

Just Neighbourhoods? Under-representation in Community-Led Planning activity

JN WORKING PAPER #2

Literature Review (WP1b) - March 2024

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Note: This is one in a series of working paper outputs produced as part of the Nuffield Foundation funded research project 'Just Neighbourhoods?', see: <https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/project/under-representation-in-uk-community-led-planning>

Preface

The Just neighbourhoods? research project funded by Nuffield, is split into several work packages and the first package is comprised of three elements. This report sets out the findings and approach taken to Work Package 1b – the literature review. WP1a is the theoretical framework and WP1c involves the CLP content review. All three elements assist in finessing the research design going into WP2 (case studies).

Section A: Literature Search Strategy

1. Approach and scope

This document outlines the structured review of relevant literature published since 2010. The purpose of the review is to provide grounding for the later stages of the research and feed into the theoretical framework (WP1a). This ensures that key findings from the wider – particularly international – community-led planning (CLP) literature combines with the existing material from the team, which has centred more on the English experience. Each identified theme is synthesised to key points for the research project to consider.

The literature review captures what has been written about community governance and planning, particularly in reference to under-representation across international social sciences and arts and humanities literature. The approach adopted has enabled the research team to:

- Extract data and combine existing evidence to provide a framework to position our research project and inform the content review and methodology
- Identify gaps in the current research

The literature identified in the search has been combined and organised with pre-existing literature reviews produced by the research team. To ensure that key items had not been omitted the team revisited each theme to capture any missing items worthy of inclusion.

2. Planning and conducting the review

In forming the proposal for the Nuffield Foundation, key search terms were identified for use in targeting relevant outputs to inform and contextualise the research. The research team went through a mapping process to identify overlapping terms in the search, developing a search protocol and literature search strings (see Table 1). The focus on community-led planning necessitated the team taking a flexible approach given that at different times and places other terms and linking words have been used when discussing community activity with a relationship to planning such as ‘community regeneration’, ‘community governance’ or ‘neighbourhood action’. This cross-disciplinary multiplicity of synonymous terminology means that inevitably we would be likely, on the one hand, catch less relevant material and on the other, to miss other outputs.

The language of outputs was limited to English, and the keywords were searched within the title, abstract and author keywords only.

Table 1: Search protocol and strings

<i>Search strings:</i> Community-led OR People-led OR Resident-led OR Citizen-led OR Place-based OR Co-design OR Co-Production OR Co-Creation OR {Community development}
AND
{urban planning} OR {town planning} OR {parish planning} OR {land use planning} OR {spatial planning} OR {planning process} OR {planning practice} OR {neighbourhood planning} OR {neighborhood planning} OR {place making} OR {Rural Planning}
AND
Governance OR Participation OR Localism OR Representation OR Decentralisation OR Collaborative OR Care OR Communal OR Co-operative OR Empowerment OR Involvement OR Engagement OR Inclusion OR Communicative
AND NOT
{regional planning} OR {regional studies} OR {Crime and Justice} OR {Smart cities} OR Archaeological OR Flooding OR Fracking OR {urban ecosystems} OR {Clever Cities} OR Gender OR technologies OR infrastructure OR Marine OR Health OR Tourism OR GIS OR {corporate social responsibility} OR {conflict studies} OR Transport OR {urban system} OR {ecosystem services} OR indigenous OR disaster OR {higher education} OR {forest policy} OR {environmental impact assessment})

3. Reporting the review

The search strings generated a list of 421 documents. Each member of the team reviewed approximately 105 documents and inputted their findings into a spreadsheet to assist in forming the basis for the literature synthesis. Each member of the research team assessed individual items using an agreed review approach and a consistent recording of key attributes designed to inform the research. The populated spreadsheet included a range of details and links to the project themes. The headings were: authors, title, publication, relevance, methods, research questions, key findings, conclusions drawn and bearing on the project scope and research aims.

Additionally, any key new literature sources (i.e. not in review output grouping) were highlighted for later review. Some items were omitted when deemed to be outside the project's scope.

Following from the initial review, the team then embarked on a dive into the literature using the key themes identified (see below) to cross-check for any missing relevant outputs. This included a search for other documents missed in the Scopus database. The two stages were then reconciled with pre-existing literature reviews produced by the team, both in the bidding process and during their prior research in the subject area. Overall, the review includes over 500 sources.

Section B: Literature themes and synthesis

This is a high-level review of both neighbourhood policy and CLP in the UK and internationally, including further outputs which touch on relevant themes as set out in Sections 4, 5 and 6.

4. Literature themes

The identified literature was coded into nine themes to reflect the key aspects which were discussed by authors across the 421 identified items (supplemented by further sources).

The themes are ‘CLP and’:

- i. Leadership, motivation and actors
- ii. Resources / capacity / knowledge / time and support
- iii. Co-production
- iv. Tools, frameworks, technologies
- v. Just Planning / Justice*
- vi. Priorities, scope and participant types
- vii. Politics
- viii. Power*
- ix. Community assets and participation

* Key themes deployed in the theoretical framework for WP1a and discussed more fully in that document. The WP1 report (Working Paper 1) discusses related issues stemming from our focus on justice/injustice and power with key aspects including: knowledge, resources, scale, support, priorities, context, situatedness and accountability (and which therefore overlap with some content of this report).

5. Literature synthesis

The following subsections distil the literature across the identified nine themes. A summary of key elements or aspects under the nine themes is found in Table 2 (Section 7).

i. *Leadership, motivation and actors*

Under the theme of leadership, numerous aspects were rehearsed relating to how neighbourhood scale action is mobilised or oriented. This also encompassed leadership as involving the **facilitation** of open discussions of new ideas, and the **knowledge** and **ability** to apply those ideas including the integration of local knowledge (Primdahl and Kristensen, 2016). We can discern how leadership is being discussed as both leadership on behalf of neighbourhoods, as well as from within, or as **endogenous leadership**. In terms of the former Toomey (2011) identifies eight roles that practitioners play in participatory initiatives, split into traditional roles of: rescuer, provider, moderniser, and liberator as well as four ‘alternative’ roles: catalyst, facilitator, ally, advocate.

Some authors deploy the label **change agent** to double for leader and note that the support bases of change agents are multiple, and where they are observably successful, they span local,

urban, national and sometimes the national level and can be sectorally diverse; some with strong public and NGO relationships (van Ostaijen and Agger, 2023). This highlights that ‘leadership’ is rarely something derived from an individual alone but involves the ability to draw on support and to **assemble resources**. Thus, the leadership contribution also highlights both the networked aspect of planning activity, as well as the existence of joint leadership situations. Some have recognised that ongoing community action requires several key elements involving resources, leadership continuity and recognition of **setting** (Gopalakrishnan and Chong, 2020). Success factors associated with status are seen as relevant under this heading and include respect, sharing and ownership, and action factors include co-responsibility and co-decision making (Roengtam, 2020). Albrechts, Barbanente and Monno (2019, p.1501) propose that, ‘additional to statutory planning, a more imaginative and inclusive strategic spatial planning is needed’ that is state-led but ‘co-productive, open, selective, and dynamic’ which conjoins with the theme below on co-production.

Some argue that shadow-state organizations, and in particular city-building nonprofits, are central actors in engaging neighbourhoods to participate in (self-)governing as it relates to urban affairs (Marwell, 2004). This involves the development of ways of understanding the neighbourhood as impoverished and in need of intervention. Intermediary organisations - nonprofits – have acted to orient the community towards the objectives of its funders, which is reminiscent of consultants employed via UK government in relation to neighbourhood planning in England (see Parker *et al.*, 2023). In the case set out by Fraser and Kick the community came into conflict with them, yet ultimately the analysis demonstrated how one of the intermediaries was able to create the conditions within which residents engaged in self-governance, bringing them into alignment, albeit imperfectly, with the other members of the growth coalition present in that instance (Fraser and Kick, 2014). Other cases, in the US and China (Bonds, Kenny & Wolfe, 2015; Chang *et al.*, 2019) illustrate further the conflicts that can arise between nonprofits and citizens, with different priorities and ways of working.

In England some Neighbourhood Forums have been declined by local authorities, or there is reluctance from some local authority areas to encourage Neighbourhood Planning (NP) (Salter, 2022; Parker *et al.*, 2017) one factor being lack of local authority **capacity**. Resistance to Neighbourhood Planning in England was identified as being particularly present in more deprived areas because of the importance placed by local government on economic development and neighbourhood (or urban) renewal. Some might perceive NP as another hurdle in the way of completing regeneration. Or, in areas of neighbourhood renewal, where there are often multiple layers of area-based initiatives and networks, linking elected representatives to residents/voters, NDPs might be considered as a disruption to the already established 'policy rich' contexts. One example was presented where, in Liverpool funding might actually have been lost if cooperation occurred with the NP process (Sturzaker *et al.*, 2022). Some councillors appeared to be involved to take credit for the work of the community and gain leverage for their own political agenda and "redefine the terms of democratic participation from the question of ‘what can a representative do for or ‘gift’ to the citizen and/or community?’ to that of ‘what can citizens and communities do for themselves?’" ... and this competes with NP, where there is scarce volunteer time and possibly over-stretched commitment (Sturzaker, Sykes and Dockerill, 2022; Parker *et al.*, 2020).

Overall, the reception by local government has been mixed but take-up in more deprived areas low. In one of the least deprived areas studied by Sturzaker, Sykes and Dockerill, (2022), they found that NP was viewed as a low-cost alternative to statutory land-use planning, and there was a proportion of s106 agreement funds offered for financial support for the NP.

A key point highlighted by Freestone (2022) was made regarding the role of key individuals acting as **enablers** and / empowering individuals to take on formal roles of influence and charts how individuals participated and then went on into politics to exercise greater influence (e.g. elected politician) (Freestone, 2022). Equally rules or systems deployed may be utilised by developers or politicians for reasons of self-interest, e.g. to utilise common property resource management systems to protect views, rather than for ecology purposes or to reflect democratic intent (Robbins, Martin and Gilbertz, 2012).

Context and the specificities of neighbourhoods (see also setting) are seen as important, particularly the interpretation of culture (Geertz, 1973), with Hall *et al.*, (2012) indicating the need to be sensitive to particularities of local place and local culture too given that localities have uniquely embedded ways of seeing resources, defining problems, and addressing those problems. Most cultural practices express and record what it means to live with a particular socially cultivated landscape and engage in everyday problem solving. These practices, contain the logic behind strategies for behaviours that shape social and ecological function. They argue that leveraging local expertise, opinion, and inside knowledge of physical and political dynamics, management can better meet the needs of each setting than through formal planning.

There are varying **capacities** of participants and how more attention and effort needs to be paid to past, present, and future harms to different stakeholder groups (Hill *et al.*, 2019). This issue was recognised in community planning in Israel, Shmueli (2017) stressed the need for planners to gather in-depth information on prospective participants and their interests, and furthermore, "they should conduct an in-depth examination of **historical and current parallel processes** or decisions and bring them to the community discussions as part of the information- and knowledge-gathering stage" (*ibid.*, p.142). The aim here is for planners to be aware of who should be engaged at different points of a collaborative planning process. Shmueli argues that planners should always assume the presence of multi-scale interests and interference among non-governmental actors (which is linked to Gaventa's power cube) and recognise that community planning problems can only be addressed as a multiscale process. This point links well with the intended methods underpinning our research.

Presence of apathy and a lack of **motivation** to participate after a local unwanted development was discussed by Silvonen (2021) who presented findings that showed introducing new participatory processes does not always lead to the inclusion, despite best intentions and that alternative processes may be needed. Apathy was also present in communities considering NP in Middlesbrough, with local people regarding engagement in CLP as 'pointless' ostensibly because of local political friction in that case (Lynn *et al.*, 2023). Conversely, local input to programs 'placemaking in the place where you are, then use people who love the place in the first place'

(Foster, 2022). Ethnicity and place-based identity is at the heart of some community organising efforts, particularly for mobilising political capital, grassroots actions, and symbolic capital (Šakaja and Višnić, 2011). This indicates how shared values and group identity can act as potent forces or mobilisation. Practically speaking, the complexity and long-term nature of collaborative activity are increasingly recognised (Al Waer, Rintoul and Cooper, 2021).

Murtagh and Ellis (2010) identify a range of substantive **skills** that might be applied to places where ethnicity shapes local development. At the heart of this lies “understanding and mapping local power circuits, capitalising on everyday encounters as a basis for collaborative action and understanding how laws, regulation and resource allocation systems impact on the most divided places” (2010, p.580). The authors stress the importance of such social learning is heightened in spaces, especially important here it is hard to penetrate techno-rational cultures of planners and managers. (Nb. Questions of networks and how actors operated in partnership is discussed in the section centring on co-production).

Ilovan and Răcășan (2022) attempted to link local initiatives / action to feelings of **place attachment** (see also Lewicka, 2011). In some contexts, there is a negative association between urbanisation and place attachment, which indirectly appears to influence civic participation in some experiences (Buchecker and Frick, 2020). The presence of community initiatives such as community land trusts (CLTs) can act as catalysts for community involvement in planning and vehicles for 'place attachment'. Place attachment often does not operate within fixed administrative boundaries but acts more organically to articulate a 'sense of place', which can be lost upon redevelopment (Alawadi, 2017; Wesley and Ainsworth, 2018). Initiatives such as CLTs can have very concrete results, delivering affordable social housing in rural communities as evidenced by Moore (2021). CLP is seen to hold various strengths, but also weaknesses - including "co-ordination challenges... unpredictability... and [a tendency towards] consensual, but potentially suboptimal solution[s]" (Czirják, 2019, p.168). Moore also says that CLT mechanisms can deny opportunities to those who lack the required 'social or function attachments to place' (2021, p.28), with Parker, Lynn and Wargent (2015) arguing that a form of 'norming' or conforming can easily take place in community planning processes.

Lowe and Thaden (2016) discuss the idea of place 'stewardship' and the activity of CLTs and community development corporations (CDCs) as ancillary/complementary to community-led planning. There appears an interesting line of inquiry around the idea of CLTs/CDCs as a form of community-led planning. This point also links to issues of ongoing engagement and practices possibly to ongoing place management practices as part of what has been termed place (Otsuka and Reeve, 2007; Dempsey *et al.*, 2014).

The paper by FitzHerbert and Lewis, (2010) tells the story of a town scarred by unemployment and post-industrial decline. The study follows the efforts of local people to work on self-identified action. Communities also value **certainty** over what change is likely to take place or not (Gopinath and Jackson, 2010). The importance of trust for open and inclusive arenas was asserted by Wang and Wang (2020), while Grossman and Creamer contend that with care and thought there is much scope to apply more critical and self-critical assessment of action which is

more attuned both to how others claim and frame what they do and to the ways that professional planners claim and frame issues and solutions (Grossmann and Creamer, 2017).

It has been stressed that **information** in itself does not result in a change in the status of marginalised community groups. Findings revealed that improvement in accountability lines and capacity building can help impact the salience of community groups in developmental decision processes. It is argued that for change to be attained, a combination of factors is important, not only improved information but also wider accountability and capacity building (Toomey, 2011). Work on NP in England did indicate how communities began to be more supportive if development is oriented to reflect their preferences, including questions of location, this was contended in a different context by González and Connell (2022) whose paper highlights how engagement can lead to greater agreement over location of development. Hui *et al.* also found that small-scale development was likely to help rebuild community ties (Hui *et al.*, 2021).

Overall, the question of **leadership** and of **motivation** is tied with other themes discussed below. In existing work on neighbourhood planning questions of small teams of people effectively leading has been identified as have issues of possible burn-out where burdens or other workload issues are present (Parker *et al.*, 2021). This aspect presents itself as a question area relating to how and on what basis has community leadership been sustained and what would be helpful to support community leaders (Langone and Rohs, 2014).

The section has revealed how questions of preparation and understanding of community (i.e. contextual understanding and activity preparation) prior to engagement is important, as are parallel activities such as CLT activity can act to focus attention on very local planning, while presence of other activity or schemes could cut across or undermine CLP. A range of interlinked factors of key individuals, information, skills, motivation and accountability of local agencies are recognised components of success. This synopsis of issues under the theme heading assists the research in indicating how mapping or assessing the presence, contours or lack of such features has shaped CLP efforts across the case study areas.

ii. Resources / capacity / time and support

Undoubtedly, resources will be important to project activity. As such the second theme centred on the topic of resources available for communities to engage and Hollander (2012) discusses the variety of 'intelligence' held within communities and which can be enabled and deployed to deepen the quality of participation – this appears to relate with questions of **social capital** (Crawford *et al.*, 2008; Holman and Rydin, 2013; Mandarano, 2009; Putnam, 1995; Putnam *et al.*, 2004) - and discusses hybrid applications of face-to-face in-depth interaction aided by **technology** (Mosconi *et al.*, 2017). The paper argues that intelligent participation involves a rethinking and redesigning of public processes to meet diverse learning styles and draw in multiple intelligences and improve and encourage dialogue. This speaks as much to how systems are organised rather than what is at stake or in focus.

There has been an interest recently in the role of social infrastructures, linking to questions of the role and potentials of ABCD community development and the significance of places such as community halls as meeting places, as well as other social infrastructures in providing community focal points and nodes to grow greater community action and possibly community planning (Tomaney *et al.*, 2023). The paper by Firth, Maye and Pearson (2011) highlights the potential of community gardens as part of the range of social infrastructures that can ‘increase social cohesion, support networking and enhance levels of social capital. They do so by providing a shared “third space” (*ibid.*, p.558).

Clearly there are challenges involved in participation and the paper by Poe (2022) urges that the more we understand the multilayered, place-based trauma impacting spatial processes, the better growth practices can be developed in collaboration with communities. This speaks to the place history, particularly the history that relates to decisions over the future development of an area.

Capacity is linked to resources and ‘transformative capacity’ is identified as present where communities have created new systems where conditions make the current system weak. Various components make up the strength of such capacity, including inclusive and multi-forms of governance, transformative leadership, and empowered communities of practice. There are four development processes considered as being important to underlying transformative capacity: systems analysis, sustainability foresight, practical experimentation of communities, and the embedding of effective sustainability innovations. Wolfram, Borgström and Farrelly’s (2019) research highlighted that the bottom-line condition is the focus on inclusion and empowerment for (re)shaping inclusive and multiform governance arrangements lest a process be deemed flawed.

Relational capacities and **communicative skills** are crucial to the success of building relations across disciplines and sectors, particularly essential for planning related activities (Dandekar and Clark, 1992; Ramasubramanian and Albrecht, 2018). Specific skills and methods for facilitating the co-production of knowledge should be considered as an area of expertise (Wickenberg, 2023) particularly in the development of institutional capacity where micro-social relations in themselves can generate processes of invention for local projects (Healey *et al.*, 2002). It is recommended by Schmachtel (2021) that relational agency be conceptualised as a micro-political process prefigured by the discursive and structural context in which it takes place. This places relational agency as an analytical perspective which shows limitations in the co-creation process.

According to Schmachtel (2021) conflicts are only ever considered (in a dialectical way) and as a catalyst for the development of an enriched reconceptualization of the problem. Indeed, both conflict and collaboration are considered by some to be important aspects of co-production (Zhao, Liu and Wang, 2023). The need for mediation and **facilitation** was identified when creating place plans in Wales to navigate potentially conflicting priorities (Jones and Spence, 2017) while (Konsti-Laakso and Rantala, 2018), argue that widened participation and using open transparent dialogue can prevent conflict. For some, it is acknowledged that collective decisions are reached more effectively when ‘disruptive thinking’ occurs (Sørensen and Torfing, 2021). Small groups have been identified as being able to seek consensus instinctively and therefore if

they are in control of the process can narrow the range of participation (Mansbridge, 2002; Mendelberg, 2002). Vigar, Gunn and Brooks (2017) state that facilitating agnostic debates when forming neighbourhood plans makes for better quality and more inclusive plans. They suggest that where conflict is absent, it could be considered as a “manifestation of a post-political trend in public policy” (Gualini, 2015: p61). Those who facilitate community planning activities ideally would have a set of skills and personality traits that contribute to being able to host healthy agnostic debates, include being open-minded, approachable, honest, open and trustworthy, courteous and humble, impartial stance and empathetic (Alwaer and Cooper, 2019).

Ha notes the value of lived experience in that it takes time living in a place to develop social capital and understanding of place (Ha, 2010). Studies looking at topics as diverse as rural appraisals in Cameroon have made similar findings with respect to "hard to reach" or "seldom heard" groups i.e. that such groups always exist, and those without long-standing ties to a place often fall within them, so targetted and **specific resources** may need to be allocated to ensure they are heard (Engwali and Grace, 2018).

Institutional design influences how actors remain involved, as well as social factors (Eräranta and Mladenović, 2021). Participatory spatial planning processes examined in the Israeli context, suggests that there is a correlation between the initiating body, its commitment to participation and the level of success of the participatory process (Eshkol and Eshkol, 2017). In their study the institutional framework did not support network ties between processes. The social network was in constant flux, with many people entering and leaving, and the structure was strongly centralised with one clear core actor, or a relatively small set of actors. Some of the network dynamics were explained through institutional rules and routines, such as decision-making procedures; but some were shaped by emergent actor-relational factors, such as escalated arguments between some actors. Frantzeskaki (2022) examined participation across people, place, institution, and links to the consideration of the ASID model (see WP1a) which emphasises the role of institutions and institutional design to successful participation.

Gough and Accordino's (2013) research provided evidence that **partnerships** between local governments and cultural institutions have the potential to increase local government capacity by strengthening resource networks and improving political efficacy and governance. The research by Ruzowand-Holland (2014) indicates that when citizens increase their scientific and ecological knowledge then citizens' confidence in land use decision-making is improved. Conversely, Parker, Lynn and Wargent (2015) identified that institutional burdens acted to limit take-up, time taken and scope of community plans. Thus, the **time inputs** involved in some forms of engagement can be problematic and time and its manipulation has been cited as a key barrier to participation by (Grosse and Femenias (2022), and the use of time may marginalise some according to Dobson and Parker (2024). Khaldi's (2019) work promotes the idea that proactive long-term approaches can lead to socio-ecological and institutional transformation. Encouraging bottom-up approaches lead to socially innovative activities that are found to be one of the main stimulants of resilience across communities and stakeholders. Severcan (2015) found that timings

of participation projects themselves can also undermine participation, particularly for some identified groups.

In terms of **support**, in terms of resources and advice, as well as commitment for participatory planning, international experience shows that commitment to making participation work on the part of decision-makers is vital – a French study found strong resistance on the part of politicians in that country, who argue that participation is ineffective; whereas the authors “argue that they rather do not want or know how to run participatory and deliberative democracy” (Blondel and Evrard, 2023, p. 199). Conversely, A review of community development activity in Cameroon notes that such activity can develop without much in the way of external support, and that policy makers could perhaps focus on how to remove **constraints** and barriers to such activity (Alasah, 2011). In the work on neighbourhood planning in England issues of appropriate support has been discussed (Parker and Salter, 2017; Brookfield, 2017) but it appears that identifying constraints needs to be an early-stage activity.

The role of **relationships** in participatory planning has been explored in an East Asian context. Using the concept of ‘ba’, which refers to the pre-existing consensus and relationships embedded in the physical and social environment and that involve organizational knowledge creation understanding agents' interaction and the effect on action is highlighted (Nonaka and Konno, 1998; Tokoro, 2015). This also links to questions of context and social capital. Four dimensions of ‘ba’ relationships have been discussed: ‘originating’ relations, ‘dialoguing’ relations, ‘systemising’ relationships and ‘exercising’ relationships – referring more to action or implementation. In this context the importance of local government going beyond facilitating public participation but to actively engage in the conversion between tacit and explicit knowledge and increase relations has been claimed (Seo, 2022).

The section has revealed how skills, support and resources together form important components for CLP activity and the research should be considerate of what of these are drawn-in or lacking during the primary data collection phases of the research. Similarly, the way in which particular initiatives derived from framing institutions can have significant impact on community action is revealed as potentially important. Thus, we are not only concerned with invited or self-generated CLP activity but how either or both are shaped by pre-existing or associated institutional limits.

iii. Co-production

The theme of co-production has generated a large literature in its own right (see Turnhout *et al.*, 2020; Galuszka, 2019; Adams and Boateng, 2018; Mitlin and Bartlett, 2018), and clearly there are crossovers here with questions of resources and capacity as above. This section maintains a focus on the process dynamics, given that co-production is claimed widely to bring benefits, but in a politicised context, and/or where projects are large and complex, it can be difficult to manage. Some have raised issues of costs outweighing benefits for policymakers (Bartenberger and SześciŁo, 2016). Equally, it has been observed that, by default, CLP activity resembles formulations of co-production given the widely acknowledged need for various inputs and relations to be present.

Lessons from other policy sectors are similar to those from planning; seeing co-production as building of capacity, but that it is complex, requires early and meaningful engagement and much attention needs to be paid to power dynamics (André *et al.*, 2023). Although co-production is different to collaborative planning, the overlap is people-centred, people-led interventions, with an emphasis on collaboration, through which planning can be achieved, particularly using **social mobilisation** as a tool to form connection between state and community. The trading of ideas via forms of co-production does not necessitate a shared understanding or a shared ideological view related to the planning subject, and Albrechts discerns how a narrower approach in the form of a 'limited agreement' can be achieved as a result of bargaining and compromising, instead of aiming at a total consensus, in order to generate progress in the planning process (Albrechts, 2013).

Various **motivations** are present with a variety of co-approaches to social governance, with aspirations to co-construct, co-manage, co-evaluate and share, with ultimate aims of self-governance and self-development (Yan *et al.*, 2023) also recognised as 'self-organisation' by Boonstra and Boelens (2011). Social movement-initiated co-production has been increasingly described as an approach that **enables urban poor communities** in the South to gain wider access to urban governance opening new communication channels between the society and the state but failed to impact directly on policy making or help to disentangle communities from the patronage of powerful figures. However, the governance/implementation phase revealed that these achievements left only some tangible legacy (Galuszka, 2019). Questioning whether co-production processes can do more than improving living conditions of the poor, and whether it can lead to lasting change in the processes and structures of urban governance, Galuszka (2019) seeks to identify if co-production can lead to a mainstream process, rather than as 'alternative' or 'innovative.'

Miraftab (2020) draws the distinction between 'invited' and 'invented' spaces of action, where invited spaces are actioned through community-based informal groups and allied organisations that are legitimised by donors and government interventions, whereas 'invented' spaces are those of collective action by the poor that directly confront authorities to challenge and destabilise the status quo (Miraftab, 2020, p.437). The latter falls into the wider category of insurgent planning forms (Miraftab, 2009; Basta, 2022). Government interventions are often regarded as reflecting a particular political drive and with rapid delivery, whereas community building and collaborative planning require sustained processes of change, the art and skill becomes about how these interventions can be better matched to the needs of communities (Powe, Pringle and Hart, 2015) and timings or temporalities aligned (Dobson and Parker, 2024), and how tension can be reduced between rational bureaucratic approaches and local democracy (Chaskin, 2005). Furthermore, the institutional drive to increase collaborative planning needs to incorporate the aspirations of meaningful engagement alongside the slow-changing culture of public administration (Bua and Escobar, 2018). The statement that "Planning is broad... Economics is disciplined." (Heikkila, 2000) which also suggests that there is something to take from often opposing forces in order make sustained progress.

Co-production is seen as superior by some to collaborative planning due to having greater emphasis on both the production of knowledge and planning decisions (van Kerkhoff and Lebel, 2015). For co-production to increase the proactive inclusion of different stakeholders, particularly excluded social groups and citizens, there is a need for residents to be considered as central stakeholders of co-production by all actors (Satorras *et al.*, 2020). Co-production has been found to make a difference to the quality of participation and engagement, but if the focus of co-production activity is on those who already participate, not the seldom heard, the latter can feel excluded and stigmatized, and hence perceive themselves as “less legitimate social actors” (Cornips *et al.*, 2023, p.9). Often, only organised groups are invited rather than individual members of the community and this is a downfall of inclusive co-production activities. Some expressions of co-production can be viewed as a process to up-scale, by connecting smaller projects together, working towards similar goals. Booth (2017) stresses how there are many ‘publics’ in a given place and in that particular example a wider reality that different people experience places differently and older residents can also be disregarded is highlighted, with the importance of social spaces of segments of populations not necessarily recognised (Burns, Lavoie and Rose, 2012). Siame and Watson (2022) suggest that co-production in addition to collaborative planning involves low-level **conflict management**, or multiple tactics of resistance.

Ersoy and Hall (2020) found that co-production is an umbrella term for many different understandings of collaborative research which are not necessarily made explicit or negotiated. To improve the **outcomes** of collaboration, what it involves and what the desired outcomes are, there needs to be clearly established understandings of how co-design, co-development, and codelivery will be implemented at the outset. This may require some time and work to frame the problem and set expectations. While the focus was on climate and on co-produced design the seven principles could be more widely useful. They indicate multiple forms and claims x 7 principles for co-production:

1. Frame the problem ‘together’
2. Allow time to build relationships, trust and understanding
3. Test and agree on expectations
4. Clarify key language and key outputs
5. Be inclusive and explicit
6. Support interpersonal skills and reflexivity
7. Be adaptive and match activities to objectives.

Contemporary urban development is increasingly characterized by collaboration and co-production between ‘experts’ and the ‘public’ in urban planning processes. Kleinhans, Falco and Babelon (2022) applied four co-production conditions to assess how digital participation platforms (DPPs) shape co-production. These can create and nurture but also thwart hybrid ‘ecologies of co-production’ that reflexively harness the evolving interdependencies between technology use and planning practices. Such ecologies of co-production recognise both the strengths and limitations of multiple tools, methods and approaches and how these can align with particular moments and phases in the temporal continuum of co-productive planning processes. Recently, local planning actors have adopted digital platforms which are specifically

built for networked engagement and collaboration purposes. The analysis in the Kleinhans *et al.* (2022) work showed that these conditions are co-constitutive and co-evolutive rather than concurrent or sequential, with strong links between the compatibility of public agencies, attitudes to co-production, organisational cultures and incentives for co-production. The results demonstrate the need to identify inclusive approaches to networked co-production, including experimentation and 'learning by doing' (Kleinhans, Falco and Babelon, 2022).

Hoffman explores the value of aiming beyond participatory planning toward co-production, and assesses the role of 'world building', a design approach that involves (joint) **visioning** (Hoffman, 2022). Fleming *et al.*, (2023) paper explores how key institutions locally can play an important role in fostering co-production. Goldstein, (2010) argues that the ability to catalyse institutional relationships that were compatible with their scientific practice. Understanding this co-production of science and the social order is a first step toward effectively incorporating different experts in negotiation and implementation of technically complex collaborative agreements.

Ersoy and Hall (2020) discuss a 'bounded' example of reflexive governance, one that exhibits advanced forms of deliberation and coproduction but, ultimately, addresses too narrow a constituency of environmental, business and green activist interests. It seems that the focus of the partnership assisted the participants in working together more effectively while the authors see the focus itself as a weakness in terms of wider application of the co-production model. Hence the question of **scope** (and control) reemerges here with Huang, Akaateba and Li (2020) arguing that limiting flexibility in the approach diminishes the strength of co-production ventures. Balancing private and public actor interests is challenging in co-production and 'flexibility' and 'regulation' affect the success of co-production ventures. 'Flexible regulation' is seen as the key to the co-production process and its outcomes. It recognised how successful participatory programmes need to build trust in a community before CLP efforts can begin in earnest; likewise, efforts are needed to persuade local governments of the need to shift power dynamics (Brown and Baker, 2019).

In their study of public spaces in Liverpool, Leclercq *et al.* (2020) found that both public-private partnerships and community-led planning approaches, even when dominated by 'private' actors can produce a high degree of 'publicness' if **trust, inclusion**, and collaboration are present. Conversely, they found that being a 'public' institution does not axiomatically guarantee support. Indeed others present an overall culture of distrust (Bockmeyer, 2000) and it has been argued that public and private organisations are heavily intertwined and often feature similar types of bureaucracy, rules and red tape (Graeber, 2015). Evidence from international development research suggests that familiar dynamics are found when private corporations enter into community development activity (traditionally delivered by governments, and non-governmental organisations). The entry of **private sector actors** does not remove difficult and intractable issues such as co-ordinating action between local and national bodies or the tendency toward conservative visions for community development (McEwan *et al.*, 2017).

This sub-section has revealed how co-production is both debated widely but also critiqued, as linkage to power is clear and possible participation management has been alleged in some

instances. However, the principle of joining resources, knowledge and associated institutional capital (Healey, 1998), persists in terms of continued efforts to work on models and approaches that can work. As the review indicates many have urged for bespoke arrangements that are co-designed while recognising the need for inclusionary effort and careful parameters being established and maintained (cf. Tomaney *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, how different actors are aligned or act as possible blockers for CLP activity is of interest. How such issues are presented in the selected study cases will form part of the primary data stage.

iv. Tools / frameworks / technologies

The project team reviewed and grouped participatory practices together as part of a review of different forms and tools in participation in spatial planning. Participatory development techniques are vast, and yet there is consensus that they ought to bring a reversal in the roles and power of outsiders and the community itself (Labbé *et al.*, 2015), this is relevant to us as it argues for nuanced understandings, as well as a degree of **community control**. The article by Frediani and Cocina (2019) identifies and discusses a series of strategies that have emerged from Global South contexts, and which represent ways of dealing with planning limits, such as collective forms of spatial production. These respond to the perceived inadequacy of planning instruments to engage with diverse processes of city-making situated beyond dominant practices; partnership-oriented practices that react to the neoliberalisation and financialisation of planning; and advocacy-oriented planning to contest abusive planning practices.

Research carried out in Seattle (Sirianni, 2007), found three foundations of success; relational organising, ABCD (considered elsewhere in this review) and ‘accountable autonomy’. Relational organising, which builds relationships around face to face, one to one interactions about values and interests, is considered as important to building trust and aims to transform understanding of power, from ‘power over’ to ‘power with.’ Accountable autonomy (Fung, 2009) expresses how and where plans are delivered by the community they can promote clearer accountability.

Progressive formulations of territorial governance are considered to be important as institutional mechanisms to resolve integration of local communities, and intended as a place-based approach to strive for participative democracy for a community. Various dimensions that make up territorial governance: 1. Co-ordinating actions of actors and institutions, 2. Integrating policy sectors, 3. Mobilising stakeholder participation, 4. being adaptive to changing contexts, and 5. realising place based / territorial specificities and impacts (Toto and Shutina, 2021). Network approaches can shed new light on the nature of community in urban areas (Neal, Derudder and Liu, 2021). Healey (2012) has argued that more overt **network governance** holds potential for more people-centred forms of activity, she lists 7 elements seen as constitutive in this: governance and belonging, shared enterprise, multi-sided public discussion, nuanced issues that need careful consideration, formal government which is still important, civil society movement involvement, local institutions, and lastly good overlap between those elements.

In terms of the options of planners to manage participation, that is from perspective of the organisation of participation, the determination of its scope, selection of stakeholders, methods

and techniques of communication, decision-making and visualization, as well as the deployment of resources, or the possibility of promotion and dissemination of information all play a part. Hrivnák *et al.* (2021) contend that a participatory plan can be a suitable tool for achieving effective participation management, similar point was raised by Parker *et al.* (2014) in arguing for better organisation of neighbourhood planning in England.

A significant body of work has amassed discussing various forms of partnership, co-design and co-production (see also separate section above) and Lock, Bain and Pettit (2021) stress how **design of data tools**, along with data being open (Zhang *et al.*, 2019) is important to ensure better applicability and understanding amongst partners. Hofmann, Münster and Noennig (2019) also regard co-design of tools as aiding greater participation levels and intensity but McGowan, Dembski and Moore (2020) highlight that partnerships between Local government and communities can often result in co-option and repositioning of community-led schemes so that conformity to wider need is achieved. In terms of **visualisations and photos** in engaging communities (Valencia-Sandoval, Flanders and Kozak, (2010) see these as a useful tool in aiding understanding and exploration of impacts and solutions. La Rocca *et al.*, (2023) notes how archive / repository of resources can be useful for community action. Indeed the project will involve such a repository for images.

The use of 'living laboratories' as a concept to aid participation and ideas was recognised by Tewdwr-Jones and Wilson (2022). The use of city labs as a potential tool for collaborative planning within which hybrid organisational forms exist that can act as boundary organisations to aid facilitation of interaction (Scholl and Kemp, 2016) and potential may exist in the extension of urban rooms (Tewdwr-Jones *et al.*, 2019). They are considered as learning environments, multi-stakeholder settings, use co-creation and approach complex problems in a multi-disciplinary way. Success factors of a city lab are deemed to include; having clear strategic learning goals; involve activities on co-creation and alternative forms of planning; making public value creation explicit; and having public sector planners involved in the laboratory.

Krishnamurthy (2018) queries if new instruments, strategies and formats, and theories that are currently being employed has actually led to more effective urbanism, given that strategic and spatial, formal, and informal frameworks of participatory practices appear to coexist and makes for a congested environment with many options, tools, interventions . This implies working with neighbourhoods to fashion and draw down on existing tools and opportunities to make effective use that corresponds with need and ability and resonates with calls for **flexibility** – as well as **identifying gaps for support**. Whole system and multi-strand policy strategy should recognise the role of the informal sector according to Indrosaptono and Syahbana (2017). Goncalves (2022) discusses 'welfare partnerships', defined as the process through which local agents interact with each other in the dynamics of collectively defining strategic objectives and building place-based approaches that reinforce local citizenship.

The paper by Hossu *et al.* (2022) provides an extensive review of types of **tools** used across Europe but miss experiments of citizen control (Hossu, Oliveira and Niță, 2022; see also Burns, 2004 for example) as Neighbourhood Planning in England has purported to be (see, for example

Wargent and Parker, 2018). Hossu *et al.* argue that it would be essential to develop inter-and trans-disciplinary participatory practices that could support a closer follow-up of plan-implementation processes in such a way that expectations are met (or what is stated in the plan, i.e. conformity / implementation). Future research on how innovative, people-centred and digital-based, participatory practices can contribute to improving spatial planning processes is seen as important. Furthermore, how different forms of consultation activity is suited to different communities and groups and support for development may be elicited through ‘deep engagement’, comprising a range of formal and informal actions to support community engagement in urban regeneration, and examine the responses of communities to redevelopment is focussed on by Glackin and Dionisio (2016). This highlights questions of bespoke arrangement or **flexibility** as indicated by Indrosaptono and Syahbana (2017) and Huang *et al.* (2020).

Harvesting systems involving **ongoing engagement** allows continuous public discussion and may enrich ideas of place and space. Laconesi and Persico (2013) assessed series of projects in which artists, scientists, anthropologists, engineers, communicators, architects and others participated to the design of innovative ubiquitous and pervasive systems were able to transform the ways in which the concepts of urban planning and city-wide decision-making were defined in the US. Novel forms of urban life were imagined, in which cities became the time/space continuum for multiple, stratified layers of information expressing the ideas, goals, visions, emotions and forms of expression for multiple cultures and backgrounds, producing new opportunities for citizenship.

In areas that require additional **support** to achieve effective governance at the local level, there is often the need for professional support (Bynner *et al.*, 2023). However, it is important to acknowledge the long-term requirements to sustain governance and the importance of understanding of local issues and potentials (see also Vangen and Huxham, 2003; Edwards *et al.*, 2000; Osborne *et al.*, 2004; Markey *et al.*, 2012; Burayidi, 2013; Powe *et al.*, 2015). Another challenge present in areas of need is the sustainability of local leadership and often the lack of access to tools to deliver change. One solution presented by Powe (2019), is the establishment of community enterprises (as a 'boundary' Guston, 1999), or intermediary institution between community actors (including residents, businesses, town and parish councils, and community-based partnerships and organisations) and other external actors (including regeneration funders, local authorities, and other services) which coincides with asset-based community development (ABCD).

In examining neighbourhood planning processes, which are largely sub-contracted out to a nonprofit organisations, Lee and Harris (2022) found that those nonprofits can significantly improve resident engagement at the grassroots level, but that nonprofits simultaneously face constraints due to contract benchmarks. The findings echo the work of others (e.g. Levine, 2021) tracking the changing dynamics between communities and municipal government in the US and in particular the role of intermediaries who can gain the trust of local residents and navigate municipal/planning processes. This has also been noted in neighbourhood planning in England (Bragaglia and Parker, 2023).

Community Development Corporations (CDCs) are major agents of revitalisation in many US neighbourhoods. These entities often take the lead where community action or public agencies are lacking and typically these CDCs operate in close collaboration with communities. Molina Costa (2014) argues that the need to compete in competitive real estate markets has precipitated the professionalisation and a depoliticisation of community activism.

Powe et al., (2015) suggest that external prescription of culture change necessary for collaboration to occur, local **community enterprises** might be more effective. Such enterprises can stimulate local volunteer activity, attempt to provide a catalyst for private-sector investment, and tackling 'wicked' problems. One challenge faced by community enterprises is that they can be pressured to deliver substantive outcomes/outputs rather than on their symbolic representation of the community. Powe, in a later paper, (2019) acknowledges the importance of risk-taking and innovation in achieving long term solutions to regenerate, in doing so community enterprise needs to be considered as locally legitimate by the local community and be viewed as a credible partner by external organisations. This leads to the challenge of dual **accountability**. Success in local legitimacy might be that these enterprises are personally approachable rather than an abstract body (Healey, 2015, p.21).

Evidence from the US suggests that community **context** matters for levels volunteering, and not merely as proxy for characteristics of individuals. For example, the authors found that 'differences in volunteering behavior occur not because rural places are inherently more civil, but because small places, by nature, have different levels of endowments to support volunteerism and activate these community resources in different ways' (Paarlberg *et al.*, 2022, p.117). In all places, different tools and techniques can potentially succeed in engaging with 'seldom heard groups' (Ju and Kim, 2023).

Artists and activists have been identified as facilitating the widest possible participation of communities over and above bureaucratic forms (Sebastianski, 2019). Some authors have found that art spaces can function as a conduit for building social networks and contribute to community revitalization. Issues pertaining to the location, organization, and management of art spaces may limit their community and economic development potential however. Grodach proposes crafting stronger arts-based community and economic development programs (Grodach, 2011) and it is apparent these points link to the ABCD literature.

Sense of community, place or the 'territorial identity' (Roca and Roca, 2007) of a place are important considerations for the exploration of collaborative planning which links to questions of specific context and **setting**. According to Muniz, Albert and O'Guinn (2001), three fundamental elements of communities are needed; firstly a consciousness of kind, which is an intrinsic connection between community members involving a sense of **belonging**. Secondly, shared rituals and **traditions**, stemming from history, culture, values, norms and world views. Lastly a sense of moral **responsibility**, a duty and obligation to the community and each individual member.

Toomey *et al.* (2020) argue there is a role for **citizen science** in fostering sense of place and responsibility and inculcating pro-social behaviours, such as civic action and thus increasing engagement in planning matters. How knowledge is shared and applied, not only ‘linear distribution’ of knowledge sharing but how, social learning and training has potential for the local community as decision makers to have direct interaction with scientists and policy makers (Schauppenlehner-Kloyber and Penker, 2015; Sun *et al.*, 2019). Here, decision-making can involve the mobilisation and co-production of different knowledge sources (Edelenbos, van Buuren, and van Schie, 2011) and can involve increased legitimacy, ownership and accountability for complex problems and their solutions (Hirsch Hadorn *et al.*, 2006; Lang *et al.*, 2012).

Visioning with local communities is regarded as a useful tool by Voskamp *et al.* (2023) however the process, including the expertise of those involved, their commitment and affinity with the local planning context can influence how transformative the vision will be and how it affects change. This highlights the attention needed to ensure quality and inclusivity. Similarly, modelling can work in broadening participation, but must be done in an iterative and open manner (Newell and Picketts, 2020). This corresponds with Peel and Parker (2017) who see land use planning, including master planning and creating evidenced policy options, provides an important democratic space for legitimising action, offering leadership and extending participation to new change agents. They stress the role of participatory visioning and the inclusion of those willing to enable change in a given locality.

Furthermore, tools such as multicriteria decision analysis can be used alongside **backcasting** to help with democratisation of policy creation, however it is acknowledged that areas where participatory processes are lacking, such sophisticated tools may not be appropriate (Primdahl and Kristensen, 2016). Such tools can be used to legitimise the role of community voices and increase ownership of and confidence in the actions decided and have the potential to contribute to:

- 1) reduction of bounded rationality
- 2) prevention of issue exclusion things
- 3) quality discussion / deliberation
- 4) interdisciplinary and cross-sector approaches to actions
- 5) increased transparency.

Of course such tools have limits including the skills, time and resources required (Sisto, Lopolito and Van Vliet, 2018). Even in **participatory budgeting**, there have been concerns raised over whether the community as a whole benefit given tendencies of systematic exclusion, i.e. those who are most deprived (Saguin, 2018), and in turn does not lead to increase solidarity or trust and not alleviate poverty.

The use of tactical urbanism as a planning tool, does not, according to Jackson and Marques (2019), inherently promote **gentrification**; however, but it does have the ability to bring attention to a neighbourhood that would otherwise remain overlooked. Developing thoughtful goals and strategies for realizing long-term improvement are essential to achieve neighbourhood revitalization. It was also claimed that the activity assisted in self-defence or when a perceived threat of insensitive development appeared. This issue raises wider questions of **outcomes**; both anticipated and otherwise.

Technologies can be used to tap into the knowledge, capacity and resources held by local people, but the question is how, by who and for whom, i.e. these processes need to be considered in relation to participatory justice in a similar way as other urban interactions (Anderson and Jung, 2023). Some technologies can help address problems of under-representation, particularly amongst young people (Chassin and Ingensand, 2022). Such technology might include use of games, with a study of engagement of children in Brazil using Minecraft to successfully encourage younger people to engage in planning (de Andrade, Poplin and de Sena, 2020). Games have been found to reduce drop-out rates in participation, but they come with cultural barriers in some sections of the community (Constantinescu, Devisch and Kostov, 2017). This is one reason to resist the tendency towards tech utopianism, i.e. to assume that games, etc. always offer an opportunity to significantly increase participation in planning. Some studies show reluctance on the part of planning practitioners, and indeed on the part of adults in the community to participate (Ampatzidou *et al.*, 2018). To aid useability the co-design of new technologies may help to increase positive reactions towards local engagement (Aguilar *et al.*, 2021).

An emerging trend in participatory studies is the increasing activity (or at least recognition of activity) at the periphery of formal planning processes (Talen, 2015). In their study of three cases in Scandinavia, Nyseth *et al.* (2019) found that innovative methods for citizen involvement in urban planning processes - such as democracy cafes, conversations, walks, tech such as the use of 3D glasses - can function as an **intermediary** means to assist between neighbourhood actors and local government. These innovative, 'third space' activities tend to be more informal, with advisory rather than instructive functions, "which also opens up the possibility of minds being changed without any risk for the stakeholder" (2019, p.14). The cost of developing such "openings towards new ideas, opinions, and imageries that could increase the quality of a plan" (ibid., p.14) was the lack of obvious concrete or tangible inputs to plans. This is a familiar phenomenon in planning, where formal, quasi-judicial planning systems seek closure and inputs that help render reality judgeable (Rydin, 2021) thus undervaluing more exploratory or innovative inputs.

The section has revealed how a wide range of tools and techniques are available but are used unevenly and it seems without deep care for matters of context or application, as indicated in earlier sections here. This theme has revealed how the research should look carefully not only at tools and their design but how they are used as well as considering implications for outcomes.

There is also food for thought for the research team in finessing the data collection approach and in wider work with case study neighbourhoods to understand how they are working and for what purpose.

v. *Just planning/ Justice*

Critical to our work is the idea that access to, design and operation of and outcomes should be in some sense ‘just’. As we discuss in the theory framework, questions of justice are sometimes masked by synonyms or allied terms, such as fairness or equity, as well as identifiers such as feelings of lack of control over a process or of institutional design, as discussed above. In a study of Neighbourhood Planning in England clear evidence of barriers to participation, i.e. how design, process and practice of CLP shapes activity was provided (Brookfield, 2017) and how to ensure both inclusivity and representativeness have been called into question (Colomb, 2017; Vigar, Gunn and Brooks, 2017). As with the English example, other nations' participatory systems have been argued to be exclusionary and favouring elites (Damayanti and Syarifuddin, 2020). Similar findings have been drawn elsewhere, including in Indonesia (Das, 2015). Others have argued that social movements should reflect a wider diversity of experiences in order to more effectively address inequality (Desmaison *et al.*, 2023).

Placing **justice as the core value** in a CLP approach, it has been argued, can help residents understand problems of structural inequality, and motivate their and other's efforts and residents can be helped to see their own power and their ability to express their views (Bengle and Sorensen, 2017). In a study of 64 municipal arts and cultural plans in the US, Loh *et al.* (2022) found that cities with robust public participation processes displayed a stronger emphasis on diversity.

Nasca *et al.*'s (2019) study of a participatory planning initiative in an Ontario neighbourhood found that even community planning activities explicitly designed to combat power inequalities unintentionally reproduced **inequitable power relationships**, where it was difficult to uphold resident knowledge in spaces dominated by professionalised processes and language. In their study of community planning in Detroit, Laskey and Nicholls (2019) found that intermediary organisations such as CDCs failed to redistribute power to marginalised groups, resulting in insurgent planning practices from elsewhere in the community.

Efforts to work on planning related issues inclusively face deeper obstacles that affect how communities operate. Eames and Egmore cite issues of **weak ties**; lack of communication, uncivil behaviour, and lack of cross-generational integration (Eames and Egmore, 2011). Knapp (2021) sees a wider range of professionals based in or working with communities could form part of a wider more diffuse set of actors that are able to assist in community empowerment. The market remains a powerful and pervasive presence according to Colenutt, (2022), in planning processes, despite the growth of alternative perspectives, but research in Sweden suggests that the market paradigm can be, incrementally, challenged by efforts to promote co-creation (Candel and Paulsson, 2023). In a financialised environment, securing community benefits from urban redevelopment is possible, but needs prioritising and funding (Brail and Lorinc, 2023). The notion

of community-led production and consumption, can be seen as offering potential for a radical re-shaping of such practices, but transitions in this direction are complex and multi-faceted (Sandercock, 2003; 2023; Brandellero and Niutta, 2023).

Much of the writing on social innovation assumes it is a good thing, but more work is needed to understand the relationship between processes of social innovation and outcomes in urban areas (Ardill and Lemes de Oliveira, 2018). **Social innovation** is a term that is often accompanied by co-production, many have seen that social innovation in terms of governance can help dissolve inter-sectoral boundaries (Moulaert, *et al.*, 2009), but new governance practices can be selective and exclusionary. There is always a need to match bottom-up activity with top-down support/supervision (Baker and Mehmood, 2015) which aligns with questions of institutional design. To more fully move to new institutional forms, those involved need to carefully reflect on the "institutional work" needed to effect change (Bisschops and Beunen, 2019).

Howell (2016) contends that understanding the ways in which legitimate sites of planning interact can protect marginalized groups from losing out to a democratic process that favours those who have time, financial resources, and knowledge to attend public meetings, access public officials, and participate in the traditional exchange-value market for property. Planners – including organizers, city planners and public officials – can create enabling conditions and human rights framework or **rules** can be adapted to develop a set of measurable regeneration indicators. Howell suggests that the application of this rights toolkit provides a greater potential for regeneration to meet human rights standards, and therefore, realise the “right to the city” in practice. Hearne (2013) argues that rights form a basis for participation and involvement in urban change. Discussions of empowerment and the **Right to the City** has emerged strongly in the past decade and understanding of where planning occurs to include advocacy, tenant-based action and organizing, can create opportunities to meaningfully address local challenges.

The section indicates how questions of inclusive participation may be linked to questions both of innovation but also to more prosaic questions of design and oversight, as well as in terms of property market pressure (see also the WP1a theoretical framework paper). Centrally our interest on this theme relates to how accessible CLP action is, whether support is appropriate and how needs or priorities are captured or not.

vi. Priorities, scope and different “types” of participants

Many participatory initiatives are bounded in their scope (Gaventa and Cornwall, 2006) and how this has been arrived at is of interest to the project team. In assessing a community empowerment network (CEN) operating prior in London in the 2000s, O'Hare (2010) makes the connection between roles of **facilitation** and **leadership** in relation to scope/prioritisation. He notes that communities may be “captured” or are restricted by imposed boundaries, limits of capacity as face pressure to adhere to particular rules. O'Hare also urges greater methodological care to examine the ‘micro-relationships between governance actors’ (p.41) as well as attention to the specificities of each case or neighbourhood. Marginalised groups may be more likely to

consider intangible cultural resources as significant, and these can be harder to valorise in planning processes (Buckley and Graves, 2016).

To bring stakeholders with different priorities together, neutral ‘policy brokers’ have been suggested as essential (Chu, Law and Williams, 2022). In an earlier contribution to discussions about structures that facilitate community engagement, Keough (1998) asks how can ‘we root our decisions in community? How can we ensure that the **institutions** created for the advancement of our communities do not lose sight of their reason for being, which is in a democratic society to serve community?’ (Keough, 1998,p.194).

Research into the operation of large **funders** of community activity may not align their efforts with the priorities of local people (Bonds, Kenny and Wolfe, 2015). In a study exploring preferences in relation to urban forestry highlighted that there can be a distinct difference between local and "expert" views on topics related to the built and natural environment (Barron *et al.*, 2021) which provides a link to questions of knowledge and support in participation where technical issues are involved (see also Parker *et al.*, 2017) as well as how government objectives have suffused much NP activity in England (Brownill, 2017; Apostolides, 2018).

In terms of issue **prioritisation** empirical research supports the view that local people have positive associations with community and green spaces, and negative associations with main roads and junctions (Covato and Jeawak, 2023). Research on protected areas in Argentina finds that communities are more likely to support their protection where this is tied to community planning and identity, rather than imposed from above (Degele, 2023). Also, in relation to people and green space, Buijs *et al.* (2019) discuss ‘Mosaic governance’ as an effective approach that can link active citizenship with the creation and operation of green spaces. In process terms define it as: “the diversity of processes that may facilitate existing active citizenship and stimulate its upscaling through a mix of governance modes and policy interventions tailored to the socio-ecological context of urban landscapes” (Buijs *et al.*, 2019, p.54).

Another approach to considering questions of scope has been a more recent turn towards **informality** and recognition in this term of the benefits of planning activity performed by non-governmental actors (Meijer and Ernste, 2022). This of course overlaps somewhat with some forms of community-led planning in the global north and south, given that some have determined to apply the term informal planning to refer to all planning activities outside the formal regulatory procedures that are conducted by nongovernmental stakeholders (2022, p.513).

This indicates how and whether scope of action is externally imposed requiring therefore some community compliance, or whether the activity is self-defined or indeed whether any coproduction has occurred. This is a critical point for the research in terms of how neighbourhoods decide to engage and on what basis; either with invited participation or not and if alternative activity is sustained, how such forms of informal planning have been pursued and why. There is a large literature on increasing participation amongst other minority groups, building of course from the keystone work of Arnstein (1969) and others. More recently, Kashem and Gallo (2023) examine the interaction between **technology** and minority

participation; and Lee (2019) explores the engagement of migrants, who may be particularly suspicious of state-organised or mandated participation.

As with planning activity at other scales, an important question regarding equity/equality is the ease with which different ‘types’ or **groups** or sections of a community and how different members can participate in community-led planning. Costa *et al.* (2021) focused on teenagers, identifying both a lack of spaces which met their needs, and the existence of ‘poor urban literacy’ (2021, p.140) as issues which negatively impacted upon how they used and engaged with urban spaces. In a study of participation amongst young adults in Singapore (Diehl and Chan, 2021), apathy was not identified as a reason for non-participation. There was a perception gap between young people and authorities regarding non-participation, so the efforts of the latter were not well directed. The use of games, simulation and modelling can help to involve younger people (Rexhepi, Filiposka and Trajkovik, 2018). Conversely, (Tirivanhu, Mataruka and Chirau, 2018) highlight a case for institutionalising youth participation through legislated or mandated planning structures, specifically community-based planning, in order for it to be taken seriously. Although mandating participation does not necessarily lead to widened participation such approaches are not an answer alone (Crompton, 2017; Brody *et al.*, 2003). When engaging the youth, strategies should come from the premise that young people are frequent consumers of public space and are an important part of their development (Šakaja and Višnić, 2011). That work features a literature review on barriers and solutions to youth engagement in disadvantaged areas. The research highlighted the need for researchers to be prepared for some of the outcomes of poverty, such as trust with people external to the community, illiteracy, lack of ethics, inexperience, conflict, and sense of insecurity. They suggest methodologies for engaging the youth to not be based on passive tools that involve sitting down with diaries or surveys but with **tech** such as GPS devices and cameras. They found that when the youth engaged with place design activities their agency increased, which led to feeling more meaning and thus motivated to continue engaging with the project.

Severcan's (2015) work features a comprehensive list of barriers to youth participation in disadvantaged communities of Istanbul. This included institutional/project-specific barriers, in particular it was the inexperience of the project manager and conflict between youth and project implementers, including the lack of financial resources to promote it, that was identified as being core to the lack of youth engagement. Economic barriers were also present, particularly demands to receive payment, limited access to co-funding, unavailability of employment for disadvantaged people, employment obligations of youth and conflict with the timings of project, and transport and access to the workshops. Political and **legal barriers** were also present, including conflict between project implementers and local authorities, perceptions of children's lack of power, negative attitudes about participation from local authority and planners, and conventional policies that hinder the production of community spaces via participation).

Furthermore, some **social barriers** were present, including adult fears of people who work with children, mismatch between expectations of the youth and what happens, misconceptions from society about whether youth can and will engage, illiteracy, and presence of youth that are disliked. In addition, cultural barriers included false presumptions about the nature and aim of

the funders, absence of a participation culture, concerns about mixed-gender activities, familial obligations of youth, cultural norms towards girl's involvement and participation in public realm. Finally, physical/geographical barriers, such as infrastructure and IT problems allow access to digital technologies, availability of an appropriate setting, and adverse weather conditions all affected participation. Monaghan (2019) successfully studied the engagement of children with planning issues across Belfast, demonstrating both the interest and capacity of children to participate was under used. Matthews and Limb (1999) highlighted the need to understand children and young people from their perspectives, as they are likely to have different views and values associated with place and space compared to adults. Otiz-Escalante and Gutiérrez-Valdivia (2015) considered the use of feminist participatory methods to increase women's participation in planning.

Clearly concerns of inclusivity link to with questions of design and purpose of community planning, as well as the scope of CLP. The literature above indicates that linking groups to process and anticipated outcome helps with questions of rational choice which can affect whether people engage (Mace and Tewdwr-Jones, 2019). Equally the literature discussing preparation and understanding of the profile of place is seen as a pre-requisite to good community planning activity. This is likely to apply to efforts being ostensibly led by community members themselves and will be of interest in the project.

vii. *Politics*

There is sometimes a debate amongst community activists and scholars about engaging in more formal activities, and the risk of becoming institutionalized, or of **co-option**. Some argue that there is scope for radical processes and tools to work alongside more conventional state-based approaches, without the former losing their radical *raison d'être* (Bunce, 2016). Others have found that radical and DIY projects can become institutionalised over time, which may depoliticise them to some extent, but they can still be powerful in changing mindsets (Bach and McClintock, 2021).

Dillon and Fanning (2016) set out how community empowerment has featured in London, coming to the conclusion 'that the very areas that need community empowerment the most need the **state** the most' (*ibid.*, p.132) and that there is likely to be differences across neighbourhoods that can divide with the least articulate communities had become 'defined by a form of protective **paternalism**' (*ibid.*, p.133). Whereas in the same areas participation in planning specifically depended on 'unsolicited activism' which required capacity 'likely to be possessed by middle-class communities rather than by people living in deprived areas' (*ibid.*, p.135).

In the US context, many cities see the establishment of neighbourhood governance as going hand in hand with place branding - they hope to establish **new identities** for places, along with a set of stakeholders who wish to improve those places. Those stakeholders may not be interested in ideas such as the 'right to the city', rather encircling an area they can try to control (Collins, 2021). The politics behind the production of 'visions' are rarely explicitly identified, but they

clearly have an important influence on those visions, and the strategies which emerge from them. Communities and policy makers may well have different **priorities** (Berbés-Blázquez *et al.*, 2023).

Reviews of parish plan experiences with a view to informing the then emerging Neighbourhood Planning system in England (Gallent and Robinson, 2012; Bishop, 2010; Parker, 2008) found that parish plans would not easily transfer to the urban context, with the diversity of the population seen as a possible barrier to CLPs gaining legitimacy. In the English situation, some Neighbourhood plans were seen to generate community support precisely because they used (Bradley, 2017) place identity to symbolically represent a particular vision of what a place is, and should be. Whilst informality is not a significant feature of development in the UK, lessons from places where it is commonplace can be applicable, for instance Chien (2019) argues that the notion of what the state enforces or redevelops is a matter of choice.

What we can draw from this segment of literature is that the motivations of national let alone local or even neighbourhoods actors to either invite or develop CLP activity is riven with wider political considerations. Thus, the underpinning motives as well as limits on CLP are of importance here, alongside previously mentioned concern for questions of process and scope. What also comes through this segment of the literature is the question of capacity to act being uneven and which will most likely be episodic in some areas (see also, Maya-Jariego *et al.*, 2023; Gunn *et al.*, 2015; Innes and Booher, 2003).

viii. *Power*

Questions of power and how it is exercised are given some coverage in the theoretical framework of the project and how this is being applied to the project design is discussed in the WP1a paper. Yet questions of power pervade the literatures on participation in planning and across related sub-categories such as urban governance. This topic range may be viewed in terms of how knowledge is produced, whose knowledge is valued, how knowledge claims are negotiated, or deemed important. These involve profound questions when addressing issues of power in urban spaces (Butcher *et al.*, 2022). Pre-determination by powerful bodies, including NGOs, recurs throughout the literature (Bawole and Langnel, 2016) and also where efforts to participate can be undermined or simply used manipulatively. Yet some have been more optimistic arguing that communities can shift the dial on planning policy and practice, not being passive recipients of change and instead they can "move boundaries on what government actors and professional planners see as possible" (Caggiano *et al.*, 2022, p. 10) with some now writing about such prefigurative potentials (Davoudi, 2023; Hillier, 2017). The work of Zhao, Liu and Wang (2023) identified two outcomes of legitimate power over participation; one is used to rationalise decisions made by local government or planners and encourage adherence, or secondly to more authentically achieve empowerment. Three considerations are posited, first the planner's motivations, the second is the local response to the participatory planning strategy, i.e. the degree, type, subject and impacts of participation. Thirdly, the role of the planner in the participatory activity i.e. representatives of the authorities, or outside the stakeholder network, or whether they increase the opportunities for public engagement and actions to increase the involvement of marginalised communities.

In English Neighbourhood Planning, where unelected representatives, i.e. Neighbourhood Forums can be seen by some as a perceived threat to elected members 'power' and concerns were raised about the redistribution of power at the micro local level and that Neighbourhood Planning in England was perceived by other politicians as a Conservative party policy and some were not prepared to actively support the policy approach because of this. In a study of urban governance in deprived neighbourhoods in Boston Levine (2016; 2017; 2021) found that community-based organisations had superseded local democratically elected officials as the legitimate representative of deprived neighbourhoods. There are some resonances here with community forums in England (Colomb, 2017). Levine make several important claims, firstly that the performative nature of claims to community representation predominate (2021), that increased participation has not necessarily equated with increased influence (Levine, 2017), and that no participatory setting, process, or outcome can accurately reflect the 'community voice', because ultimately there is no *a priori* **definition of community** (Levine, 2021). This assessment brings us close to wider observations about participation in planning being imperfectable (Brownill and Inch, 2019).

Whilst some find community driven projects empowering, others can see them as exclusive and disempowering (Bach and McClintock, 2021). Leffers and Wekerle, (2020) paper draws on post political theory and discusses how post-political theorists have emphasized that collaborative planning processes control the terms of public debate, in effect undermining the participation of many oppositional voices (Legacy *et al.*, 2018; Rancière, 1998; Swyngedouw, 2005). The authors also argue that in the case explored a rather insidious mobilisation of public interest justifications was present which aligned with the post-political critiques.

Some have pointed to spaces such as 'city labs' can be powerful ways to involve people, who might otherwise not be involved or have become disenfranchised by conventional approaches (Marvin, *et al.*, 2018; Kemp and Scholl, 2016). This approach links to ideas about ongoing engagement rather than the episodic. It was asserted that such spaces still needed be aware of wider **contexts** which can alter how participatory opportunities play out (Chatterton *et al.*, 2018). A disconnect between policy makers and communities can lead to 'the wrong kinds of risk' being taken, as the former do not have to experience the setback of policy failure on the latter (Adams *et al.*, 2019).

Diversity of **formats for multi-stakeholder engagement** is required to bring forward the knowledge and design of policies and plans. Building new institutional spaces is the prerequisite for unveiling the relations between transition initiatives and other actors as well as between transition initiatives and public institutions (Frantzeskaki and Rok, 2018).

Clearly this theme is important and features as a critical component of the theoretical frame see WP1a and questions of how power is used and experienced forms an important consideration. In particular, given the way that context for engagement is important and how all issues of design, knowledge and resources are influenced and have influence of power and its exercise. This is one reason why the theme is used as a meta-structuring ideas for the project (see WP1a).

ix. Community assets, place and participation

The idea and variety of ways that that ‘community’ has been deconstructed over a long period includes questions of size and type of interest groups in an area or simply of location / propinquity (see Levine, 2021; Wallace, 2010).

Cornwall (2008) asks a crucial question regarding what are citizens actually invited to participate in? This may be in terms of fields of activity (e.g. health, environment, housing) and in terms of issues and depth of engagement (echoing some of the participation theory literature, such as: Gaventa, 2019; Everatt *et al.*, 2010). In this section we are predominantly interested in planning but clearly linkages between planning in the more abstract or future regarding can be linked or be relevant to points of focus, such as particular **social infrastructure** (Tomaney *et al.*, 2023) and to assets which are needed, or are important to retain (and see section 6 below).

There has been a growth in interest around the role of community assets as building blocks for engagement and empowerment (cf. Garcia, 2020) and an asset-based (ABCD) community development model that is regarded as an effective shift from a needs-based approach (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003). Huang *et al.* (2018) endorse the ABCD model as they deem the presence of community assets, as spaces where the community can meet, is associated with a higher likelihood of participation, specifically, it is the social values and the symbolic meanings associated with places that have a direct influence on levels of participation (Zhu, 2015) in a broad sense. It is suggested by Zhu and Fu (2017) that communal space can positively influence participatory behaviours. García (2018) provides insight to how asset led regeneration can act to mobilise community by offering a focal point and a tangible project. Public spaces can be a powerful tool to bring people together, providing there is a clear right to use such spaces, and a responsibility to look after them (Dragutinovic, Pottgiesser and Quist, 2022).

The literature on landscape and community involvement suggests three lenses; landscape as a *common good*, landscape as a *resource where some have rights*, and landscape as a *development factor*. Such landscape characterisations can be effective in collaborative strategy making, as they are considered to be a coherent way of representing and discussing landscapes of values, rights and development (Primdahl and Kristensen, 2016) in combination.

There are questions raised by Faldi *et al.* (2021) concerning aspects of place-based approaches that include the limitations of case study-based empiricism, tendencies to romanticise informal and bottom-up initiatives, and to justify the historical retreat of institutionalised public action from responsibility for steering urban change in favour of markets on the side or ‘self-responsibilising’ initiatives (Faldi, Fisher and Moretto, 2021).

It is well established in the literature that proximity to large **public institutions** (such as universities) can dwarf the interests and actions of local communities. Although such institutions are often one stakeholder among many, their access to resources (particularly political and

economic), civic significance, and institutional knowledge, can place them “apart” from policy debates even as they are rooted in communities (Moss, Zhang and Anderson, 2014).

This section considers community assets indirectly links to our focus both as pre-resource for engagement due to the nature of some community assets as being informal and trusted spaces to foster and ‘market’ or advertise participation opportunities. It is also as a focus for some community planning, for instance in seeking to deliver greater or improved community assets in form of communal space or in terms of community-led housing (Field and Layard, 2017; Sendra and Fitzpatrick, 2020).

6. ‘Community-Led’ Planning across the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland

This section provides a closer account of the state of knowledge regarding CLP (more accurately ‘community scale’), across the nation states in scope for the research. There is a little overlap with the previous section / themes, but the aim is to give a focussed overview of what findings, examples and issues have been identified as part of the work package one activity and are most germane to the community-led planning focus.

a. *CLP and Place based policy in England*

Previous waves of experimentation with community governance have been widely reported (see Dillon and Fanning, 2016; Pill, 2012; Sullivan, 2001) and several waves of community-based policy focussing on ‘regeneration’ has featured in England, including the single regeneration budget (see, Rhodes *et al.*, 2007; Baeten, 2000), City Challenge (Davoudi, 1995) and New Deal for Communities (Lawless and Pearson, 2012) and a wide literature has accounted for such initiatives. The New Deal was supposed to be led by locally informed strategies designed to improve conditions within deprived neighbourhoods and the results were deemed largely a failure, with little change identifiable when compared to non-participating areas and instead the programme has been said to feature “greater control from central government, diminishing community interest in the initiative, and over-optimistic assumptions on the part of local residents as to what the programme could ever achieve” (Lawless and Pearson, 2012, p.509). Although none of the initiatives from the past thirty years have formally involved input to the planning system, apart from influencing national policy orientation, and this has been a recurring theme where a divorce of planning and development from wider regeneration efforts has been a consistent issue, even though much emphasis has been placed on ‘property-led’ regeneration (Carley, 2010; Raco, 2000), although there were elements of urban and rural governance that were supposed to inform or influence local authority policy – such as Community Strategies from 2000 (see Lambert, 2006; Raco *et al.*, 2006) but in an indirect fashion influence at the local level on planning activity has been limited (Baker, Hincks and Sheriff, 2010; Dobson and Parker, 2023).

This is why so much interest has been sustained in neighbourhood planning (NP), as it offered a degree of citizen control over local policy. As a result, a substantial literature has developed over

the past decade considering NP in England - as well as on wider programmes and initiatives. As might be expected, this overview features considerable detail of the design, operation and experience of the NP policy since 2011 (see also Parker *et al.*, 2023 for a detailed account).

Neighbourhood planning in England

The focus of our review has been post-2010 and, since its inception in late 2010 and its formal basis in the 2011 Localism Act (amended in the 2017 Act) and 2012 regulations, Neighbourhood Planning (NP) in England has prompted a substantial amount of attention in both planning practice and academia with numerous outputs discussing the design and operation of the policy (see Wargent and Parker, 2018 for a review to 2018). Individuals' motivations for participating in NP are complex (Cao and Sturzaker, 2022) but also inextricably linked to the broader neighbourhood's socio-economic, cultural, and political make-up. Against this backdrop, take-up in urban and deprived areas has been low, whilst overall take-up of the policy has also dropped (Parker *et al.*, 2020).

The recorded higher take-up of neighbourhood development plans (NDPs) in affluent and rural neighbourhoods (Defra, 2013; Vigar, 2013; Parker and Salter, 2016, 2017; Parker *et al.*, 2020) has been accompanied by ongoing pessimism about the ability of NP to promote local regeneration in the most deprived areas, particularly those that lack market interest and development opportunities (Bailey and Pill, 2014). Conversely, there are examples of innovation as a positive outcome of NPs (Neighbourhood Planning), for example, interest in community-led initiatives such as community land trusts, self and custom-build projects, co-housing, and other models (Field and Layard, 2017), preserving local architecture and heritage and the production of design codes (Wargent, 2021), and linking consultation exercises to cultural events that explore issues of local representation in (Cowie, 2017). Despite alterations to support that have been made over the past few years, including improved funding for deprived areas (MHCLG, 2020), it still needs to be discovered how these changes have helped uptake in deprived areas. The above has led to calls for sustained funding for direct professional involvement in NP to maintain the policy's efficacy (McGuinness and Ludwig, 2017; Wargent and Parker, 2018).

A number of barriers to NP have been recognised in the literature, firstly in urban areas are often overlaid on **complex social fabrics** - instigating a plan can entrench local divisions and fuel existing conflicts, particularly in diverse neighbourhoods (Colomb, 2017). For those able and willing to participate, the literature also points to significant **burdens** (Parker *et al.*, 2015; Parker *et al.*, 2020). Anticipation of the effort involved in NP may produce a collective action problem (Holman and Rydin, 2013). Key issues faced by volunteers included understanding technical issues, navigating the regulatory hoops, and learning 'planning speak' and writing policy (Parker *et al.*, 2014). Concerns have also been expressed over the politicisation of voluntary effort (Parker *et al.*, 2021) and the burdens involved in neighbourhood planning, both of which point to ensuring appropriate support - from both LPAs (local planning authorities) but also consultants and other advisors (Parker *et al.*, 2015; 2017). Such issues are also linked to a need for more information, support, or orientation (Bradley and Sparling, 2017) and motivation to participate when other priorities exist (Parker *et al.*, 2020).

Existing research shows remarkable consistency across identified issues and barriers to participation in deprived areas and in proposed solutions. Much of the latter is directed toward levers controlled by **national government**. Local Authority support has been widely recognised

as crucial to successful NP, but this has proven uneven and complicated at a time of stretched local government resources; LPAs are expected to ‘do more with less’ and resourcing issues have been exacerbated by contradictory priorities from central government (Ludwig and Ludwig, 2014; Salter 2018). The degree of support offered by Local Planning Authority officers, varies, partly due to the attitude of local councillors, with negative responses ranging from disinterest to hostility (Sturzaker *et al.*, 2022), producing a range of **LPA responses** to NP (Salter, 2021).

Discussion of reforms in specific localities, and considering **local context**, is typically overlooked in the above literature. There are questions regarding **hidden costs** (Inch, 2015) in terms of time inputs and financial costs beyond that allowed for in support grant allowances. These may be higher in some situations (larger neighbourhoods or those that need more support or resources to mobilise action/involvement). Local plan status and uncertainty over implementation and the primacy of plans (Parker and Wargent, 2017; Parker *et al.*, 2020).

The Locality report *People Power* (2018), called for an extension of ‘the powers which can be designated to neighbourhood forums in non-parished areas’ (2018: p.19). Secondly the role of Neighbourhood Forums more widely has been not only to prepare a plan but to act as a focal point for community and for the local authority to engage with community. Research with a focus on Neighbourhood Forums in London (i.e. urban), produced a review of NP and highlighted a need for training both for officers and elected members, to hone the duty to support and to ensure better support for communities across the stages of NDP production as well as improving the **funding** arrangements for Forums (London Assembly, 2020).

Research has raised questions over NP’s **representativeness** (Davoudi and Cowie, 2013), legitimacy (Gunn *et al.*, 2015), and possible ‘double exclusion’ where NP runs a risk of excluding already marginalised groups (Parker, 2008) - inclusionary methods are therefore essential and to ensure NPs are a true reflection of community wishes (Wills, 2016). Colomb (2017), looking at difficulties of operationalising purportedly community scale action, points to extra barriers where hyper-diversity exists.

Some Plans appear to ‘double up’ on local plan policies rather than creating innovative and value-adding policy (Brookfield, 2017). Other research shows that some communities’ plans reveal a modest **scope and conservative positions** in anticipation of a legal challenge (Parker *et al.*, 2015), or apparent lack of issue awareness given some coverage of NPs (Lee *et al.*, 2022). In some communities have found their NPs **limited by officers**, consultants, and examiners (Parker *et al.*, 2016), acting to encourage ‘norm enforcement’ (Parker *et al.*, 2017).

Evidence on the ability of NP to deliver **new housing** is particularly patchy (Lichfields, 2016; DCLG, 2016) and particularly hard to calculate; however, assorted studies have found new development to be better tailored to local needs (Parker *et al.*, 2020; Salter *et al.*, 2022).

Conversely some evidence has indicated a promising concentration on ‘socially inclusive’ growth and sustainable housebuilding with a social purpose (Bradley and Sparling, 2017; Bradley *et al.*, 2017), but this remains limited, other NDPs focus on locally relevant locations, housing mix, occupancy, and design (Bailey, 2017). Others have considered that the take-up and focus of NDP activity is not delivering socially inclusive and environmentally just outcomes (e.g., Gunn and Vigar, 2015).

Several reports have made recommendations relating to NP, notably the 2014 User Experience of Neighbourhood Planning research (Parker *et al.*, 2014; Parker *et al.*, 2015), which identified recommendations including clarity over the duty to support placed on LPAs, simplification of the process of designation stages (subsequently addressed), and clearer messaging regarding the future role and status of NDPs. A further national study into Neighbourhood Planning impacts set out a long list of aspects for attention (Parker *et al.*, 2020), including, among other things:

- **Support** for NP – particularly funding and targeting that could be better directed, including aiding the relationship between the LPA and neighbourhoods
- Uneven **uptake** – lower take-up in urban deprived communities
- **Scoping** – possible triaging of local issues and use of appropriate tools to address them
- **Training** - for local planning officers and community leaders about the NP process and critical skills
- Relationship with **Local Plans** to improve clarity and guidance in terms of data, linkage, value-adding and sequencing to help with improving outcomes overall
- Place-making and **participation** – to nestle NP activity into broader agendas and concerns and to build from pre-existing activity
- **Knowledge exchange** – particularly sharing experience and support across neighbourhoods and LPAs.

The relationship between the local plan and the production of a Neighbourhood plan is also recognised as bearing on the time taken and the likelihood of take-up, with better integration and cooperation required. Publica (2019) also focused on urban and deprived areas in London, they identified four areas for action, set across:

- **Process** - improvements to aid neighbourhoods in navigating the complexities of formal planning
- **Mainstreaming** or integration of NP activity – particularly about local plans and broader agendas
- **Funding** arrangements and alignment that recognise diverse needs
- **Support** improvements and fostering capacity in neighbourhoods (and local authorities).

The Locality report *People Power* (2018) called for an extension of ‘the **powers** which can be designated to neighbourhood forums in non-parished areas’ (2018: p.19). Tomaney *et al.* (2023) in work which focusses on left behind places¹ and the social infrastructures and place attachments involved in ‘left behind’ areas put the case that historic attachments and particular buildings and their uses ‘community assets’ are very important to foster hope and collective endeavour.

In another recent piece of work looking at in Middlesbrough was conducted by Lynn, Parker and Wargent (2023). Those findings resonate with much of the existing empirical evidence concerning NP in England and themes that appear in the wider literature review where LA support, targeted resources and other deeper socio-economic issues impacted on NP take-up. Reasons for undertaking or not undertaking NP were not *necessarily* linked to a lack of awareness

¹ The term ‘left behind places’ has generated discussion about its use, if used in the project we will deploy single quotes to indicate it is an unsettled label (see Pike et al., 2023).

of the policy and there was evidence of an appetite for NP and some understanding of its limits. There remains some uncertainty about what NP can achieve and more importantly how it sits in terms of perceived social and environmental need. This has been a pervasive concern in NP and wider CLP scholarship, that the terms and scope of NP do not mirror the issues and challenges faced by local people; even in terms of the built and natural environment let alone questions far beyond that range of considerations (e.g. education, crime, health).

Prior experience of engagement in planning and development within wards was influential, with some sections of the population in Middlesbrough appearing to suffer from cynicism stemming from previous initiatives (such as City Challenge). There was a perceived lack of support – both in terms of local authority support and concerns about the capacity of council officers’ availability to help. This fed into a broader feeling of ‘top down’ management rather than ‘bottom up’ empowerment or collaborative exchange. In what appears as a theme in the wider literature review, the message of community control advocated by the central government appeared not to have reached the participants. **Peer support** in both the participating and non-participating areas – was seen as helpful, and the development of a formal **support network** and shared resources was backed.

Fear of retribution was a new issue identified within this research; concerns were voiced from some people that property owners might find out about the involvement of tenants in planning matters, potentially inducing an **adverse reaction** that would risk current living arrangements. Some concerns about reaction to NP involvement and outcomes were also detected in national studies (Parker *et al.*, 2014; 2020) but these derived from concerns over inter-community tensions if, for example, new development was encouraged by neighbourhood plan proponents.

This section has indicated a myriad of issues and barriers to CLP take-up at scale and how these are addressed or contended with in our case studies will be an important part of the findings.

b. *CLP and Scotland*

While literature exists on community planning in Scotland that is long run (cf. Illsley and McCarthy, 1998; Sinclair, 2008; Vercher *et al.*, 2021) little has yet been said about more recent policy tools – particularly the introduction and operation of Local Place Plans, introduced by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. These are the closest policy tool to neighbourhood plans – said by some to be “based largely upon” them (Walton, 2019, p. 2.) and sit alongside Community Action Plans. Some such Plans are adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. For example, Applecross formed a Community Land Use Plan in 2019 and applied for Supplementary Planning Guidance status.

Prior to that policy iteration Scotland had attempted a form of community planning in the early years post-Devolution, with its first iteration being in 1998 with five ‘Pathfinder’ community planning projects (Edinburgh, Highland, Perth and Kinross, South Lanarkshire and Stirling). In 2001 the Community Planning Task Force was established. It was in 2003 when community planning became statutory binding, when the Scottish Parliament introduced the Local

Government in Scotland Act 2003, and specific statutory guidance on community planning was published in 2004.

Audit Scotland is part of the Strategic Scrutiny Group, a national forum that oversees the scrutiny of public sector bodies, including the scrutiny of community empowerment and is tasked with evaluation of community planning. In 2012, Audit Scotland and other stakeholders and scrutiny partners developed an audit framework with the aim of improving performance and accountability of Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs), they also publish other reports.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 lays out the policy foundations for Community Planning Partnerships to form Local Outcomes Improvement Plans (LOIPs) (replacing traditional community plans that cover a council area) and locality plans, with specific attention to localities where people residing there experience significantly poorer outcomes which result from socio-economic disadvantage. In 2015, the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee carried out an inquiry into the Community Empowerment Act 2015, where it was found that CCPs experienced various barriers, such as councils remaining dominant partners, the need for greater investment in community capacity and that local communities were not always directly involved with the CCPs (Scottish Parliament, 2015).

Scottish Government (2010) published a Planning Advice Note on community engagement, which focuses on community engagement in planning. There are also National Standards for Community Engagement (Scottish Community Development Centre, no date), produced by the Scottish community development centre, which are offered as good practice principles with the intention of improving the process of community engagement.

In terms of co-production (see section 5iv), Walton (2019) suggests that the 2006-onwards Local Development Plans in Scotland have reduced the ability for communities to engage in plans at the local authority scale. A further specific Scotland example was an investigation into the contribution of community empowerment policies to successful co-production. This research found that although policies can enhance co-production, success is dependent upon the institutional nexus between policy and practice. As co-production is reliant upon public organisations valuing participation and engagement and similar to the findings of the inquiry, it was found that a lack of flexibility, resistance to shifting power dynamics and friction between communities and councils as barrier (Steiner *et al.*, 2023).

Based on a case study in Scotland, the ABCD (asset-based model) has been identified as ‘neoliberalism with a community face’ (MacLeod and Emejulu, 2014). Community groups, known as ‘community participation bodies’ can make ‘Participation Requests’, as defined in Part 3 of the Scottish Act, where they can request to have greater involvement in decision-making and service delivery, this participation is labelled an ‘outcome improvement process.’ It is suggested that the Scottish approach to public service delivery (in terms of community planning) is “underpinned by three key principles: an assets-based approach; coproduction of services; and an improvement philosophy” (Elliott, Fejszes and Tàrrega, 2019: p.303)

Within the context of fiscal austerity and the increasing influence of the private sector's involvement in planning, findings based on a case study of West Dunbartonshire, Scotland show

that higher quality design outcomes can be achieved through discretionary planning practices (Richardson and White, 2021).

In Scotland the wider scope of community planning, alongside the advent of Local Place Plans (LPPs), demonstrates that policy, guidance and oversight is in place for community planning, however there is more to learn from how Local Place Plans are formed and used, and to what extent they are binding as say SPGs. The Scottish Government (2021) published a literature review covering Local Place Plans, which concluded that LPPs would be useful in advancing governmental agendas and went as far as promoting LPP as tool not only to ‘build more trusting relationships between communities and local government’ but also to , ‘provide intelligence from local communities to inform future public services’ and ‘provide an opportunity for government to communicate its priorities, objectives and constraints, and collaborate with communities on their delivery locally’ (Scottish Government, 2021, p.6). The LPPs were confirmed via a January 2022 circular which set out the necessary guidance on the LPP process to enable neighbourhoods (‘community bodies’) to commence their LPP.

c. *CLP and Wales*

Community-led planning and neighbourhood governance in Wales has a history of community-based action and of governmental intervention. Such policy initiatives include the Communities First (C1) programme which ran from 2001 (Higgs and White, 2001; Pearce, 2008), which targetted the 100 most deprived areas of Wales then extended to 150. That policy was reoriented by 2012 and formally ended in 2018 with numerous outputs assessing its impact (Dicks, 2014). In discussing the contradictions of public participation in regeneration projects in Wales, Dicks (2014) suggests that the Welsh government has used participation as an attempt to manage crisis, and pursued a form of ‘responsibilisation’ of the local communities rather than a more genuine activation. In reporting on the Communities First regeneration programme, Adamson and Bromley (2008) state that “impact on key markers of deprivation such as poor health, low educational achievement and poor housing quality has not been achieved” (2008: p.21).

There has been a Planning Aid service operating in Wales since the 1980s to support people with regards to the formal planning system (Parker and Street, 2018; Thomas, 1992). More recently the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 legislates for increasing participation and public engagement in planning and introduced Place Plans. They are non-statutory documents that can be adopted by Local Authorities as Supplementary Planning Guidance. A Place Plan can cover a range of issues that matter to a community, including non-planning matters, with a distinct section that forms the SPG element that links to the Local Development Plan. It can be a document that “sets out local level planning guidance on the use and development of land, links to planning policies set out by your Local Planning Authority, is written by local people who know the area well and can add more detail to the work done by the planners [and] can link to other local / Community Plans on a wide range of issues” (Planning Aid Wales, 2024, no pagination).

Jones and Spence (2017), in assessing the prospects for successful Place Plans in Wales identified a need for mediation and facilitation, as well as questioning the capacity and aspirations of

communities to engage with the policy. They pointed to wider problems of local government burdens and under-resourcing being likely to reduce the ability of Local Authorities to help deliver Place Plans. They advocate for online community-led planning tools such as ‘Shape My Town’ to aid in this.

Jones *et al.* (2019) also set the context by investigating Place Planning in Wales via the lens of the seven well-being goals and five ways of working set out in the legislation *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*. Pill (2012) presenting research on neighbourhood initiatives concluded that “the paradox is that despite increasing emphasis on localism, community empowerment and civil renewal, initiatives at the neighbourhood scale are not a viable approach in an era of economic austerity and deficit reduction.”

Scott *et al.* (2009), in exploring eight case studies across Wales, identified that “communities seem united in their view of a systemic failure by policy and decision makers to address the core components of rural development required from both respondents and policy rhetoric. They criticised the fragmented, centrally imposed and inflexible policy responses which lead to selective and elitist “overdevelopment” without recognition of the specific needs of place, community and environment. These mismatches resulted in ‘social, environmental and economic problems and growing community fragmentation, alienation and distrust’.

A Survey of Parish, Town and Community Councils in England and Wales was conducted in 2021 (Giovannini *et al.*, 2023) shows that less than a third of councils had created a neighbourhood or place plan (see also SLCC, 2022)

Some instances of community planning activity in Wales:

- In terms of Place Plans – Planning Aid Wales, on their website show cases of Mold, Brecon Beacons and Crickhowell highlighted in Wales – alongside similar types of Community / Place Plans which have been developed in England, highlighting Bath and cases in Shopshire. They can be found here: https://www.placeplans.org.uk/en/?page_id=47.
- See also:
 - Gwynedd and Anglesey Councils’ ‘Local Market Housing’ Scheme
 - Specific guidance for Place Planning in the Brecon Beacons National Park
 - Ynysybwl succeeded in a £1.2m funding bid from the Big Lottery

We can see from the overview of the Welsh situation that past experience with forms of community empowerment, that at least touch upon influencing the lived environment, have met with criticism and the more recent adoption of Place Plans has yet to be assessed and there has been incomplete take-up.

d. ***CLP and Northern Ireland***

Suffice to say here that a great deal of wider community development work has been pursued in recent decades in Northern Ireland, some stemming from attempts to bridge divides made worse by the troubles (see McAlister, 2010; Knox and Carmichael, 2015). The research will be looking

carefully at how to navigate a challenging social cultural milieu in examining recent community planning efforts – particularly given the sensitivity and different meanings attributed to labels such as ‘community’ in Northern Ireland. This will focus largely on activity after the creation of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014. This legislation stated that councils, Northern Ireland Departments, are to promote and encourage community planning through working with ‘community planning partners’ via Community Planning Partnerships. The Departments are required for the LDP to have regard for resultant Community Plans in the exercise of their departmental functions. In April 2015, the reform of Local Government resulted in the creation of 11 new councils. These new councils act as the lead for the community planning process for their district, whereby Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) have been formed. Section 73 in Part 10 of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act 2014 lays out the requirement for wider participation in community planning, beyond the council and CPPs.

From the Northern Ireland perspective, the components of community planning were laid out in 2008 – that such activity should involve:

- an effective, statute-based Community Planning process led and facilitated by the new councils;
- a clear statutory requirement on all other public bodies including policing, health and education bodies to participate in and support the Community Planning process;
- a clear duty placed on councils to engage with local communities to produce a community plan (see Cave, 2013).

The Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO, 2022) compiled a report on planning in Northern Ireland, identifying that ‘the planning system should positively and proactively facilitate development that contributes to a more socially, economically and environmentally sustainable Northern Ireland’. However, there was no mention about how community planning can assist with delivering that goal. Rafferty (2020) suggests that “advancements with community planning models elsewhere expose the limitations of its conceptualisation and operationalisation in Northern Ireland.” They put forward recommendations to be considered in policy debates, including defining a ‘community’ with rights, capability building, power and influence, monitoring and evaluation, and accountability and transparency. Mid and East Antrim Borough Council has been unique in creating a Community Panel alongside a Community Planning Strategic Alliance (Community Planning Partnership) and a Community Planning Operational Board. The Community Panel intended to act as the ‘community voice’ in the community planning process, drawing on representation from different council geographies and other categories. Existing practitioner reflections indicate challenges with getting a balance of representation and in establishing a clear remit for the role of such a panel. Rafferty (2020) raises questions in relation to rights and power given the panel was created to be a forum for expressing the community voice, but issues emerged as to the extent to which community voices could challenge decisions agreed within the Strategic Alliance partnership.

Useful source link provides information on the NI approach: <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/planning-engagement-partnership-pep>

7. Key points and question areas emerging

The review has brought to the surface a wealth of sources from across the world. We attempted to bring the resulting key findings and issues together under a set of themes and drew out the variables and factors recognised in that literature. Questions of design, participant mix, neighbourhood difference, scope, and limits of CLP and came through, as well as several features that present opportunities and insights into factors of success.

Each theme is concluded with a brief reflective passage and Table 2 provides a heads-up of the key labels distilled from the review. This distillation will aid the research team when developing the data collection tools / guide the observational element of the research with the selected neighbourhoods.

Table 2: Key terms derived from the literature

Theme (x9)	Key terms
i. Leadership, motivation and actors	Leadership from within places; History (legacy) and context/setting; Motivation; skills (navigation of situation); capacities; information; facilitation; knowledge and ability; endogenous leadership; certainty/trust; place attachment; change agents.
ii. Resources / capacity / knowledge / time and support	Capacity(uneven); communication(skills); facilitation; institutional design; technology; Partnerships; time inputs (and calibration to group/interest); Support; constraints; relationships; targeted/ /specific resources; social capital; assembly of resources needed.
iii. Co-production	Scope/control; trust; motives; private sector; joint visioning; outcome focus; conflict management; inclusion
iv. Tools, frameworks, technologies	Mobilisation(social); support; flexibility; degrees of control; fit to purpose / gap identification; non-profit/intermediary-actors; community enterprise; context/setting (impact of); visualisation/photos; role of arts; visioning; backcasting; participatory budgeting; gentrification (danger of); Outcome orientation; intermediaries (e.g. tech); data tools; limits of tech; ongoing engagement (open); living labs.
v. Just Planning / Justice	Justice as central tenet/value; accountability; control; representativeness; power relations; communication (weakness); knowledge development as empowerment; social innovation; rules to support inclusion; right to the city (and see WP1a – Theoretical frame)
vi. Priorities and scope (inc. participant types)	Funding parameters; groups differential knowledge/understanding (and priorities); use of tech and minorities; facilitation; legal constraints; youth; social barriers

vii. Politics	Co-option; intra-community division; state roles; paternalism; identities; priorities
viii. Power	Motives of instigators; knowledge claims and validation; Definition and imperfect representation; Contexts/settings; engagement between stakeholders; Format of participation; dangers of post-politicisation (and see WP1a - Theoretical frame)
ix. Community assets and participation	Scope of participation; imperfection; assets as focal points; Social infrastructure; property-led regeneration; rights; public institutions

The country-by-country oriented assessments of the literature on CLP indicate a set of common issues. Although together they also illustrate the relative dearth of research on recent or current CLP initiatives beyond England. Although each country has its own experience of attempts to develop forms of participation in planning, few could be regarded as ‘community-led’ in the tighter sense of that label. Instead, experience has been that past CLP (broadly defined) practice, even if targetted on more disadvantaged areas, has attracted criticism from researchers. Given that the newer tools (e.g. Place Plans, Local Place Plans, Community Plans) have not been fully examined in practice across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the research will help provide insight into their operation. While, for England, the focus will be to avoid simply repeating research exercises that have looked at NP there thus far, and to probe more deeply into how that tool or other efforts have been mobilised in so-called ‘left behind’ areas.

In terms of lines of questioning and matters for observation the review has highlighted numerous key aspects - derived from Table 2 we can link those features to our primary data collection stage (as well as providing extra context for case study final selection). For example, in examining possible cases or pursuing the case study research we will look at what community assets exist or are used or are seen as missing (Theme 9 – community assets), or Theme 3 (co-production) we will be mindful of exactly how, who and on what basis partnership is offered or has been maintained. Theme 1 (leadership) similarly sharpens our attention on what forms of leadership are present, how such community leaders manage or are supported.

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