
ARTICLES

‘On the Side of the Angels’: Community Involvement in the Governance of Neighbourhood Renewal

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ABSTRACT Community involvement in regeneration is far from easy, and is difficult to define. The New Deal for Communities programme has directly involved residents in the governance of neighbourhood renewal with some success. However, community capacity has proved to be limited, adequate representation is difficult to achieve and there has been friction with local government. Community empowerment has to be enabled and supported by getting the structures and processes right, and supporting community representatives.

KEY WORDS: Community involvement, neighbourhood renewal, urban regeneration, governance, community representation, empowerment

Regenerating Places, not People

When we wrote about urban policy in *Local Economy* back in 1991 we were, justifiably, angry (Robinson & Shaw 1991). During the Thatcher years, urban policy had been a travesty. It was not about improving the lives of disadvantaged people and communities, certainly not about equity, redistribution or social justice. Through the Urban Development

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Corporations (UDCs), policy was principally concerned with promoting physical development by supporting and subsidising the private sector and, in particular, property developers. It was policy in, but not of, the inner cities. To the extent that Tory governments sought to justify it, it was claimed that some mysterious trickle-down effect would, eventually, bring benefits to local people. It was top-down, formulated and implemented by non-democratic quangos (Imrie & Thomas, 1999).

Consequently, we called for the abolition of the UDCs; for a more balanced, partnership approach; and, above all, for the '*empowerment of local communities*' (Robinson & Shaw, 1991, p. 69). We argued for genuine community involvement, which would produce relevant, effective and creative responses to the problems facing marginalised communities. In short, we argued that policy had to change: from a top-down, market-driven approach to one that was bottom-up and responsive to the needs and concerns of local residents.

Policy did change and, looking back over the past ten years or so, the change has been substantial—even, perhaps, remarkable. Heseltine's City Challenge programme initiated a shift towards community involvement and social regeneration, while the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) then started to open up new opportunities for local initiatives. After 1997, the 'New Labour' government pushed ahead with regeneration programmes aiming to tackle 'social exclusion' and bring about 'neighbourhood renewal'. It soon became the conventional wisdom that regeneration could only be achieved through substantial community involvement in 'real' partnerships (Pearce & Mawson, 2003).

The Social Exclusion Unit and the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit opened up a debate about what regeneration policy should be trying to achieve and provided a conceptual base for new policy initiatives. The emphasis within the National Strategy Action Plan for Neighbourhood Renewal was on community involvement, long term interventions, mainstreaming and the delivery of real change—making a difference to the lives of people in Britain's poorest neighbourhoods (SEU, 2001). A new high profile initiative, New Deal for Communities (NDC), was launched in 1998, followed by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and experiments in Neighbourhood Management. To those of us who had been so critical of policy in the 1980s and early 1990s, these new policies and programmes were—and are—very welcome.

Back in 1991 we said that 'it has to be emphasised that genuinely involving the community in the process of urban regeneration is far from easy' (Robinson & Shaw, 1991, p. 70). Even back then, that was widely understood to be the case. But now, with several years' experience of programmes committed to 'involving the community' we know more about why it is 'far from easy'. Reflecting on our experiences with New Deal for Communities, SRB programmes and other local initiatives, we explore some of the problems being encountered in community-led regeneration. Unless these problems are faced and overcome, there is a danger that communities will be 'expected to bear the responsibility for

any failure' (Atkinson, 2003, p. 118), and that policy will simply revert back to top-down approaches delivering projects of little benefit to disadvantaged communities. Indeed, the government's recent adoption of the UDC model—to push through change in the South East growth areas—and the earlier emphasis on business-led Urban Regeneration Companies, suggests that a more centralist alternative to bottom-up, community-led regeneration is already bubbling uncomfortably close to the surface.

Defining 'Community Involvement'

Nowadays, community involvement is held to be, self-evidently, 'a good thing'—even a panacea. The Urban White Paper (DETR, 2000), captured many of the potential benefits: it can empower people, strengthen communities, result in better public services and make regeneration sustainable. And the Government's recent consultation on 'building civil renewal' is all about supporting community involvement to tackle social problems (CRU, 2003). Community involvement is not just desirable; it is essential and morally right. To support community involvement is to be on the side of the angels.

But what do we actually mean by 'involving the community in regeneration'? 'Community' is a notoriously slippery concept and carries with it a variety of connotations (Cochrane, 2003). It may be conceived as groups of people defined by geography, identity or interest, or even viewed as an aspirational model. 'Involvement' can be taken to mean many different forms of interaction and participation. It is, therefore, not surprising that community involvement generally goes undefined, a mantra interpreted in various ways and leading to a wide range of policies, structures and social processes. In regeneration policy, community involvement is often seen particularly as being about *governance*: the participation of residents in decision-making in local partnerships. There are other components, such as consultative processes or residents participating in various events or activities. It may also be linked to ideas of community spirit, social capital or that equally nebulous concept, 'community cohesion' (ODPM, 2003).

However, involvement in governance has become an increasingly prominent issue, to the point where it is now commonly regarded as the central element of community involvement in regeneration. That emphasis on governance is a key feature of the NDC programme, where the aim is to develop and pursue regeneration that is 'resident-led'. In almost all NDC partnerships local residents are now in the majority on NDC partnership boards (NRU, 2003). In many, these community representatives have a sense of ownership of both the programme and the process. That comes across when those residents talk about how 'we take the decisions; it's *our* money for *our* community'. It is empowering, it is good to see, and it makes a nice change. Involving the community in

governance is, without doubt, a good thing—but it is ‘far from easy’, and it generates problems and challenges which need to be acknowledged and tackled.

Perils and Pitfalls of Governance ‘by the Community’

When it is working well, governance ‘by the community’ can be uplifting and inspiring, bringing positive change and generating a sense of achievement and excitement. But in some places it is proving to be a real struggle. It can be very fragile and dependent on the dedication of a handful of individuals. Community representatives on NDC boards are finding themselves having to cope with considerable pressures and, consequently, some NDC partnerships are facing problems in developing and delivering their regeneration programmes (NRU, 2003; NAO, 2004). This model of governance presents particular and substantial challenges.

Community Capacity

Much has been said about the need to develop the capacity of communities to lead regeneration and there is no doubt that residents serving on partnership boards have learnt a lot about the process and practice of regeneration. But only a small minority of residents have the confidence, interest, or time, to get heavily involved in the governance of regeneration. Most people are unable or unwilling to spend their time in a seemingly never-ending series of meetings trying to make sense of bureaucratic jargon and procedures. Many find partnership board meetings intimidating and patronising. The commitment involved can be very substantial; the National Audit Office found that, within NDC partnerships

Residents were experiencing ‘burn out’ as a result of attending regular board meetings, working group discussions, project appraisal boards and a host of other activities ... the burden is significant and each NDC partnership has had to actively manage its engagement process so as not to overload existing volunteers or deter potential participants. (NAO, 2004, p. 28)

It is not realistic to assume that there are many people willing to take on the work of governance—and that goes for affluent areas as well as the disadvantaged areas targeted for regeneration programmes. It can be not just time-consuming but also a frustrating and thankless task. This kind of community capacity is actually more limited than we like to think.

Community Representation

‘The community’ is, in reality, many communities—different and distinct neighbourhoods, different communities of interest and identity. Community representatives on NDC partnership boards are probably more representative, by ethnicity and gender, for example, than local councillors

(Shaw & Davidson, 2002). Even so, they often do not really represent the diversity of the local community. In our experience, most partnership boards include few people in full-time employment, while younger people are noticeable by their absence. Isolated and marginalised groups—the so-called 'hard to reach'—are often not represented, not reached and their absence goes unnoticed.

The community is increasingly viewed as an 'equal partner' in area-based regeneration initiatives (as is 'the Council', 'the voluntary sector' 'the police' etc). But 'the community' is not a single entity with well-defined aims or objectives. Different people may have very different ideas about what is important and desirable to make life better (even if they appear to belong to the same 'community of interest' and live in the same area or neighbourhood). There seems to be an expectation that community involvement in the governance of regeneration programmes will naturally lead to a simple, consensus position being reached on '*what the community wants*'. In fact, 'what the community wants' is complex, is filtered through the community representatives and partnership structures, is shaped by what is considered feasible, and emerges as a pragmatic programme, which meets some aspirations and not others. Priorities emerge according to the relative strengths of different interests, personalities and partners and, of course, the perceived likelihood of success. As one study of the experiences of residents involved in urban regeneration projects notes, 'communities are diverse and local interests may conflict with each other. If the community is seen as homogeneous then only the most powerful voices will tend to be heard' (Mayo *et al.*, 2000, p. 1).

Moreover, community representatives will—understandably—tend to focus on what they know and what most concerns them. They can find it a struggle to engage with the wide range of themes and issues in a holistic NDC programme. Equally, they can find it difficult to understand and represent the concerns of the wider area, beyond their own 'micro-neighbourhood'. It does not help that the boundaries for area-based regeneration initiatives often reflect administrative or political considerations, rather than functional communities or neighbourhoods. As Raco notes, such boundary drawing produces communities that are 'exclusionary in their inclusiveness', with boundaries that 'are neither natural nor rational, but formed in and through broader relations of power, privilege and exclusion' (Raco, 2003, p. 241).

In addition, the relationship between community representatives and those they are supposed to represent can be difficult and unclear. There may be a 'gulf between those who have learnt to play the game and those they represent' (Taylor, 2003, p. 193), resulting in poor communication, frustration and ineffective accountability.

Decisions made by the community '*may not be representative, progressive or enlightened*' (ODPM, 2003); they can be exclusive, even reactionary. Not all people—or communities—have modern or progressive attitudes towards issues like ethnic origin, religion or sexuality. There may be not only misunderstanding but distrust between generations. And a

community-led partnership may be defensive, presenting a false consensus, and failing to respond to challenge and criticism. Problems that can afflict local government can also be reproduced in the community governance model. On many occasions, SRB partnerships have been hijacked by local Councils; equally, resident-led NDC partnerships can be hijacked by a clique of residents with a particular, limited and exclusive agenda.

Knowledge and Experience

The move towards community governance and empowerment is often justified on the grounds that the community knows best. But does it? There is no doubt that residents have much greater experience of local conditions and problems than the 9 to 5 professionals simply because they live there. Residents do not, however, have a monopoly of knowledge and experience. Community representatives on regeneration partnerships are likely to come into contact with only part of their local community and lack the specialist knowledge and sources of information available to the professionals.

Community representatives find there really is a steep learning curve to face in getting to grips with regeneration. In addition, beyond getting to know about jargon and processes, delivery plans and so on, it can be difficult for them to find out about what works in other, similar places. That can set limits on innovation and creativity, resulting in a programme of projects 'invented here' but often 'reinventing the wheel' and not linked to wider experience of best practice. This, of course, is why real partnership is important, bringing in the knowledge and experience of other agencies—and why the knowledge base of the staff is crucial. The limited knowledge of community representatives (and also of partner agencies and regeneration staff) has been recognised in building up a national support infrastructure through the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit and its Neighbourhood Renewal Advisors working with local partnerships (NRU, 2002).

The Practicalities of Community Involvement

Community members are (usually the only) unpaid volunteers in the regeneration process. While they have a more personal interest than paid professionals in improving their area—and stand to gain considerable benefits if it works—their status during the process is bound to be viewed differently. It is difficult to say how the perceived status of community members would be viewed if they were paid to be involved. Would they become more or less valued? Would more people—perhaps different sections of the community—get involved? Or would payment undermine their position within their own communities? These are important questions, as yet unanswered.

Some partnerships are very sensitive to the needs of community representatives and have sought to reduce barriers to participation. Others have still to give proper consideration to basic issues such as the timing, location and format of meetings, childcare provision, access and transport. All too often, arrangements for meetings and events are made primarily to suit paid officers rather than community representatives.

The time demands of involvement in regeneration initiatives can be extremely high for community members—often higher than for (paid) representatives of partner agencies, who will probably find it easier to view their involvement as part of their paid work commitment and keep it separate from the rest of their lives. As well as attending Board meetings, sub-group meetings, the various fora, special events and conferences, community representatives have an additional role to play in representing the views and wishes of their fellow community members. For instance, they may attend tenants' and residents' associations and other local groups to consult with people and report back on developments within the NDC programme. They are also likely to be involved in more informal representation and consultation as a part of their daily lives (e.g. talking to people in the local shops and post offices, and as they walk down the street). They may even have neighbours knocking on their doors to report problems or give opinions on local issues. Because community representatives live 'onsite', they find that they can be on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. On top of that, they may have to face some hostility from other residents suspicious of the motives of community representatives, believing them to have 'changed sides' or become involved in order to pursue their own interests and agendas. Marilyn Taylor has recently spoken of the 'enormous demands' placed on community representatives who are

caught in a no-man's-land where they are expected to represent the views of their constituencies to partnerships on the one hand, but at the same time to embody the partnership back in the community on the other, even when its decisions fly in the face of community wishes. Where money is at stake, representatives also run the risk of being suspected of feathering their own nests by their community, while being accused of being unrepresentative by their partnership colleagues is an occupational hazard, especially if they challenge the drive to consensus. (Taylor, 2003, p. 193)

Contested Governance

Governance '*by the community*' has tended to be regarded as an alternative to a local government that is perceived as having failed. Within many NDC partnerships, residents regard the local Council as 'the problem'—and central government tends to see it that way too.

In many areas that may well be a justifiable view. But the fact is that community governance cannot be an alternative to local government—a regeneration partnership does not have the powers, range of responsibilities or resources that local government has. Moreover, local government

has a wider geographical remit, concerned not just with the interests of one small area but a whole town or city. And this contested governance contains a crucial contradiction. For many residents, local government may be 'the problem' but, for regeneration to work, it also has to become part of 'the solution' as it can bring to bear such substantial resources and influence (or, on the other hand, block change). The trouble is that the establishment of a community-led partnership in opposition to the Council can undermine prospects for partnership. At its most extreme, the Council is regarded as the enemy; that attitude is not conducive to partnership working—it is not a way for the community to win friends and influence people in the Council. Nor, therefore, is it likely to help in the attainment of the new Holy Grail of regeneration, 'mainstreaming'. It is clear that a mature and co-operative relationship between a partnership and the local authority is of crucial importance. Without that, regeneration is much more difficult to achieve. The recent Public Accounts Committee report on the NDC programme underlined the importance of that relationship, having found that 'mistrust between some local authorities and New Deal for Communities boards has prevented progress through the partnership approach' (PAC, 2004, p. 2).

Under Pressure to Achieve Results

New Labour's neighbourhood renewal policies are full of statements about there being 'no quick fix', and therefore highlighting the need for longer-term interventions (SEU, 1998). It is acknowledged that it takes time to build community capacity and create partnerships imbued with trust and respect. The ten-year timescale of NDC is recognition of this. The idea of building in a 'year zero' prior to implementation—which, unfortunately was not programmed in to NDC—needs to be seriously considered in future regeneration programmes. But regeneration partnerships are under constant and increasing pressure to deliver on central targets. After just three years of the NDC programme there were criticisms that partnerships weren't going fast enough, not doing enough, not achieving 'quick wins' (*Guardian*, 2003b). There is clearly a danger that such criticism will discredit and undermine the credibility of the programme. Some of the criticisms were valid, many NDC partnerships could and should have done more, and had more of an impact. There is a need, however, to be patient and to allow time for development, experimentation and learning. Indeed, there are clear signs that some partnerships are developing momentum and gradually beginning to have an impact on their neighbourhood. Looking at the progress of the programme so far, the NRU have recently noted that, 'whilst we are still not half way into the 10 year programme, the results give grounds for cautious optimism' (NRU, 2004a, p. 6).

An underlying problem is that the 'natural' timetable of community-led regeneration is very different from the timetables of politicians and the Treasury, both anxious for tangible outcomes to be achieved. As the recent NRU review of the NDC programme acknowledges, 'there is a tension

between community engagement and involvement and the pace of delivery' (NRU, 2004a, p. 5). Ultimately, this disjunction could undermine current attempts to empower the community to lead regeneration and could leave behind dispirited community activists imbued with a sense of failure.

In addition, there is a danger that local partnerships faced with unrealistic expectations about what can be achieved by local action will end up 'being condemned as the authors of their own *failure*' (Atkinson, 2003, p. 102). Many of the problems experienced by disadvantaged neighbourhoods can, at best, only be alleviated by initiatives and interventions at the local level. Both the causes and solutions are often found well beyond the neighbourhood. In view of that, the neighbourhood and its residents must not be 'blamed' for failures of policy and action, which are the responsibility of other agencies at other levels.

Enabling and Supporting Community Empowerment

This brief commentary on perils and pitfalls is not intended to provide reasons why community-led regeneration should not be attempted. We must stress, again, that we are very much in favour of this approach to regeneration—and it offers the most promising route to dealing with some serious and difficult issues. Rather, it is our intention to be realistic and recognise that this approach is 'far from easy'. The dream of community empowerment can become a nightmare—and the media have reported on some NDCs where the dream has, at the very least, turned sour (*Guardian*, 2003a).

The involvement of communities—local residents—in the governance of regeneration programmes can work, and it can work very well. But in many cases it will need to be carefully nurtured and managed; it needs to be enabled and supported.

Some regeneration partnerships have thought through the perils and pitfalls and are seeking to make resident-led regeneration a reality by enabling and supporting their community representatives. At the other end of the spectrum, some partnerships effectively block the possibility of meaningful community involvement in their governance. The picture is very varied, even within one city or region. In the North East, for example, there are NDC partnerships that work very hard at encouraging and promoting community involvement, while there are SRB partnerships where the community's voice is rarely heard.

Getting the Structures and Processes Right

Good practice is emerging—and it is hardly 'rocket science'. Key considerations for partnerships include:

- Strong promotion of the opportunity to serve as a community representative and good information about what it entails, coupled with

encouragement of all sections of the community to serve. Partnerships need to look out for new people who might serve as representatives; new members can 'refresh' the board and help to sustain it over the long term. One approach might be to identify and invite interested residents to come to the board as observers and also offer them access to the induction, training and officer support given to the board members. Some of them—having acquired knowledge, skills and confidence—could become board members in the future.

- Creating clearly defined structures and pathways for the selection of community representatives, preferably through local elections and/or nomination by existing community groups—as opposed to self-nomination (PAC, 2004), or the local authority simply picking safe activists and 'usual suspects'. It may be necessary to co-opt some local residents on to the board in order to ensure fuller representation of the diversity of communities of interest and identity.
- Ensuring that meetings are held at times and at locations convenient to community representatives, plus arrangements for carers and provision of transport. It should also be stressed, particularly to community representatives, that expenses are available as of right and should be claimed.
- Proper procedures for induction, and perhaps also mentoring, of all new board members. Also job specifications should be given to all members, together with details of rights, responsibilities, expectations and a code of conduct.
- Every effort needs to be made to make meetings as understandable as possible, avoiding unnecessary jargon, needless complexity and excessive paperwork. Clear procedures should be specified to promote mutual respect and an equal right to be heard. Simple, but important issues, such as seating arrangements, should be thought about to promote equality and encourage participation. The NRU have recently produced useful guidance on board effectiveness for NDC partnerships, covering such areas as: organisation; composition; roles and responsibilities; and the behaviour of board members (NRU, 2004b).
- Good officer support for the community representatives is crucial. Ideally this should be provided by a dedicated officer serving as enabler and, at times, champion. The partnership's officers can also help the community representatives perform their role by providing them with information about local conditions obtained from local agencies and through community consultation exercises. A good communications strategy, facilitating effective dialogue between the partnership and all local communities is essential.
- Learning opportunities need to be made available to all board members, including access to training and advice and also opportunities to meet representatives from other partnerships to see what others are doing and how they are organising community involvement in their governance.

But it is not just a matter of getting structures and processes right, important though they are. Equally important is the ethos of the partnership, translated into the way in which it treats community representatives.

Supporting Community Representatives

Community representatives need to be cherished, supported, acknowledged, listened to and respected. Of course, that goes for all board members, but the community representatives are, we believe, special and need to be treated as such. Without them, resident-led regeneration cannot happen and community involvement is a hollow phrase. Moreover, it always has to be remembered that, unlike virtually everyone else round the table, they do not have to be there, they are unpaid and many of them will find the official culture of meetings alien and alienating. That ethos of cherishing their contribution has to be a feature of the whole organisation so that all officers are clear that it is not acceptable to treat community representatives as an irritant or to ignore their views. Equally, it is not acceptable for community representatives to belittle or undermine the partnership officers.

We have noted the problem of 'burn out'. That needs to be taken very seriously by partnerships and should be guarded against. There is a tendency to 'volunteer' community representatives for everything, so tying them into a never-ending round of meetings. Reflecting that continual and excessive commitment, we have heard of board membership being referred to as a 'prison sentence'. In some NDC partnerships, the Chair, in particular, is effectively putting in a full working week, entailing many hours of meetings. That cannot be right for the well-being of the individual or the partnership and points to the need to share responsibilities and work across the whole board membership. In addition, structures may need to be reviewed and rationalised. Not everything requires a meeting—and not every meeting needs to involve a resident board member. And training needs to be carefully planned so it is not excessive or needlessly replicates the expertise of the professional staff. Nor should it, incidentally, result in the 'institutionalisation' of community representatives, making them 'good at the game', but no longer outspoken and challenging. Good practice is to limit the time commitment of community representatives, preventing them from being over-burdened—however willing they may be. More than that, community representatives should be able to enjoy what they are doing, find it interesting and get satisfaction from it. Doing regeneration can be a chore, it can be tough and frustrating. But it can also be fulfilling and—dare we say it—fun. We must not lose sight of that.

Partnerships that wish to pay community representatives as a reward for their time and commitment should be able to do so. As things stand at present, that is often difficult or impossible because of the charitable status or constitutions of these bodies. More importantly, people on state benefits—who often make up a significant proportion of the community representatives—would have their benefits reduced or jeopardised if they

received payment. The regeneration magazine *New Start* is actively campaigning on this issue (via its 'Just Rewards' campaign) and makes the point that local councillors and quango board members are paid, while community representatives on regeneration partnerships are not recompensed for their similar contribution to public life. Some partnerships have sought to get around the benefits problem by providing shopping vouchers to local residents involved in their activities, but this is not really a solution and does not usually involve such 'payments' to community representatives. Of course, it may be that many partnerships would not wish to pay board members, not least because it might be seen to compromise their position in the community—but it should be up to them to decide that. Government policy, especially on the benefits issue, needs to change. A small income paid for serving on a regeneration partnership board ought to be disregarded in the calculation of benefits; that would be consistent with the government's support for community involvement.

We have argued that community representatives are 'special'. In saying this, we mean that they have a particular role and the partnership should recognise their specific needs. But the other members of the partnership board are also 'special'. Local councillors, the police, representatives from housing, the health service and so on also have particular roles and needs and they, too, will have to have their skills, their 'capacity', developed—an issue emphasised in the recent Egan Review of Skills for Sustainable Communities (ODPM, 2004).

However, needs clearly differ. While the community representatives might have to learn about official practices and processes, the others might have to learn about the local community and how to interact with that community and its representatives. All will have to develop their interpersonal skills (Henderson & Mayo, 1998). For a partnership to work properly there should be recognition of different capacities, respect for different roles and, above all, parity of esteem. That should help to avoid the problem of contested governance. Hostility on the board between local councillors and community representatives can certainly arise when both claim they have a mandate to speak for the community. It helps if both recognise that they have different, but equally valid, roles and capacities and that their mandates are, inevitably, both very imperfect.

Conclusion

The NDC programme is testing out a new approach to the governance of the regeneration process. In previous regeneration schemes, the involvement of local residents in shaping and managing the process has usually been very limited, often tokenistic. In NDC, the intention is that community representatives should have a central role—developing and implementing regeneration that is locally owned, locally led and, above all, which tackles the problems experienced and identified by the local community.

The NDC experiment, still less than half way through, is already demonstrating the potential and the possibilities of community empowerment. Ultimately, it will tell us what works and in what circumstances. It has confirmed that community involvement in governance is 'far from easy'—and has helped to identify and develop best practice which can make it work, and work well.

Participation in the process of governance is certainly an important component of community involvement in regeneration. But it is only one of the components. A wider interpretation—of the sort that is likely to be required to sustain regeneration in the long term—could embrace a much deeper and broader engagement. The concept of community involvement can be developed to mean a situation in which all residents feel they are part of a place, are 'stakeholders' and 'active citizens'. Growing out of that, we might envisage a community that has many layers of mutual support and where people are involved in voluntary and community sector organisations and community activities (ODPM, 2003). It is a community that confidently challenges public institutions to do what they are supposed to do—as is now happening in some NDC partnerships under the banner of mainstreaming. But it is also a community which does things for itself, through community-based service provision, community action and individual initiative.

This wider concept of community involvement is, as yet, not well articulated and is still an indistinct vision. Securing effective community involvement in the governance of regeneration programmes is a considerable challenge. Beyond that, establishing stronger communities is a much bigger challenge, promising even greater benefits.

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