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### **From 'event-led' to 'event-themed' regeneration: the 2002 Commonwealth Games Legacy Programme.**

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**From ‘Event-led’ to ‘Event-themed’ Regeneration:  
The 2002 Commonwealth Games Legacy Programme.**

**Introduction**

Using events to assist the development of urban areas has a long history. In some cities, development can only be understood by analyzing the legacy of various events staged there. For example, the 1888 World’s Fair, 1929 World Exposition and 1992 Olympic Games bequeathed some of the most notable spaces in contemporary Barcelona (Montalban 1992). However, events are used by cities for more than merely urban development. It is now common for cities to justify considerable expenditure on events by citing physical, social and economic regeneration as envisaged outcomes. Many host cities are using events strategically to achieve a range of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ regenerative impacts in areas that have suffered disproportionately from the effects of industrial decline. Nevertheless, there remains much scepticism surrounding event regeneration strategies. Several damning academic critiques of events (Ruthieser, 1996; Lenskyj, 2002), alongside perennial media accounts of wasteful public expenditure, have rather tarnished their reputation as vehicles for regeneration. Hiller suggests that mega-events are best understood as ‘public relations ventures far removed from the realities of urban problems’ (2000, p. 440). Other critics argue that the main beneficiaries of event strategies are seldom the most deserving and needy candidates (Raco, 2004). To avoid such accusations, some cities have adopted specific plans to direct regenerative impacts. This approach was adopted by the authorities responsible for organizing the 17<sup>th</sup>

Commonwealth Games. The host city, Manchester, UK, had already gained valuable experience of the potential and pitfalls of event regeneration via its unsuccessful bids for the 1996 and 2000 Olympic Games (Cochrane et al., 1996). These bids left a legacy of sport facilities and partnership working which were capitalized upon during preparations for the 2002 event.

A detailed evaluation of the impacts of the 17<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Games is beyond the remit of the present study. There has already been a significant amount of research undertaken which directly identifies the impact of this event. In 2002, Cambridge Policy Consultants produced a pre-event estimate of the economic impact and then updated it in November 2003 (Cambridge Policy Consultants, 2003). This research identified an associated increase of £22 million in turnover for local companies and 6,300 new jobs for the Manchester area. Whilst seemingly impressive, these positive impacts need to be assessed against the £670 million capital investment in new sporting venues, transport and other infrastructure (Gratton et al., 2005). A further impact study was carried out for the North West Development Agency in 2004 (Faber Maunsell, 2004). It reported that, between 1999-2002, 1450 new jobs were created in East Manchester, where the main event venues were sited. Therefore, official evaluations of the effects of the 2002 Commonwealth Games have generally been positive, reflecting upbeat appraisals in media accounts. [As Ward \(2003, p. 125\) states, the Games 'were generally considered to have been a success in terms of their organisation, the number of spectators who attended them, and the general feelgood factor they instilled at the time'](#). Nevertheless, it is also generally recognized that more research is required to substantiate existing appraisals, to

establish more diverse impacts and to assess long term effects ([Carlsen and Taylor, 2003](#); [Gratton et al., 2005](#); Jones and Stokes, 2003; [Ward, 2003](#)).

[Unlike the more general focus of the impact studies now available](#), the aim of [the present study](#) is to examine the use and impacts of one scheme adopted in conjunction with the Commonwealth Games: ‘The 2002 NW Economic and Social Single Regeneration Budget Programme’. This Programme was an innovative attempt to ensure that the Games left a lasting legacy for Manchester and the North West of England. Gratton et al. claim it represents; ‘the first time in Britain an ambitious legacy programme was designed around a major sport event’ (2005, p. 993). [As the Programme officially ran for the period 1999-2004, its effects are not incorporated into more general evaluations of the Commonwealth Games which were published soon after it was staged \(for example Carlsen and Taylor, 2003\)](#). The Programme was planned and implemented by a partnership of public and private sector agencies, but Manchester City Council, as Accountable Body, maintained responsibility for financial management and ensured the probity of the Programme throughout its lifetime. The Programme was unusual in that it involved small scale initiatives aimed at delivering ‘softer’ impacts that were not necessarily wholly reliant on the Games itself. The aim of this study is to evaluate this example of ‘event-themed’ regeneration. The findings can be used to provide implications for other cities contemplating using events to assist regeneration ambitions.

*Events and the contemporary city*

The mass audiences, celebrities, iconic structures and consumption associated with sporting spectacles mean that they are perceived by cities as particularly valuable examples of what have been termed 'hallmark' (Ritchie, 1984) or 'mega' events (Hall, 1997). Not satisfied with their role merely as cultural celebrations or athletic endeavours, cities are using sport events strategically to achieve urban development. According to Lipsitz (1984), this practice is underpinned by six envisaged outcomes; the creation of a 'big town' image; increased marketing power to attract new industry; additional employment and sales; new recreational opportunities for residents; renewed civic morale; and more interest in sport among the young. On a less explicit level, the importance of events to the contemporary city can be related to their compulsion to become centres of consumption through the 'organisation of spectacle and theatricality' (Harvey, 1989, p. 92). This desire to create spectacles is closely related to the contention that, rather than relying on the consumption of goods, it is valuable for cities to emphasise 'ephemeral services in consumption' (Harvey, 1989, p. 285). Staging large sport events is seen not only as a means of generating such consumption, but as an important way of symbolising the transition of cities towards this role.

As the discussion above suggests, city image enhancement is usually one of the key objectives of event-led strategies (Smith, 2001; 2005a). If successful, this can provide an incentive for new inward investment and greater competitiveness in an increasingly symbolic global economy. Barcelona is generally considered as an exemplar of what can be achieved. Enduring associations with industrial decline, political unrest and general drabness have been replaced with fashionable associations with sport and design (Smith,

2005b) and the 1992 Olympic Games is often cited as the cause of this image transformation. Smith emphasises that this event was merely one of a much wider set of 're-imagining' agents that allowed Barcelona to develop a favourable contemporary image (Smith, 2005b). But the city clearly benefited from its status as an Olympic venue. Therefore, it seems that a significant mechanism for city image enhancement is the effective transfer of event images to images of the host city (Brown et al., 2004). The increasing recognition and manipulation of this process means that cities are said to be transcending a basic place marketing approach, and adopting one which has more in common with 'co-branding' (Chalip et al., 2003) or 'brand alliances' (Brown et al., 2004). As Garcia identifies, since the late 1990s there has been an 'expansion of city marketing techniques and their progressive transformation into city branding strategies' (2004, p. 315). This has direct implications for regeneration. As Tibbot contends; 'if a cultural project is going to succeed in leading regeneration, it is crucial that it does so as part of a holistic destination brand' (2002, p.73, cited in Garcia, 2004). Therefore image and regeneration objectives are very much intertwined.

### **Events and regeneration**

Despite recognising their connectivity, the focus of the present study is the regenerative, rather than image, effects of events. The term regeneration is used here not merely to refer to the recovery of derelict land. As Hemphill et al. (2002) emphasise, an important lesson learnt from practice in the 1970s and 1980s is that regeneration must be about more than bricks and mortar. For Booth, the 'definition of urban regeneration in Britain

has always been singularly broad, encompassing physical regeneration and the development of urban projects, the restructuring of economic activity and the reconstruction of social frameworks' (2005 p. 258). This is indicative of how the term will be used here, but the assertion that this is *always* how regeneration has been interpreted is perhaps a little optimistic. Many authors consider that British practice, particularly in the 1980s, was overly reliant on property-led initiatives (see Oatley, 1998). In recent years, a more holistic conceptualisation of urban regeneration - more in line with Booth's definition - is apparent, as 'partnership, spatial targeting, integration, competition, empowerment and sustainability have assumed increasing importance' (Jones and Gripiaios, 2000, p. 218/9). Therefore, although some authors still discuss 'softer' initiatives separately from regeneration, the term is increasingly used to refer to a wide range of urban programmes to assist areas physically, socially and economically. This broad interpretation is adopted in the subsequent discussion of event-inspired regeneration that encompasses a diverse range of intended outcomes: from the reclamation of brownfield sites, to the empowerment and re-skilling of city residents.

Perhaps the most obvious opportunity for event-inspired regeneration is the associated investment in new venues; which can assist the physical regeneration of host cities. Locating new facilities and associated infrastructures in brownfield or derelict sites allows such areas to be reclaimed as integral urban zones. But if sustainable regeneration is to be achieved, an important consideration is to plan for the effective post-event use of such facilities, as this helps to translate physical changes into wider regenerative benefits. Atlanta, USA, developed a series of new sport facilities to stage the 1996 Olympic

Games and adopted a ruthless strategy that designated exactly what would be done with them once the Games were over. Part of the Olympic Stadium was demolished to turn it into a Baseball Stadium for the Atlanta Braves. The shooting range was handed over to a local shooting club, whilst the aquatic centre, basketball gym, hockey stadium and equestrian venue were passed to educational establishments or local authorities (Whitelegg, 2000). Despite this efficiency, any further physical legacy was restricted by the large number of temporary constructions. These led to the event being labelled ‘the disposable Games’ (Rutheiser, 1996). Atlanta’s approach contrasted with that of Athens, Greece, where 95% of the projects planned for the 2004 Olympic Games were permanent spatial structures (Beriatos and Gospodini, 2004). These two cases highlight the dilemma faced by host cities; wanting to bequeath physical legacies, whilst ensuring that money is not wasted building and operating unnecessary new venues.

The use and refurbishment of existing facilities is perhaps a more guaranteed way of avoiding ‘white elephants’. This was the approach adopted by Los Angeles during preparations for the 1984 Olympic Games (Andranovich et al., 2001). Such frugality matches the International Olympic Committee’s (IOC) recent proclamation that it wishes to see future host cities reducing the scale of the Games, thus cutting costs and avoiding superfluous new venues. The IOC’s new approach is understandable considering the prevalent under-utilisation of venues after the Olympics is staged (Essex and Chalkley, 2000). But even if new venues are used extensively in the post-event era, they may render existing facilities redundant. Malaysia spent a total of 561m Malaysian Ringgits (£94m) on stadia and infrastructure for the 1998 Commonwealth Games. This was seen as



extravagant compared to that of previous host cities (Silk, 2002). The existing stadium and swimming complex were perfectly adequate for staging the Games, but new facilities were built to impress the watching international audience and to symbolize the achievements of the incumbent government (Silk, 2002). This case demonstrates that regeneration and legacy considerations are often overlooked when the rationale for staging an event involves overriding political objectives.

Events seem to leave a more positive physical legacy when they are used to accelerate or facilitate the accomplishment of existing plans. Therefore, they should be embedded within wider regeneration strategies. This matches the approach outlined by Carricere and Demaziere (2002) who advocate coherent urban development that includes an event, rather than using an event to encourage urban development. Barcelona perhaps provides the best example of such a strategy, as it had talked for over 25 years about many of the changes now associated with the 1992 Olympic Games. Principally, this event provided an important incentive and deadline to complete long held visions to develop road and transport infrastructure, housing, office and commercial developments; telecommunications; and hotel facilities. Tellingly, more money was spent on each of these four types of developments than new event venues (Brunet, 1995). This ensured that the Olympic Games left a comprehensive physical legacy that provided the basis for Barcelona's subsequent economic regeneration.

*Economic and social regeneration*

**Deleted:** The location of new facilities associated with events also influences the potential for regeneration. The recent trend to site event facilities at the edge of cities causes less disruption to existing urban activity and allows better access for spectators whilst events are being staged (Thornley, 2002). Yet it also means that facilities are often divorced from the communities they are supposed to be regenerating. The Amsterdam Arena, developed as part of the Dutch capital's bid for the 1992 Olympic Games, was developed on a commercial site near to, but physically divorced from the Bijlmeer district, one of the poorest neighbourhoods in the city (Thornley, 2002). This physical separation compromises the legacy of such facilities as evidence suggests that it is preferable to develop venues within disadvantaged communities, thus maximising potential for local benefits. This is illustrated by the Stade de France, built as the centrepiece the 1998 Football World Cup Finals. This stadium has assisted the regeneration of the St. Denis district of Paris in which it is situated (Dauncey, 1999). Nevertheless, there are still dangers associated with this type of approach. If events are staged within existing communities, this should not be used as an excuse to parachute in new residents and developments. This practice of 'bulldozing' existing communities to make way for a gentrified urban zone is an established Olympic tradition (Lenskyj, 2002).¶

**Deleted:** events

Recent literature on events has suggested that it is insufficient to concentrate merely on the ‘hard’ physical legacy of events, as positive effects do not necessarily ‘trickle-down’ to the local people and businesses that need them most. Softer economic and social considerations also need to be addressed (Balsas, 2004). Accordingly, some events have involved deliberate attempts to encourage economic and social regeneration by providing new skills and support for local people. Volunteer programmes are commonly employed to achieve such effects. As volunteers are needed to help facilitate events, by training them and giving them direct experience of employment, new skills can be nurtured. In Lillehammer, Norway, host of the 1994 Winter Olympic Games, 79% of the volunteers surveyed felt that they had enhanced their skills by being one of the 9100 volunteers involved (Kemp, 2002). These volunteers acquired a range of skills, including job skills, social skills, confidence, local knowledge, language skills, IT skills and network opportunities to assist future employability. The 2000 Sydney Olympic Games also involved an extensive scheme involving 62,000 volunteers. The sheer scale of this undertaking prompted Sydney to organise a ‘Pioneer Volunteer Programme’ which recruited 500 volunteers early (some as early as 1996) who were trained to assist with the management of other voluntary staff (Webb, 2001).

**Deleted:** The organisers spent \$50million on the recruitment, training, accreditation, acknowledgement, uniforms, feeding and transport of 62,000 volunteers. To reward their efforts, volunteers were given the chance to take up free tickets for the closing ceremony and the CBD of Sydney was closed for half a day to provide volunteers with their own ‘ticker-tape’ parade.

Recommendations for volunteer recruitment usually stress how best to obtain the large numbers required. For example, Sydney learned from Atlanta that it had to mobilize networks of private contactors to assist in the recruitment, training and management of voluntary staff (Webb, 2001). Yet even if such efforts are successful, it is unclear whether this actually contributes to social regeneration, particularly as few attempts have

been made to ensure that those benefiting from volunteering were those most in need of assistance. People who volunteer are often enthusiasts who have volunteered before, and tend not to be marginalized members of local communities. A more targeted approach focused on the most disadvantaged (and least skilled), is something that has been notoriously difficult to achieve. Manchester's Commonwealth Games (2002) was the first to include an initiative where 'most participants came from groups with little sense of engagement with wider society' (Jones and Stokes, 2003, p. 204). The present study includes an evaluation of this innovative volunteer programme. This will add to research which already exists on the expectations of Manchester's volunteers, who Ralston et al. (2004) suggest were optimistic about their forthcoming experience because they perceived it to be a one-off chance to participate in the staging of a large event.

To assist social regeneration, some cities have also adopted vocational training programmes in conjunction with events. As part of the \$10 million construction industry training strategy implemented as part of the Sydney Olympic Games, 12,000 workers were trained, with special provision for workers from Aboriginal and non-English speaking communities (Webb, 2001). This inspired Toronto, where the Trades Council used the city's bid for the 2008 Olympic Games to pressure the government into developing skills training programmes for the local Aboriginal community (Tufts, 2004).

Due to the extensive building programmes usually associated with events, labour initiatives are usually focused on construction employment, but major questions have to be asked about the actual number and quality of jobs which are supported by event initiatives after the construction phase (Loftman and Spirou, 1996). Therefore, it is

**Deleted:** A pre-vocational programme for school leavers was also developed that enabled them to secure future employment in the industry. Large events

important that wider employment and educational initiatives are pursued by event hosts. Greece adopted an Olympic Education Programme in conjunction with the 2000 Games staged in Athens. This project was based on school initiatives adopted by previous host cities (Los Angeles, Calgary and Lillehammer). Grammatikopoulos et al. note that these projects have tended to lack theoretical unity and subsequent evaluation; but state that; 'they seemed to resonate with teachers as a source for integrated and imaginative pedagogical ideas and activities' (2004, p. 67). Lenskyj (2002) adds a note of warning that such schemes must not be hijacked by commercial sponsors. She cites evidence suggesting that the contents of Sydney's educational packs left schoolchildren with the impression that the McDonalds Corporation and the Olympic Games were indelibly linked.

One key theme within recent literature on event planning is that cities should aim to build upon the existing resources of an area, rather than overriding them (Raco, 2004). Although new economic activity is often needed to stimulate regeneration, there is a danger that 'existing forms of employment.... may be overlooked and undervalued' in event strategies (Raco, 2004, p. 35). Therefore, it is important to ensure that local companies and disadvantaged individuals are able to benefit from the lucrative contracts usually associated with large events. Although much maligned, the Millennium Festival in Greenwich, London, involved an innovative approach whereby an organisation was established to link local labour and local companies to the event. This allowed over 850 local people to be trained for jobs at the Dome, the centrepiece of the Festival, with a further 500 gaining employment on the surrounding Peninsula. This represented 40% of

the total jobs created, with 27% of the workforce derived from ethnic minority groups (Greenwich Council, 2004). This type of support for local employees and businesses may be needed, particularly as evidence shows that events can actually harm local businesses, as well as assist them. Although Barcelona's Olympic regeneration is widely applauded, it involved the clearance of small manufacturing firms from Olympic sites. Hundreds of thriving small businesses were evicted from these areas which had traditionally offered low rents (Shapcott c.f. Raco, 2004). Similarly, the Centennial Park constructed for the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta dislocated at least 70 businesses (Cherkis, 1996, c.f. Whitelegg, 2000). This practice looks set to continue in the future. The organisers of London's Olympics are currently negotiating with 284 businesses which will have to be relocated to stage the [Games in 2012 \(Hansard, 2005\)](#).

Just as there are negative economic effects associated with events, there are also negative social impacts, which planners should seek to minimize if regeneration goals are to be achieved. Research by Waitt (2003) into the social impacts of Sydney's Olympic Games demonstrates that local and marginalised people often feel excluded from event benefits. Host cities need to be more aware that there are social consequences of events that affect local communities in the short and long term. With respect to the latter, cities must be careful not to remove access to community facilities to finance elite venues. The development of Homebush Olympic Park for the Sydney Olympic Games meant that Auburn Local Government Authority (LGA) was required to transfer rateable land to an adjacent council in exchange for land comprising part of the Park. The budget shortfall that this created meant that some local community and youth services were suspended

(Owen, 2002). Furthermore, due to the upgrading of various facilities to stage Olympic events, local people within both Waverley and Ryde LGAs experienced reduced access to, and control of, community facilities (Owen, 2002). Similar effects were felt in Sheffield, UK, where local swimming pools were closed to fund high-spec facilities for the 1991 World Student Games. In more extreme circumstances, residents have actually been forced to move from their own homes because of events. Approximately 600 tenants were evicted from land to assist the staging of the 1986 Vancouver Expo in Canada, whilst in Australia, the 1987 America's Cup and the 1988 Brisbane Expo also led to significant amounts of residential relocations (Hall, 1997). Events have also been associated with the sanitization of cities, with homeless people and travellers removed from prominent areas (Atkinson and Laurier, 1998). As Tufts identifies, the Olympics are very much implicated in the 'revanchist city', playing a crucial role in 'the social control of marginalised groups through coercive and non-coercive means' (2004, p. 50). Atlanta's Olympic Games in 1996 provides a good example. The construction of the Centennial Park for this event dislocated at least a thousand homeless people and four shelters that supported them (Cherkis c.f. Whitelegg, 2000). An increasing realisation of the potential for these effects has resulted in strong campaigns for related intervention in some host cities. One of the most interesting aspects of Toronto's controversial bid for the 2008 Olympics was the lobbying of the local labour council who only gave their support once they had been assured that there would be provision of significant affordable housing units, protection for tenants against eviction or displacement, and the protection of the civil rights of the poor and homeless (Tufts, 2004).

### *Management and planning systems*

Securing regeneration from events requires careful planning and event managers who are sensitive to the importance of legacy. Unfortunately, the absence of rigorous planning, or the overriding of established procedures, is an established characteristic of event initiatives. As Chalkley and Essex recognise, planning for major events often ‘sits outside the existing categories of planning’ (1999, p. 391). Similarly, Hall suggests that many event hosts have adopted a ‘boosterist’ approach, which he sees as ‘a form of non-planning’ (2000, p. 21). This is perhaps best exemplified by Sheffield’s preparations for the 1991 World Student Games, which involved ‘muddling through without a clear formal plan’ (Bramwell 1997, p.174). Bramwell feels this lack of strategic planning resulted in missed opportunities for regeneration. Even when more a more strategic approach has been undertaken by host cities, it has tended to be characterised by ‘top-down’ planning and there have few instances where communities have actively participated in the planning and implementation of event projects. Although Barcelona is often lauded as an example of best practice, here such involvement was also conspicuously absent. As Calavita and Ferrer (2000, p. 804) state: ‘It would be tempting to ascribe, at least in part, the success of Barcelona’s Olympics to a citywide and neighbourhood participation process in its planning and implementation. But this is not the case’. One exception to the prevalent under-involvement of communities was denied the opportunity to be fully realised. The (unsuccessful) bid for the 2004 Olympic Games prepared by Cape Town, South Africa, involved hundreds of visits to community groups by bid personnel. All aspects of the bid were independently assessed and submitted for community ratification (Hiller, 2000). Perhaps surprisingly, other examples of

community input have occurred during preparations for events dominated by private sector agencies. When Los Angeles wanted to supplement its private sector funded 1984 Olympic Games with revenues from ticket and hotel taxes, a referendum was held. Similarly, in Utah, a referendum was held on the issue of diverting \$59 million of sales tax revenues to construct facilities for the 1996 Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City (Andranovich et al., 2001).

The frailties of event planning are perhaps explained, although not excused, by the apparent incompatibility of short-lived events with long-term planning. The deadlines and timetables associated with staging events often results in established planning procedures being compromised. Sydney's 2000 Olympic Games received plaudits reflected in titles of books about the event: 'The Best Games Ever' (Lenskyj, 2002) and 'The Collaborative Games' (Webb, 2001). But even Sydney's Games President admitted that there were anti-democratic elements in the highly centralized system used to implement initiatives (Webb, 2001). Developments were 'fast-tracked' and certain procedures (e.g. EIA submissions) ignored. This made the Olympic organisers much less accountable to the community than under normal circumstances (Owen, 2002). The Games organisers were also accused of merely encouraging tokenistic input from local government areas (LGAs) and community groups. For example, the general manger of Auburn Council, the LGA in which the main Olympic Park is situated, complained that they were on a lot of 'paper-bag committees...yes, we're on a lot of committees, but I really question the substance or the impact or the effect that any of these have' (Owen, 2002, p. 301).



Delivering a successful event, whilst ensuring a positive legacy, requires effective coordination between Games organisers, regeneration agencies, different levels of government, local businesses and community representatives. Event management bodies tend to concentrate on logistics and marketing, with regeneration and legacy considerations left to conventional urban authorities. This divergence of emphasis and responsibility, plus the increasing tendency for event management 'companies' to be controlled by the private sector, can result in event organisations being artificially divorced from urban governments. This reduces opportunities for regeneration. As Thornley (2002) states, it is important to retain the involvement of elected officials in event projects to ensure proper integration with, and benefits for, communities. The 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games was notorious for the number of different agencies involved and the power struggles between them (Rutheiser, 1996; Whitelegg, 2000). The organization with prime responsibility for the delivery of the Games (ACOG) was a private sector entity and was unresponsive to protests from city residents about the lack of regeneration assistance. Its co-chair famously stated that the Olympic were a business venture, not a welfare programme (Rutheiser, 1996). Elected officials set up a state body (MAOGA) to ensure that event organizers were accountable to the public sector, but the real authority remained with ACOG. Subsequently, the municipal government established an organisation called CODA, a public-private partnership intended to lead the development of inner-city neighbourhoods. This organisation had few positive impacts because it was under funded and had such different objectives compared to ACOG (Whitelegg, 2000).

## **The Single Regeneration Budget**

The focus for the present study is the North West (NW) Economic and Social Programme adopted in conjunction with the 2002 Commonwealth Games. This is an example of an event regeneration strategy, but it is also an example of a Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) programme. Therefore, it is important to understand the nature and parameters of such programmes before this particular example can be evaluated. The SRB was introduced by the UK's incumbent Conservative Government in April 1994 (Ward, 1997). As its name implies, this Fund was created by aggregating twenty independent programmes that had previously been used to finance urban regeneration. Fordham et al. (1999, p. 132) state that this was 'one of the most significant changes in the funding and administration of English regeneration policy in a quarter of a century'. On a practical level, the SRB involved two key elements: a new agency (English Partnerships) to co-ordinate land and property-driven initiatives; and the establishment of the SRB Challenge Fund (SRB CF), a competitive scheme which sought regeneration bids from local partnerships (Brennan et al., 1999). The 2002 NW Economic and Social Programme was one of the successful schemes awarded funding from the 5<sup>th</sup> round of the SRB CF.

Every bid made to the SRB CF was required to satisfy a basic two point criteria: it had to be a strategic response to local problem and it had to have the agreement of a local partnership (Fordham et al., 1999). The aim was to give local people more influence and provide a more flexible approach which would allow regeneration initiatives to address local needs. Successful bids were awarded funding to 'pump-prime' specific projects to

stimulate a process of regeneration and development that would continue even once

funding had ceased. The SRB identified seven key aims of the CF and these are cited in

Figure 1. Of particular relevance to the present study is aim #7; 'to enhance the quality of life of local people, including their health and cultural and sports opportunities' (Dept of Environment, 1995, p. 2). Although the guidelines seemingly encourage a diverse range of impacts, commentators have expressed concern that non-economic objectives (such as #5 in Fig. 1 below) have received limited priority (Fordham, 1999).

**Deleted:** Unlike previous schemes, this funding did not have to be evenly spread over the project's lifetime. This is reflected the SRB's mission to promote a more flexible approach to urban regeneration.

[INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE]

A large number of critiques of the SRB CF concentrate on the competitive system on which it is founded. Therefore, it has been subject to criticism because of the cost of bid preparation and because it allegedly penalises areas that lack the capacity and experience to put together successful bids. The competitive system has also been accused of prioritising cost and efficiency over quality and equity (Fordham et al., 1999), and is considered by some to be a way of masking cuts, rather than increasing efficiency (Oatley, 1998). Recent academic research has countered some of these criticisms.

Brennan et al. (1999) investigated whether the competitive system employed by the SRB CF actually met local needs. They found that all bar one of the ninety-nine most deprived districts received funding from the first three rounds. Therefore, the authors conclude that the SRB CF 'has been successfully targeted on the most severely deprived local authority districts' (Brennan et al., 1999, p. 208).

**Deleted:** Furthermore, research into all seven annual rounds by John and Ward (2005) found that the competitive element did result in substantial improvements in bid quality, especially at the bottom end.

The other key theme of existing appraisals of SRB CF schemes is the involvement and encouragement of partnerships. John and Ward report that there is 'widespread agreement that the competitive system shook up partnerships and made Local Authorities and other traditional regeneration bodies more innovative' (2005, p. 74). However, several commentators disagree, arguing that the SRB merely formalised existing partnerships, rather than encouraging new collaboration (Oatley, 1998). A slightly different argument is that schemes such as the SRB CF, produce 'marriages of convenience' that exist merely to allow bids to qualify for funding, rather than encouraging genuine partnerships (Cochrane et al., 1996). [The SRB CF Programme at the centre of the present study was submitted by the 2002 North West \(NW\) Partnership, involving Manchester City Council, the NW Regional Assembly, the Games management company \(M2002 Ltd\) as well as private sector interests. Whilst the present study will attempt to gauge whether any lasting lower level partnerships have been formed because of this SRB Programme, the subsequent demise of the overarching Partnership suggests this may indeed have been a 'marriage of convenience'. However, this is a little unfair, as the bid submission coincided with the introduction of the North West Regional Development Agency in 1998. Therefore, the shifting nature of regional institutions at this time, and the involvement of transient event-focused partners, meant its demise was perhaps inevitable.](#)

The SRB CF ended after the 2002-3 round (#7) and is now subsumed into the Regional Development Agencies Single Programme. However, that does not mean that researchers should no longer be concerned with this particular urban policy initiative. As Brennan et al. (1999) state, the effects of many of the SRB programmes are still unclear as funding

was often given for schemes with a lifetime of 5-7 years. Therefore, many SRB programmes are still being implemented. As sustainability was meant to be a key feature of many of the programmes, it is also important to evaluate whether the effects of past programmes continue to be felt by target audiences.

**Deleted:** Furthermore, although the SRB CF has now officially ended, the perceived successes of the scheme means that the present UK Government has made clear its intentions to maintain an SRB CF component in its future regeneration strategy (Brennan et al., 1999). ¶

### Regenerating Manchester and the North West

Manchester has been the subject of a large amount of urban regeneration research; a function of the large number of projects that have been implemented there. As Quilley argues 'since the late 1980s, the city has consistently secured a disproportionate share of discretionary grant funding and has remained at the forefront of urban regeneration' (2000, p. 609). The main venues for the 2002 Commonwealth Games were sited in Eastlands, and The East Manchester Urban Regeneration Company (later New East Manchester Ltd) was established in 2000 to oversee the plethora of regeneration projects in this part of the city. The area is designated as an 'Education, Health and Sport Action Zone' by Sport England, and hosts both 'Sure Start' and 'New Deal for Communities' national programmes. Rather than the event assisting an established strategy, as is recommended by some commentators (e.g. Raco, 2004), this concentrated regeneration effort was 'prompted' by the decision to award the city the Commonwealth Games (Ward 2003, p. 121). However, the subsequent extent and diversity of projects pursued in East Manchester suggests, as Carricere and Demaziere (2002) advise, that this is urban regeneration that includes an event, rather the speculative use of an event to encourage urban development. As a result of all this attention, Ward suggests that East Manchester

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is now the most 'policy thick' area in Britain, something which has made it 'a rather unreal place, the creation of the imagination of local and regional politicians rather than of local communities' (2003, p. 123).

Alongside localised initiatives, there has been an attempt to assimilate East Manchester into the city's wider redevelopment project that has been ongoing since the late 1980s (Ward, 2003). Although the Commonwealth Games matches Manchester's new entrepreneurial approach to regeneration perfectly (Quilley, 2000), preparations for the Games coincided with a national (and supra-national) imperative for more regionally orientated approaches. Therefore, despite widespread suspicion of regional considerations amongst politicians in Manchester (Deas and Ward, 2000), the city was compelled to think more about regional effects. Urban regeneration in the UK has usually been funded at the national level, and with events very much civic concerns, the regional remit of the Commonwealth Games Legacy Programme can be interpreted as a way to lever funding which would not have been made available if the wider regeneration of the NW region had been ignored. Despite providing opportunities to access both national and European funds, the 'new regionalism' of UK regeneration policy remains rather awkward for the NW. The traditionally poor relationship between Manchester and Liverpool, added to the apparent desire of the former to assert itself as the centre of its own city-region, has always undermined a coherent regional approach (Deas and Ward, 2003).

### **The 2002 NW Economic and Social SRB Programme**

When, in November 1995, the XVII Commonwealth Games was awarded to Manchester, the city felt it had secured an unprecedented opportunity for securing lasting regeneration. This admirable emphasis on legacy considerations and regional regeneration was inspired by the experiences of other cities, and by the realisation that they could use well planned projects to lever external regeneration funding. It had little to do with satisfying the technical requirements of securing the Games candidature. Indeed, the Manchester 'bid book', which helped the city to win the Games, pays relatively little attention to such matters (Manchester 2002, 1995). Unlike the current emphasis devoted to legacy in the criteria used by the IOC to assess Olympic Games bids (Vigor et al., 2004), the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) does not include legacy or regeneration considerations in its 'Games Management Protocols' (CGF, 2006)<sup>1</sup>.

A key mechanism for securing a positive legacy from the Games was the 2002 North West Economic and Social SRB Programme (hereafter referred to as the Legacy Programme). Superficially transcending the struggle for power between municipal and regional authorities, this was a Manchester-led initiative aimed at encouraging a regional legacy. Therefore, this is not only a fascinating example of an event strategy, but also of the territorial politics of regeneration. A successful bid was submitted to the SRB CF by the 2002 North West Partnership for a programme running from 1999-2004. This Programme was highly unusual in that, unlike other SRB CF schemes, it had a thematic focus. The award of £6.2million was supplemented with other private and public monies,

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<sup>1</sup> However, in justifying its recent decision to award the 2010 Games to Delhi, India, the CGF does cite legacy considerations, concluding that 'Delhi has demonstrated a commitment to legacy through venue development and access and sport promotion to India's youth' (CGF, 2003, p. 88). This suggests legacy considerations may play a more prominent role in determining the host city of future Commonwealth Games.

providing an overall budget of £17.7 million that funded a range of initiatives across the North West. Leveraging funding is a noted advantage of event strategies and accessing these funds provided an immediate justification for staging the Commonwealth Games.

This national funding, and the very existence of a legacy plan, also helped to assuage local criticisms of the potentially wasteful use of public expenditure.

The regionally focused Legacy Programme was designed to complement other more localised urban renewal strategies that were implemented as part of the preparations for the 2002 Games (Carlsen and Taylor, 2003). Indeed, the funding for the Legacy Programme was in addition to another SRB CF round 5 award of £25 million which was granted in 1999 for projects in three neighbourhoods in East Manchester: Beswick, Clayton and Openshaw (Jones and Stokes, 2003). It was also meant to dovetail with more established regeneration projects that were ongoing in other parts of the city and wider region. As Williams (2002) points out, there were a ‘host’ of other SRB CF programmes being undertaken in Greater Manchester at this time, with projects in Cheetham and Broughton, North Manchester, Central Salford, Old Trafford, Moss Side, Eastlink and the A6 Corridor, in addition to those in East Manchester. Whilst this ‘policy thickness’ was/is somewhat confusing, it at least provided Manchester and the North West with a chance to prove that they could learn from previous host cities and embed event initiatives within wider regeneration strategies.

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The main aims of the Legacy Programme were:



1. To improve skills, educational attainment and personal development within target disadvantaged areas.
2. To develop skills and improve cohesion through participation in celebratory events and health improvement projects.
3. To improve the competitiveness of SMEs in targeted sectors.

The Legacy Programme funded a total of seven individual projects:

**Commonwealth Curriculum Pack** - A programme which used interest in the Commonwealth Games to motivate children and teachers at school to enhance their information and communications technology skills. This was encouraged through the development of new curriculum materials and a website. These new learning resources also aimed to stimulate learning about the Games, and Commonwealth countries in general.

**Games Xchange** – This project provided the opportunity to promote and market Manchester and the North West region. This was achieved by providing information about the city/region to local people and visitors through a range of accessible, informative and innovative methods. An event information centre set up as part of this project aimed to train and give employment experience to disadvantaged individuals.

**Pre Volunteer Programme (PVP)** - An opportunity for people from specific disadvantaged groups throughout the NW to undertake accredited training and to gain experience through volunteering at the Commonwealth Games. This training was in addition to the instruction given to conventional volunteers. Those involved were not guaranteed roles at the Games, but the aim was to encourage PVP graduates to apply for positions and, if successful, to give them extra support and guidance if they experienced difficulties fulfilling their roles.

**Healthier Communities** - Provided healthier living initiatives throughout the region before, during and after the Commonwealth Games. The project provided assistance to health services in disadvantaged communities, primarily through providing community representatives with new skills, contacts and opportunities to gain further funds. It also aimed to develop more coherent links between sport and health initiatives. More specifically, the project was intended to provide support for the elderly and those with learning difficulties, and to encourage young people to make healthy lifestyle choices.

**Prosperity** - This project aimed to ensure businesses in the region benefited from the Commonwealth Games by forming strategic alliances between regional and Commonwealth organisations. It provided opportunities for local businesses to create sustainable trade links with Commonwealth

countries. More specifically the project aimed to identify, and disseminate information about, business opportunities relating to the Games. A business club was established and administered in the run up to Games to assist this endeavour.

**Passport 2K** - Provided out of school activities for young people aged 11-18 across the North West who took part in a range of outdoors activities incorporating sport and the arts. The project combined a series of local activity programmes, with a number of regional events. The latter aimed to enable young people from a range of backgrounds and locations to meet up and participate in activities on a regional basis.

**Let's Celebrate** - Used celebratory arts including carnivals and mela to build the capacity of South Asian, African and African Caribbean communities and representative organisations in the North West. The idea was to award franchises of varying lengths to new and existing groups who had aspirations to develop their own events. The overarching aim was to promote long-term social cohesion, cultural diversity, local employment and the development of community-led cultural infrastructure.

The seven projects varied in the degree to which they were linked to the Commonwealth Games. In the case of the Pre-Volunteer Programme (PVP), the link was clearly evident, as the project eventually supplied 10% of the volunteers used in the Games. Likewise, the

Games Xchange project was clearly linked to the event by providing Games related information and guidance to visitors. Similarly, the Curriculum Pack project provided teaching resources focused both on the Games and the Commonwealth more widely. The other projects are perhaps best described as being ‘Games-themed’ rather than ‘Games-led’ as they were only indirectly linked to the event itself. For example, Passport 2K promoted involvement in a range of activities, some of which were sports that were part of the Games, but also more diverse activities. Both Healthier Communities and Prosperity North West used the Games as a springboard to achieve health and economic benefits for the region. There were only tenuous direct links between these projects and the Games. The same is true of Let’s Celebrate which took the Commonwealth theme to support processional and celebratory arts events. These were only linked to the Games through the dedicated focus on ethnic groups originating from Commonwealth countries. [Therefore, whilst all benefited from being branded as Commonwealth Games initiatives, the indirect event associations of some projects meant a wide range of objectives could be pursued. This resulted in an event-themed regeneration programme that was quite unlike any implemented previously by a host city.](#)

Alongside its innovative use of the Games as a theme for a broad range of initiatives, the Legacy Programme was also unusual in that it aimed to achieve regeneration effects across the whole of the North West, rather than simply confining them to the host city. There were several mechanisms that encouraged this regional dissemination: it was a prerequisite at the appraisal stage for all legacy projects funded through the Legacy Programme to have a regional focus; and Programme co-ordinators and projects made a

concerted effort to market their activities on a pan-regional basis and therefore to beneficiaries located outside Manchester. Regional effects were also maximised through institutional arrangements. The Board was made up of individuals representing all of the sub-regions of the North West, including a high profile Chair who, as Liverpool City Council's Chief Executive, was from outside the host city. The overall philosophy adopted was that the projects should go to the beneficiaries, rather than expecting beneficiaries to go to the projects.

#### **A note on method**

There are established methods for evaluating SRB CF Programmes. Alongside the requirement for multi-agency working and sustainability, the SRB CF is renowned for its emphasis on monitoring and evaluation; in particular its requirement for quantified outputs. This is perhaps a reaction to concern over the lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation associated with new urban policy initiatives in the 1980s (Imrie and Thomas, 1995). Yet, as Wong (2002) states, the subsequent obsession with quantitative research has also posed problems, with outcomes such as community identity and institutional capacity unsuited to such analysis. Whilst these factors have inevitably been neglected in SRB programme evaluations, some feel that the focus on quantifiable outputs has had a more fundamental influence by encouraging bids restricted to inducing quantifiable effects (Ward, 1997). In the present study a mixture of qualitative and quantitative indicators were used to adjudge the success of the Legacy Programme. This reflects the more rounded objectives of the Legacy Programme and the authors' own research

philosophy. The aim was to use the advantages offered by the quantitative output monitoring required by all SRB CF programmes, whilst ensuring that qualitative research was used to explain findings and explore less tangible outcomes. Therefore, a combination of desk research and semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders was employed. Desk research was undertaken to establish the performance of the Legacy Programme in quantitative terms. This involved analysing Single Regeneration Budget output and spend information to assess achievements against target figures such as creating a certain number of jobs, delivering a set number of training courses and supporting a set number of businesses. The desk research provided an assessment of whether these targets had been achieved and key stakeholder interviews were then used to explain these findings. Due to the rather crude nature of the quantitative information obtained, the interviews with 20 key stakeholders provided the main body of evidence used to evaluate the Legacy Programme. Participants were specifically identified because they were either directly or indirectly involved in the delivery of the Legacy Programme or the Commonwealth Games. They included those individuals who managed and coordinated the Programme on a day to day basis, managers of all of the projects funded through the Legacy Programme, key regional and sub-regional partners, as well as representatives of strategic bodies who were involved in the delivery of the Games. Figure 2 lists all of the interviewees who participated in the research. Although it is recognised that interviewing intended beneficiaries would have provided a more comprehensive evaluation, resource constraints prevented this. Therefore, the effects on individuals, communities and businesses are derived from the official project evaluations and the views of those who were involved in the day to day management of projects.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted using a basic topic guide with associated prompts. Interviews were customised according to the position of the interviewee, but where relevant, standard questions were asked to allow views to be directly compared. The general aim of the interviews was to reveal the impact of the projects and to assess their sustainability. Reflecting the themes that emerged from the review of past events, there was also an explicit attempt to assess management arrangements and to explore the way that regeneration projects were linked to the Games itself. To respect the wishes of those involved, some interviews were documented by the interviewer making detailed notes, whilst in others, responses were recorded using audio equipment. The data was analyzed using basic qualitative data analysis procedures as suggested by Dey (1993). Therefore, once the interviews were conducted, the researchers spent time familiarising themselves with the information obtained, before establishing categories, themes and patterns. Once this was done, a basic coding system was adopted and any emergent ideas, explanations and relationships were tested by returning to the data.

[INSERT FIGURE 2 HERE]

**The 2002 NW Economic and Social SRB Programme: an evaluation**

As the Legacy Programme was primarily funded through the SRB CF, each project had to record all outputs associated with their activities. According to these figures, the Legacy Programme achieved the following outputs<sup>2</sup>:

- 220 jobs created;
- 3,092 trained people obtaining a recognised qualification;
- 8,473 businesses helped across the region;
- 913 voluntary organisations supported;
- 2,607 people encouraged into voluntary work.

Paperwork exists to prove that these outputs have been achieved. For example, evidence to prove that a new job has been created normally comprised a confirmation letter from an employer. Proof that an individual has been on a training scheme usually consisted of a sign-in sheet with the person's name, address and signature. The SRB often audit this evidence to verify that recorded outputs have been achieved. This means that the findings above are neither assumed, nor self reported. On this basis, the outputs associated with the Legacy Programme are impressive. Evidence exists that thousands of individuals and businesses from across the North West directly benefited from the seven projects. Furthermore, as the Legacy Programme has provided people with employment, qualifications and other key skills, there is likely to be a long-term legacy. But measuring the success or failure of an SRB Scheme by purely looking merely at outputs only

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<sup>2</sup> Figures are calculated using the SRB outputs of the programme. These figures are an amalgamation of SRB outputs which fall under the same theme e.g. 220 gaining employment is an amalgamation of 1ai Jobs Created and 1di Number of Residents Accessing Employment through Training Advice and Targeted Assists.



provides a superficial indication of overall impact. Much regeneration impact is not picked up by quantitative output measurements alone and therefore there is a need to assess the wider 'added-value' of the Programme.

One of the Legacy Programme's most notable achievements was its success in engaging and benefiting individuals from disadvantaged groups and/or areas. The interviewees asserted that the projects had helped to engage those people that previous regeneration initiatives had struggled to reach. This was achieved using the branding and 'hook' of the Commonwealth Games to promote engagement. The PVP, for example, was highly successful in providing 16-19 year olds, ethnic minorities, people with special needs and the retired with the opportunity to access training and employment experience. Another key impact was the provision of new opportunities for gaining qualifications and employment. The training provided as part of the PVP enabled 2,134 individuals to gain one of the two qualifications offered as part of the project. A total of 160 individuals were recorded as having gained employment after taking part. The interviewees also highlighted a number of examples of positive 'softer' impacts on individuals. A range of feedback from participants, youth workers and activity co-ordinators suggests that the Passport 2K project raised the confidence and self-esteem of participants. Indeed, the opportunity to take part in new activities was described by some as a 'life changing experience'. Relevant interviewees also felt that the PVP and Let's Celebrate had helped to raise the aspirations of participants and had given them increased options and opportunities for the future.

The Legacy Programme also had a positive impact on local businesses. The outcomes of the Prosperity project included increased business access to on-line services, electronic newsletters, member to member offers, exhibitions, funding to run or co-run events, and the opportunity to use the Commonwealth Games logo. The business club created as part of the project was particularly successful. Business club members were able to get involved in the supply chain activity focused around infrastructure development. This allowed them to collectively tender for, and win, around £45 million of sub-contracting work. The project also gave specific trading advice to over 500 businesses and set up 250 one-to-one business meetings on behalf of members.

There were also several intangible benefits of the Legacy Programme. [As Deas and Ward \(2000\) identify, regionally-based thinking and co-operation has been somewhat lacking in this part of the UK. Therefore, it is interesting that a](#) number of interviewees [mentioned](#) that projects had helped to foster a sense of regional identity and to break down regional barriers. The perception was that projects such as Passport 2K, with its regional events bringing people together from across the North West, helped to foster a sense of regional pride and to develop a coherent North West identity. For one of the coordinators involved with Passport 2K, this was evident on a practical level with young people from Manchester and Liverpool working together. Similarly, the Let's Celebrate project helped to improve interaction across racial divides, with anecdotal evidence suggesting that there were more non-Asians attending the (project assisted) Mela events than in previous years.

It is also clear that the Legacy Programme had a range of positive effects on a number of the organisations involved in its planning and delivery. Let's Celebrate enhanced the capacity of many of the community organisations it worked with. For instance, the voluntary groups involved in the project's East Lancashire consortium reported that this involvement had given them a better idea of how to be more professional. Similarly, the Dhamak community project was successfully supported in its attempts to seek continuing sources of funding. Involvement in the Programme also allowed delivery organisations to increase their knowledge base and contacts. For example, the involvement of the Manchester Digital Development Agency (MDDA) in the Curriculum Pack project enabled the organisation to gain a useful insight into how animation can be used to make educational websites more accessible and engaging. Involvement in the project also helped MDDA to establish some useful connections with industry that they are still using. Similarly, the involvement of Arts Council England – North West (ACENW) in Let's Celebrate provided this organisation with an increased understanding of the position of the community and celebratory arts sector in the region.

Another important impact of the Legacy Programme was its effects on the communities engaged by its projects. One of the most notable examples of this was the programme of activities run in Halton Borough as part of Passport 2K, where local police recorded a 35% drop in reports of youth nuisance during the time the activities were running. Likewise, a Passport 2K project run in Cumbria enabled young people in deprived and rurally isolated communities to access a range of opportunities across the county. It also succeeded in getting adults involved to act as volunteer mentors to support the young

people participating. Let's Celebrate also highlights how the Programme succeeded in having an impact at the community level, in this case principally through enabling and facilitating community input into cultural events. One example of this was the South Manchester Mela. Let's Celebrate was important in establishing a new steering group for this event which was more representative of the community and which played an important role in successfully stimulating public interest. Other notable instances of projects that benefited the wider community included the way in which both the PVP and Passport 2K encouraged further community and voluntary work among those individuals benefiting from participation, and the success of Healthier Communities in assisting the establishment of a number of Healthy Living Centres (HLCs) in Liverpool. These Centres compliment existing health provision and aim to reduce health inequalities in deprived areas.

#### *Sustainability of the Programme*

All SRB CF funded projects are supposed to deliver sustainable impacts and are required to produce a 'forward strategy' to promote the longevity of the programme.

Encouragingly, four of the seven projects that were supported by the Legacy Programme are still continuing to deliver even though their SRB CF funding has ceased. Good examples are available via reference to both the Healthier Communities and Passport 2K projects. Healthier Communities part funded a HLC co-ordinator to support the creation and development of HLCs in Liverpool. More HLCs consequently met and passed the UK Government's 'New Opportunities Fund' criteria and are now providing services to communities as a result. Similarly, Passport 2K has left a positive legacy for some

communities. Of the sixteen areas which ran local activity programmes, ten have been incorporated into mainstream provision and remain in operation. Likewise, four of the regional events developed as part of the project are now permanent fixtures within local service delivery.

Some projects developed networks and partnerships that are still in operation; providing further evidence of sustainability. Perhaps the clearest example of this is the North West Business Club, originally established as part of the Prosperity project, but which continues to grow today. Currently the club has over 7,000 business members ranging from SMEs through to large multi-nationals. Likewise, Healthier Communities established a partnership of health, sport and learning representatives in Cumbria and this partnership continues to operate successfully. The Healthier Communities project also set up a regional forum for local groups concerned with provision for the elderly which still exists to enable local offices to work together on a regional basis. Furthermore, some of the projects have left tools which can still be used and which can be used in the future. Alongside the skills and qualifications of participants, the PVP leaves the tangible legacy of two accredited courses for event and sports volunteering. Similarly, Healthier Communities helped to establish a searchable database so doctors can refer patients to sport and leisure opportunities. The database is widely used now and an external agency has taken on board responsibility for its upkeep.

While there are numerous examples of seemingly sustainable impacts achieved by the Legacy Programme, there are also instances where projects have been less successful in

building a lasting legacy. Certainly those involved with the Curriculum Pack and Lets Celebrate felt that opportunities to build a more concrete legacy were missed.

Interviewees associated with the Curriculum Pack felt there needed to be a better resourced and more clearly thought out continuation strategy. This might have involved better use of skills developed and lessons learned as the basis for future web-based e-learning provision in similar educational contexts. Thus, whilst these projects did achieve some degree of sustainability, there is a sense that their legacy overall is questionable.

Reflecting the concerns expressed in the literature review, it seems that the added temporal dimension introduced by having an event as the keystone of the regeneration scheme has also compromised the Legacy Programme's sustainability. Despite the Programme's life officially running from 1999-2004, many interviewees doubted whether enough emphasis was placed on project activity and spend after the Games took place (in 2002). The perception was that much of the effort and project delivery was undertaken before the Commonwealth Games, with levels of interest and impact consequently dropping off soon after the Games had finished. The majority of outputs occurred prior to the Games and this has negative implications for the likely sustainability of the Legacy Programme. There is also evidence that the post-event period was neglected at institutional level. The frequency of Board meetings dwindled after the Games and attendance at meetings reduced significantly once the Games had finished. Again, interviewees viewed this in a negative light, as this was when issues relating to legacy were most pertinent. Furthermore, about 75% of the staff employed by the agency who organised the Commonwealth Games event (M2002) left soon after it had finished;

leaving few individuals left to champion the legacy cause during this key time. This, plus the premature departure of the Legacy Programme's co-ordinator after the Games, meant that the Programme underperformed during its post-event life (2002-2004).

Although outputs and spend from the Legacy Programme tailed off after the Games, this alone does not necessarily mean that the long-term effects of the projects are insubstantial. Many of the outputs achieved will leave a sustainable legacy, particularly where individuals gained employment and qualifications. Moreover, consideration of the project level evaluations reveals that there are some obvious successes amongst the projects in terms of promoting sustainable impacts. Examples of individual participation leading to further positive engagement are particularly evident with respect to the PVP and Passport 2K projects. For example, the PVP developed a database of volunteers that has already been used to provide a pool of volunteers for other sports and community events, including the London Triathlon. Looking at the Legacy Programme overall, the picture in respect of sustainability is somewhat mixed. There are a range of instances where projects have left a positive legacy, but also a feeling that opportunities for enhancing sustainability were sometimes missed. The view of many of those interviewed was that more attention should have been devoted to forward strategies and ensuring durable effects, particularly in the post-event period.

#### *Management arrangements*

As noted previously, the regeneration legacy of an event is often dependent on the management arrangements adopted. Although having a regional chair was one of several

positive aspects of the Legacy Programme, several problems were noted during discussions with relevant interviewees. Evidence suggests that the Legacy Programme Board was unsure of its exact role and it was noted that meetings tended to focus on issues such as SRB outputs and spend. Interviewees thought that the Board's knowledge and influence could have been used to much greater effect if their agenda had been more strategic. The Legacy Programme also lacked a sustained and prolonged delivery mechanism, with arrangements changing several times during its lifespan. Although as Accountable Body, the City Council maintained ultimate responsibility throughout, leadership of the Programme was passed from Enterprise plc, the original Managing Agent, back to the Council, who then appointed a Management team to co-ordinate the Programme. These changes resulted in disjointed management arrangements and caused the initial failure to draw up robust Programme level systems for management and monitoring. During its inception stages, the Programme lacked any one individual to take responsibility for the development and implementation of systems. The most positive results were obtained from the period during the two and a half years when a permanent Legacy Programme Co-ordinator was in post (from 2000).

As stated in earlier sections of this paper, event regeneration organisations which are artificially detached from the management of the event itself may struggle to leave a lasting legacy (Whitelegg, 2000). In the case of the Commonwealth Games, formal and informal links did exist between the Legacy Programme and M2002, the body responsible for organising the Games. There were close relationships between those individuals managing the Legacy Programme and those managing the event itself. The



Chief Executive of M2002 sat on the Board of the Legacy Programme and played an active role in steering its priorities and activities. Furthermore, the interviews revealed positive working relationships between key staff and joint working on projects such as the PVP. Links were also assisted by locating Legacy Programme staff in M2002's offices for part of the Programme's lifespan. However, questions were raised about where the Legacy Programme sat in the general structure of the overall delivery of the Commonwealth Games. It was not until three years before the event itself, and four years after Manchester was confirmed as the host city, that the Legacy Programme was initiated. Subsequently, the Legacy Programme was simply bolted on to the activities of M2002. Although it was widely accepted that M2002's key priorities were infrastructure projects, selling tickets, organising athletes and other complex logistical issues, interviewees also felt that legacy issues were often relegated down M2002's priority list. Simply having a small team of individuals based in M2002's offices who managed the Legacy Programme did not ensure that M2002 was properly focussed on legacy issues. Instead of simply being the responsibility of those people who delivered the Legacy Programme itself, legacy issues could have been part of the remit of M2002's Board, staff, contractors, those constructing facilities and anyone else who was involved in Games planning and implementation.

### **Discussion and conclusion**

The Legacy Programme associated with the Commonwealth Games has delivered valuable outcomes for Manchester and the North West. This has been achieved using an

innovative ‘event-themed’ approach, rather than one which is ‘event-led’. The mixture of projects linked to the Games, alongside those with more tenuous associations, was a key strength of the Legacy Programme. It encouraged a greater range of benefits than would otherwise have been possible and ensured that a ‘boosterist’ approach was avoided. [This has helped it to avoid many of the problems associated with event strategies noted in initial sections of the paper.](#) The Commonwealth Games was used as a uniting theme, rather than a speculative stimulus, for regeneration and this encouraged a more considered approach targeted at the most needy beneficiaries. Many of the projects could have existed regardless of whether the Commonwealth Games was being held in Manchester or not. But all project managers stressed that the success of their project would have been significantly less if it had not been linked to the Games. This demonstrates the value of a diverse regeneration programme united by a popular coalescing theme. Alongside varying the extent to which projects were linked to the Games, the Legacy Programme involved an innovative range of projects, including an effective mix of social and economic initiatives. [As identified in the literature review,](#) [social considerations have generally been under-represented in urban regeneration in general, and SRB programmes in particular \(Nevin et al., 1997\).](#) Therefore, it is admirable to see the extensive use of socially-orientated projects in the Legacy Programme. These projects have delivered benefits to people which other regeneration initiatives have failed to reach.

Despite the admirable intentions and achievements of the Legacy Programme, there were still several aspects that could have been improved. For example, several interviewees

felt more sustainable legacies could have been bequeathed. Research by Oc et al. (1997) suggests that the sustainability of social/economic regeneration programmes relies on two factors: developing a 'forward consciousness', and the 'chronology of funding arrangements'. According to Oc et al., one of the main obstacles to establishing a 'forward consciousness' is the time expended on meeting the bureaucratic requirements of the programmes (Oc et al., 1997). The authors also state that a 'forward consciousness' is more likely when there is a continuity of personnel through design and implementation. The management of the Legacy Programme was overly concerned with bureaucracy and suffered from several changes in the personnel responsible for co-ordinating the Programme. Therefore, it is perhaps unsurprising that a forward consciousness was not always achieved. In terms of funding a programme to maximize sustainability, Oc et al. found that, while front-ended funding ensures an immediate impact, money could often be used to greater purpose and effect in the middle and later years (Oc et al., 1997, p. 379). Again, this is reaffirmed by the experiences of those involved in the Legacy Programme, as greater funding was needed once the Commonwealth Games was over to ensure that projects could capitalize on the event. This would have helped individual projects to achieve greater sustainability, whilst helping to prolong the life and influence of the Games as a whole. Other funding issues were also noted by several interviewees. A prevalent view was that the Legacy Programme required more flexibility regarding how and when it spent its funds. A key part of the rationale for the SRB CF was to provide more flexibility ([Ward, 1997](#)), but perhaps even more adaptive arrangements are required. Although SRB stipulations allowed different amounts to be spent at different times, it still required projects to set outputs and spend at the inception stages. This had to

be rigidly adhered to over the Programme's lifespan. Any similar legacy scheme in the future would benefit from a more flexible funding stream which could accommodate more creativity and piloting of new legacy ideas.

The most obvious deficiencies of the Legacy Programme were the structures and processes used to generate those impacts. Aside from some of the management and practical issues, there were some problems regarding the institutional structure adopted.

This replicates problems experienced by other host cities, such as Atlanta, discussed previously. The legacy provision for the Commonwealth Games was dominated by the SRB CF bid, which provided the funding and parameters for the Legacy Programme. Ideally, this Programme could have been merely one element of a wider legacy scheme. Thus, legacy has perhaps been overly determined by the requirements of the SRB CF, rather than by key priorities. Furthermore, there was some evidence that the Legacy Programme was used as a public relations tool to demonstrate M2002's commitment to a regeneration legacy, rather than as an integrated part of a wider regeneration programme.

As Raco (2004) states, event initiatives should be embedded within wider regeneration plans, and not act as a substitute for them. It is a little worrying that the Legacy Programme dominates reviews of the positive impact of the Games in general (see for example Fauer and Maunsell, 2004), when this was a £17.7 million project largely detached from the £320 million capital investment in event venues and operation (Fauer and Maunsell, 2004). Though the Legacy Programme paid admirable attention to 'soft' regeneration, the physical legacy of the Games and its potential connection to social and economic development was perhaps not given adequate attention by the event organisers.

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Despite these concerns, Manchester's consideration of legacy still surpasses the plans and achievements of the vast majority of previous examples of event regeneration. Having a detached and SRB-led Legacy Programme is obviously far better than having no legacy provision at all. However, if Manchester, or another city, were to stage a similar event in the future, it should seriously consider giving legacy considerations more emphasis and priority. Ideally, it should ensure that legacy is a priority for all those involved in the Games, rather than merely the exclusive concern of an individual unit or programme.

Replicating a common deficiency associated identified in the literature review, there was also a conspicuous failure to involve local communities in the planning and implementation of projects associated with Legacy Programme. As Raco (2004) states, positive event legacies are most likely to be achieved when local communities are both policy objects and subjects. Such participation enables local capacity building, and thus improves the chances that any impact experienced will be sustained.

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### *Key lessons learned*

The preceding evaluation of the Legacy Programme has highlighted several implications for event regeneration. These are summarised below:

#### *Lesson 1) Combine events with bottom-up regeneration programmes*

The Legacy Programme has successfully managed to use a series of neighbourhood-level initiatives associated with an event to achieve regeneration. Avoiding a reliance on 'trickle-down' effects from flagship projects has secured positive effects for needy beneficiaries. This example should be followed by other cities pursuing event-themed

regeneration in the future. However, future strategies should involve more collaboration with communities at the planning and implementation stages to help ensure that programmes genuinely involve ‘bottom-up’, rather than simply neighbourhood-level, regeneration.

*Lesson 2) Use events as a ‘hook’ to encourage participation in a range of regeneration projects*

The Legacy Programme was event-themed, rather than event-led, and this allowed it to deliver a broad range of regeneration outcomes, whilst using Games links to generate interest and participation. Therefore, a key lesson for subsequent practice is that events can be used to frame a wide range of regeneration projects, rather than merely stimulating effects associated with event venues. Many of the Legacy Programme projects could have run without the Games, but the event associations enhanced participation levels and contributed to their success.

*Lesson 3) Ensure that legacy programmes are not too divorced from other aspects of event planning*

Although the Legacy Programme was a massive improvement on most previous attempts to use events as regeneration tools, there were several structural and organisational deficiencies. Legacy organisations should not be too divorced from event management organizations and legacy considerations should not be seen as less important than logistical and marketing concerns. Cities establishing event management organizations need to ensure that legacy is properly prioritized and integrated within event planning.

*Lesson 4) Use event-themed regeneration to help access the most elusive and most needy beneficiaries.*

As the UK Government has recently outlined, sport and the arts are particularly good ways of tackling the causes of social exclusion (Social Exclusion Unit, 1999). The evidence from the Legacy Programme is that sport events can help to access those groups most difficult to reach. The Commonwealth Games provided a good 'hook' for participation from needy beneficiaries, as well as from project workers and key players. Furthermore, event projects - particularly targeted volunteering schemes - are useful ways of delivering training and support to those most in need of assistance. However, events will not automatically engage the most needy. Projects still need to be carefully designed to match the needs and characteristics of disadvantaged people. As the Legacy Programme proved, well designed projects boosted by event associations can deliver benefits to elusive target audiences.

*Lesson 5) Events can achieve regional effects, even when they are territorially concentrated in certain metropolitan centres*

The Legacy Programme involved an admirable attempt to disseminate effects regionally, despite the inevitable territorial concentration of the Games itself [and the poor record of regional co-operation in the North West](#). The Programme's partial success in achieving such lofty ambitions should be regarded favourably. Regional effects were achieved by developing effective institutional relationships between regional stakeholders and by using a diverse range of projects that did not rely too heavily on the event (and therefore

its territorial concentration). Most events are organised at the civic level, but the Legacy Programme demonstrates that more equitable regional effects can be achieved if this example is followed.

#### *Final remarks*

In its bid to the SRB CF, Manchester 2002 Ltd and the 2002 NW Partnership claimed that the Legacy Programme was ‘both pioneering and innovatory’ (undated, p. 2). Such hyperbole is rarely justified, especially when used in a document designed to attract funding. However, the Legacy Programme implemented in conjunction with the Commonwealth Games was genuinely noteworthy. A regional and ‘event-themed’ regeneration scheme that did not simply rely on the direct impacts of an event is an innovative strategy with few precedents. Although certain elements could have been improved, the general approach adopted is laudable and meets many of the good practice guidelines emanating from academic and government sources. This makes the Legacy Programme associated with the 2002 Commonwealth Games an initiative which should be carefully considered by other cities intending to use large-scale events to achieve urban regeneration.

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