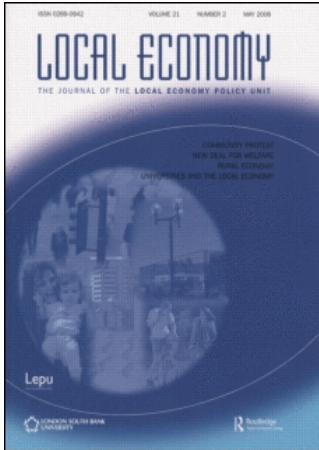


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Bringing Britain Together? The limitations of area-based regeneration policies in addressing deprivation

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Bringing Britain Together?

The limitations of area-based regeneration policies in addressing deprivation

Paul Chatterton and David Bradley

■ ABSTRACT

This paper is concerned with the extent to which the new tranche of area-based policy initiatives from New Labour can address deprivation. We argue that such policies are likely to meet the failures of previous initiatives as they continue to simplify the complex processes underlying regeneration: they arbitrarily draw boundaries around regeneration areas; they represent a continuation of place commodification; and, they continue to represent accountability structures which rest with statutory bodies rather than the community. Without re-inventing the wheel, urban policy needs to revisit conventional wisdom relating to territorial development: namely, that local regeneration is determined by factors inside and outside particular localities.

■ INTRODUCTION

For twenty years, rescue funds have flooded in from local government, from Westminster, from Europe. Countless schemes have been set up and dismantled, two-year plans and five-year plans, regeneration projects like Objective 1... Snazzy offices have been opened, glossy brochures printed up, and many solemn-faced men in suits have waxed fat in the process. The whole area could be renamed Quango City. When Tom thinks of the money that has been pumped into Liverpool 8 over the years, he gags. "There's been about six billion so far, spread over the last four decades, and here we are today, still living in shit."¹

Deprivation remains an enduring characteristic of many communities and it has long been the pre-occupation of governments, journalists and academics to identify its causes and origins. Opinion is generally divided as to whether wider "structural" or more local "neighbourhood" factors are implicated (Glennister

¹ An extract from Nik Cohn, 1999. *Yes We Have No: Adventures in Other England*, Secker and Warburg, London, pp 113–114.

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et al, 1999) and current government thinking (Social Exclusion Unit (SEU), 1998) has swung back in the favour of neighbourhood, local area-based explanations of deprivation. In this paper, we argue that the continuing vogue for area-based approaches to regeneration has stifled debate over the causes of deprivation and that such initiatives have led to inadequate understandings of the processes that guide regeneration at the local level.²

The first section highlights a number of continuing problems in the new round of area-based initiatives. These include the arbitrariness of boundary drawing and packaging areas for regeneration; the continuation of place commodification and marketing within these initiatives which satisfies DETR value for money criteria rather than focusing on community need; and finally, the continued dominance of partnerships which reflect the requirements of the statutory bodies executing the process (central and local government, government offices, Regional Development Agencies) rather than those affected by the process (community groups, residents, local micro-businesses).

The second section discusses a set of wider questions. We contend that, in common with other attempts at regeneration over the last twenty years, the current raft of area-based policy initiatives are unable to achieve integrated local regeneration as they pay insufficient attention to wider structural reasons for deprivation. While the causes of deprivation partly lie with local neighbourhood explanations, what is required is a whole-scale rethinking of policy to include structural factors. This does not involve re-inventing the wheel, but revisiting some conventional wisdom (such as CDP, 1977; Townsend, 1979) relating to territorial development; namely, that local regeneration is determined by factors inside and outside particular localities.

■ THE AREA-BASED APPROACH

Over the last few decades, numerous area-based initiatives have emerged to address deprivation such as the Urban Programme, Priority Neighbourhoods, Inner City Task Forces, City Challenge, Estate Action and Urban Development Corporations. The shortcomings of these policy initiatives – such as lack of community involvement, an overemphasis on economic and property development and an insensitivity to local needs – have been discussed elsewhere (Healy et al, 1992; Robson et al, 1994; Mohan, 1999).

Under the New Labour administration, area-based or ‘neighbourhood’ explanations of deprivation have gained new momentum through the Social Exclusion Unit’s Report *Bringing Britain Together: A National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal* (SEU, 1998), which highlighted the fact that previous regeneration initiatives largely failed to tackle the persistent problems faced by Britain’s poorest communities and stated that ‘a new approach is long overdue’ (foreword). Similarly, the *Urban Task Force Report* (DETR, 1999a) claimed that current policy guidance on urban regeneration is ‘threadbare and lacking

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²The paper draws upon completed and continuing work by the authors involving the evaluation of various area-based regeneration initiatives in the North of England.

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³The effects of the SRB in addressing deprivation have been explored in-depth elsewhere (see for example, Brennan et al, 1999; Harvey and Shaw, 1998; Nevin et al, 1997; Tilson et al, 1997).

vision, conviction or effective integration". A new approach came in the guise of a raft of new area-based initiatives which include the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) in its fifth round,³ New Deal for Communities (NDC), New Start, Sure Start, Crime Reduction Programmes, Employment, Education and Health Action Zones, the Local Government Association's New Commitment to Regeneration and the recent announcement to create Urban Regeneration Companies.

These new initiatives depart from previous area-based strategies in a number of ways. Firstly, they receive a degree of coordination from the Social Exclusion Unit and 18 Action Teams led by "champion ministers". Many of these schemes are piloted in what has been called "trailblazer" or "pathfinder" areas that act as policy laboratories. Secondly, this framework, laying the ground for the forthcoming White Paper on Urban Policy, represents a more integrated approach, especially in terms of agency and community participation and the use of a wide range of variables to promote, assess, and gauge performance. Further, a claimed characteristic of the approach is that it represents "joined-up thinking", which will bring together the work of different government departments (Lee, 1999, 483). In spite of these improvements, the rest of this section highlights continuing limitations of area-based strategies in addressing deprivation.

Drawing boundaries

"The idea that society's ills are concentrated in certain areas and communities has a long history" (Townsend, 1979, 543). As the CDP commented in the 1970s:

Drawing fixed boundaries around an area demonstrates the smallness of the problem. This is particularly misleading in inner city areas, but is a good example of how the problem can be defined concretely for the local population. The boundary immediately sets them aside from the rest of the inner city, as small yet special. It turns them inwards and discourages them from seeking unity with neighbouring communities with identical problems. (CDP, 1977, 53)

The new policy framework contained in *Bringing Britain Together* (SEU, 1998) represents a localist approach to regeneration which requires a particular territory to be identified, delimited and packaged for regeneration. This process of boundary drawing has a number of shortcomings. Firstly, deprived neighbourhoods are identified through the Index of Local Deprivation (ILD) which replaced the Index of Local Conditions (ILC) in 1998. However, the ILC and ILD generate very different results and so there has never been more confusion concerning the identification of the very poorest neighbourhoods (Lee, 1999, 486). Townsend's classic work (1979), which highlighted that as many poor people live outside areas designated for

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assistance than within them, further confounds the problems of drawing boundaries. Confusion stems, then, from mixing up disadvantaged people and disadvantaged places. In this sense, deprivation may be *in* particular places, but not *of* particular places.

Secondly, it is assumed that boundaries delimit coherent territories within which differences in land use, prosperity and population either do not exist, or can be overcome, and overlaps and leakages between areas on either side of the boundary are not fully explored. Further, specific areas within the regeneration boundary may have different functions and identities within the local and regional economy. Areas such as deprived housing estates, private-sector property-led flagship developments and prestige business parks are combined and regarded as ingredients that all work towards the overall regeneration vision. In such circumstances, synergy between these elements is assumed despite the virtual absence of interdependencies between them. Within the regeneration boundary, then, development plots (opportunity areas) and areas of relative economic and social deprivation (problem areas) are combined with little regard to their compatibility.

A further problem relates to displacement. Regeneration areas are typically chosen because they define areas with a relatively high proportion of residents experiencing social and economic deprivation. Yet, delivering programmes which generate outputs within such areas often incurs high unit costs and, in order to encourage partnerships to address the needs of ‘problem’ residents, DETR requires reporting on the number of target beneficiaries. However, such targets are often met by “exporting” problems (such as problem tenants) or eradicating them (such as derelict or underused property and poorly maintained residential units).

The question currently asked by DETR of partnerships, then, is not the extent to which the problems within the area have been tackled, but what changes have taken place in the area. This confirms Shaw and Robinson’s (1998, 60) observation that: “regenerating people, rather than places, is difficult to achieve”. The success of many area-based regeneration strategies, then, is often prefigured as territories are chosen that can meet prescribed output criteria and build upon existing and viable projects.

Finally, research by Tilley et al (1999) highlighted that targeting the needs of “virtual” rather than “spatially” defined communities may prove more effective in addressing deprivation, as with such communities it is often easier to achieve meaningful levels of community participation and identify the nature and extent of needs.

This process of delineating areas for regeneration, then, allows the New Labour administration to place the causes of deprivation with particular “communities” which then “become convenient tools, and often powerful metaphors, in the study of social exclusion” (Lee, 1999, 483). Such an approach

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raises long-standing debates about the behaviour of the urban poor. Identifying areas for priority action only further stigmatises these places as “problem areas” to be set apart from the rest of society. More worryingly, it fosters the idea of a “culture of poverty” and an “urban underclass”, who are responsible for the conditions they are surrounded by (Mohan, 1999).

Place marketing and commodification

Place marketing and the re-interpretation of place were central components of the property-led approach to urban regeneration of the 1980s (Healey et al, 1992). The current raft of regeneration initiatives have made efforts to move away from this promotional model; for example the SRB now provides 10% of resources for community capacity building (DETR, 1998b) and NDC is committed to nurturing local skills and initiatives.

However, although there has been a shift away from property-led regeneration, coinciding with the run down of the UDCs, the recently published *Urban Task Force Report* (DETR, 1999a) suggests that regeneration should be “designed”. In this context, there is likely to be a renewed emphasis on regenerating sites and buildings rather than communities. In spite of the rhetoric of community capacity building and “bottom-up” approaches, then, current regeneration strategies continue to improve the profile and superficial appearance of areas suffering from dereliction and deprivation to increase developer interest in the overall area (Raco, 1999).

Although there has been private sector housing investment on sites cleared of abandoned local authority housing stock, “if there has been any middle-class repopulation, it has not been associated with social mixing” (Mohan, 1999, 189). Support for industrial or commercial property on regeneration sites has, in many cases, drawn businesses and their existing employees from elsewhere in the urban area, thus creating relatively few local employment opportunities in the targeted area.

Furthermore, strategies that attempt to maximise the “leverage” of private sector investment encourage the displacement of indigenous capital with internationally mobile capital (Imrie et al, 1995). In particular, local businesses such as scrap yards, importers, car repairs, warehousing, screen printing, fashion garment production, jewellery making and paper printing, which traditionally provided a source of jobs for inner-city residents, are replaced with higher value uses such as housing, retail, leisure and office space or temporary car parks (Raco, 1999; Imrie et al, 1995). In this sense, the various public–private regeneration partnerships which have emerged in recent years point to a “politics of territory”, which is about defending the status quo and attracting mobile capital at the expense of nurturing indigenous talent (Imrie et al, 1995).

Localism and accountability

Recent government initiatives have made significant in-roads into devolving power. The Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), bringing together the work of several Government departments, have introduced the opportunity for a more co-ordinated and tailored approach to regeneration. Further, policy emanating from the Social Exclusion Unit displays an increased sensitivity to local needs and a pre-occupation with community empowerment initiatives (North, forthcoming).

In particular, the government has reviewed the operation of the SRB and in its latest guise has issued guidance to introduce a greater emphasis on supporting communities from below (DETR, 1998c). Further, plans for the establishment of Community Development Trusts or Partnership Boards to give communities a majority stake in the management of NDC, and the recommendation that NDC areas are given their own “neighbourhood endowment fund” to spend as they wish on local projects, represent a government commitment to allow communities a stake in the regeneration process. Moreover, the introduction of a “year-zero” in the NDC framework to increase community capacity is helpful.

However, there remains a “closure of local politics” (Imrie et al, 1995) in which area-based strategies and funding continue to be defined by statutory bodies and are driven more by central government than the communities involved. In this sense, public–private urban regeneration coalitions steer the development agenda with community consultation playing a symbolic, yet legitimising, role (Imrie et al, 1995, 34). Furthermore, under the framework of Regional Economic Strategies produced by RDAs, the ability of community groups to introduce regeneration initiatives that contest established models of regeneration are curtailed (Imrie et al, 1995, 44). Local regeneration schemes, then, are constrained by the fact that they have to be mindful of regional frameworks as well as local needs (Hall and Nevin, 1999). Bodies such as the RDAs are unlikely to “get below the surface of the problem” and, considering their characteristics as largely non-elected, business-led organisations interested in attracting mobile global investment, they will simply recycle the same kinds of policies that have not reduced inequalities in the past (Gibbs, 1998).

The extent to which the SRB and NDC can establish real community-owned partnerships, then, is limited when the community often lacks the power, resources and technical knowledge to operate on an equal footing with lead partners such as local authorities and TECs, who have previous experience and institutional capacity to steer the bidding and management process (Hall and Nevin, 1999; Taylor, 1995; Hastings et al, 1996). Moreover, bidding for SRB and NDC represents an “urban regeneration game” (Robinson and Shaw, 1994) and an expensive “beauty contest” (Harvey and Shaw, 1998, 28) rather than an articulation of need or complexity. While even failed bids can induce innovation and forge new partnerships, the competitive nature of the bidding

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process can equate to a significant waste of resources and destruction of morale for the losers (Harvey and Shaw, 1998, 23) and can falsely raise community expectations. The competitive rules of engagement often pitches neighbouring communities against each other in a zero-sum battle for resources and reduces the desire to cooperate and share experiences (Harvey and Shaw, 1998).

Partnerships, then, so common within the rhetoric of “new localism” (Hall and Nevin, 1999) are used to legitimate regeneration policies based around the socio-pathic view that problems stem from the community. It also fosters consensual politics, in that the community would rather be part of an unequal partnership, than miss out altogether (Taylor, 1995). More worryingly, it does not alter the rules of the game, as partnerships are often vehicles for maintaining current power relations and strengthening established institutional players within localities, rather than generating a capacity for the addition of new players and ideas (Imrie et al, 1995). What is evident is that “Local regeneration partnerships have, therefore, often been used to legitimize a pre-existing strategy of the local authority” (Hall and Nevin, 1999, 478). It is unlikely that efforts emerging from the new SRB guidance will be radical enough to alter pre-existing power relations (Hall and Nevin, 1999, 481). Without a radical shift of power away from statutory bodies, community groups will remain structurally excluded (Raco, 1999, 272).

However, there are problems in the community in terms of generating sufficient levels of effective involvement or empowerment. Our work has shown that within targeted communities, several “sub” communities exist, with one established, small and articulate sub-group dominating and “speaking for” the rest of the community. In essence, the community creates its own “politics of closure”.

The “Urban Policy” White Paper may prove to be a watershed in terms of territorial accountability. However, the policy recommendations by the *Urban Task Force Report* (DETR, 1999a) suggest that there will continue to be a strong emphasis on new property, levering in private sector capital, and meeting the needs of external investors. In spite of a new language and approach then, there remain significant weaknesses within area-based regeneration initiatives: they retain an emphasis on bringing in new investment and new building; they will presumably continue to be judged on physical and economic regeneration; and such regeneration can continue to mask a failure to offer access to employment, education, training, leisure and health care opportunities for individuals and their families.

■ A WIDER QUESTION⁴

The chief [issue] is the poverty and neglect of the [inner city] area and its people in every sense. To a great extent this poverty is a reflection of inequalities in society

⁴This title is taken from CDP (1977, 25).

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as a whole. Clearly, the scale and character of the problem is too great for policies concerned solely and specifically with inner areas to be effective. Any fundamental change must come through policies concerned with the distribution of wealth and the allocation of resources. (IAS Third Study Review, 1974. Quoted in CDP, 1977, 24)

Raising wider questions as to the causes of deprived neighbourhoods is not new. When discussing the condition of the urban poor, 19th century thinkers such as Marx and Engels, and pioneers of poverty research such as Booth and Rowntree, drew conclusions related to the whole economic system rather than area improvement (Glennister et al, 1999, 2). This was echoed in Townsend's classic work – that “an area strategy cannot be the cardinal means of dealing with poverty” (Townsend, 1979, 560) as areas “...cannot be treated as autonomous or self-sufficient in terms of either economy or culture. Their functions and distribution of prosperity are in the main decided elsewhere” (Townsend, 1979, 564).

However, current policy thinking has swung away from such understandings and has disconnected local conditions from the influence of the non-local factors. For example, recent reports from the ESRC Research Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) have stated that there is a clear rationale for area-based policies as some areas suffer disproportionate levels of deprivation (Smith, 1999; Glennister et al, 1999). *Bringing Britain Together* (SEU, 1998, par. 21.18) shares this view and suggests that poor communities suffer due to a lack of links with other areas. However, we would contend that deprived communities do not suffer because of their *disconnection*, but because of their *connection*. For example, the effects of the mobile capital flows are often borne unequally by disadvantaged communities, and regional and national housing and labour markets can drain resources out of declining communities.

The above quote from the CDP reminds us that a number of wider questions need to be addressed in terms of tackling deprivation in local areas. However, “there is no need to continue ‘re-inventing the wheel’” (Shaw and Robinson, 1998, 62), as for many years, academics, governments and practitioners alike have advocated comprehensive and integrated approaches to tackling deprivation (CDP, 1977; Townsend, 1979; Robson et al, 1994).

In particular, Townsend (1979, 560) made a plea for an institutional theory of poverty based around a structural change in the allocation of resources and wealth, occupational class structure and labour and housing markets at a national level. Further, Harvey (1982) pointed to the wider processes of urbanisation under capitalism which has led to a divided reorganisation of space around prosperous city-centres and ghettos. This economic restructuring of space continues and some parts of the city have inevitably lost out (Newman and Verpraet, 1999, 488). Finally, Wacquant (1999) highlights that urban marginality is now an entrenched characteristic of western societies and is

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increasing through structural developments associated with the labour market and the reconstruction of the welfare state rather than the characteristics of particular localities.

However, there has been a reluctance to use these existing stocks of knowledge within current government policy and to foster a debate on the causes of deprivation. Shaw and Robinson (1998, 50) comment that urban policy over the last twenty years has overlooked that “everything is inter-related”. Current area-based regeneration policies, then, are placed within a context of a growing “economic localism” (Mohan, 1999; Lovering, 1995). Changes in the global organisation of production imply, on the one hand, a move away from industrial and regional employment designed to maximise output and retain full employment at the national level, and, on the other, the erosion of a nationally-regulated Keynesian welfare state, income redistribution policies and controls on trade and exchange rates, as a means of sustaining the domestic market. Local economic strategies, then, have little choice but to employ a policy repertoire based around increasing entrepreneurial capacity, “embedding” footloose investment, securing a stake in the globally competitive allocation of jobs and production activity, and attracting foreign direct investment (Harvey, 1989, Mohan, 1999).

This largely business-led and externally focused model, epitomised by Kanter (1995), focuses upon supply-side issues in the local economy such as infrastructure, skills provision and the supply of land. However, such a model does little to address issues such as full employment, the needs of marginal groups, and the capacity of communities to help themselves. Moreover, highly mobile capital and foreign direct investment can have a devastating effect on already weak communities (Tomaney et al, 1999). In the context of Britain, deprived neighbourhoods, mainly in the urban north, have borne the brunt of economic restructuring away from traditional industries, with little protection from state policies (Mohan, 1999). In the face of such global restructuring, there is little individual neighbourhoods can do and widespread urban abandonment has often been the remedy (Power and Mumford, 1999).

The current vogue with area-based strategies, then, represents a block on gaining a deeper understanding of territorial development. What is required is a renewed debate concerning the broad-based and geographically complex causes of deprivation. As Robinson and Shaw (1994, 233) commented: “No-one should be under the illusion that a spatially targeted urban policy alone will solve urban problems . . . the first step in any attempt to develop a meaningful urban policy should involve a return to the Big Idea . . . of full employment”.

The challenge for government is not to lose sight of the fundamental structural forces which generate deprivation (Geddes and Newman, 1999) and to translate the complex nature of territorial development into meaningful

policy structures. However, it is easier to formulate regeneration policy around local neighbourhood factors rather than wider structural factors. Originality and innovation are often sacrificed by the need to “play the rules of the game” and deliver outputs. In this sense, it may be more appropriate to talk of “grant coalitions” rather than “growth coalitions” (Shaw and Robinson, 1998, 58) which exist to “grab grants” rather than to understand the complexities of regeneration (Jones and Ward, 1998, 37).

■ CONCLUSIONS

Joined-up or contradictory thinking?

In unitary states, such as the UK, with weak structures of regional governance, there are difficulties in promoting “joined-up” approaches to regeneration, due to the division of responsibility between government ministries organised on a functional basis. While the primary responsibility for regenerating particular localities rests with DETR, the regeneration process should concern a number of different ministries (Goddard and Chatterton, 1999). *Bringing Britain Together* (SEU, 1998) recognises that one of the problems is that “government is still organised in vertical channels with few cross-cutting links” (par. 2.9).

However, the government is committed to connecting policy debates across previously functionally separated government departments and mechanisms are being established to coordinate overlapping area-based initiatives, especially as many area-based initiatives have similar objectives (DETR, 1998a, 1998b). In particular, the DETR has commissioned a two year study to support the development of policy and practice on the better coordination of area-based initiatives (CABI) and the *Urban Task Force Report* (DETR, 1999a) has suggested the need for “Urban Priority Areas” to sweep up the patchwork of area-based initiatives.

Yet, there is no escaping the fact that many policy initiatives are incommensurable. In particular, the government has recently produced White Papers on Sustainable Development (DETR, 1999b) and Competitiveness (DTI, 1998) and has developed baseline indicators for both. There is potential for conflict, then, between simultaneously pursuing policy imperatives of, on the one hand, sustainability and social inclusion, and on the other, economic competitiveness (Mohan, 1999, 194). The challenge for the forthcoming Urban White Paper is to make sense of such conflicting policy imperatives.

Moreover, even if rightly conceived, the various area-based initiatives do not represent an adequate level of resources to tackle deprivation at the local level (Hall and Nevin, 1999, 480). Such a conclusion seems to make sense in the light of the fact that subsequent layers of urban and regional policy interventions have done little to alter the basic map of uneven development in the UK (Mohan, 1999; Atkinson and Moon, 1994).

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Embedding alternative approaches

Raco (1999) has highlighted the difficulty academics face in influencing regeneration agendas in the light of new forms of urban governance in the UK. Within this “politics of closure” (Imrie et al, 1995) it is difficult for alternative approaches to development to find any legitimacy. However, new opportunities are opening, especially for marginal groups, from which to challenge conventional models of development (Thomas et al, 1996).

In Britain’s industrial peripheral, which has experienced a lack of success with orthodox growth strategies, there is a need to incorporate a much wider spectrum of opinions and activities, which can offer progressive and sustainable approaches to employment and wealth creation, resource use and community services. Such an approach concerns a re-localisation of economic and social life – in essence, a more democratic, locally embedded, people-centred and ecologically sustainable economic system (Robertson, 1998).

English Partnership’s current emphasis on mixed-use developments and “Urban Villages” is a recognition of the need for sustainable urban regeneration (Urban Villages Forum and English Partnerships, 1998). If sufficient resources are pumped into pockets within the urban area, numerous “Urban Villages” can be created, comprising a mix of housing, business and leisure uses. However, reversing the tide of those abandoning rented homes and of middle-class families chasing a rural or leafy suburban lifestyle is an immense task.

To improve the employability and mobility of residents in deprived areas requires the creation of employment that matches more closely the skills and employment aspirations of unemployed residents. The problems of regenerating communities are particularly acute in inner-city areas that are prone to “leakage” and experience high transience and resident flows due to the nature of the housing stock. Such areas are also close to the centre of relatively large labour market areas and thus local residents face relatively strong competition. In sum, measures to address a widening employability gap need to go well beyond current regeneration initiatives.

What has become known as the third-sector, comprising cooperatives, mutual organisations, local exchange trading systems (LETS) and credit unions, offers new resources for community-based economic development policy and regeneration (Thorne, 1996; North, 1999; O’Doherty et al, 1999). Further, the framework set out under Local Agenda 21 and the recent White Paper *A Better Quality of Life* (DETR, 1999b) provides a useful template to integrate economic, environmental and social issues within regeneration initiatives. However, LA21, and the concept of sustainable development more generally, remain under-resourced, poorly defined, badly managed and marginal to the concerns of statutory bodies. Building bridges between sustainable development and local economic development strategies remains a major stumbling block (Counsell, 1999). In particular, initiatives such as LA21 and LETS need greater resources if

their values and language are to gain widespread acceptance in society. Questions remain, then, concerning the extent to which such bottom-up initiatives provide a space for a radical critique on what has gone on before and whether area-based initiatives are really open to action from below (North, forthcoming).

In sum, the area-based approach of New Labour to tackling deprivation is limited in what it can achieve as local regeneration is influenced by factors inside and outside of localities. However, we do not need to re-invent the wheel. It has long been understood that the ability of small-area regeneration strategies to encapsulate the complex nature of territorial development is, at best, naive and, at worst, a waste of resources. No matter how imaginative area-based strategies become, they will remain fundamentally flawed in their conception of the nature of the problem. By returning to some of the conventional wisdom, regeneration could be about people as well as places – in essence, the eradication of poverty rather than managing poor people (CDP, 1997, 63).

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