement could be caused by increasing demand and costs for local people to continue living in the area. Similarly, the participants who took part in the research focused on the community aspects of gentrification and the loss or potential for loss of aspects of the community. Due to the focus on the community and its development it has been decided that the theme of gentrification should be discussed in relation to the main community theme.

John who is a member of the Labour Party as is the Local Government, explains that their ideals deviate with regards to “…gentrification…so, Newham Council and I somewhat diverge in my view of all of this. Newham has sort of got a ‘boosterish’ approach to the council which is very positive and outward looking but they are a lot more keen on building more aspirational housing in Stratford, so a lot more settled development or affordable housing than I am. I think there’s a massive waste in Newham and that we should be providing a bit better mix of affordability.”

John is intimating that the Newham Council would prefer to see more ‘aspirational’ ‘executive-style’ housing, which would fetch a higher market price than the typical family housing which can already be found across the borough. In short, as he indicates, this is a component of the gentrification processes.

Jane explains that from a local council position, over the last decade or so the housing focus has been
“One or two bed units and that still will be the case we’re seeking to up proportion to the three bed units…I guess that’s another of the challenges where the development opportunities lie right on top of highly accessible transport…”

Jane argues that there needs to be a change in the housing schemes, but it can be a challenge to align the opportunities to develop housing when the development sites are located in prime position because of the linked infrastructure, such as the transport network. The Newham 2027 Core Strategy (2012, p. 17) reinforces Jane’s position

“Over the last decade there has been a significant shift in the balance of housing stock, with a large number of family dwellings converted to small self-contained flats, leaving only around 40% of the borough’s housing stock as family sized homes containing three or more bedrooms. In addition, 90% of new homes built since 2004 comprise one or two bed units. Larger family homes containing four or more bedrooms now comprise only 6.8% of the borough’s housing stock. This has a huge influence on the level of churn, together with the fact that there are currently insufficient opportunities to encourage those with improving income that their aspirations for better homes, schools and local amenities and safer, more attractive and connected neighbourhoods can be met by staying, spending and investing in Newham. A transformation in the nature of the local environment, including Town and Local Centres is required for communities to become more stable and to thrive.”

The challenge brought up by Jane here, is representative of another facet of gentrification in terms of the struggle to balance the need for affordable housing with the ability to sell the development for a higher price on the residential private market. The difficulty here is to get families to settle into the area. One of the ways to manage that churn is to provide family-sized properties. By providing suitable housing young people are more likely to move in and stay in Newham rather than move out of the borough prior to setting down any roots.

Fred has a slightly different take: for him, the gentrification process has been a long and slow development that has taken time to be established. He also presents the idea that the rise in house prices which have so far been attributed partly to the gentrification process, has not been as apparent as expected post-Olympic Games
“…everyone said ‘oh Olympics coming, house prices, but actually house prices didn’t change much in this area for some years after the bid. I mean they’re going up now…”

In discussing house prices rises in the area, Amy offers an anecdote on colleague’s experience.

“it’s quite shocking really, my ex-colleague bought a house a couple of years ago and he, you know…it’s like a two up two down sort of thing and it was, he was amazed he got something for £250,000, within a year he’s managed to re-mortgage it for £300,000 because it had gone up £50,000…”

The comments here by Amy, Fred and Jane are presenting similar narratives regarding house prices. The cost of houses in Stratford and Newham has risen. Historically, Stratford, Newham and the wider East London region were lost cost houses where people would settle down and financially establish themselves before moving on. The trouble is the constant movement of people in and out of the area causes population churn. The difficulty of stabilising the population churn is the rise in house prices and cost of living, which then prices out local families who have lived in the area for generations. A balance needs to be found in order to provide low-cost options for those on lower incomes whilst still being seen as attractive to the incoming middle-class gentrifiers. In June 2015, Seema Hakim (2015), writing for the Newham Recorder, explained that Newham had the highest price rise at 17.2% in comparison to other London boroughs. She adds that this brings the average property price in Newham to £295,306, although she states that the average price is still under £300,000 and is one of only three boroughs (Barking and Dagenham and Bexley) that has an average property price under this threshold. By December 2015 the BBC reported that the average price over the year for Newham rose by 22.2%, making the average property worth £319,522 (Anon, BBC News, 2015).

George explains that the reverse issue of the house prices going up from a gentrification perspective is the cost to the local communities who are already residents in the area. He is speaking from a long career, which has had a focus on regeneration projects
“...it is really difficult, there’s a number of issues on housing that makes it difficult. The more attractive an area, the higher the house prices go up. And then people say not only are the ones for purchase or rent, the private ones, more expensive but the affordable ones, the rent is pegged as a percentage of the market rate. So the market rents are moving up, then are they still affordable for local people? So, it’s a real difficult one. You know the sad thing in life or the true thing in life, if an area is attractive then rents and prices go up and you have to say that that movement in value reflects the confidence that people have in the area. You can’t have it either way...you can’t ask for suppressed prices in certain areas...”

George highlights several important points in his comments. One interesting point he makes, relates back to the issue of ‘attractiveness of an area’, which was briefly mentioned by John when he talked about ‘aspirational’ housing. George relates the attractiveness of a location to the rise in costs to live in that location. In the case of Stratford, the rise in prices could be relatable to the hosting of the Olympic Games in 2012 because it was a global event which highlighted the many attributes associated to that area. Furthermore, George explains that the increased interest in an area, which affects the price of the housing in the location, will also have a knock-on effect upon the cost of ‘affordable’ housing. George examines briefly the link between the cost of affordable housing and the market value of a property or development. He tells us that the rent of an affordable housing unit is linked directly to the market value of the development, therefore the higher the private value, the higher the affordable housing rent will be. It could be argued that the discourse used in setting out ‘affordable’ housing is doing a disservice to local residents, who cannot afford to be on the spectrum of affordable housing. In turn it means that the incoming, more affluent people can inadvertently squeeze out the previous residents due to their higher income and social standing.

An interesting point to consider is presented by Dave Hill (2013b) from The Guardian; “…for some local people change will be good, for others it will not.” The participants of the research have largely been presenting positive experiences, however, these are not universal. Due to the limited number of participants, partly due to research fatigue or localised resistance in the area, the community representatives who have participated have all been community
representatives. Community representatives are those who hold positions in organisations directly related to the regeneration of Stratford or have been involved at some level with community activities and engagement. Unfortunately, I was unable to gain access to communities or provide a sample of experiences across a range of ethnicities. Those who have participated have all gained from the experiences. However, through the media it is known that, for example, the previously mentioned Focus E15 Mothers Group has been displaced from council-run accommodation.

The campaign group’s story broke after the main fieldwork element of the research had been completed. However, through secondary research their narrative needs to be included because they are one of the communities affected by gentrification. Aditya Chakrabortty (2014), writing for the Guardian, explains their story:

“They are the 29 single mums who were turfed out of their hostel just over a year ago when funding cuts hit; the homes group who were advised by council officers to leave their families and friends in London and move with their kids 200 miles away, to low-rent parts of Birmingham and Manchester. Now they’re the bunch who fought and won – and are all still living in Newham…These women, none of them over 25, have taken the narratives set out by suited officials and journalists and flipped them upside down…they’re pushing solutions to the real issue – preventing London from becoming a city in which the rich live while the rest of us are bussed in to serve them.”

The article highlights the growing issues surrounding gentrification in East London. The Carpenters Housing Estate has been a central facet to the group’s discourse. The Carpenters Housing Estate is located adjacent to the East to South East side of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. The estate is found just off the Stratford High Street and is part of Stratford Town rather than the Stratford City development. The Estate at the time of writing is sat mostly empty awaiting redevelopment after most of the residents in social housing properties were moved prior to the start of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The E15 group who were housed at the Focus sheltered housing hub were evicted and became homeless with only the prospect of being moved to another city far away
from their families and support networks. The campaign group was created by a few of the mothers who were affected by the eviction, and they saw the potential for the Carpenters Estate to be used for social housing again since the development plans had stalled and the houses were available to use. The E15 group explained that a move away from their support networks would be detrimental to not only themselves but their children too. Rowan Moore (2015), writing for The Observer, highlights the point the E15 group were making about being moved away from support networks. Moore explains that when people are moved away from their social and support networks the impacts can include “…schooling disrupted, jobs lost, support networks broken and relocation putting impossible distances between friends and relatives.”

The social impact of being forcibly moved to another area affects all areas of the person’s social life.

Zoe Williams (2014), also writing for the Guardian, explains that the political issue surrounding the E15 Group concerns the ‘affordability’ of housing in the area. She goes on the contextualise the struggle faced by residents in Stratford by stating that the “…wages don’t even cover social rents, thousands of homes empty in preparation for the billions their destruction will bring in. It’s plain that what looks like a heap of problems is actually one: housing is too expensive.”

The problem according to Williams relates to the cost of living and renting a property in London. The experiences of the group are in contrast to those of most participants within this research. The differences will be partly down to the positions in the communities that the participants hold. The majority of the participants are benefitting from the process of gentrification. Reni Eddo-Lodge (2014), writing for International New York Times, explains that the ‘affordable’ homes in the newly built East Village were at the time of writing “…available to rent at 80 percent of market rates, which meant that they cost between £1,244 and £1,688 a month. The average annual salary is £26,500.”
Eddo-Lodge is using financial data to highlight the disparity between the phrase ‘affordable’ and the actual cost in relation to the average salary of a resident in the Stratford area. Using the 80% of the market rate information provided by Eddo-Lodge, a resident who earned £26,500 per annum as a salary would be left with £520.33 to £964.33 per calendar month, depending upon the rental market rate they paid, to cover additional living costs and associated expenses. The ‘affordable’ homes are therefore more accessible for the gentrifying population who are moving eastwards due to the rising prices of houses across the capital. The costs of the new ‘affordable’ housing are creating a valuable market for the incoming population which is a driving factor in the gentrification. Furthermore, the phrase ‘affordable’ is also context dependent: in comparison to the rest of the wider London housing market the cost of the rent is affordable to those who are currently living outside of the lower income boroughs and who earn more than the average annual salary.

**Communication**

Communication has been highlighted by participants as an important theme to consider. Communication has been a central part in not only the hosting of the Olympic and Paralympic Games in London, but also the post-Games infrastructure alterations. Communication has a direct impact on the experiences of the local population as well as for the selected community representatives. Communication allows for dialogue to be developed between the host organisations and the legacy orientated organisations (meaning the organising committee and the successor to the organising committee), and the local communities. The dialogue could be developed through intermediary sources, such as community leaders, or through more official local government representatives.

The following subthemes have emerged from the participant narratives, relating to their experiences:

- Marketing and legislation
- Message delivery
The subthemes are discussed individually in relation to the importance of communication and the regeneration of the cityscape. Five of the participants directly discuss communication as part of the regeneration process. Two of the participants work for a regeneration and legacy-focused organisation. The other three participants work in organisations related to business and education. Three out of the five participants have either worked or lived in the East of London for approximately a minimum of 20 years. The other two have less than a decade each of involvement and knowledge about the Stratford and wider Newham area.

Marketing and Legislation

Marketing and its associated legislation are issues that have been mentioned in the literature on the hosting of sport mega-events (see Shaw, 2008). However, none of the participants in the project brought up the challenges associated with marketing in a tightly restricted area. Kevin Rawlinson (2011), writing for the i-Independent explains that

“The 2012 Olympic Games are billed as the catalyst for East London’s regeneration, and the opportunity to make money from the arrival of the five rings has been duly seized upon by the entrepreneurially minded. A brief walk around Stratford, in the shadow of the Olympic Stadium, reveals businesses trying to cash in. But lawyers are moving in for the kill in the first wave of what legal analysts warn will be the toughest enforcement of marketing rules yet at a major international tournament.”

In 2006, the London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act was passed in Parliament which created legislation which was used to protect the rights held by the IOC with regards to their signs and symbols and association with the Olympic Games. Shaw (2008) calls the ‘illegal’ use of the associated images, signs and symbols of the Olympic games ‘ambush marketing’. As a sport mega-event, the Olympic Games are a well-publicised and well-promoted sporting spectacular. The IOC place restrictions on the use of certain images, words, phrases and symbols in order to protect the brand and to entice large-scale sponsor companies.

Jacquelin Magnay (2011), writing in The Daily Telegraph, discusses the impact of the 2006 Olympic and Paralympic legislation. She explains that
“The Government has vowed to clamp down on any non-Olympic companies seeking to gain a benefit from associating with the Games and has banned activities such as skywriting, fliers, posters, billboards and projected advertising within 200 metres of any Olympic venue...Local traders during the Olympic Games advertising a ‘gold medal menu’ or ‘Games specials’ could also be caught up in the rules.”

Magnay highlights the challenges faced by local businesses for trying to harness some of the marketing opportunities from hosting a sport mega-event. The legislation regarding ambush marketing has been designed to protect the Olympic brand and its partners. The legislation is exclusionary for local businesses who cannot afford or do not have the opportunity to officially work with the Olympic brand. It is arguable that the imposed exclusionary practices add to the local community viewing the hosting of the Olympic Games as, Penny describes, a “juggernaut”, the direction of which cannot be altered, while offering little in terms of commercial benefits for the local area.

**Message Delivery**

Message delivery is the conduit for communication between the official organisations involved in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site’s regeneration and the local communities. The method of message delivery was highlighted as a recurring theme from five of the participants – George, Bill, Amy, Roger and Emily. These five participants draw individually from three different discourses (official, business development and local/community) in order to provide their opinions and experiences. George explains that the message delivery element of the regeneration process has been extensive, with a specific department set up to take the lead on this task.

“...we have people in the organisation whose job is to do community relations. And some of that’s just about we have an event and what’s the impact going to be. But we also targeted the community groups, so we’ve got representatives of community groups. So you can get in to talk to a small number of people and they can spread the word within their group.”

He furthers these comments by discussing some of the other methods that his organisation uses to deliver the message out to the communities.
“We do newspapers, we did them during the games. We’re doing them now called ‘Park Life’ and things like that. Put those in libraries and drop them in different establishments and we do within a 2 mile radius we put through doors. We do a lot of things that tell people and give people the information.”

George’s organisation is ensuring that different strata within the community are being contacted. One thing George neglects to mention is whether the newspapers are designed to meet the needs of the diverse community found within the two-mile radius. As previously mentioned there are over 100 different languages spoken in the area, some are rarer than others, the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park website only provides a copy of the local newsletters in English, and there is no option to request a copy in an alternative language, even when searching through the ‘accessibility’ options.

Bill furthers George’s perspective when he discusses the size of the task involved in communication.

“…you have to accept it’s a massive undertaking to reach all stakeholders with information that is up to date factually accurate and presented in a means that is accessible to all the different mix of whether that’s ethnic groups, or people for whom English is not their first language or for those who don’t have access to the internet…so you’ve got a huge comms [communications] challenge.”

Bill highlights the diversity found within the area, and the difficulty in reaching all members of the local communities. He also understands that it is not only language which can pose a communication problem, but mentions that access to the internet can be an obstruction. It is important to recognise that some members of the communities will not have access to the internet, which is a method of communication that is heavily relied upon. Bill carries on:

“I saw a lot of activity in that space. I think there was some outstanding endeavour to present information that was predominantly factual. Politicians and others always spin it and always stress the positives. I saw a lot of different types of events so things where you could register, walk off the street, popups in areas where people would be known to be congregating. Initiatives targeted different parts of the community, competition for schools, public addresses, radio shows, town hall events…I saw a plethora of discrete and interrelated and coordinated and spontaneous
events…there were a lot of people putting a lot of effort, a lot of money into comms…”

Bill provides a wide range of examples of communication methods of delivery. Bill states that in his experience he saw a lot of focus on communication and delivering messages to the local communities. He explains that from his perspective, he saw multiple methods of engagement with community members in order to deliver the message that was needed to be passed on to the community.

Amy explains that from a business point of view, it has been important to contact their organisation members to help deliver the communications and messages coming from the London Legacy Development Corporation.

“I was talking to the manager of a large local supermarket [name deleted] and last year we did a booklet with some of the partners about sort of the changes in the area. Those like East Village was on there and the Olympic Park and just sort of data about it opening and numbers of people that were coming and it was just on his noticeboard. And he actually referred to it you know, because all of these things happening…it’s actually just about getting the message out to people because they’re businesses, they’re entrepreneurs at the end of the day. They know what they’re doing. They know how to produce stuff that people want to buy or services that people want to buy, you just sort of have to give them the information really.”

Amy reinforces George’s point about targeting specific groups in the community. In Amy’s states that in her experience business owners and entrepreneurs can build their services and brands if they have access to as much information as possible, regarding the expected numbers of visitors, potential resident numbers and other information that would be important for business owners to know. The neo-liberal economic model means that the information helps businesses enter and maintain a position within the competitive free-market (Harvey, 2005).

George specifically references an anecdote that is related to transport management, whereby there was a heavy level of messaging about disruption to travel across London. However, he does admit that some of the message delivery process during the lead up to and actual hosting of the Olympic Games was not
handled in the best way possible. He explains that the Olympic Delivery Authority

“did travel demand management in London and between 15 and 20% of people…either disappeared or changed their journeys and went different routes and that. It was designed to do that. It was designed to make sure the place didn’t gum up, but it’s an impossible balance because you never know…It’s difficult to balance.”

The anecdote emphasises that it is hard to find the right level of message delivery to ensure that the message is received but not taken in the wrong context. The impact of the messaging had far reaching consequences; Amy explains through her discourse, the experiences of members of her business network

“…the actual Olympics themselves were really…they were really not very good for the town centre because people stayed away. Like we saw all of the footage was actually across London were people staying away cos they thought it would be too busy…I mean Stratford is a really busy place and it was really noticeable cos we were here during the whole of the Games. I mean people in this building, everyone was going to go on holiday.”

Amy uses a discourse drawing from an example of the difficulty in the delivery of messages and communications to all sectors of the communities. The anecdote shows that the message delivery had an adverse effect on people’s decision-making regarding visiting or staying in the surrounding area of the Olympic Park. It is arguable that the aim of the transportation message delivery was to reduce the demand on the transport network so that visitors, Olympic family and spectators could easily navigate the system. However, the above anecdote is the only negative point provided by any of the participants who spoke about the communication methods and message delivery.

Roger, a community member, explains that prior to the Olympic Games being hosted the local communities were sceptical that the Olympics would bring any benefit to the local communities due to the previous failures of regeneration projects to materialise or bring benefit to the communities. He discusses a project that he is currently involved with developing and the attitude he would have expected to receive from the community and local authority
“…we want to rebuild our building…we want to have this facility available for the community. I don’t think they would have gone for it before because the attitude even in the local authority was like ‘well actually we’ve got no future’…whereas now you know we can actually talk about our project of that sort of size and people aren’t thinking ‘well how on earth is that going to work?’ People are thinking ‘huh’ that’s going to be brilliant…I think that’s the difference, we can participate as well in the changes that are happening.”

Roger uses his experience of the construction project for the building to highlight, in his opinion, a change in attitude at all levels of the community, including the local authorities. He presents his idea that the community have become more accepting of large scale projects because of the perceived success of the Olympic Games regeneration programme. Roger and Emily explain that the attitude change at a local level has been developed from a cynicism derived from past failures.

They explain that the community were

“Emily: …determined to be against it…
Roger: yeah…it was going to fail. You know they weren’t really going to do what they say they are going to do. And they just put their heels in, no matter what the evidence that was put in front of them or what communications were made available to them. They were like no, it’s going to fail and we’re going to make sure it is going to fail. When they lost the battle it was like hang on, see this has all happened without us…”

Roger and Emily used their narrative to explain that some community members, in their experience, were sceptical of the Olympic Games and the associated regeneration plans. It would be unrealistic to think that communication and message delivery would reach everyone in the community. There are always barriers; however, Emily and Roger are accentuating the point that some people were not interested in being reached by the messages being delivered. Stratford and East London have been undergoing different phases of regeneration since the early 1980s, it is possible that this has caused a level of fatigue or resistance within the surrounding communities. Fatigue or resistance could be instigated from the continuous set of promises made by developers and those assurances failing to happen. The failure of developers to ensure the local communities are included and benefit from their projects means that some long-standing members of the community will become distrustful of new plans. Penny, a prominent
community member, conveys “the IOC, it’s a complete juggernaut”. Roger reinforces the idea of ‘it would happen no matter what attitude’ by saying “…see this has all happened without us”. It was not the message delivery from the organisations involved which failed to reach those more negative community members; they were working from their own previous experiences of regeneration projects in the area.

**Discussion**

The subthemes that developed from the literature review diverged with the emergent themes from the results of the interviews. The results provided a greater level of crossover between the major themes and subthemes, such as gentrification becoming apparent in the sociocultural issues chapter as well as in the urban regeneration chapter. The following discussion will link between these crossover points and the results that have produced emergent themes.

The community subtheme explored the definitions of ‘community’ and its relation to community development (including social capital, multiculturalism). The points of discussion highlighted through the narratives of the participants focused predominantly on elements of gentrification and social polarisation. These elements relate to subthemes emphasised in the literature review. Bill explained that East London is seen to be “disadvantaged in all sorts of measures”. ‘All sorts of measures’ relates to the Indices of Multiple Deprivations\(^\text{15}\). The ‘measures’ are used as a rationale for encouraging the gentrification process. Part of gentrification relates to the concept of social capital. Bourdieusian social capital considers social capital as a resource that can aid the individual who is building their reserve (Bourdieu, 1986). Increasing social capital reserve levels is supposed to then aid in the development of that individual’s future opportunities due to the network they have developed. However, those using social capital as justification for gentrification that by increasing the reserves of capital for individuals will improve the Indices of Multiple Deprivation position.

\(^{15}\) See appendix A, p240 for Community Profile setting out demographics of Stratford, Newham
Thomas believed that in his opinion the prevalent stereotypes associated with the levels of deprivation found as descriptors to East London is slowly becoming eroded and are breaking down. It is arguable that the erosion of stereotypes relates to the influence of multicultural policy when considering the diversity of the borough. Parekh (Parekh, 2001, 2003) explains that a singular identity is a naïve construct in a nation. The erosion of stereotypes relates because the initial multicultural policy was implemented up to 17 years prior to the interviews taking place. It is possible that there has been a longitudinal influence of social perceptions whereby multiculturalism has become embedded within our cultural nexus.

John contextualised his perspective by using an analogy of the evolution of the riverside living. He expressed the idea that at one-time riverside living was associated with the heavy industries and deprived communities, however over time it had morphed to be seen as a ‘boutique’ lifestyle for those who are affluent in the post-industrial city. John’s narrative aligns with Nail’s (2008) historical commentary that recognised that the rise of urban living was likened to the idea of a more refined lifestyle and culture. The post-industrial city has created the next iteration of lifestyle expectations in London, which includes the change in expectations relating to riverside living. The most recent evolution is a reverse of the original industrialisation of London. These alterations have all supplemented towards the move to a gentrified cityscape in East London.

The post-industrial city has seen the rise in the gentrification of the existing communities. The experiences and opinions regarding the gentrification of the cityscape were, as expected, varied depending on the community representative being interviewed. John explored the notion that the local Newham Council are focused on the delivery of ‘aspirational housing’, which is tantamount to the more executive style of housing being developed in the area. Jane described the idea that the focus of the council had previously been for the development of one or two bed properties, and that the focus had left a shortfall in larger
properties for families. Jane’s view is expressed in the Newham 2027 Core Strategy, which states in its policy description that Newham has an imbalance in its housing stock. Fred explained in his discourse that house prices were rising but there had been a delay. The rises in price did not occur immediately, it has taken time. The BBC News (2015) website stated that by the end of December 2015 the average house price had risen by 22.2% over the course of the previous 12 months. George used his discourse to explain that in his opinion it is not possible to keep house prices low and increase the housing stock. He explained that house prices rise because the location becomes more attractive to a wider population that is a reflection of the growing confidence in the geographical area. The antithesis of George and John position are the mothers of the E15 Focus Mothers Group. The Mothers Group use their online discourse to highlight their perception of the gentrification process that they align to ‘social cleansing’. The campaign the group is running is emphasising the challenges facing families who are being moved out of the Newham area due to limited social housing options. The group’s argument is predicated on the movement of families to other boroughs and counties and being replaced by more affluent families who can afford to rent or buy property in the borough.

In addition to the community and the process of gentrification, communication developed as an emergent theme from the interviews. Communication was particularly prevalent in the official discourses presented by George, Bill, and Amy. The official discourses were included as an underlying part of the development of local discourses presented by Roger and Emily. Communication was described in the discourses as the process for official organisation involved in the regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park with the surrounding local communities. The discourses highlighted a linked additional emergent theme of message delivery. Message delivery relates to the way in which organisations deliver their messages and content to the communities and groups. George explained that in his organisation there is a department tasked with the PR [Public Relations] and Communication. The department is responsible for delivering information to the local communities regarding the
regeneration process, any likely disruptions to daily life and other planned activities. Bill’s discourse mentioned that he understood the communications element of the regeneration process to be a massive undertaking. He explained that he saw multiple methods of trying to connect with and open dialogue with multiple communities and groups. These discourses surrounding the emergent themes of communication and message delivery can be linked to the development of social capital presented by Putnam (2000). Putnam’s theory of social capital is less focused on the development of capital as a resource, and more centred around the ties and connections that can be built. The official discourse was reminiscent of Putnam’s bridging capital, whereby networks are developed between groups that are not usually connected. It was important for the content of those official discourses to be delivered to all facets of the communities being affected by the regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

In Amy’s discourse, she emphasised the importance for local businesses to be kept up to date with the evolution of the park so that they could plan and adapt their business plans. Roger and Emily both spoke about their experience of community members’ scepticism. They explain through their discourse that there were community members who were determined to be anti-Olympics because they had had negative experiences of regeneration projects not fulfilling their promises to the local communities. They believed those community members would not be reached by any of the messages being expressed by the organisations and agencies involved in the regeneration of the park site. Roger and Emily’s narratives both highlight the challenge of connecting with communities where there is a high level of bonding capital. High levels of bonding capital creates a barrier to external individuals from joining or interacting with the exclusive group (Putnam, 2000). These barriers mean that it is possible these groups become homogenous in their own insight of events and make their own links to previous regeneration projects that have been perceived as failures.
Conclusion

This chapter set out to discuss the selected community representative’s experiences of the sociocultural issues related to the regeneration of Stratford, Newham and surrounding communities. The following research question was the basis for the discussion:

*How have the selected community representatives been affected by the cultural evolutionary processes as a part of the wider community development plan?*

It was noted by participants that Stratford, Newham and wider East London communities have always been socially engaged. Furthermore, the communities have been evolving to be inclusive of more and more diversity since the migrant ships arrived in the 1950s. Thomas, in particular, mentioned that the ‘East London’ stereotypes were starting to be eroded. It is arguable that the erosion of these East London stereotypes are part of the next stage of a cultural evolution for Stratford, Newham. However, the erosion of these stereotypes may also be an indicator of gentrification.

Gentrification has been a long and slow process for Stratford. John explained that in his opinion, Newham Council are ‘boosterish’ in their approach and are welcoming on the gentrification process. The council are aware of the benefits of encouraging more middle-class families and individuals to settle in Stratford and Newham because of the economic advantages it will afford the borough. However, Dave Hill writing for the *Guardian* rationalised the idea that some of the residents and communities will desire gentrification and it will be disadvantageous to other people within the community. It would be a challenge for young families and people to be able to afford to continue living in the borough they have grown up in because of the rise in cost of living as gentrification takes hold. These people are already starting to be displaced from the borough. The dislocation of these members of the community will affect the social mix and the diversity of the borough.
It was known that the sociocultural issues chapter would be closely linked to the urban regeneration chapter because of the social concerns involved in regeneration practice. However, as the thesis has progressed it has become apparent that governance and economics was also intricately linked to the other two themes. The next chapter, governance and economics will take up some of the thematic threads found in the sociocultural issues chapter and the urban regeneration chapter.
Chapter Nine  
Results and Discussion  
Governance and Economics  

Introduction  
In this chapter, I discuss the themes of governance and economics that were central to community representative comments. These themes capture the political and economic issues surrounding the Olympic Games, and specifically here how these community representatives experienced them. The three subthemes that have emerged from the participant discourses area as follows:  
- Central and local government  
- Ideology  
- Economics  

The first two subthemes are focused on governance and the experiences of the community representatives. The final subtheme is intricately linked to the other subthemes in terms of the ideology and decision-making process. Each subtheme will be discussed individually. I have also included a small section relating to commercialisation and branding, which had previously been included in the sociocultural issues chapter of the literature review. It has been relocated to this chapter in the discussion chapter because the participants spoke of branding in reference to global businesses and other organisations rather than rebranding of the city or nation.  

Central and Local Government  
East London has three predominant levels of governance: central government, local government, and the recently developed and establishing regional government. Six of the participants in the research directly mentioned or referred to one or more of the stated levels of governance. One of the participants at the time, John, was the elected member of the London Assembly as the
representative of East London, he has since moved on from this position. The London Assembly is the regional government for London; its elected members represent regional groupings of the London Boroughs. Furthermore, one of the six participants was a former local councillor who now works in regeneration. There were no representatives from central government, however, there were comments made by the participants that referred directly to central government. The main focus of the comments however, was centred on local government and their role in the regeneration of the area.

John, who sits at the highest point of the hierarchy as an elected member of the London Assembly, explains that in his opinion, the London Borough of Newham has been

“…for 30 years …fairly outward looking borough, where people have recognised that the economic change means that they have to look outwards to a greater degree and have to be fairly pro-regeneration. So the Newham Council has fairly supported the London Docklands Development Corporation, didn’t like the expropriation of land but wanted to find ways of getting jobs out of it. And it was actually quite disappointing the Royal Docks because the LDDC [London Docklands Development Corporation] came and went and a lot of undeveloped land continued which was then inherited by the LDA [London Development Agency] eventually.”

John’s discourse is highlighting that he sees Newham as a borough that is looking to the future in its endeavours to improve its standing within the wider London area.

John then goes on to link in the importance of the local political leadership in relation to the success of the bid to host the Olympic Games in Stratford. He believes that

“…the visionary leadership of Newham Councillors, … a number of key offices and people from the private sector partnership … talking up and never accepting defeat on the way the borough needed to grab opportunities has been part of the reasons why we’ve ended up with the Olympic Games in Stratford. If we hadn’t had a succession of leaders in Newham who hadn’t talked up the opportunities and the need for investment then we would never
have been in a position where Stratford would be a viable venue for the Olympics.”

John’s discourse is drawing from his knowledge of local politics and how the local networks work between the private, public and volunteer sectors. It is implied that these sectors have been working in partnership in order to generate or access opportunities that have arisen prior to and during the Olympic cycle. His discourse is crediting the political leadership and their decision making as one of the reasons, in his opinion, that made Stratford an attractive option as a host city site to hold the Olympic Games.

John’s opinion about the outward looking borough and the visionary leadership is contested by Fred. Fred is a community member who has lived in the area for a number of years, describes the Mayor of Newham as a “self-publicist…he very much pushes his own agenda”. Fred goes on to explain that the information that is provided to the community via local magazines and publications is “useful information but very much from quite a biased Council point of view”. The contrast in view between Fred and John is interesting and aligns to their different position within the social hierarchy. John as a regional government member sees the pushing of agendas and highlighting the areas potential as a positive attribute hence the ‘visionary leadership’ comments; whereas, Fred sees the pushing of agendas as self-publicising and not focused on the actual needs of the local people. The experiences of both of these participants highlight the analysis of Bourdieu on the close links between power and information.

In addition to Fred and John, Penny explains, in her opinion, that people’s perspectives regarding governance is dependent on their position on the social hierarchy. Penny expresses her perspective from a base of experience from working and living within deprived communities dating back to at least 1990;

“I mean, Conservatives as a general rule are sort of wanting to encourage business and have a trickle-down effect16. Well, having

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16 The trickle-down effect is a top-down approach to community development, whereby funding and development opportunities are supposed to trickle down to the lower community levels of the
lived in poor areas it doesn’t work. It doesn’t trickle-down far enough, so it needs sort of a bottom up political localism and it’s fairly meaningless...one can get very cynical.”

Penny’s discourse is advocating for a bottom up, local based approach to governance that focuses its attention on the communities rather than businesses and organisations. She believes that top-down approaches do not work in the best interests of the communities who reside at the bottom of the societal hierarchy. She explains that in her opinion the opportunities do not reach the bottom of the hierarchy. She is using her experience of living and working in deprived communities as evidence to refute the top-down approach that relies on the trickle-down effect to create development opportunities in communities.

The previous discussion has looked at opposing ends of the social spectrum, at the top and bottom. Jane sits somewhere in the middle of the spectrum through her position in planning, hence her experiences and insights provide further context here to the discussion. When Jane was asked about the implications of a changing government, from New Labour to a Coalition Government in 2010 she explains that

“I couldn’t really comment on that [changing government] in detail... it's partly politics at City Hall level and the idea of …having a development corporation, which …takes part of our control is something we haven’t been terribly happy with. Given we had a perfectly good planning framework adopted and they are just rewriting it. And you know there was plenty of cross boundary working going on before that. And obviously because it’s under direct Mayoral control, as in Boris [Boris Johnson who was London's Mayor until 2016] control, he has particular agendas that he is pushing which link back to the coalition government agendas, but they have a particular Boris spin if you like, which is not necessarily in line with what the Newham Mayor would prefer.”

Jane is using a thread of discourse that is highlighting, that in her opinion, the local council have not been happy with ceding planning control to the London Legacy Development Corporation since they had a history of interagency working and cooperation. She also mentions in her discourse that there were ideological societal hierarchy. It is reliant upon enough opportunities or funding being generated to reach the lower levels of the hierarchy where the money or access to the opportunities is needed.
differences between the Coalition government, London Mayor and Newham’s Mayor in terms of their agenda priorities. She notes that Boris Johnson’s agenda has its own slant, which is in opposition to the preferences of Newham’s Mayor. Each political representative wants to use their party’s ideology to help shape the projects being undertaken, such as the continuing development of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Jane continues to explain the implications of the changing government and the particular challenges that were being faced as a nation in 2010.

“You can see what Newham’s mayor Sir Robin Wales has been pushing as he’s been on the scene much longer. I mean the coalition government if you like their policy changes were intertwined with a much wider idea of the impact of the economic downturn. So, if you like, it coincided with the general funding squeezes in local government which probably would have happened to some extent whichever government was in power and associated challenges to viability. But I think all political parties would have started giving that a much more prominent role in planning policy because you had to get some development going. But yeah, people have observed that some of the wider regeneration ambitions were lost in that shift. It is said that there is much more pressure to yield quick returns than there might have been and those created returns should be paying back the money the government put in, a lot of them have broader public interest concept to the return.”

There are interesting points being made by Jane in the above section. Firstly, Jane mentions that the loss of control to the development corporation was something that she was not happy about, especially since the borough had already worked collaboratively with organisations before. The unhappiness is subtly implying that there is a level of disempowerment felt by Jane and the local Newham Council. The disempowerment stems from the lack of control over locations and tracts of land that were previously under the local authority’s control. By having those tracts of land removed from local authority control, the local planners have had to cede control and the power of decision making for that specific area. The emphasis in feeling the loss of power comes from the decision to change which organisation manages specific tracts of land. The decision was made by central level politicians and not by the local authorities.
Figure 4 Hierarchical Structure of Organisations and Participants

experiences. The narratives provided by the participants allude to a top down hierarchical structure, where the information flow is in a downward direction. The structure is reminiscent of Arnstein’s Ladder. Arnstein (1969, p. 217) explained that the lower two rungs of the ladder
…describe levels of ‘non-participation’ that have been contrived by some to substitute for genuine participation. Their real objective is not to enable people to participate in planning or conducting programs, but to enable powerholders to ‘educate’ or ‘cure’ the participants.

According to Arnstein, those at the top of the structures are working from a position of benevolence, but this is a façade. In reality it is surmised that the ‘powerholders’ impose their ideas on disempowered citizens situated on the lower echelons of the structures. As the ladder is climbed, there is an increase in interaction with those ‘powerholders’. Figure 4 proposes that higher up the hierarchy the more knowledge is held by the representative of that level.

When Jane discusses losing control to the overarching development corporation, she is explaining that she has had to cede control over the planning for a particular area of the London Borough in which she works. In return for the ceding of control she is receiving less information about the overall planning that is going to be happening, but she still has to plan the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park regeneration within the rest of the Borough’s planning. Jane is now limited to only being able to access information about the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park’s regeneration from the official guidelines provided by the development corporation. Although, Jane is receiving more information about the development of the park than other community representatives such as, Penny or Fred.

Similarly, to Jane, Penny’s experiences as a community member imply a top down approach and a reliance on information being provided from an organisation outside of the area making decisions about regeneration and community development. She uses the example of the Carpenters Company.

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17 The Carpenters Company of London began developing a housing estate in Stratford in 1867 on land they owned. The idea was to provide a form of social housing for their workers to lease. By the 2000s, the estate was a mix of leasehold and freehold depending on the property type and in need of repair and renovation. Some of the properties were still held on long term leases provided by the Carpenters Company in the late 19th Century. (Council, 2010). The land had been highlighted for potential redevelopment opportunities as part of the Olympic regeneration planning. The site is still being discussed after plans were dropped by potential redevelopers in 2014.
cooperative housing scheme to describe the experiences of a top down approach to regeneration. Penny explains that the Carpenter’s Estate is

“…an estate of cooperative housing scheme. I mean a lot of it, yes was grotty, but it was land in the ownership of the Carpenters Company that had been on long hundred and twenty five year leases and that was all coming up to the last sort of ten years or so. And they were going to masterplan the whole lot. They started discussions over this, they said well that plot of land comes back to us in 2005, and that in 2008 and we’ll masterplan the whole thing and then develop it as they become available. And that was the stage we were at and suddenly they said ‘uh we’ve had someone come and talk to us from the London Development Agency, um and they’ve sort of bought us out. And we didn’t really have any choice.’ And it was accept the sort of suitcase of fivers or they’d just compulsory purchase it anyway.”

According to the discourse Penny has been accessing, it had previously been a more open discussion about using a masterplan to redevelop the Carpenters sites. It seems that the top down approach by the London Development Agency was imposed on the residents of the site through a compulsory purchase order scheme. Penny uses the phrase “we didn’t really have any choice” to highlight the imposition of the purchases made by the development agency on to the residents of the estate. Penny also uses the word “suddenly” which emphasises the speed of the change of plans and the lack of information provided by the organisation who was at the top of the hierarchy. “Suddenly” implies shock, which in turn could be a reference of lack of knowledge about the developing plans for the regeneration. Penny’s narrative focused on discourses accentuating the idea that residents were presented with a financial offer or the threat of a compulsory purchase order. The options provided by the London Development Agency would lead to the same outcome – the residents moved from their current houses. Penny’s discourse is emphasising the idea that the residents had no choice in the decision.

Penny also reinforces Jane’s narrative, as previously mentioned, Penny calls the IOC a ‘juggernaut’, but she also explains that against her previous experiences of regeneration and associated planning

“…never before have I felt that regeneration was just literally a lottery dependent on whether this worked or not and I was really scared about that.”
Penny’s use of the phrase “lottery dependent” highlights again the lack of information flow reaching the bottom of the hierarchy. The loss of ‘collaboration’ which she had been a part of in previous regeneration planning, means that like Jane, Penny has felt a loss of control alongside the community members with regards to the Olympic plans. The loss of control combined with limited access to information means that the community members will have a more negative experience of the changing cityscape. Those at the top of the hierarchy have an overall idea of what is going to be happening and timescales associated with the changes. Looking at figure 20, you can see that the further you move down the hierarchy there are fewer opportunities to be able to access to information and knowledge about the plans and timescales for the regeneration plans. In contrast to Penny, Andrew Neather (2014), in his article for the Evening Standard, calls for “…leadership from City Hall on big projects.” He is supporting the idea that there needs to be greater influence from regional government in order to ensure large scale regeneration projects are developed.

**Ideology**

Political ideology was an area that was expected to be brought up in the interviews by participants; however, it was not widely discussed. One participant, Jane, mentioned the differences between the ideologies of the changing national government in 2010 and the local new Labour represented government. The mention was an indirect reference to Boris Johnson being London’s mayor. Jane’s discourse reflects that there were differences between the corporation taking over as it was in “Boris control”, and the local mayor’s agenda. She is indirectly mentioning that there is an ideological difference between the City Hall, regional government level and the local level of politics. It is important to recognise the ideological differences because it influences the level of priority placed on the individual agendas. Traditionally, Labour or New Labour have been more focused on a Keynesian based doctrine which favoured state intervention,

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18 Boris Johnson elected to be the Mayor of London from 2008 until 2016. The Mayor leads the London Assembly and sets the budget and plans for developing London over their four year term in office. The London Assembly is a regional level government (The London Assembly, 2016)
whereas the Conservatives have been traditionally more neo-liberal in their approach to dealing with policy development and economic challenges. There is a pressure for Olympic host cities to prove the value of hosting the games, and ensuring a sustainable future for their Olympic venues. Jane highlights the coalition’s focus on creating “pressure to yield quick returns” on the investments that have funded the regeneration and development plans across Newham and the other Olympic Boroughs.

John also mentions political allegiances when he talks about

“I’m the Labour guy, the mayor was Labour, then I was on his team. And he made me the deputy chair of the LDA [London Development Agency], which was the most senior political position because the chair had to be a business person. So we helped drive through the land assembly and other work for the Olympics…following the 2008 election, when Boris Johnson became mayor I obviously ceased to be deputy chair of the LDA. The agency was then abolished by the Tory [Conservative] government – the Coalition Government, but I came off the board because it was now a Tory administration.”

The above quotation from John’s interview is the only direct reference to political affiliations and the changes that occur when administrations change. John’s discourse is centred on his political allegiance and the roles that his political affiliation allowed him to take. Andrew Neather (2014), writing for the Evening Standard, explains that “It is a hard balance to get right: local democracy reflects different local ambitions.” Andrew Neather is emphasising John’s point, that it is hard to find a balance between different ideological positions when the political parties in power are different at each level.

Keith also uses his narrative to present the idea of the conflict between central and local levels of government. He explains that he is affiliated to the Labour Party

“My political viewpoint, I am Labour as every single person on the council is.”
He then goes on to explain that in his view there has been a problem with the grants system provided by the government. He draws from a discourse which raises questions about the uncertain future of the social and benefits welfare system that is present within the United Kingdom. He uses a discourse which enables him to condemn the Coalition Government’s austerity measures in relation to the aforementioned grants system.

“I don’t know what will happen in the election but right now this government is being absolutely savage in that respect.”

His narrative uses a thread of discourse which is associated to his political allegiance. Labour at the time of this interview was the Shadow Government in opposition to the Coalition Government and are ideologically opposed to the more Conservative focused policy designs which were implemented by the Coalition Government between 2010 and 2015. Ideologically, the Labour party are more focused on the provision of a welfare state that is accessible by all therefore Keith’s condemnation of the austerity measures are understandable.

The idea of political ideology and business being entwined has been raised by Dave Hill (2012b) writing for the Guardian in 2012,

“At least one of the East London Olympic borough leaders on the corporation’s board found Moylan perfectly agreeable to do business with despite political differences…”

Hill was writing about the period in which Boris Johnson, the then London Mayor, took over as chair of the London Legacy Development Corporation. None of the participants discussed the short term tenure of Boris Johnson as Chair, however Hill acknowledges the links between politics and the corporate worlds who are working in conjunction with one another in order to develop and build the legacy from the 2012 Olympic Games. Hill (2012b) continues to present the idea that Boris Johnson’s move to chair “the corporation’s helm has been presented by City Hall as proof of his passionate commitment to east London’s regeneration.”

Hill is implying that Boris Johnson was able to use the idea of stepping in to fill a gap on the board to his advantage on the political and media stage. It allowed Boris Johnson to create an example of his commitment to the legacy of hosting the Olympic Games during his tenure as Mayor, whether he was supportive of hosting prior to winning the election as Mayor.
Economics

Another area relating to governance is that of economics, its development can be linked to the political ideology of the policy maker. From the literature, it was expected that there would be a wider discussion about economics. However, the participants did not talk about economics to any great degree; it is arguable that it is because the participants did not have any great involvement or many experiences that directly related to economics. Penny tells us an anecdote:

“I went to a [organisation Penny is involved with] meeting down in Kent and basically they said we had some really good projects and it’s all been axed because all the money’s gone to Stratford…I was just profoundly embarrassed because the whole of the rest of the country, I think, lost out to us. Everything was sucked in to make it happen here. Um and I couldn’t do anything about that but I felt the sort of pain really, to guilt even, that very worthwhile projects were just hitting the dust…”

She is highlighting the point that when the 2008 economic crisis and following recession happened, money was pulled in to support Stratford and other areas outside of Stratford were losing out on funding and opportunities. She explains that she felt “embarrassed” and even “guilty” about other areas losing out on funding opportunities because the money was being fed into Stratford. Philip Johnston (2008), writing for The Telegraph supports Penny’s experience

“Few events are being staged outside London; and why should the regeneration of east London be a burden on the taxpayers of Birmingham or Liverpool who would like to see similar improvements?”

The experience and the secondary evidence provided by Philip Johnston, identifies that the economic crisis meant that funding was drawn into London in order to ensure the Olympic Games in 2012 were seen to be a success on the global stage.

It was intriguing to note that none of the participants directly discussed the economic analysis methods that have been employed to justify hosting the Olympic Games. The literature review noted that there are a variety of analytical
methods used to rationalise hosting a sport mega-event either ex-ante or ex-post. Although all the participants have been selected as community representatives, none of them would have been directly involved in the creation of the analytical methods, they may have only seen the actual analyses. It is arguable that those who work in local or regional government positions would have been privy to the results of the evaluations. However, the results may not have made a lasting impact on them as they are neither economists nor solely focused on benefiting from the economic gains predicted by the techniques used to justify hosting the Olympic Games. Furthermore, the initial ex-post analyses would not have been completed or published at the time of the interviews and therefore the participants would not have had access to the data.

Commercialisation and Branding

The commercialisation and branding section had been relocated in the discussion section because the participants were placing more emphasis on the idea of links between commerce and branding rather than the act of rebranding a city or nation. Four participants, Amy, Fred, Cyril and Bill all mentioned the idea of branding in a brief and succinct way. The section will set out the four perspectives and compare and contrast them with each other and in relation to the literature. The different job roles that the participants hold have all contributed to the differences in their understanding of the idea of branding. Those participants involved in business and development have understood the term to relate to business endeavours, whereas others have connected their perception of the word to links with other large previously branded parts of the nearby cityscape.

Both Amy and Bill use their conception of branding to relate to business. Amy, who works with a consortium of businesses and organisations, understandably sees branding as relating to large scale brands which have been attracted to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site. She does not wholly attribute the attraction of the large brands to hosting the Olympics.
“…it’s a sort of process that started because Birkbeck19 have moved here…So it had kind of started I mean yeah it does make a difference you know they’re brands they’re world renowned brands like the V&A (Victoria and Albert Museum) and UCL (University College London) so yeah it does change the perspective on a place really.”

Amy has chosen to highlight two well-known London based brands which are establishing themselves in East London on the globally recognisable branded Olympic Park. She has drawn from the official discourses which are emphasising the importance of these large branded organisations to the East London area. It is understandable that Amy would be excited for these large organisations to move to the area because they are enhancing the unique selling points of Stratford that she can use to increase the membership of the business consortium she works with. These large brands are also potentially aiding the gentrification of Stratford. Both the V&A and UCL are locating their new sites away from their more centrally based London campuses. The location of their new sites will encourage people to travel to East London and visit the area, there is then the potential that some of these visitors may decide to relocate themselves or their businesses to Stratford.

Similarly, Bill’s institution was drawn to their new site because of the branding of the Olympic Park and how that ties in with his own organisation’s branding.

“For us, part of why this is an attractive location is the Olympic Park, that the [name of organisation removed] brand fits very nicely with that. We are also very excited about the quality of the masterplan vision for our part of the park.”

Bill’s rationale for their move to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park location has been based on the official discourses provided by the London Legacy Development Corporation and their predecessors. Bill and his organisation have been drawn to the park because of the offer and unique selling points that are on offer to an expanding education provider. It is arguable that the rebranding of the Olympic Park has created an attractive offer for large well known organisations

19 Birkbeck is part of the University of London group.
which are looking to expand their operations. The securitisation and gentrification will both have had an impact on the improvement of the perceptions held about Stratford and the wider East London area.

Cyril uses official discourses to explain that in his opinion it has been possible to use the Olympic branding to help emphasise the local level messages about the changing cityscape in East London.

“We’ve been telling a story…actually what the games did then was help the penny drop not least with Boris Johnson but also with other business and university leaders to say as we’d hoped it would that this is the place to locate.”

Cyril is referring indirectly in his narrative to branding. He is using the official discourse to highlight that the local use of Olympic branding helped to encourage central government figures and other leaders to get on board with the Olympic regeneration plans. The development of the “Olympicopolis concept” according to Cyril has been a major part of gaining support for the redevelopment of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park from not only central government figures but also as a method of encouraging well known branded organisations to relocate to the park site in Stratford. The Olympicopolis concept is in reference to the V&A, London College of Fashion, UCL amongst other organisations which have since secured locations in Stratford on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site after this interview had taken place. It is a branding tool that has been deployed to attract these organisations and draw in more visitors to the local area through the cultural offer which is part of the wider concept. It is arguable that these plans are designed to engage with affluent populations who are not local residents, and to attract them to visit in order to spend money and potentially stay on (part of a by-product of gentrification).

Fred directly mentions the idea that the official discourses are aimed at people who are not deemed to be ‘local’.

“People do talk about the centre of gravity of London shifting eastwards and I think there’s some truth in that. The city has partly shifted east to Canary Wharf and that’s affected the Isle of Dogs more directly but they’re selling, if you look at the adverts, the
posh apartments they’re selling in the Olympic Park, they’re advertising on the basis that you can jog or cycle down the river to Canary Wharf.”

Fred has explicitly talks about the official advertising methods of the newly built apartments and houses. Fred is intimating that the methods of advertising, which are branding Stratford and the wider East London as an enclave of London, as a tool for the process of gentrification. The advertisers are aiming their discourse at the men and women who work in the ‘city’, it is exclusionary to those who do not work in and around Canary Wharf or the city.

From an alternative rebranding perspective, Keith has explained that in his experience the local council are looking at ways to rebrand themselves to help ensure stability for the future by creating “Newham Plc…we’re evolving all these things (different entrepreneurial ventures) to make money because right now the Government is cutting back and hitting what is still despite all these improvements one of the boroughs with one of the greatest amounts of deprivation in the whole country.”

The rebranding of the local council ties into the idea presented by Fred of Newham becoming an ‘enclave of Canary Wharf’, because they have to use entrepreneurial methods in order to generate finances and funding to maintain service provision in the era of economic instability. Thematically it is fitting because Canary Wharf is the location for global business brands and now the local council in Newham have to use a similar business mind set in order to create financial opportunities for the borough. The discourse being used by Keith comes from local level concern regarding the future of public sector funding. It is intimating that the reliance on top down policy structures is unrealistic when the ideology behind the policy makers relies upon the development of a competitive free market.

Discussion

The subthemes for the chapter were Economics/Policy Decision-making; Ideology; Convergence; Economic Analysis/ Multiplier Effect; and Commercialisation. The emergent themes focused predominantly on ideology,
central and local government and commodification. The subtheme of Convergence moved to the Urban Regeneration chapter because it fit with the participant narratives. Furthermore, there was little discussion regarding economic analysis in relation to hosting the Olympic Games. Any tangential reference to economic analysis was discussed within the Sociocultural Issues discussion chapter due to its ties to communication and message delivery. It was Bourdieu (1984) who stated that there is an association between social class and political opinion. The ability for a person to answer a politically focused question increases the higher up the social hierarchy the person moves; symbolic power increases as the individual climbs that hierarchy, giving an increase in the weight of the opinion being expressed. It is understood that those in the top echelons of the hierarchy will have access to more information than those who are lower down the hierarchy. The weight of opinion and experiences provided by the participants are held with the same weight no matter their position within the aforementioned hierarchy. The three levels of governance are part of a hierarchical structure, whereby each level has a slightly different remit and focus.

John thought Newham was a forward thinking borough that had been able to harness opportunities through their interagency approach to development. However, his opinion about the borough was not reflected in the discourse provided by Fred. Fred thought the local Mayor came across as a “self-publicist”, as opposition to John’s positive view of the borough. Fred also expressed that any information provided by the local council seemed to provide, in his opinion, a “biased council point of view”. Penny’s accessed discourse presents the idea that the system of governance fails to enable community groups to access all the opportunities. Penny explains that structures that encourage a trickle-down effect for development neglect to reach the community groups that are at the bottom of society’s hierarchy. Penny used discourses drawn from her years of involvement in community regeneration and development within deprived locations. The discourse presented by Penny is critical of the Neo-Liberal ideal of competitive free markets, whereby it is thought that funding will filter through the social hierarchy and reach those communities that need it (Harvey, 2005; Saad-Filho,
Jane who works in local authority planning expressed her feeling of disempowerment after central government removed planning control for the tract of land for the Olympic Park site from local control to the jurisdiction of the London Legacy Development Corporation.

Ideology had a limited discussion. Jane’s use of discourse presented her understanding that each level of governance was setting agendas with ideological differences. The change in central government meant that there was a coalition with a Conservative majority in power, a Conservative regional government and the local government affiliated to New Labour. Jane intimated that the change in central government meant that the local government needed to amend some of their plans to meet the new agenda requirements. The economics subtheme fits together with the ideological emergent theme because the changes in ideology had an impact on the economic planning. In 2008, a global economic crisis meant that decisions had to be made concerning being able to fund hosting the Olympic Games whilst there were national austerity measures in place. The Neo-Liberal approach to austerity is steeped in its history, whereby national assets are seen as institutional barriers. Ill-defined ‘private property rights’, therefore lead to newly created market systems as a method of reducing the costs (Harvey, 2005). Penny explained through her discourse that she had direct experiences of finding out about how austerity was affecting the rest of the United Kingdom. She explained that she went to a regional meeting of her organisation and told that many other regeneration projects in the region had been cancelled and the funding diverted to Stratford. The diversion of funding to Stratford had been to ensure the plans set out linked to the Olympic Games would be seen as successful on the global stage. In this scenario the Olympic Games held precedence over any other project being undertaken by the organisation because the focus of success needed to be in Stratford.

Branding was moved to fit into this chapter because the participants focused on the idea of encouraging brands to move to the area and the implicit changing of perceptions of East London. The four participants (Fred, Amy, Cyril,
and Bill) who spoke of branding in very indirect and loose ways, all made reference in some way obliquely about gentrification. Their consistent commentary on the encouragement of well known, in some cases global, brands to relocate to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site alluded to the exclusionary discourses being used by advertisers to attract visitors. In this instance, commodification of sport could be attributed because hosting the Olympic Games has converted physical urban space into ‘saleable objects’ (Moor, 2007). The ‘saleable objects’ has encouraged large global brands and organisations to transition their business interests and potential clientele to East London. It is possible that Bodet and Lacassagne’s (2012) idea that place branding can occur through association is interesting. It is certainly possible to attribute this idea to the confidence found in East London post-Olympic Games. The knock-on effect from the desire to promote East London and in particular Stratford to visitors who may not historically have travelled to the eastern parts of London would not only benefit the borough through increased spending but perhaps entice new residents to move to the newly establishing communities on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Conclusion

The discussion within the chapter has mostly revolved around the perception of the influence of ideology on decision-making processes. The participants highlighted their personal awareness of the Neo-Liberal effects on their experiences. Penny criticised the flawed reliance on the ‘trickle-down’ effect perpetuated by Neo-Liberal focused policy design. There was a juxtaposition of ideology emphasised by John and Fred; both held an alternative perception of the same actions presented by the Local Government leaders. John, as a politician himself highlighted these actions as forward-looking and visionary. Whereas Fred, saw these same actions as self-promoting and aggrandising. The difference between John and Fred ties into their difference in social hierarchical position. Figure 4 provided a visual representation of this juxtaposition. John, as a regional politician, has access to all of the plans and understands the overall plan of what the local government wish to achieve. Fred, on the other hand, sits at the bottom
of the hierarchy as a community member and therefore relies upon the local government to release information regarding the latest plans.

It was interesting that unlike in the literature review, the branding discussion was predominantly focused on the enticement of branded organisations rather than on the rebranding of the cityscape. The desire to attract global brands to the location of the park has surreptitiously aided the rebranding of East London. The movement of large scale branded companies and organisations has been a ‘vote of confidence’ in East London which has translated to outside audiences and been part of the perception change. Bodet and Lacassagne’s idea regarding the association between host and event is interesting because it recognises the positive links that are produced. These associations have been emphasised within East London because of the confidence generated by the interest from global brands and nations and their investment in the cityscape.
Chapter Ten

Conclusion and Future Research

Introduction

The thesis has set out and discussed the research aim which was

‘To gain an understanding of the experiences of selected community representatives in relation to the regeneration of the Olympic Park site in Stratford as part of the London 2012 Olympic redevelopment plans.’

The aim was designed to comprehend the magnitude of experiences that the selected community representatives will have gone through in relation to the regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and wider Stratford areas. The research aim generated three research questions

- How have the selected community representatives experienced the urban regeneration of the local area?
- How have the selected community representatives been affected by the cultural evolutionary processes as a part of the wider community development plan?
- How do economic and political decision-making affect the selected community representatives as a part of the regeneration process?

Accordingly, the literature review turned to examine the following three prominent areas vis-a-vis the research questions:

- Urban regeneration
- Sociocultural issues
- Economics and governance

These three thematic areas were then reflected in the discussion of the qualitative research findings. The main thread of argument through the whole thesis has been the idea of balancing the desires of those in power and the development of local communities who are at the forefront of experiencing the regeneration. The selected community representatives were all situated in the mid-level of the social
hierarchy. They were either prominent community leaders, business leaders, or local to regional level politicians.

The problem being studied throughout the thesis was the idea that the Olympic Games are heralded as being a catalyst for regenerating the host city and whether the experiences of the selected community representatives agree with that assumption. There has been little consideration for the experiences of the community representatives who are living and working in the surrounding location of the Olympic Park site. Furthermore, there is little research undertaken in the immediate aftermath of hosting an Olympic Games. The research has studied, through the semi-structured interviews, three periods of time, before the games won the bid (up until 2005), the preparation for the games (2005-2012) and post games (2012 onwards). It was important to track the experiences and to contextualise them with regards to what was happening in Stratford and the surrounding area of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site.

Summary of the Findings

The summary of the findings will present a synopsis of the thesis discussion in relation to the literature review. The key themes that have been derived from the narrative thematic analysis and the discourse analysis will be the main focus of the following summary. The discussion found within this chapter will answer the three research questions posed at the beginning of this thesis in detail. The main thematic topics highlighted throughout the thesis are as follows:

- Convergence Agenda
- Post-Olympic Games confidence
- Infrastructure and accessibility
- Erosion of stereotypes
- Housing
- Gentrification
- Communication between community representatives
- Ideological conflict
The Olympic bid was predicated on the diversity of Stratford and the wider London Borough of Newham (see Appendix A). It was important to consider the diversity of the borough and neighbouring communities because it was central to the Olympic bid. However, the participants were predominantly from White British backgrounds and a minority of participants were from Afro-Caribbean backgrounds. This is not representative of the Census 2011 demographic breakdown of the geographical location. The participants all met the sampling criteria of being community representatives, and it is possible to suggest that other ethnic groups have been unable to establish themselves in the geographical location for long enough in order to set down roots to meet those criteria. Traditionally, the National Socioeconomic Status data has indicated that a large number of Stratford residents are employed in the lower paid, blue or pink collar roles. These lower paid roles in conjunction with a percentage of long term unemployed and never worked add to the problems with deprivation found in the local area. However, since the Olympic Games it is to be noted that Newham has improved its position on the Index of Multiple Deprivations, moving from 2nd to 25th on the scale between 2010 and 2015 (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015). It is arguable that these improvements have occurred due to the focus on gentrification and the encouragement of middle-income people to settle in Stratford and the surrounding Olympic Boroughs.

The discussion of urban geography with the participants highlighted many physical changes to the cityscape in and around the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. John, the then London Assembly Member for East London, likened the

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20 Meaning a move from 2nd most deprived area to the 25th most deprived area – so a positive move in terms of deprivation found in the borough.
Olympic Park to a footprint. The analogy worked well as the park in the initial stages of reopening to the public was very visually distinct from the rest of Stratford City and Stratford Town. It was also distinct from the previous industrial land use.

The convergence agenda or framework was agreed to by the local, regional and central politicians as a way to help develop the socioeconomic status of the Olympic Boroughs. Both John and Bill found the convergence agenda as a positive policy framework for Newham to follow. They saw it as a forward thinking method of improving the levels of community deprivation found throughout the borough. John and Bill found it a positive way of making borough wide improvements due to their roles. John was, at the time of interview, a regional level politician and therefore would have bought into the idea as a way of bringing about change and ensuring the policy makers signed up and sustained their promise to increase help to the borough. Bill is a member of a Higher Education Institute who has chosen to move into the local area of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site, and was keen to be involved in the whole process. Jane explains through her narrative that the policy is really another buzzword being used by politicians. However, in her professional capacity she found that the policy and the Olympics provided a precedent and a framework to guide future developments. Developers now have set guidelines and levels of expectations to meet when tendering for a contract or opportunities to build new developments and other opportunities.

However, there was a different perspective of the policy by prominent community member Penny. Penny explains that from a community position, “aspiring to be average” is “grotty”. She uses her narrative to explain that in her experience the desire to become average is not inspirational. Penny’s comments are akin to gentrification (Lees, 2008; Walks & Maaranen, 2008). The Convergence Agenda is aiming to re-establish East London’s levels of deprivation to be in line with the rest of London. Potentially the improvements already seen in the change in position on the Indices of Multiple Deprivations have been due to
the focus on middle-income individuals and families being enticed to move to the new housing developments on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

George, Bob, Cyril and Mark discussed the post-Olympic Games confidence which has seen a high level of investment in East London. There are a number of developments being started which have been attributed by the participants to a ‘ripple effect’ which has happened since hosting in 2012. The Inter-IKEA group and the Chinese ABP Docklands group are two of the notable developments near to the peripheries of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site. The ‘ripple effect’ has been made possible by the investment confidence developing in East London as the world’s view was focused on the region during the lead up to and the hosting of the Olympic Games in 2012. Although these developments have been attributed to hosting the Olympic Games, Roger, George, Cyril, John and Amy have emphasised the point that Stratford and the wider Borough of Newham have been undergoing a serious process of regeneration since the early 1980s. They all mentioned in their narratives and used discourses about the longitudinal regeneration that the local communities have been experiencing. Most of the participants have either worked or lived in the area for more than a decade, in some cases more than two decades. The length of time and involvement in the area means that their narratives hold some gravitas to the expression of their experiences and opinions.

Mark talked about the negative aspect of the previous regeneration. He indicated through his narrative the experiences of social polarisation during the initial docklands developments in the 1980s and 1990s (Marriott, 2012; Moran, 2012). It was curious that the threat of social polarisation has not been really mentioned as part of the new Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park regeneration experiences of the participants. It could be attributed to the early stages of the repurposing of the site to a residential and cultural enclave in East London and the research was conducted in the time period that was in the aftermath of hosting the Games. The media representation of the changes happening in the area pointed more towards a total displacement of ‘original’ residents, such as the Focus E15
Mothers Group, rather than the creation or ghettoization of specific socially polarised areas within the evolving cityscape.

Another element that was highlighted as important through the urban regeneration chapter was the transport network and associated infrastructure (Mejia-Dorantes & Lucas, 2014). Both Ben and George mentioned that Stratford was one of the most well connected parts of London. The accessibility of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site was attributed as one of the reasons for winning the bid to host the Games. Although, Penny did note that the transport infrastructure had been under development since the 1990s, so its regeneration was not catalysed by the Olympic Games. Roger, Emily and Molly all used their narratives to express that there had been improvements made to the public transport network in the Hackney borough area on the far edge of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site. However, Penny explained through her narrative that there has been a history of developers not using the local community’s knowledge when redeveloping parts of Stratford.

The regeneration of the Stratford International station and the incorporation of the bus station in the 1990s was an example used by Penny to highlight the problem. She used an anecdote which emphasised the lack of the use of community knowledge when she spoke of an elderly resident at the time mentioning in a public consultation that the plan would not work due to the local bus routes. Penny’s anecdote underscored the top-down decision-making process and emphasised the limitations to relying upon a trickle down system of community development and regeneration practices. According to Penny the trickle down system does not reach the lower levels of communities, the funding and opportunities are used by those higher up the societal hierarchy and those communities most in need are not able to access the chances. The image presented by Penny who is sceptical of the reach of a top-down structure is in contrast to the idea of communication provided in the thesis. George explained that his organisation used a community focused approach to opening up dialogue.
However, Penny’s narrative seems to refute the idea that the opening up of dialogue between the organising agencies and the communities was two way.

Bill’s narrative reflected this perception when he stated that Stratford and the wider borough were “disadvantaged in all sorts of measures”. Thomas who is a long term resident of Hackney explained through his narrative that the perception of high levels of deprivation was slowly being eroded. Thomas’s perspective is mirrored in the aforementioned improvements made against the criteria found on the Index of Multiple Deprivations, where Newham has made improvements moving from 2\textsuperscript{nd} to 25\textsuperscript{th} on the index (Gill, 2015). John used the analogy of how perceptions have changed with regards to riverside living. He mentioned in his narrative that historically the river was the place where poor communities who relied on the river to make a living or worked in the factories found along the river banks. However, there has been a cultural change and now in the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century the riverside is seen as a desired boutique location (Marriott, 2012). He has pointed out that there has been a long term cultural evolution across the rest of London and intimates that now East London is undergoing the same change.

Housing was highlighted as a problem for the Borough of Newham. John used his narrative to put forward the idea that Newham Borough Council desired to create more ‘aspirational housing’. ‘Aspirational housing’ is design of housing that is likely to attract more affluent residents. Jane used her narrative to explain that housing has been a longitudinal problem for the borough and that, like the rest of the United Kingdom, there was a short fall in certain types of family housing. Both Fred and the BBC drew attention to the rise in house prices. However, the rise in prices was not an immediate occurrence, but has developed since hosting the Olympic Games in 2012, and is arguably linked to the growing confidence in East London and its developing attractiveness as a location to live and work. The negative aspect to the rising attractiveness, prices and cost of living is the developing gentrification. The statistics, as previously mentioned, all point towards an improving standard of living, however it must be questioned whether
the improvements are linked to gentrification. It is a question that Penny was raising as a local concern in her narrative. Jane’s mention of a limited number of certain types of housing stock has had an impact on the housing provision within Newham is also part of the problem stemming from the gentrification of Stratford and Newham.

Gentrification was also found in the discourses drawn from media and newspaper articles. The most notable was the Focus E15 Mothers Group stories. The group were not contacted to be part of the research because they were founded after the research had taken place. The group is making claims of social cleansing, whereby the disadvantaged are being displaced. The Mothers group was established when their sheltered hostel accommodation was set to be closed and they were served with eviction notices. Many of the eviction notices were detailing a move for the mothers to places across London and to towns and cities further afield in the United Kingdom. The group set up residence in a tower block that had been set for demolition to house a university that was due to develop the site. The university did not end up developing the site and have since focused their new campus development on a different location on the periphery of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. The group’s argument was that Newham Council were pushing out the deprived families in favour of attracting gentrified communities who would bring affluence and hoped for stability to the borough. Those who could no longer afford the increases in cost of living expenses, in particular rental costs, would have to move elsewhere and leave their established support networks behind (Lees, 2008). They attribute this to modern day social cleansing which is the by-product of the council wanting to attract more affluent professionals and families to move and stay in Newham. The group are drawing attention to the problem that stems from the by-product of a local authority’s desire to stabilise their problem with population churn.

Another theme that emerged from the interviews and newspaper analysis was communication. George described the importance, in his opinion, of communication and message delivery. The regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth
Olympic Park site entailed large scale earth works and disruption to the local communities to ensure it was completed on time. Communication with the local communities who were to be affected was important to the agencies involved in the project. George noted that it was essential to notify communities of the stages of the regeneration and to help residents understand how the works would be effecting them. He said that in his experience he found people reasonable when they understood exactly what was happening and who to contact if something unexpected was happening. Bill said that he was aware of a lot of work being put into communicating with the local communities. Amy used her narrative to express the value in that type of communication with the local businesses she works with. She explained that local businesses need to be kept apprised of all the developments on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site so that as entrepreneurs they could adapt business plans and develop new opportunities to build their own businesses. As previously mentioned by Penny, communication has not always been a high priority for the regeneration practices that have been undertaken in the Stratford and Newham area. She intimated that communication was still an area that was lacking and did create a top-down structure with little chance of meaningful feedback from the lower levels of the societal hierarchy.

Governance and economics was the final discussion chapter. The chapter discussed the potential conflict between political and economic ideologies and the challenges faced by communities in the aftermath of the global economic downturn and the on-set of austerity measures. The literature review presented the idea that in the United Kingdom there were two competing ideologies that had an impact on hosting the Olympic Games in 2012. The United Kingdom has been using a Neo-liberal economic and political ideology. The IOC require a Keynesian-esque ideological approach which uses state intervention to ensure that the country is accountable for ensuring the success of the Games from an economic perspective. Keynesianism, as noted, developed to work from a position of benevolence (Keynes, 2006). It has been questioned whether the Organising Committee or the IOC realistically work from these same fundamental benevolent positions. The austerity measures imposed on the United Kingdom by the then
Coalition Government had an impact on the nation and on the experiences of the selected community representatives taking part in this research. Penny was particularly affected by the phase of austerity measures. She used her narrative to explain that as the rest of the United Kingdom had projects cancelled and had to reduce their financial requirements to run organisations and groups, she was still receiving all the necessary funding to complete projects and plans that had been put forward. Money was diverted to Stratford and away from other deserving projects to ensure that the Stratford projects would be completed on time. The Olympics became the focus and held precedence over other projects because of the finite timescale and the expected global coverage of the location throughout the Olympic cycle. Stratford had to be seen as a success in order to legitimise hosting the Olympic Games and to establish a sustainable legacy through the associated confidence that develops from hosting a successful Games.

Governance was also an area of discussion by the selected community representatives. John exclaimed that Newham was seen as a forward thinking borough, one that was looking to develop and change to meet the needs of the 21st Century. John, a regional politician, sees the same person and borough in a diametrically opposed way to the established community member. Fred, a long term residents of Stratford, held an opposing view of the borough and its mayor. Fred used his narrative to describe his view of the mayor as a ‘self-publicist’. The difference in the opinions between politician and community member is interesting as they sit on opposing ends of the spectrum. Figure 4 was created to help visually show why these opinions could be so different when focusing on the same element. John would be at the top of the hierarchy, where he would access to all the information and is positive because he has access to the knowledge of what is currently happening and what is being planned and access to subject matter experts. Fred on the other hand is at the bottom where he can only gain access to information that is provided to him and he can only access officially sanctioned knowledge. Fred is only going to see the outcome of projects and the majority would be the presentation of projects and plans that were deemed successful. Anything negative would not be publicised to the wider public,
therefore Fred is unable to see the struggle to achieve certain projects or the challenges behind the success of projects. Fred’s view is thus filtered and this could be attributed to his idea of the Mayor as a ‘self-publicist’.

Jane as a professional involved in planning used her narrative to present the feeling of disempowerment. Jane mentioned that the creation of the London Legacy Development Corporation took away the responsibility for a large tract of land from the local authorities across the Olympic Boroughs. She inferred that this was disempowering considering that as local authority planners they were used to multi-agency working. Penny, as previously mentioned, highlighted the failure of the trickle down system. Penny has found through her extensive experience of working in community development that relying on a Neo-liberal free market method of providing funding for community development, the money will not reach those in need of receiving the funding and opportunities that the money affords. She presents the idea that relying on a trickle-down effect will fail due to the societal hierarchical structure where money and opportunities do not reach the lower echelons of the hierarchy. The deficiency of the trickle-down effect directly impacts the ability for the original community residents to remain in the geographical location. The local communities are unable to compete in the socioeconomic environment with the newly introduced ‘gentrifiers’ or incoming middle-class people and therefore are more likely to become displaced from communities that their families have been a part of for generations.

_Evaluation of the Findings_

The aim of the research was to gain an understanding of the experiences of selected community representatives in relation to the regeneration of the Olympic Park site in Stratford, Newham. The research has found that there are many facets and approaches to understanding the experiences of the selected community representatives. The research was planned as an inductive piece of work and two prominent threads have emerged from the community representatives’ experiences. The following results emerged from the interviews and these areas were not found in associated literature during the literature review. Prior research
was conducted covering individual topics included within the thesis, and there has been a limitation to the amount of research found that combines all three topics together. Therefore, it was interesting to note these two predominant findings.

Firstly, the ripple effect has become apparent. It is a theme which has limited impact on the community representatives themselves, but has had an effect on the growing confidence found in East London and a cultural change in how the geographical location is perceived. Secondly, marginal gains have materialised as a thread, in constituting a by-product for understanding the experiences of the selected community representatives. These gains have had a direct impact on the participants’ experiences in the short term, when they have considered what the area was like prior to hosting the Olympic Games.

The Ripple Effect

The ripple effect emerged through the discussion when the selected community representatives pointed it out as a recent occurrence in their experiences. The previous regeneration works, circa the 1980s, had not, in their experiences, created this same level of developer confidence in East London. Both Bob and Mark highlighted some of the new developments that were starting or under development across East London. Bob was particularly vocal about the new developments happening in the docklands and beyond. In his years of experience working with a business and enterprise organisation he had not experienced this level of confidence driving forward the number of new development opportunities going through the stages of planning and beyond. The developing confidence has created an eastward focus in London. Businesses, companies and other associated organisations are now looking at the potential for development in the East End of London.

The ripple effect has had an influence on both the micro and macro levels of the community. The effect has shown that the initial investment in Stratford and the other Olympic Boroughs has enabled a perception change. The perception change has enabled the areas surrounding the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park to
harness the confidence which has developed since hosting the Games. The Olympic Games provided a global stage for East London. The confidence has been shown by foreign investment in the surrounding East London locations. The large scale developments by Siemens and ABP around the docklands and the Inter-IKEA development projects are believed by Mark and Bob to have been made possible by the focus that the London 2012 Olympic Games brought. Changing our perspective from looking at the macro scale of international development opportunities, the opportunities from the micro level should also be considered. Roger, Emily and Molly explained that they believe that their own local development to create a new building for their organisation has been facilitated by hosting the Olympic Games. They have been granted permission to redevelop their current site in Hackney and attribute the opportunity to the growth in confidence and a changing attitude within the local authorities. They associated the successful planning application for the development with the confidence driven from hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012 and their perception of the attitude change at the local authority planning level.

The ripple effect may have been perceived as positive to the participants of this research, however, there is an apparent down side to the effect – gentrification. The focus and interest falling on East London will have highlighted the disparity in real estate prices between East London and the rest of the Greater London area. The disproportion between the two geographical locations will aid in exacerbating the gentrification process because of the availability and low cost of land ready for development. Gentrification is a by-product of the attention gained from hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games. However, the participants are predominantly positive about the focus on Stratford and the East End of London. Gentrification has not been particularly focused on by the participants because of their positions as community representatives. They will potentially gain from the process with better infrastructure and investment in the local area, but they are unlikely to be displaced unlike the Focus E15 Mothers Group. Penny as a prominent community figure has questioned the effects of
gentrification on the region and expressed concerns about the experiences on the local communities who are facing displacement and other levels of deprivation.

An element of creating the ripple effect involves the ability to harness, what I shall term, the ‘honeymoon’ period. My research has taken place in the immediate two years following the conclusion of the London 2012 Olympic Games. I have recognised that there has been a positive reaction by the selected community representatives to the conclusion of the Olympic Games. There was a level of excitement and pride emanating from the participants as they spoke about their experiences of the actual Olympic Games. There has been a changing attitude within the communities according to both Roger, Emily, Molly, Fred and Thomas. By harnessing the feelings of goodwill and elation found within the local communities it has been possible to speed up the outward movement of the ripple effect. The confidence that has developed in the immediate aftermath of the Games, at both a community (micro) and global (macro) level, it has been possible to create the ripples moving outwards from the epicentre.

Marginal Gains

Marginal gains have also become an apparent feature in the experiences of the selected community representatives’ narratives. Marginal gains relates to the improvements, no matter the size, made to infrastructure, to the locale, to the services provided by the local authorities. These marginal gains have aided the development of local level confidence. Emily and Molly both spoke about improved access to public transport and improvements to the infrastructure. Roger also mentioned that the simple act of street cleaning had made an impact on local communities and their own perceptions of the city and area that they live in. These gains provided an opportunity for the local communities who were directly affected by hosting the Olympic Games to be proud of where they live and this, according to participants, seems to have bolstered a new found confidence.

The participants’ perceptions of marginal gains have also been affected by the aforementioned ‘honeymoon’ period, whereby the new infrastructure and
services have been bedded in to the local area. The time of the interviews was within two years of the culmination of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Paul Ricoeur’s (1985) work on time and narrative helps to explain the phenomenon of marginal gains. The linkage between time and the event creates a structure in the participant’s narrative. The structure then becomes the framework that they attach the discourses they associate and access to. In this case the participants are still remembering the enthusiasm and euphoria attached to hosting the Games in their local area that the discourses they choose to use as part of their narratives present a positive association to the experience of hosting. The short term, yet large scale investment that has been made to local infrastructures and facilities available for use by the local communities has leant itself to providing a short term positive experience of hosting the Olympic Games and the associated regeneration programme.

I think it is inevitable that the selected community representatives would provide examples of a positive experience in the aftermath of the Olympic Games. The area has undergone more than seven years (at the time of interview) of levels of high investment into public services, infrastructure and the creation of a new open green space within the urban environment. As Penny explained in her narrative that Stratford was receiving money throughout the economic crisis to the expense of other United Kingdom projects. Stratford was the focus and it had to be seen as a success, otherwise the post-Games affect would have been limited and the park could have been seen as a failure, similar to Montréal (1976) or Athens (2004). The high level of investment and focus has influenced the local communities’ level of self-confidence which in turn has aided the overall level of investment confidence.

However, it was not a positive experience for all communities. The media emphasis on the challenges faced by the Focus E15 Mothers Group. The Mothers Group who came to prominence in 2015 have been vocal about the level of gentrification and the displacement of families who have lived and worked in Newham for generations. The Mothers Group use the traditional media and social
media to present their narrative. Their narratives focus on their perception of
social cleansing, which they attribute to the local authority’s desire to encourage
gentrification in Newham. Penny talked about the problem with gentrification
throughout her narrative and stated that she would be keeping an eye on the
statistics and stories that were beginning to emerge in 2014. Penny put forward
her concerns about the Convergence Agenda. The Agenda is a framework that
was designed to bring East London into line with the socioeconomic status of the
rest of London. Penny’s concern came from the way the statistics were measured,
she highlighted the idea that the process of gentrification will improve levels of
deprivation experienced because of the displacement of working class
communities.

Reflections on the Research and its Contribution to Knowledge

The original contribution to knowledge stems from the limited research
found in the field. There was little research considering how all three of these
main themes could be combined to gain an understanding of the experiences of
selected community representatives in relation to the regeneration of the Olympic
Park in Stratford as part of the London 2012 Olympic redevelopment plans. My
research has attempted to bridge the gap and to answer all three questions. By
studying these three themes, it has been possible to gain an insight into the overall
experiences of the community representatives. Sport mega-events are not one-
dimensional events that are constructed in a short time frame. The Olympic
Games are part of a seven-year cycle from acceptance of the bid through to the
actual point of hosting. During this time, community representatives face a variety
of challenges, spanning from cultural through to governance, to their previous
every day routines due to the construction phases associated to the Olympic Park
development. Therefore, it was valuable to focus on these three thematic points to
provide a balanced discussion and exploration of the representatives’ experiences.

The inductive nature of the research has meant that the research questions
became guidelines rather than questions that could be directly answered. The
research moved on from these questions into greater depth than initially expected.
The experiences of the community representatives ranged in relation to the urban regeneration. Some expressed disappointment and frustration at the closure of thoroughfares through the cityscape. Others were excited by the opportunities afforded to the communities with the improved infrastructure and services. The research set out with three separate research questions being asked:

- How have the selected community representatives experienced the urban regeneration of the local area?
- How have the selected community representatives been affected by the cultural evolutionary processes as a part of the wider community development plan?
- How do economic and political decision-making affect the selected community representatives as a part of the regeneration process?

These three questions emerged from the literature review as prescient and not considered in relation to the community representatives that were selected to be part of this research. Research that had been read focused on the impact on the community that was found in the vicinity of the Olympic Park. Other research considered the economic legitimisation of hosting an Olympic Games.

1) How have the selected community representatives experienced the urban regeneration of the local area?

Urban regeneration was shown to be multifaceted. The community representative cluster groups contained prominent community members as well as regeneration experts, local and regional politicians and business leaders. Each of these groups have different needs, expectations and perceptions to be taken into consideration. The participants all noted in some way that long term regeneration projects had been taking place throughout the London Borough of Newham since the 1980s. The Olympics were just a small part of a much larger regeneration programme as expressed by Sam. The finite time frame for the regeneration of the Olympic Park site was a new experience for the community representatives. The site had to be ready for the start of the Olympic Games in July 2012. Previous regeneration projects had not included this short time scale for completion. The
knowledge that there was an end date for completion of the park meant that the community representatives’ experiences were found to be generally quite positive.

It has been deliberated that there has been a largely positive response to the discussion surrounding the regeneration for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site and surrounding locations. The positive response could be attributed that the experience of former regeneration projects being less organised than the Olympic Games. The positive response could also be attributed to the timescale of the interviews. The interviews were all taken in immediate aftermath of the Olympic Games concluding. The time frame would have had an impact on the memories that are elicited by talking about the Olympic Games and the pride that was felt by the community whilst hosting.

Furthermore, the marginal gains that became apparent also had a direct impact when participants were discussing the urban regeneration. The changes to the physical landscape of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and the improvements to local infrastructure, especially public transport had a positive influence on the discussion. Although Stratford has been well connected since the extension of the Jubilee Line, communities such as those found in Hackney and in particular Homerton have benefitted from new bus routes and additional Overground trains. These marginal gains have a positive effect on the experiences of the community representatives because they open up the accessibility and connectivity of the wider cityscape and make it easier than ever to travel between different parts of London.

2) How have the selected community representatives been affected by the cultural evolutionary processes as a part of the wider community development plan?

The effect of the cultural evolution elements of the community development plans on the selected community representatives was minimal. Cultural evolution has been a part of living and working in the East End of
London for centuries and this latest cycle has been no different. Through the literature of Marriott is has been shown that cultural evolution is a contributing factor in the makeup of the social fabric of the region. The participants’ reaction to the cultural evolution processes as a part of the wider community development plan was more negative. The negativity became incredibly apparent when taking into consideration the newspaper and media coverage of hosting the Olympic Games. East London has been a location undergoing constant cultural change. The area has a diverse multicultural history that dates back centuries to the point of the development of the docklands in the late 18th Century. Although, the interviews presented a more positive outlook on the ever changing culture, the Focus E15 Mothers Group certainly highlighted the problems with the local Mayor’s desire to encourage more affluent professionals and families to move to the area.

Never before has access to traditional and social media been more prescient. Social media has provided a platform for disadvantaged groups to raise their concerns and highlight perceived inequalities within the social landscape. The Focus E15 Mothers Group presented the idea of a cultural cleansing, where the local working class, poor families were being displaced in favour of people who could afford the increasing cost of living. The interviews that were undertaken with the selected community representatives provided a more positive response to the cultural evolution. One reason for this could be because they are generally middle-class professionals who live and work in Stratford. The on-going gentrification of Newham has meant that those who cannot afford to live in the area are being displaced, some of this according to Jane relates to the long term oversight of planners who have built and developed one and two bed housing to the detriment of larger three and four bed family housing options. The community representatives are unlikely to be facing such challenges, many explained that they own their own house which is in contrast to the Mothers Group.

The experience of gentrification has presented itself as a concern for some of the participants. Those in regional and local level government roles were more
accepting of the process as they can only see the benefits of greater numbers of affluent people moving to the area. The development of the Convergence Agenda meant that there has been a quantitative framework set out to try to ensure East London is no longer socioeconomically disadvantaged in comparison to the rest of London. Penny and Jane both presented the idea that it would be difficult to attain the convergence unless there was an economic slowdown of London. Penny highlighted the idea that the homogenisation of East London with the rest of London would occur as a by-product of gentrification. She explained that in her opinion, using statistics as a method of analysis would fail to take into account the displacement of local communities who have been forced to move from the area due to the rising cost of living. Therefore, the statistics would improve as there would be a greater number of economically comfortable residents who have moved into the locale.

3) How do economic and political decision-making affect the selected community representatives as a part of the regeneration process?

The political element of the discussion presented the understanding that between local, regional and national government (at the time a Coalition between Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties), there were two competing political ideologies. The Conservative Party were in overall control of the regional government, the London Assembly, the national government was a coalition and the local government was outright New Labour. Jane explained that in her experience, the competing ideologies meant that each level of governance had a slightly different spin on what they wanted to achieve. The slight differences in ideology and policy design meant that it could be a challenge in delivering exactly what each level of governance required. It was mentioned that there is a recognition that the IOC requires a Keynesian economic approach to hosting, whereby there is significant state intervention to underwrite the events (Giulianotti et al., 2015). However, it is argued that Keynesianism works from a more benevolent position (Keynes, 2006; Saad-Filho, 2010; McKibbin, 2013) than the intentions set out by the IOC and the national governments who win the right to host the Olympic Games. The intentions of the British Government may be less
aligned with the true Keynesian ideals and more focused on delivering a successful Olympic Games on the global stage.

John stated that he believed Newham to be a forward looking borough. This sentiment was echoed by Bill who has been involved in moving his organisation to a site on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. However, the local community did not agree with John. Fred thought the local Mayor was a ‘self-publicist’. Two people on different ends of the social hierarchy see the same local government in two opposing ways. The economic and political decision-making processes have influenced the experiences of the community representatives. None of the community representatives have had a lot of influence with regards to hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The process was described by Penny as a ‘juggernaut’. Even those participants who were working in the regeneration sector had little influence over the finer details of hosting, the most that some of them could action related to the early planning stages for the post-Olympic Games stages of development and regeneration. There has been a process of disempowerment which was emphasised by Jane, the local authority planner.

The Olympic Games were presented by both Jane and Penny as a disempowering experience of governance and decision-making. Jane was effected by the establishment of the London Legacy Development Corporation. The corporation took away decision-making powers in relation to the tract of land which is now the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Penny felt disempowered by the top-down approach of the IOC and government in relation to hosting the Olympic Games. The approach enabled the government to impose compulsory purchase orders on local communities. The purchase orders meant that the local community members had no choice but to accept a financial deal for their home or business site and move to a different area.

Wider Impacts of the Research

The research is not universal, it cannot be generalised and its findings used in full by other host cities or nations. Each host nation has its own economic and
political standing, and London is not wholly comparable to Brazil’s Rio de Janeiro. The research is not generalizable but could inform other host cities with regards to the experiences of the local communities who live alongside every stage of development of the Olympic Park. I believe there are things to be learnt from London’s hosting that could benefit Tokyo, which is due to host the event in the summer of 2020. I attended the Tsukuba International Academy of Sport Studies Short Programme in 2015, and I believe there are similarities between London and Tokyo from an economic and political perspective. Tokyo is facing an on-going economic recession and has a much more stable political system, which is more similar to London than Rio de Janeiro. It is not dissimilar to London’s position in 2005-2012 when London was impacted by the global economic crisis. Tokyo is a postmodern, post-industrial city and is developing the Olympic Park in areas of the city that are in need of regeneration. The experiences of my research participants could be used to inform the Tokyo organising committee by enabling them to understand the long term impact of a large scale regeneration project on the local communities surrounding the proposed development sites. It could also be used to aid the development of a ripple effect and post-Olympic Games confidence, which would be beneficial to the Japanese economy by catalysing development projects outside of Tokyo in the adjoining prefectures.

There was an issue with gaining access to a variety of research cluster groups. The access challenge could be associated to research fatigue generated from the level of focus placed on Stratford and its surrounding communities in relation to hosting the Olympic Games in 2012. However, the challenge may also stem from localised resistance to being included in research, especially considering the period the research was undertaken. The communities in and around Stratford had experienced a high level of research engagement in the lead up to the Olympic Games. It was hard to get access to many diverse groups as they would not return correspondence or phone calls. This problem was understandable as London was the focus for a lot of Olympic research. I had to expand my geographical focus, which opened up access to one community group
who had been missed in the pre-Olympic Games research. However, this was a singular event and it occurred after one organisation who did not want to participate forwarded my details on to this group after a community meeting. Unfortunately, the snowball sampling was only effective twice. It brought me the aforementioned community group and an interview with one other participant.

It should be acknowledged that the selected community representatives who took part in the research were all, what I term, community representatives. They were either prominent community members, or business leaders or involved in politics at some level. The research has been generally positive with regards to research aim of gaining an understanding of the experiences of the selected community representatives in relation to the regeneration of the Olympic Park site as a part of the Olympic redevelopment plans. This includes the consideration of the issues raised about gentrification and displacement of long term residents. The issues raised about gentrification and displacement of local residents came from the newspaper and media articles that were incorporated into the research as a point of triangulation. The interviews were particularly positive and that has developed from the knowledge that as community representatives, they or their organisations have directly benefitted from hosting the Olympic Games. The community representatives have all had a vested interest in the regeneration and the success of the Olympic Games. Roger, Emily and Molly were able to plan and develop their own construction project, which they believe would not have been possible before hosting the Olympic Games. Amy has been able to help develop the business district and the opportunities for the businesses and entrepreneurs that she works with. Bill and his organisation have been drawn to move to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park site because of the infrastructure and the facilities available.

Future Research

The research contained in this thesis has opened up the discussion regarding our understanding of the experiences of selected community representatives in relation to regeneration of Olympic Park sites. Due to the
limited research undertaken that considers all of these thematic areas, it would be interesting to continue to work in this area but in the context of other host cities. If there was a larger data set then we would be able to create a better understanding of how Olympic host city regeneration is experienced by community representatives. The future research would need to contextualise the position of the host city. It would be necessary to question whether the host city, as an example, was similar to London whereby there was already an established programme of regeneration with infrastructure already in place or if it is similar to Rio de Janeiro which has hosted the Olympics Games in 2016 with limited infrastructure already developed on their Olympic Park site. The economy would also need to be considered, whether there was a strong global economy or a weaker developing economy which would create different challenges in relation to the potential hosting experience.

Logically, Tokyo 2020 would make an interesting comparable study. I attended the Tsukuba International Academy for Sport Studies Short Programme in 2015 in order to learn more about the host city for the 32nd Olympiad of the modern era. They have prior experience of hosting sport mega-events similar to London. Tokyo had previously hosted the Summer Olympic Games in 1964, and Nagano hosted the Winter Olympic Games in 1998. The city infrastructure is already well established throughout Tokyo, including their underground rail network and the overall connectivity across the cityscape to visitors. Although, it should be noted that there would need to be some improvements for transport accessibility for passengers with specific transport needs, such as those visitors who use wheelchairs. The sites for the games venues are all situated in and around the Tokyo harbour area of the city, which is their focus for investment and improvement. The Tokyo Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games have already faced a number of challenges regarding the cost of building the venues due to their economic climate. London faced similar challenges with increasing costs for stadium when the global economic crash occurred in late 2007-2008. I think there would be a fascinating link to explore between the
experiences of London community representatives and Tokyo’s given the parallels between the two global cities.

The ability to gain access can be difficult as this thesis has pointed out, especially if you take into consideration the language barrier with Japan. However, the rise in popularity and access to social media could be used to combat these initial impediments. Social media is growing in popularity and would allow a researcher to gain access to different affected groups. Sport mega-events are becoming more focused on social media – the recent football Euro championships are an example in addition to the social media focus presented throughout the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. It would need to be planned with an appropriate methodology and methods to harness the exact data needed, but it would allow for access to harder to reach groups and an ability to see the evolution of discourses being presented online. Furthermore, the contacts that I made when I attended the Tsukuba International Academy for Sport Studies Short Programme would aid in gaining access and ability to interact with the local populations found in and around Tokyo and surrounding prefectures.
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Appendices

Appendix A

Contextualising the Composition/Demographics of Stratford and Newham

Stratford and Newham Community Profiles

The community profile has been designed and written to contextualise the composition of the Stratford and Newham communities in relation to the rest of London and England. It is important to present this information as background knowledge because it helps to reinforce the evidence provided throughout the literature review. The following chapter will firstly present a short community profile of the Stratford and wider Newham area using statistics provided by the Census taken in 2011.

Community profile

The data being presented as a part of the community profile has been taken from the 2011 Census data provided by the Office for National Statistics. The data presented relates to the demography of the area. The demography of the area is important to consider because it helps to underpin points of discussion brought up in the interviews by the participants as well as to highlight the positions within the community strata from which the participants are drawn. The date of the census is important to note as being undertaken in 2011, the year immediately prior to the Olympic Games being held. Therefore, it is important to note that at this time there would possibly still be people working and residing in the area because of their employment being linked to the creation of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Furthermore, the information provided in the Census 2011 is relatable only to the day that it is written. It is a snapshot of information which has been liable to change. However, with this in mind it is still important to include the data as it is providing a snapshot of the demography and is a representation of the level of
deprivation found within the area, which was one of the features of the bidding process. The electoral ward which has been used to access the statistical data is the ‘Stratford and New Town’ ward, the ward where the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park is predominantly situated. The statistical data will be placed in reference to the wider London Borough of Newham and the additional Olympic Boroughs if it is relevant to the issue under discussion. The main quantitative data that has been utilized here has been drawn from the Office for National Statistics (2011) Census 2011. This data has yielded the following insights.

First, the Stratford and New Town ward has a population that is significantly younger than in the rest of England and, to a lesser extent, the rest of London. Stratford and New Town has a mean age of 31.5 according to the Census, which is 7.8 years lower than the mean age in relation to England’s average. In relation to the rest of London the mean age is 4.1 years lower in Stratford and New Town electoral ward. The young demographic of the ward and borough is one factor that will affect population churn. The borough’s local authorities have recognised there is a problem with population churn where people move in and establish themselves and then move out to more affluent areas. The problem with population churn is the limited social capital available to the communities. The local government faces the challenge of identifying and meeting the needs of the community due to the high levels of poverty and crime. The by-product is the experience of social dislocation and displacement. Stabilising the population churn was one of the issues highlighted as part of the Olympic and Paralympic Games bid. One of the benefits in slowing the churn will mean that there will be a reduction in the loss of money from the local economy as settled residents will spend their earnings in the local area. Additionally, the local authorities should be able to identify the needs of the residing community more easily and act to improve the levels of deprivation and services available. The exact numbers for the age structure are found in the following pie charts:

21 The data has been found at this website: http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=7&b=13688999 &c=stratford+and+new+town+d=14&e=6335050&i=1001x1003x1004&m=0&k=1&s=144 9483928375&enc=1&dsFamilyId=2474
Figure 5 Age structure of Stratford and New Town

- 0 to 4 years: 310
- 5 to 7 years: 310
- 8 to 9 years: 1066
- 10 to 14 years: 416
- 15 years: 84
- 16 to 17 years: 2519
- 18 to 19 years: 3385
- 20 to 24 years: 2519
- 25 to 29 years: 3385
- 30 to 44 years: 416
- 45 to 59 years: 2519
- 60 to 64 years: 3385
- 65 to 74 years: 310
- 75 to 84 years: 1066
- over 90 years: 310

Figure 6 Age structure of London Borough of Newham

- 0 to 4 years: 11461
- 5 to 7 years: 6796
- 8 to 9 years: 769
- 10 to 14 years: 8533
- 15 years: 1567
- 16 to 17 years: 12846
- 18 to 19 years: 7988
- 20 to 24 years: 43017
- 25 to 29 years: 4089
- 30 to 44 years: 32586
- 45 to 59 years: 8388
- 60 to 64 years: 7934
- 65 to 74 years: 76602
- 75 to 84 years: 10562
- over 90 years: 40437
Figure 7 Age structure of London

Figure 8 Age structure of England

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The pie charts show that the population of Stratford and New Town and the wider Borough of Newham is predominantly deemed to be young. If working age is focused on (ages 16-64), then it can be seen that this age range makes up the majority of the electoral ward and wider borough. There are a total of 20 electoral wards in the London Borough of Newham; Stratford and New Town’s working age population makes up approximately 5% of the total population of the London Borough of Newham. Another consideration for the young demographic is that the East End of London has historically been a deprived area, which has meant in comparison to the rest of London it is cheaper to buy and rent property, thereby reaching a younger demographic that does not have such a secure foothold on the capital’s highly expensive property ladder.

The population of Stratford and New Town is recognised as multicultural and diverse. The Census 2011\textsuperscript{22} (Office for National Statistics, 2013a) information recognises the ethnic diversity\textsuperscript{23}:

\begin{itemize}
  \item White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/ British/ Irish/ Gypsy Traveller/Other White
  \item Mixed/ Multiple Ethnic Groups: White and Black Caribbean/White and Black African/ White and Asian/ Other Mixed
  \item Asian/Asian British: Indian/ Pakistani/ Bangladeshi/ Chinese/ Other Asian
  \item Black: African/ Caribbean/ Other Black
  \item Other Ethnic Group: Arab/ Any Other Ethnic Group
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{22} The data set can be found at the following website: http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=7&b=13688999&c=stratford+and+new+town&d=14&e=13&g=6335050&i=1001x1003x1004&m=0&r=1&s=1449483928375&enc=1&dsFamilyId=2477
\textsuperscript{23} The following details set out the specific ethnic groupings from the Census data set

White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/ British/ Irish/ Gypsy Traveller/Other White
Mixed/ Multiple Ethnic Groups: White and Black Caribbean/White and Black African/ White and Asian/ Other Mixed
Asian/Asian British: Indian/ Pakistani/ Bangladeshi/ Chinese/ Other Asian
Black: African/ Caribbean/ Other Black
Other Ethnic Group: Arab/ Any Other Ethnic Group
Figure 9 Ethnic group in Stratford and New Town

Figure 10 Ethnic group in London Borough of Newham
The above pie charts provide the official statistics showing the ethnic diversity of the electoral ward in relation to the wider London Borough of Newham. It is important to recognise the ethnic diversity in these locations as this aspect was used as one of the main arguments in the initial documents and presentations in London’s bid to host the 2012 Olympic Games. The charts show that the Stratford and New Town ward is 40% white and 60% mixed, Asian, Black or other ethnic
group. In contrast, England is overwhelmingly white at a given figure of 85% of the population.

Furthering the discussion surrounding the ethnic diversity of both Stratford and New Town and the wider London Borough of Newham, the number of languages spoken in the area is vast. The following pie charts show a breakdown of the main languages spoken in Stratford and New Town, the wider London Borough of Newham, the rest of London and against England. The Census 2011\(^{24}\) (Office for National Statistics, 2013e) data highlights that there are over 90 different languages spoken in the electoral ward and within Newham. Some of the categories include multiple languages, variations or dialects of languages. The actual number of main languages spoken in the area is most likely to be considerably more. Again this variety can be attributed to the long history of the East of London being one of the main global docklands and the disembarkation point for many migrants entering the United Kingdom (Marriott, 2012).

\(^{24}\) The data set can be found at the following website: http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=7&b=13688999&c=stratford+and+new+town&d=14&e=13&g=6335050&r=1001x1003x1004&m=0&r=1&s=1449483928375&enc=1&dsFamilyId=2528
Figure 13 Main language in Stratford and New Town

Figure 14 Main language in London Borough of Newham
Alongside language the Census data also shows us the country of birth for residents who completed the Census in 2011 (Office for National Statistics, 2013b). The Census data shows that the electoral ward of Stratford and New Town is diverse. The following pie charts show a breakdown of the Country of Birth data, it shows that in Stratford and New Town ward 9,758 people were born outside of the United Kingdom out of a total of 17,768 (n=55%) all usual residents. It is similar for the wider London Borough of Newham which has a total of 165,414 residents born outside of the United Kingdom from a total of 307,984 (n=54%) all usual residents. In relation to England, there were 7,337,139 residents born outside of the United Kingdom out of 53,012,456 (n=14%) all usual residents. The area has a significantly higher number of residents who were born outside of the United Kingdom in comparison to the rest of England. These

25 Country of birth data set can be found at this website address: http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=7&b=13688999&c=stratford+and+new+town&d=14&e=13&g=6335050&i=1001x1003x1004&m=0&r=1&s=1449483928375&enc=1&dsFamilyId=2478
particular demographics could be explained by the social history of the area, in terms of being where many trade ships docked and migrant workers landed in the United Kingdom. The significance of these demographic features for this thesis is that the bid was predicated upon the diversity of the borough and how the community is vibrant.

Figure 16 Country of birth in Stratford and New Town
Figure 17 Country of birth in London Borough of Newham

Figure 18 Country of birth in London
Thus, in terms of the evidence with respect to ethnicity, languages spoken, and country of birth, the demography of the area and the wider borough is exceptionally multicultural and socially diverse. However, other factors beyond ethnic diversity were highlighted by the Games proponents when justifying Newham as the appropriate site for staging the London event. The socioeconomic status (Office for National Statistics, 2013c) of Stratford and New Town, and of Newham, must also be taken into account, because the London event was portrayed as the future catalyst for lifting the borough and the overall East End of London towards levels of prosperity associated with other parts of the capital. To discuss the socioeconomic status of the area, we might begin by examining the employment status of the residents, in comparison to Newham, the rest of London and England.

26 Data set found at: http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=7&b=13688999&c=stratford+and+new+town&d=14&g=6335050&i=1001x1003x1004&m=0&r=1&s=1449483928391&enc=1&dsFamilyId=2517
Figure 20 National Socioeconomic Status of Stratford and New Town

Figure 21 National Socioeconomic Status London Borough of Newham
The pie charts (see figures 16-19) above present the national socioeconomic status for Stratford and New Town, London Borough of Newham, London and England. This information is focused on the employment status of the residents aged 16-74.
years old. It is notable that the majority of residents in work are employed in the categories of ‘Intermediate Occupations’, ‘Small Employers or Own Account workers’, ‘Lower Supervisory/Technical Occupations’ or ‘Routine Occupations’ (Stratford and New Town n=6,185 or n=42%; London Borough of Newham n=47%; London n = 44%; England n=54%); whereas those in ‘Higher Professional Occupations’ or ‘Lower Managerial/Administrative and Professional Occupations’ are noted to be employers to fewer local people (Stratford and New Town n=4,481 or n=31%; London Borough of Newham n=15%; London n=36%; England n= 31%). Only 15% of the London Borough of Newham residents work in professional or managerial positions, which is significantly less than those residents in London or England. The anomaly is Stratford and New Town’s 31%, which is the same as England’s percentage. It is arguable that the Stratford and New Town electoral ward’s percentage does not fit with expectations due to the amount of regeneration and redevelopment work that has been happening since the 1980s which has encouraged a process of gentrification to occur.

The groups have been selected on these dividing lines because of the job roles that are included in each category according to the Office for National Statistics who provide a clear definition for each category and subcategory.27 Almost half of the working population in Stratford and New Town (42%) work in the highlighted categories of 3-7, which means that their jobs are more likely to be designated as ‘blue-’ (manual labour) or ‘pink-’ (customer focused, entertainment, sales or service-based roles) collar based work. These jobs tend to be on the lower end of pay scales and earnings in comparison to the higher or lower managerial

27 1. Higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations
   1.1. Large employers and higher managers and administrative occupations (Chief Executive, Production Manager)
   1.2. Higher professional occupations (Doctor, Barrister, Dentist)
   2. Lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations (Nurse, Actor, Journalist)
   3. Intermediate Occupations (Fireman, Photographer, Airline Cabin Crew)
   4. Small employers and own account workers (Self-employed, Builder, Hairdresser, Fisherman)
   5. Lower supervisory, craft and related occupations (Train Driver, Plumber, Electrician)
   6. Semi-routine occupations (Postman, Care Assistant, Shop Assistant)
   7. Routine occupations (Bus Driver, Refuse Collector, Waitress)
   8. Never worked or long-term unemployed

type of roles featured within the socioeconomic scales. Furthermore, the Census data provided also highlights that there is approximately a quarter (n=27%; London Borough of Newham n=33%; London n=20%; England n=15%) of the population deemed to be categorised as either ‘never worked’, ‘long term unemployed’ or ‘not classified’. The statistics clearly show a higher percentage of residents having been classified in the aforementioned categories who are residents of Stratford and New Town electoral ward. The London Borough of Newham is more than double the percentage across the rest of England and Stratford. In addition to the Census 2011 data, the information provided by the English Indices of Deprivation must also be taken into consideration as it provides a snapshot of a local authority’s position in relation to their levels of multiple deprivations. Furthermore, the latest release of the indices has taken place in 2015 which is four years newer than the information provided by the census and is also three years after hosting the Olympic Games.

Another measure of low socioeconomic status in the area and the wider borough relates to deprivation. Deprivation in this sense is calculated by the criteria set out in ‘The English Index of Multiple Deprivation’. The index criteria cover seven domains of deprivation (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015)

- Income
- Employment
- Education
- Health
- Crime
- Barriers to Housing and Services
- Living Environment

The evidence for Newham points towards some significant if uneven effects for staging the Games in relation to deprivation. In 2010 the London Borough of Newham (along with the other official host boroughs for the Games) was recognised as having 31% of its neighbourhoods being deemed as highly deprived. However, in the intervening five years the latest English Indices of Deprivation state that there are now only 8% of neighbourhoods within the borough as being recognised as highly deprived (Gill, 2015). Accordingly,
Newham has moved from being the second most deprived local authority to the 25th between 2010 and 2015. The impacts for other Olympic boroughs have been less pronounced: Hackney has also made improvements, although not on the scale of Newham, in moving from first to 11th on the scale of deprivation, whereas Tower Hamlets has remained in the same position on the scale. There is a correlation between the decline in deprivation and the post-Olympic effects in Newham. I am interested in how the local stakeholders understand and make sense of their experiences through their discourses. It is arguable that the investment opportunities in the Olympic boroughs has seen the development of new apartment blocks which have attracted new more affluent residents to move into the area. The process of gentrification has meant that there has been a change in building design, with a move away from the overcrowded more historically traditional housing design in the post war period, as described by Moran (2012).

**Conclusion**

The community profile has indicated that Newham is a highly diverse, poor location. However, some evidence is pointing towards a distinctive uplift after the Olympic Games, as evidenced by Newham move from 2nd to 25th on the list of indices of multiple deprivation from 2010 to 2015. Furthermore, the community profile has shown that 27% of people in the Stratford and New Town electoral ward are classified as either ‘never worked’, ‘long term unemployed’ or ‘not classified’. It has been mentioned that Stratford and New Town is a young electoral ward (an average of 4.1 years younger than the rest of London). In addition to being on average a young electoral ward and borough, Newham residents are most likely to be employed in blue or pink collar industries (Office for National Statistics, 2013c).

It has also been argued that the focus of investment and the regeneration and redevelopment of the area, including and not limited to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, has encouraged a process of gentrification which has benefitted the statistical image presented of the area. The anomalous Stratford and New Town result in the National Socioeconomic Status data provided could account for the
beginnings of the gentrification process. The change in position on the indices of multiple deprivations could be attributed to the incoming affluent residents. The incoming residents may have been drawn to the Stratford, Newham are because of the targeted advertising of the location to specific subsets of the demography in London. It will later be debated as part of the wider gentrification discussion which argues that Stratford, Newham has been advertised as an enclave of Canary Wharf due to numerous transport options available.

The community profile has also presented the idea of population churn. Population churn has been noted by the local authorities as a problem for the London Borough of Newham. Population churn is problematic because it sees the transition of people out of the borough once they have established themselves financially. Historically, there has been little incentive for newly establishing populations to remain in the borough once they have earnt or saved enough funds. This means that there has been a leakage of money from the local economy as those people who can afford to purchase products in the local area then move on and spend their money in the new areas that they move to or they can afford to spend their money in central or west London regions.

There are four crucial points that the community profile has helped to highlight and to contextualise the literature review:

- Multicultural and diverse communities
- Young demographic
- Predominantly a blue and pink collar work force
- Deprivation

The literature review showed in the sociocultural issues chapter that East London as a region has a long history of migrant populations settling there. The links to East London still exist and you can see from the data provided in the Census 2011 that the area is still as diverse and multicultural today. The young demographic is indicative of the challenges Newham and Stratford both face in terms of population churn. Young people settle into the community because it is affordable in comparison to other areas of London. Then when they have established
themselves in their jobs and lives, they move out to more affluent parts of the city. Furthermore, the socioeconomic status shows that the residents in Stratford are predominantly working in blue and pink collar service industries. The challenge for these residents is ensuring that they can continue to live and work in Stratford and Newham whilst the cost of living rises, this is indicative of chances of further population churn. These three areas have been taken forward and are part of the wider discussion chapters.