

House of Commons

ODPM: Housing, Planning,
Local Government and the
Regions Committee

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
GOVERNMENT
REGENERATION
INITIATIVES**

Seventh Report of Session 2002–03

Volume I

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Seventh Report of Session 2002–03

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the Proceedings of the Committee*

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ODPM: HOUSING, PLANNING, LOCAL GOVERNMENT & THE REGIONS COMMITTEE

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Footnotes

In the footnotes of this Report, references to oral evidence are indicated by 'Q' followed by the question number. Footnotes are referenced by page number in Volume II of the report, eg Ev 2.

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SEVENTH REPORT

The ODPM: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions Committee has agreed to the following Report:

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT REGENERATION INITIATIVES

Summary

The targets and outcomes of area-based regeneration programmes need to be aligned to the needs of the area concerned. We are concerned that the proliferation of single-issue initiatives may lead to regeneration practitioners skewing bids to meet the criteria of initiatives, irrespective of the area's real needs. Such an approach is unlikely to achieve sustainable, successful regeneration. Hand-in-hand with this problem is the short-term attitude which dominates current regeneration initiatives. Few programmes have guarantees of long-term funding, thus making planning difficult and problems of underspend more prevalent. An additional problem is the ward-based geography of area-based initiatives. Such arbitrary boundaries can result in an uneven distribution of initiatives; some areas benefiting from several different schemes, while neighbouring areas are ignored. Evidence suggests such uneven distribution can be divisive to communities.

The Regional Coordination Unit has begun to reduce the number of regeneration initiatives but insufficient progress has been made. We recommend that when the funding of the current government area-based regeneration initiatives expires no more centrally driven national initiatives should be launched. Local authorities with regeneration needs should be encouraged to develop their own regeneration plans which identify local needs. Central Government should negotiate additional resources with local authorities to fund the regeneration goals identified in these plans. We recommend that Local Regeneration Plans should;

- address social, economic and physical problems in neighbourhoods in one integrated, sustainable and coherent approach
- require the development of local partnerships to coordinate regeneration activity
- develop consultation arrangements with local communities
- encourage the exchange of best practice between local authorities
- link regeneration funding to mainstream funding
- include targets to encourage the development of capacity and skills in all involved parties
- develop urban design guidelines which all development must meet
- establish boundaries consistent with natural communities, based on the development of the Office of National Statistics data set for neighbourhoods
- ensure programmes develop community cohesion
- connect neighbourhoods to the wider geographical framework of the city and region
- ensure adequate and affordable transport infrastructure which links neighbourhoods to cities or other sites of employment
- develop asset-based regeneration which can provide revenue streams to sustain initiatives.

Local Regeneration Plans would reduce the underspend problems that arise from the current annual spending deadlines and the amount of administration time wasted on applying to the various small pots of funds available for regeneration. Local authorities regeneration activities would be independently evaluated against their Local Regeneration Plan and the results publicised in an annual report.

Local authorities with capacity issues would be supported by a central Government unit providing advice, expertises and resources; and by a pool of talented, experienced regeneration practitioners engaged by government as trouble-shooting regeneration managers.

Introduction

1. For the first half of the twentieth century urban improvements were carried out by local authorities. Increasingly, however, Government agencies became more important, both in determining the provision of services (health, education etc), and in funding regeneration schemes which covered pockets of deprivation. There were a host of different initiatives from the predecessors of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions (ODPM), including City Challenge and the Single Regeneration Budget and more recently the New Deal for Communities and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. These initiatives included policies aimed at job creation, skills training, improving services and physical regeneration. Funding began to be provided for deprived areas by the European Commission through regional programmes. Other government departments launched their own initiatives covering health, crime and education.

2. In inquiries over the last decade our predecessor Committees have been struck that so little seems to have been achieved of lasting value by many of these initiatives. Consultants' reports often claimed that output measures (eg. number of jobs created) had been met, but, in fact, large sums of additional money have been spent on the same deprived areas over and over again without bringing about a significant and lasting improvement. This prompted our inquiry into the Effectiveness of Government Regeneration Initiatives. Our inquiry was announced in a press notice on 26 July 2002. The terms of reference were:

- The contribution of area-based initiatives to broader regeneration initiatives and regional strategies;
- The characteristics of successful regeneration schemes;
- Involvement of local communities;
- Democratic accountability;
- Whether and where area-based initiatives have brought about sustained improvements to deprived communities;
- What arrangements need to be put in place at the end of a regeneration initiative to ensure that benefits to local residents continue;
- Whether policy has taken account of long term impacts as well as the outputs created;
- Whether initiatives have had an effect on the major Government and local government programmes;
- Whether lessons have been learned from previous initiatives, like City Challenge, and applied to new regeneration initiatives, such as the New Deal for Communities and Local Strategic Partnerships; and
- How the Government should decide when to introduce an area-based initiative, and whether there are successful alternatives.

3. The inquiry took place over six evidence sessions between October 2002 and February 2003. We took oral evidence from Barbara Roche, MP, Minister for Social Exclusion, Regional Co-ordination, Neighbourhood Renewal and Homelessness; from senior ODPM and Treasury officials; regeneration practitioners and evaluators; local authorities, private developers, the Audit Commission and other interested groups.¹ During the course of this inquiry we visited Sheffield, where we took oral evidence. We also visited Stoke and Birmingham. We are grateful to those who arranged the very informative visit and evidence session. We wish to thank all those who submitted evidence, our witnesses and specialist advisors Ian Cole, Brendan Nevin and Michael

¹ See list of witnesses

Parkinson. The transcripts of evidence taken, together with additional memoranda are published alongside this Report.

4. Much of the evidence we received was focussed on the role of area-based initiatives in regeneration, hence the focus of this report. Based on the evidence, this report sets out what we believe is needed to bring about successful regeneration, and the barriers to success. We also examine some of the institutions, and issues that arise in delivering regeneration.

Background

5. In this chapter we briefly describe some of area-based initiatives that have emerged from central Government in an attempt to regenerate disadvantaged areas. The fact that many of the areas targeted remain disadvantaged suggests these initiatives are not working. However it is vital to remember that such initiatives are often operating within wider environmental problems - pervasive social, economic and structural decline: Yet evaluation is difficult because of the 'counterfactual' problem, in other words the difficulty of taking account of what might have happened in the absence of public intervention.

6. The regeneration programmes of the 1980s and early 1990s were focussed on land and property led economic regeneration, such as Urban Development Corporations. Such programmes were aimed at overcoming land and property market failure, especially in the inner cities. By the early 1990s the idea of 'holistic' regeneration was back in fashion²: Comprehensive area-based initiatives were launched that sought to tackle economic, physical and social problems simultaneously in targeted areas. City Challenge was the first of these schemes. City Challenge encouraged local authorities who wanted to lead regeneration to bid against competition for funds.

7. In 1994 the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) was launched. SRB shifted the emphasis of the regeneration programme to local partnerships which were to be forged from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. SRB introduced a 'boundary-less' approach, there were no objective or geographical constraints. The aim of SRB was to provide a flexible, early response so that problems could be arrested before they became deeply entrenched. SRB encouraged a longer-term approach to problems and guaranteed seven-years of funding.

8. Towards the end of the 1990s there were further policy changes. New Deal for Communities (NDC) emphasised focussed on employment, crime, education and health problems in neighbourhood areas of between 1000 and 4000 households. Up to £60 million was available for each of the 39 NDC areas over a period of ten years.

9. More recently following the cross cutting review of Government Intervention in Deprived Areas (GIDA) as part of the Spending Review 2000, mainstreaming was advocated. It was argued that mainstream departments should seek more actively to focus resources to meeting the needs of deprived areas, especially in employment, crime, health, education and housing. Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets were set following the announcement of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan in 2001. A Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) was

² 'Holistic' regeneration is that which addresses physical, economic and social problems in an integrated manner. It has proved necessary to include quotations which use the word 'holistic' although we do not find it particularly satisfactory or helpful.

established to provide funds to local authorities in the 88 most deprived areas in order to improve the mainstream public services.³

10. In order to ensure local partnerships were co-ordinated and coherent in their approach to regeneration activity, Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) were launched to achieve floor targets as part of the wider modernisation project. LSPs are currently being established in the 88 Districts in England, aiming to utilise the partnerships established by SRB.⁴

REGENERATION: WHAT IS NEEDED

Addressing people and places

11. The SRB National Evaluation Team, suggested that areas requiring regeneration often suffer from a number of inter-related problems;

The area concerned usually has a weakened economic base (perhaps as a result of the closure of a large employer in the area concerned). There are large concentrations of unemployed and socially disadvantaged residents and a poor physical environment often characterised by a high degree of physical dereliction. Once underway the problem seems to have a momentum of its own passing from one generation to the next. It is the cumulative nature of the decline that is the problem....The problems of the most depressed areas appear to be resistant to solution by market forces and the operation of mainstream programmes operated by government.⁵

12. It is argued that area-based initiatives (ABIs) can be used in such areas to overcome the market and public sector failures that prevent areas from self-regenerating.⁶ Submissions to the inquiry highlight that the inter-related, deep-rooted nature of the problems in these areas require a 'holistic' approach.⁷ This comprehensive, multi-agency approach which targets physical, economic and social problems received unanimous support from witnesses. Many witnesses suggested that area-based regeneration will only be successful and sustainable if programmes address all these problems, something that has not always been done in area-based initiatives;

The UK has a rich history of doing lots of economic things on the ground in areas which have helped substantially. Where we have fallen down is bringing the three together, the physical, economic and social.⁸

13. A key issue in both the focus and evaluation of area-based regeneration programmes is the extent to which regeneration is designed primarily to benefit the *residents* currently living in the area, helping them find jobs, improve their health and so on, 'people-based' regeneration: Or to improve the *neighbourhood* itself, its amenities, dwelling conditions, physical environment, 'place-based' regeneration. Past initiatives have oscillated between these two approaches.

³ Barbara Roche MP confirmed entitlement to a further £400 million for the 88 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas on the 17 March 2003, HC Deb, 17 March 2003, col 33WS.

⁴ Barbara Roche MP announced the re-accreditation of the Local Strategic Partnerships in all 88 areas on the 17 March 2003, HC Deb, 17 March 2003, col 34WS.

⁵ Ev 22

⁶ Ev 22

⁷ Ev 8, Ev 28, 148

⁸ Q31 [Peter Tyler]

14. There is an argument that improving the socio-economic characteristics of the people living in an area has more of an impact than improving the physical environment. The SRB research team suggest that adverse peer pressures and demoralisation can render it difficult for individuals in deprived areas to improve their position and circumstances.⁹ Investment in the community and the individual in addition to the environment is therefore vital. The Community Regeneration Department in the Diocese of Birmingham concluded;

There are clearly areas which have been physically changed for the better as a result of regeneration intervention but this has not brought about significant change in the lives of local people leaving them frustrated and disempowered. Long term sustainable outcomes must remain the goal in regeneration and residents should derive economic, social and spiritual benefits from the process.¹⁰

15. There are however problems with ‘people-based’ regeneration, whether focussed on a particular neighbourhood or a broader area:¹¹

- those families or individuals who benefit from improved circulation or enhanced employment opportunities or better health prospects, may well move out of the target area;¹²
- the areas concerned may in any event have a history of high turnover of population, acting as a temporary home for incomers;
- results may be exceptionally hard to demonstrate, let alone quantify, and may be only expressed as the absence of some malign outcome, such as prevalence of drug abuse or juvenile crime.

16. In contrast, there can be relatively easy wins early on in the process of ‘place-based’ schemes. They can demonstrate practical results to a possibly sceptical community, persuading individuals to stay in the area.

The reality is, it is quite difficult to make a neighbourhood, or an area, feel better about itself if the buildings remain unimproved and if the physical environment does not exhibit any signs of change and improvement. I think that one of the advantages of investment in the built environment, in the physical fabric, is that it is lasting, it is more enduring, and I think the problem with some regeneration initiatives is that they do not endure, in that sense.¹³

17. The provision of decent shops, of better street or estate lighting to deter crime¹⁴, improved public spaces¹⁵ and of course visibly improved housing can have a rapid effect, especially where there is a conscious effort to ensure that local people benefit from the associated capital programmes. Evidence we received, including that from NACVS and the Paddington Regeneration Partnership underlined the importance of this mix of ‘people’ and ‘place’ regeneration.¹⁶

⁹ Ev 22

¹⁰ Ev 27

¹¹ For example, Q 3 [Paul Lawless and Peter Tyler]

¹² For example, Qq 31, 121, 400-1, 624

¹³ Q 322 [Mr Dickon Robinson]

¹⁴ Ev 122

¹⁵ Ev 167, 180, 190

¹⁶ Ev 29, Q 233ff [Ms Jackie Sadek]

18. One of the strongest messages we received was the importance of a ‘holistic’ approach to regeneration. The most deprived areas suffer from a combination of physical, economic and social problems. We are convinced that regeneration will only be successful and sustainable if programmes seek to address the array of challenges, striking a balance between ‘people’ and ‘place’ based regeneration, and recognising that neither can succeed without the other.

Matching initiatives with local needs

19. The targets and outcomes of area-based regeneration programmes need to be matched to the needs of the area concerned.¹⁷ Some evidence suggests that regeneration practitioners are not systematically analysing the needs of an area, and are not developing a focussed, coherent vision of what they are trying to achieve. The result of this approach is that practitioners chase any and all programmes in an attempt to secure funds without having considered if the outcomes of the programmes are appropriate for their locality. For example, Clive Dutton, a private developer told us;

[...] holding my hand up, there have been things that have been done that have been patch and mend and driven by the initiative and the availability of the cash rather than potentially what was in the long-term interests of the area.¹⁸

The Audit Commissions’s evidence also identified this practice;

Our hope is that people will develop their capability and confidence to have a much more coherent local vision of what they are trying to achieve, to use their own resources to do it and to draw in government and other resources to match that, rather than what many perceive to be going on the other way round which is that local resources get skewed by chasing a particularly attractive source of funding which the government or European Union have introduced more recently.¹⁹

20. Funding for a regeneration initiative should only be given to an area that can demonstrate a genuine need for the outcomes of that particular initiative. We recommend that Local Regeneration Plans should be adopted to establish whether funding should be made available under any specific initiatives. Bids should be aligned with the strategic steer given in regeneration plans.

Evaluation and sharing best practice

21. There is widespread consensus on the importance of early, persistent and rigorous evaluation of initiatives. This can ensure that existing programmes can be improved while in progress or, if failing, terminated without further waste of time and effort: and that new initiatives and programmes learn from past successes and failures. As Joe Montgomery put it

¹⁷ Q 109ff [Mr Anil Singh].

¹⁸ Q 223 [Mr Clive Dutton]

¹⁹ Q 63 [Mr Andrew Webster]

The important thing is that we learn along the way from the things which worked in each of them, retain those things which worked in the next iteration and try and lose some of the things which did not work.²⁰

The Chief Executive of Nottingham NDC told us—

If we are not operating a rolling programme evaluation during the ten years, we will not be able to modify and change the programme and respond to what we are finding during that time period [...]²¹

Mr Singh told us—

Bradford New Deal for Communities has learnt from the mistakes of past regenerations, whether it is the City Challenge programme or the SRB programmes[...]²²

22. The Government is publicly committed to evaluation and to publicising the results. Barbara Roche told us that the third principal lesson learned from previous schemes had been that, “you need to have continuous evaluation of the schemes as they are going on”.²³ Mr Wheatley of the Treasury spoke of the department’s “keen interest in the evaluation of all kinds of programmes” and that the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal reflected the results of past evaluation.²⁴ Joe Montgomery of the NRU emphasised the financial commitment involved in evaluation, at between 1 and 2 per cent of programme resource, and the creation of a dissemination tool; “renewal.net”, a “web-based repository of much of the evaluation material which is available, a lot of the academic material which is available and a lot of information about case-based good practice evidence”.²⁵ Mr Riddell of ODPM referred to the thorough real-time evaluation of NDCs, and to the publication of *What Works* documents.²⁶ Mr Jonathan Blackie of the Government Office for the North East suggested that lessons had been learned from previous regeneration initiatives and noted the practice in the North East of running regular events for LSPs to come together to discuss good practice:

Too many regeneration programmes in the past have not shared those experiences”²⁷

23. There are however three warning notes we wish to sound.

- Professor Lawless, Director of the New Deal Evaluation Team, told us that the evaluation had not been commissioned until 2001, for an initiative begun in 1998: with the result that the baseline for evaluation is 2001—

[...]there is a very strong argument to have evaluation in a sense not as the second or third task, but a very strong argument that with the announcement of an initiative an evaluation team should be set up at the outset. It would have saved a lot of time and we would now be in a position to reflect on three or four years of experience which we cannot do.²⁸

²⁰ Q 527 [Mr Joe Montgomery]

²¹ Q 149 [Mrs Pauline Davies]

²² Q 108 [Mr Anil Singh]

²³ Q 697 [Barbara Roche MP]

²⁴ Qq 419, 490, 492

²⁵ Qq 514, 518, 545, 559

²⁶ Q 422 [Mr Alan Riddell]

²⁷ Q 283 [Mr Jonathan Blackie]

²⁸ Q 39 [Paul Lawless]

That is a sorry picture. **The Regional Coordination Unit should make it its business to ensure that no initiatives get through its portals which do not provide for real-time and funded evaluation.**

- From our visits and discussions, and from evidence heard and read, we are disappointed at the lack of intellectual sophistication and rigour in evaluation of regeneration, so that bold claims of “jobs created/saved” or “housing units improved” seem to go unchallenged and unmoderated. Much of the evidence supporting claimed successes is narrowly focussed, subjective or anecdotal. **There would be benefit in the professions concerned with economic and social evaluation in creating a more challenging and persuasive framework for evaluation of regeneration outcomes.**
- Evaluation of places — how they change and how they have responded and might respond to different types of regeneration programmes — seems to be lacking. Anybody familiar with English cities can point to neighbourhoods which have been the subject, or victim, of successive waves of initiatives. The medicine and its consequences have been evaluated, but what has happened to the patient? **We recommend that some places be selected for evaluation of outcomes taken as a whole over the 30 and more years of a proactive urban policy, with a view to determining more closely the appropriateness of different categories of scheme for different types of place.**

Identifying the right boundaries

24. Any area-based initiative, whether focussed on a small neighbourhood or city-wide, has to have boundaries: and boundaries are artificial, excluding what could usefully be included, and including what may not merit inclusion. ABIs are normally defined in terms of local government wards, in the absence of any obvious alternative. Ward boundaries are drawn up in order to produce electoral boundaries that are similar across a local authority area. They neither reflect natural communities nor do they necessarily incorporate areas of land which can be used for regeneration. As the Chair of the Ouseburn Trust, the Archdeacon of Lindisfarne, put it, “Area based schemes have not always been sufficiently related to identifiable or coherent areas community wise”.²⁹ Communities are not always neatly based on ward areas, they can be based as much on shared interests as on shared geography³⁰. The Chief Executive of Nottingham NDC gave us an example of ward boundaries which cut through a ‘natural community’;

Some local people take these boundaries literally and do not wish the funding to be given to the road on the opposite side of Gregory Boulevard, for example...one side of Hartley Road is in the NDC area and the other side is not. That is ludicrous. If you are looking to improve a shopping district you need to include the whole road as opposed to just doing one half of it.³¹

25. Rob Smith of the RCU accepted, from his experience of Sure Start, the importance of sensitivity to boundary issues.³² Joe Montgomery of the NRU also accepted the problem;

We do not have much in the way of data streams, data sets and hard information on which to base a policy that is rooted in this unit of analysis called the neighbourhood.

²⁹ Ev 8

³⁰ Ev 8, Ev 15–17

³¹ Q 157-8 [Mrs Pauline Davies]

³² Q 274 [Mr Rob Smith]

One of the principal purposes of the NRU, jointly with the colleagues in the Office of National Statistics, is to create richer data streams by breaking down the existing data and commissioning new data, so that we can use the neighbourhood as a smaller unit of analysis.³³

26. Conversely, there can be and have been disastrous results where ABI boundaries have reflected neighbourhoods only too accurately. We were told that the distribution of SRB resources may have contributed to the tensions between communities in the North of England that resulted in the disturbances in 2001 in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham. The competition for recoveries between communities had exacerbated divisions in areas where there was a strong correlation between wards and different ethnic groups.³⁴ Thus focussing resources on, a predominantly white council housing estate or Asian area of run-down private housing could cause serious resentment in the area that did not receive funding.

27. There is no alternative to having sharply focussed area-based initiatives. Financial and human resources are limited. But there is room for a more careful and flexible approach to drawing the boundaries of areas subject to regeneration, and for explicit recognition by all participants, that funding may be as or more effectively used outside whatever boundaries are established. **There is no particular merit in ensuring areas are consistent in size, we look to rapid completion of the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit's work with the Office of National Statistics in creating a public data set for neighbourhoods which will make it easier for those at every level seeking to minimise the artificiality of areas defined for the purposes of regeneration.**

28. We also consider that the building of bridges between divided communities should be an explicit objective of regeneration initiatives, drawing for example on the experience of European funded work in Northern Ireland. We have heard of some developing practice, for example, residents involved with the West Pennine Housing Association capacity building project in Hollinwood (a predominantly white ward in Oldham), invite residents from neighbouring wards (some with high Asian populations) to the project's away day in an attempt to develop projects beneficial to both communities.³⁵ **We recommend that the Community Cohesion Unit follows up its May 2002 guidance with regular reports on implementation, and that it be tasked with reporting publicly on the community cohesion implications of any new regeneration initiatives, including the recently announced Enterprise Areas. The consequences of area-based initiatives upon community cohesion should be covered routinely rather than exceptionally in project, neighbourhood and programme evaluations.**

Connecting to the wider area

29. ABIs must be linked into the wider city and region. Regeneration cannot succeed when area-based programmes ignore the wider geographical context. Areas cannot sustain improvements gained through regeneration programmes unless the economic performance of the wider area and the standard of public services are improved.

30. There are difficult choices inherent in having area-based initiatives. Concentrate on regeneration of a city centre, and the immediate periphery is neglected: concentrate on

³³ Q 537 [Mr Joe Montgomery]

³⁴ Q 85ff [Mr Ted Cantle]

³⁵ Ev 1

regeneration of a peripheral site or neighbourhood and the town centre's survival is threatened. Regeneration of one neighbourhood can lead to the export of its problems to another. Concentration on neighbourhoods leads inevitably to neglect of dispersed deprivation, notably in rural areas, as persuasively argued in evidence from the Countryside Agency.³⁶ Some evidence suggested that areas which focussed regeneration programmes on their city centres left more peripheral neighbourhoods behind. As Joe Montgomery explained;

It is possible for regeneration to be pursued with some success at a city wide level whilst leaving particular neighbourhoods and particular sub parts of the city behind. The purpose of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal is to ensure that does not happen.

But;

I will be the first to concede that neighbourhoods which simply concern themselves about their parochial problems may not be those neighbourhoods that will recover best and sustain their recovery[...]³⁷

31. Where cities have managed to integrate their regeneration at neighbourhood and city level, the results have been widely applauded, as can be seen by the example of Hulme in Manchester. Many witnesses highlighted Hulme as a sustained success story. We were told that Hulme's success lay its geographical, economic and public service connectedness to the wider city.

[...] Manchester as a city did not isolate Hulme as just one place and put everything there. They did try to see it in the context of the rest of the city. It is a location close to the city centre [...] it [the regeneration activity] was never seen in isolation from the rest of what was going on in the city [...] you have to make the connections both to other public service provision and wider economic development and that is what they made sure they did [...] that [connectedness] is essential if things are not going to be seen as isolated developments which then are very difficult to sustain.³⁸

32. One function of regeneration initiatives is to re-instate a sense of pride in an area. We think it is important that people can feel a sense of pride and ownership in both their neighbourhood and the wider city. It need not be a question of choice between regeneration of the neighbourhood and the city, if the need for connections is explicitly recognised in the early stages of local planning and discussion.

Regenerating whole cities

33. The committee is concerned that in some areas ABIs are not sufficient to address the levels of deprivation. Stoke for example has six wards in the 10% most deprived wards in the country, and another 10 in the next 10%.³⁹ Such mass deprivation makes it difficult to focus on one area or neighbourhood. Neighbourhood renewal must be in the context of a clear economic purpose for the wider area, as Vince Taylor highlighted, "[...] Area-based initiatives

³⁶ Q 300ff [Mr Richard Wakeford]

³⁷ Q 522 [Joe Montgomery]

³⁸ Q 67 [Mr Scott Dickinson]

³⁹ Q 124 [Mr Bob Collins]

will never work if they are placed within a weak economy and kept within a weak economy.”⁴⁰ There are some areas where neighbourhood focussed regeneration is insufficient. **We recommend that Government establish a central resource which can provide extra support and resources to cities where heavily disadvantaged wards are the norm rather than the exception. Larger disadvantaged towns such as Hull and Stoke which are outside the core cities require support through a special unit to develop strategic thinking, to learn from the shared experiences of core cities, and to enhance innovative practice in regenerating these areas.**

Getting transport right

34. In our Annual Report we concluded that the separation of the functions of the former Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) in 2001 and 2002 had produced a loss of coherence between transport, planning, housing, regeneration and environmental policy.⁴¹ Our visits as part of this inquiry, in addition to written and oral submissions of evidence, support this assessment.

35. Many regeneration schemes are dependent on new local transport infrastructure, linking neighbourhoods into city centres or other employment sites. In Stoke for example we heard that development in Festival Park (the Garden City site) was being hampered by a lack of road access. In Birmingham we heard that people living in peripheral neighbourhoods felt disengaged from the city centre regeneration which was difficult to get to on public transport. CABE highlight that most initiatives do not have a transport infrastructure component to them.⁴²

36. Government regeneration priorities are not reflected in its transport priorities which seem to be focussed on long distance transport requirements. **We recommend that all regeneration partnerships, including Local Strategic Partnerships, engage with local transport providers. Consideration of transport requirements should be a mandatory and fundamental part of all regeneration plans.**

Using asset based regeneration

37. It is vital that the benefits brought about through time-limited area-based regeneration activities are sustained after the initial funding of the area-based initiative expires. Hence the importance of investing in assets which can provide continual funding for regeneration projects:

If you can establish an ongoing revenue stream that will underpin whatever activity it might be, maintenance or the support of people, whatever it is, clearly that is one way of sustaining the future of that particular initiative⁴³

On our visit to Sheffield we witnessed the sustainability of initiatives through a community trust and asset revenue stream, something NACVS also advocate;

⁴⁰ Q 184 [Mr Vince Taylor]

⁴¹ Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Housing Planning, Local Government and the Regions Committee, Fifth Report of Session 2002–3, Departmental Annual Report and Estimates 2002, HC 78-I, para 6

⁴² Q 320 [Mr Dickon Robinson]

⁴³ Q 391 [Mr Michael Ward]

Means of transferring ownership and management of assets to the community should be considered. Community-based organisations, such as neighbourhood trusts, can ensure sustainability at the end of a project.⁴⁴

38. Asset-based regeneration provides sustainable benefits. We recommend that Government review the existing structure of rules and regulations, including the fiscal system, to ensure there are no unintentional or perverse obstacles to asset-based regeneration.

Empowering communities

39. Many witnesses stressed the importance of community involvement in regeneration programmes.⁴⁵ In the past ABIs had a tendency to be ‘top-down’. This approach did not encourage communities to ‘own’ and therefore sustain initiatives. Without being engaged with regeneration programmes, communities are not empowered, or linked into mainstream providers. This means that when the funding comes to an end, so does the process of regeneration. The Minister told us that empowering the community is key in a regeneration strategy;

The third one [change delivered to the everyday lives of people] actually, I think, which for me is the most far-reaching, is to have involved people who may not have been involved before in actually reclaiming back their neighbourhoods, actually feeling that they can make a difference, empowering them to change things round and putting power in their hands. [...] that aspect of bringing on people who I think will never look after this, bringing them into taking control of their own lives and taking control of their communities and neighbourhoods, I think is the lasting change.⁴⁶

40. In order to empower communities, Government have in the recent past required regeneration projects to be community led. Many areas have successful examples of community led regeneration programmes; we heard evidence from several.⁴⁷ In order to raise the confidence of those in the community, many programmes have had to ‘build capacity’ in community members. This approach aims to give community members the ability to identify their areas needs and solutions; articulate them to practitioners; and then be involved in the development of the solutions. We received evidence from the West Pennine Housing Association who focussed on building capacity in ‘local champions’ who could pass information on to the wider community.⁴⁸

41. A number of witnesses highlighted the problem of community ‘burnout’ or ‘fatigue’ induced by the pressures and responsibilities placed on people whose capacity is not limitless.⁴⁹ The Cities research centre suggest that

[...] Principles of bottom up regeneration need to be maintained but greater thought needs to be given to effective ways of engaging residents in long term

⁴⁴ Ev 29

⁴⁵ For example, Ev 2, 7, 14, 28

⁴⁶ Q 751 [Barbara Roche MP]

⁴⁷ For example, Kensington NDC and Nottingham NDC programmes.

⁴⁸ Ev 1

⁴⁹ For example, Q 210 [Mr Anthony Glossop]

meaningful activity that impacts on the decision making process without inducing meeting fatigue.⁵⁰

42. Over reliance on the same community representatives, is unhealthy for the individuals concerned and the communities they represent.⁵¹

43. Relying on the community to solve deep-rooted problems is not fair on the community members, many of whom will have job and family commitments in addition to any voluntary contribution they make to community programmes. Moreover it is impossible for most community groups to devise the detailed funding profiles and plans required by Government without expert guidance and access to funding. The Shilbottle Village Forum submitted a memorandum which identified the difficulties they had encountered in raising money to fund a consultant to bid for regeneration funds. Mike Dixon, the Chair of the Forum suggested Government expectations were unrealistic;

Community led projects are produced by people (a limited number) who have other jobs, limited funds and limited time. The assessment panels seem to be unaware of the real nature of life on the ground, and expect limitless time, money and expertise.⁵²

44. The Regeneration Practice told us that “the ability of community groups to show an interest in government designed regeneration initiatives has been widely reported as a failure”.⁵³ The current reality is that most regeneration programmes are in the control of local authorities. It can be difficult for local authorities to work with communities, when they have to try and balance aspirations with practical realities. As the Archdeacon of Lindisfarne highlighted, there can be tension between taking the views of community members seriously and the local authority’s responsibility to the whole town or city. Community members can feel their views have been ignored, but the local authority has to think in terms of securing inward investment, creating employment, providing housing and building an image for the wider area.⁵⁴

45. Community consultation and empowerment is a key element of the regeneration process. Government should recognise the contributions communities can make and consider using the fiscal system to provide further incentives to community activists. Capacity building in the community has been successful and should continue. Government now need to invest in the capacity of local authorities to consult with the community, create genuine partnerships and deliver regeneration successfully.⁵⁵

Providing strong leadership

46. Evidence suggested that communities often struggle to make decisions because they cannot agree. In this situation strong, clear leadership is vital because the programmes have to keep running.⁵⁶ Several witnesses suggested there was uncertainty where government agencies such as LSPs and the local authority were unconcerned. This uncertainty led to loss of time and

⁵⁰ Ev 26

⁵¹ Q 162 [Mrs Pauline Davies]

⁵² Ev 5

⁵³ Ev 7

⁵⁴ Ev 9

⁵⁵ Ev 14, 26, 28

⁵⁶ Q 349 [Mr Dickon Robinson]

inefficient use of resources.⁵⁷ It is very important that the source of leadership, and therefore accountability for each initiative is clearly identified. Strong leadership, from politicians or corporate bodies, religious⁵⁸ or civic leaders was highlighted as a key factor in ensuring community cohesion.⁵⁹

Encouraging public space and good design

47. A number of witnesses stressed the importance of public space in regeneration, what CABA called, “the bits between the buildings” and of good building design.⁶⁰

[...] there is quite a lot of compelling evidence that a good quality of local environment produces benefits for local economies, as well as making people feel safer and promoting better health, and so on. So that is something we would very much favour [...]⁶¹

We note too the professional interest in good design of affordable housing.⁶²

48. CABA stress that public spaces and buildings have to be well-designed in order for them to be sustainable and have the beneficial impact the Treasury refer to; “I think we need to have a mechanism to ensure that what is built is actually going to be seen as an asset in the longer term.”⁶³ However in oral evidence expert witnesses suggested that the RDAs’ target framework was not conducive to encouraging good design

[...] the core benchmarks are what are called the Tier Three targets, and these are jobs created, learning opportunities taken up, hectares of derelict land reclaimed and new businesses assisted and surviving for a year. That is to be added to for next year with a fifth target, which is the amount of investment leveraged into disadvantaged areas. Now together I think those are having the effect of making us focus on quite a narrow vision of what is economic. [...] if we are to work on those [aesthetic] issues they should be reflected in the framework that we are measured against [...] I think there will be a pressure to focus on those measurable outputs, and that may mean aesthetic issues, like design, are harder to achieve.⁶⁴

49. Mike Shields of the RDA for the north-west argues, “The fact that it is not encapsulated in a neat little target in the Tier Two list, I do not think anyone should assume that means we are not bothered about it, we are.”⁶⁵ This is not our impression. **Brownfield redevelopment has been of poor quality in many deprived areas, often compounding negative external images - we recommend that public subsidy for regeneration should be conditional on an urban design guideline being in place for the scheme. We**

⁵⁷ Q 124ff [Mr Bob Collins and Ms Lin Homer]

⁵⁸ Religious leaders can be instrumental in driving a regeneration programme, for example the Bishop of Liverpool, Ev 71. See also Ev 7 [the Archdeacon of Lindisfarne, the Venerable Bob Langley], Ev 24 [Community Regeneration Department, Diocese of Birmingham], Ev 85 [Bishop of Coventry], Ev 105 [South Yorkshire Churches Together for Economic and Social Regeneration], Ev 113 [Urban Bishops’ Panel of The Church of England]

⁵⁹ Q 107 [Mr Ted Cantle]

⁶⁰ Q 317 [Mr Dickon Robinson]

⁶¹ Q 501 [Mr Alan Wheatley]

⁶² For example, Q628 [Norman Perry]

⁶³ Q 335 [Mr Dickon Robinson]

⁶⁴ Q 405 [Mr Michael Ward]

⁶⁵ Q 405 [Mr Mike Shields]

recommend that the Regional Development Agencies' objectives be reworded to include an explicit aim to improve the design of buildings and public spaces in regeneration areas. In order to measure this objective we recommend that design standards and targets be built into the Regional Development Agencies' Tier 3 targets.

Developing skilled regeneration practitioners

50. The challenge of delivering area regeneration requires a new generation of specialists who can combine skills in planning, urban design, surveying, public policy and management. Many witnesses highlighted a deficit in the numbers of such skilled regeneration practitioners

One of the big problems I am absolutely certain that we have, in urban regeneration, is a lack of really well-qualified people to implement the whole subject. [...] It is an enormous problem to get the right quality of people into Urban Regeneration Companies, for example.⁶⁶

Joe Montgomery for example highlighted the importance of investment in skills in response to skills deficit was identified in the report of the Urban Task Force.⁶⁷ There is some activity to address the issue. For example, English Partnerships is now working with CABE to create a new unit to encourage the delivery of a modular training programme for professionals in this area.⁶⁸ Information on the goals and progress of these 'Centres of Excellence' is not easily come by. Another suggestion was that more training in urban regeneration should be available at higher education level in order to produce well-qualified people. The British Property Federation told us that they were anxious about the shortage of well trained planners. However it is unfortunate that their concern did not stretch to considering providing sponsorship to students undertaking planning courses.⁶⁹

51. There has been a failure in central Government and in the professions and trades involved to address this skills shortage. **If talented, experienced regeneration practitioners close to retirement were moved into managerial positions, Government would be able to capitalise on their expertise. We recommend a forum for all those involved to identify practical measures to increase wider-graduate and post-graduate training opportunities in regeneration and to take forward an agenda for generally recognised professional accreditation. Skills training and capacity targets should be an essential component of local regeneration plans.**

REGENERATION: BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Bureaucratic Pressures

52. Government agencies are working hard to try and reduce the burdens of red tape on those delivering area-based regeneration. However written and oral submissions highlighted

⁶⁶ Q 393 [Mr Mike Shields]

⁶⁷ Q 567–569 [Mr Joe Montgomery]

⁶⁸ Ev 123

⁶⁹ Q 653–65 [Mr Ian Henderson, Mr David Hunter, Ms Liz Peace]

that this is still a problem.⁷⁰ Evidence from the nine English Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) emphasised the scale of the problem. The RDAs evidence suggests that at any time there can be approximately 27 different area-based initiatives operating in any one of the English regions.⁷¹ The Bishop of Liverpool, the Right Reverend Jones emphasised that communities understood the need for 'good' bureaucracy, however the problem was when that bureaucracy became oppressive.⁷² Others reinforced this perspective;

There is a need to assure yourself of value for money and of some kind of audit trail, but there is also a need for procedures to spend initiative money to be as simple and straightforward as you can possibly achieve, otherwise the time from idea to implementation becomes too long to keep everybody's interest and enthusiasm⁷³

53. The British Property Federation (BPF) stressed that overdue amounts of bureaucracy may deter private sector investors from becoming involved in ABIs;

[...] the actual application process is onerous, there are mountains of forms to be filled in for relatively little amounts of money. The property industry generally has quite a small overhead base in terms of staff, they practically have to build a whole department to apply for a grant [...]⁷⁴

54. Barbara Roche recognises the problem;

[...] we have over complicated schemes. Communities have applied for comparatively small amounts of money but the amount of due diligence it costs in monitoring and asking questions, then they apply for another bit of funding; another form comes along, which wants to get the same information but asks for it in a different way, and I know that to be the case. [...] [it] is something I am determined to deal with [...]⁷⁵

55. The annualisation of expenditure and insecurities regarding future funds imposed further bureaucratic burdens on practitioners after they had secured regeneration funds, as we heard from the Bishop of Liverpool (Kensington NDC);

[...] it takes time for a community which has died to live again and it does not happen in those neat three-month sections in the year. So if you have reached the end of the year and you have not spent the money you are then penalised. That feels in the local community as though they are being punished.⁷⁶

And Pauline Davies, of Nottingham NDC;

[...] the drive to spend money does give us some problems in terms of the involvement of the local community in the programme... There really needed to

⁷⁰ For example see Q 256 [Ms Ruth Duston and Ms Jackie Sadek].

⁷¹ Ev 94

⁷² Q 10 [Right Reverend James Jones, Bishop of Liverpool]

⁷³ Q 124ff [Ms Lin Homer]

⁷⁴ Q 643 [Ms Liz Peace]

⁷⁵ Q 753 [Barbara Roche MP]

⁷⁶ Q 5 [Right Reverend James Jones, Bishop of Liverpool]

be a longer-lead in time in terms of developing the capacity before the funding came down.⁷⁷

And the South Yorkshire Coalfield Partnership Board;

In practical terms it is extremely difficult to set up and implement strategic programmes aimed at tackling long-standing and complex problems without greater certainty about funding.⁷⁸

Despite the apparent realities on the ground where the pressure to spend funds quickly was keenly felt, Barbara Roche suggested that the Government had a new, more flexible, long-term approach;

[...] what we are saying is, that is the past thing, you know, you must spend it all in your year, and understandably select committees in the past have been very critical of that approach. What we are saying now is that sometimes these things take time, that we are giving people our commitment over that time [...]⁷⁹

However several government officials, including Rob Smith, Joe Montgomery and Alan Riddell admitted there was a tension between involving the local community and meeting spending targets. Mavis Macdonald's evidence on the Departmental Annual Report reinforced this suggestion;

On the NDC we have done some significant re-profiling which will start to come into effect from next April. One of the problems there was that the programme was probably too front loaded with the benefit of hindsight. Given that it was very much about creating local community capacity to run the neighbourhoods, we did not allow enough time for that to develop before we expected the New Deal for Communities to start spending the money.⁸⁰

56. Significantly it appears that the Treasury never expected the available NDC money to be spent, anticipating underspends;

I do not think it was ever actually expected that they would spend to that profile [...] So it was always assumed that money would actually slip from the opening years through into later years. If we had not had that certainty, we could not have given them the ten-year commitments.⁸¹

Yet despite this expectation, both Mavis McDonald and Rob Smith highlighted Barbara Roche's speech suggesting that "if people really were not able to demonstrate that they had proper programmes and plans in place to use the resources that were available then they would be reallocated elsewhere".⁸² Programmes should not be penalised by the withdrawal of funds if it was not expected that they would be able to spend the funds in the first place. Government needs to ensure that spending profiles do not put undue pressure on regeneration programmes

⁷⁷ Q 191 [Mrs Pauline Davies]

⁷⁸ Ev 19

⁷⁹ Q 735 [Barbara Roche MP]

⁸⁰ Ev 78-ii, Q 551 [Mavis McDonald]

⁸¹ Q 737 [Mr Alan Riddell]

⁸² Ev 78-ii, Q 552 [Mavis McDonald]

to spend funds before sufficient capacity is built within the community. We believe the spending changes Mavis McDonald and Barbara Roche highlighted are a good starting point, although Government need to ensure the rhetoric becomes reality.

A Plethora of Single-Issue Initiatives

57. Successive Governments have struggled to prevent the proliferation of regeneration funding regimes over the last twenty years. The key problem remains the “plethora of different, overlapping ABIs, designed to identify different policy needs in different areas.”⁸³ In recognition of the problems caused by the plethora of area-based initiatives, the recent review of ABIs by the Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) reduced the number from 40 to 23.⁸⁴ Although a welcome step it is clear the review was not as radical as might have been desired.⁸⁵ All the evidence highlights the need to rationalise the vast confusion of different systems, funds and time scales.⁸⁶ Rationalisation will not only improve the coherence of area-based regeneration programmes but will also reduce the bureaucratic burdens on those implementing the programmes, as the Audit Commission highlighted in their evidence⁸⁷

It [the RCU’s review of ABIs] does seem to us to make some progress in terms of trying to reduce the burden on local practitioners which we hear a lot about in terms of administrative costs and the complex system they have to negotiate in implementing these ABIs.⁸⁸

58. There has long been a tendency in central government to launch a new ABI in response to a problem. This approach can cause resentment and confusion in local government;

I do not think we have any need for the number of disparate initiatives we have faced as local government from government.⁸⁹

I have kind of described it as rabbits in the field, which is that the Government lets out these rabbits and we all run after them.⁹⁰

59. These ABIs are usually single-issue initiatives focussed on achieving improvement in a very small area. The problems caused by this type of initiative are well recognised, as the committee heard from The Right Honourable John Prescott MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: Housing, Planning, Local Government;

These kinds of initiatives are causing a lot of problems, their growth has been quite phenomenal. All governments and all ministers like to announce initiatives, they get all of these initiatives announced all over the world and different areas

⁸³ Q 378 [Mr Michael Ward]

⁸⁴ Q 671 [Barbara Roche MP]

⁸⁵ For example see, Q 52 [Paul Lawless], Q 64 [Mr Andrew Webster].

⁸⁶ Ev 119

⁸⁷ See also Q 318 [Mr Dickon Robinson]

⁸⁸ Q 64ff [Ms Katie Smith]

⁸⁹ Q 113 [Ms Lin Homer]

⁹⁰ Q 112ff [Mr Bob Kerslake]

so when you go to some area [what] you find there are a tremendous amount of initiatives.⁹¹

60. These type of single initiative regeneration schemes are not helpful to communities involved in regeneration programmes because the initiatives will not be derived from local regeneration plans. Therefore, as the Audit Commission suggest these national initiatives may not be compatible local needs;⁹²

It is difficult enough to look at the real priorities locally, but when you try to marry them up to a whole series of changing national initiatives, that can be difficult.⁹³

61. Individual government departments want to select and control their own response to a problem. But we have heard from both academics and practitioners that changes in government priorities and single-issue initiatives can be detrimental to the long-term regeneration of an area. It is important that any new initiatives galvanise ongoing and sustainable activities and contribute to the long-term vision for an area. This is not always the case. New, high-profile initiatives may actually distract from the coherence of initiatives already in operation on the ground. Such initiatives may also die out when the initial funding and publicity disappears. It is vital that government changes in policy do not distract from long-term targets and priorities of regeneration programmes.

62. Despite the attempts of the Regional Coordination Unit, there remains a plethora of area-based initiatives, too many of which attempt to address single issues. We recommend that in response to this report, Government sets out a programme for the Regional Coordination Unit to continue its plans to reduce area-based initiatives and works to enhance the integration of those remaining programmes.

⁹¹ Ev. 78-ii, Q 501 [The Right Honourable John Prescott MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions].

⁹² Q 376 [Mr Mike Shields]

⁹³ Q 77 [Mr Andrew Webster]

REGENERATION: THE DELIVERY AGENTS

63. In the evidence we received there was considerable agreement about what a successful and sustainable regeneration plan should include. However there was disagreement about what role different organisations should play in delivering regeneration programmes.

The Regional Co-ordination Unit (RCU)

64. The RCU is tasked with being the central agency with responsibility for ensuring control of ABIs. Indeed, the Minister describes the Unit as the ‘gatekeeper’. The RCU has attempted to have an impact upon the number of ABIs, as the Audit Commission highlight; “It (the RCU review) does highlight a number of practical tasks for individual departments and individual units to do in order to better rationalise (this) very fragmented set of initiatives [...]”⁹⁴. However the Audit Commission go on to claim that the RCU may have insufficient ‘clout’ in Whitehall to enforce these tasks;

What is not clear is whether or not the RCU has any clout, whether it can actually hold other government departments to task [...] Whether the RCU’s protocol will have any clout is not clear. It is there and it is definitely progress, but it remains to be seen whether or not it will be able to reduce the number [of initiatives].⁹⁵

65. In their evidence the RCU seemed confident that they can enforce their aims in Whitehall through negotiation and persuasion. They even referred to ‘enforcing’ their role if it ‘became necessary’.⁹⁶ We are keen that the Minister responsible for the Unit pays close attention and ensures that the Unit is given enough power to enable it to ration and control ABIs.

66. There is no doubt that Government need an agency to keep control of area-based initiatives. However in their evidence the Treasury emphasised that they too would be subjecting proposals for ABIs “to quite close scrutiny” with the aim of “driving down the number of completely separate initiatives”.⁹⁷ This comment causes some confusion. If the Treasury, who are themselves part of the problem, see themselves as being responsible for ‘driving down’ the number of initiatives, we are unclear as to the need and role of the RCU. **We recommend that Government clarify whether the respective roles of the Treasury and Regional Coordination Unit in the control of area-based initiatives.**

Enterprise Areas

67. During the course of this inquiry, in the Chancellor’s pre-budget speech on the 12 November 2002, a new ABI was announced - Enterprise Areas. The poorest 10% of individual wards, 2000 of them, are to be defined as Enterprise Areas and to benefit from a package of measures designed to encourage economic activity.⁹⁸ We were surprised that as the government’s agencies responsible for economic development in the 9 English regions the RDAs were not consulted about the introduction of an ABI expressly intended to aid economic

⁹⁴ Q 64 [Ms Katie Smith]

⁹⁵ Q64ff [Ms Katie Smith]

⁹⁶ Q 271 [Mr Rob Smith]

⁹⁷ Q 416–17, 426 [Mr Martin Wheatley]

⁹⁸ Q 433 [Mr Martin Wheatley]

development in the most disadvantaged wards.⁹⁹ It was apparent that neither Treasury officials, nor the NRU,¹⁰⁰ nor the RDAs were consulted.¹⁰¹ This initiative should have been approved by the RCU first. In evidence to the Committee before this announcement, the RCU told us they could enforce control over departments to ensure the co-ordination of ABIs.¹⁰² But the emergence of this initiative suggests otherwise. Barbara Roche MP, Minister responsible for the RCU acknowledged the Treasury's lack of consultation, and excused it as a 'policy imperative'.¹⁰³

68. The announcement of Enterprise Areas without prior consultation is symptomatic of the Regional Coordination Unit's weakness. The Regional Coordination Unit will not have sufficient powers of enforcement in Whitehall if departments are excused from following the system whenever there is a 'policy imperative'. Ministers must reinforce the role of the Regional Coordination Unit in co-ordinating area-based initiatives.

Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs)

69. One debate centres around the extent to which control can be decentralised to the local area. On the one hand central government has more experience of ABIs and a greater repository of skill and knowledge. On the other, those in the area will have a greater understanding of the problems and practicable potential solutions. It has been suggested that the infrastructure is now available at local level through LSPs.¹⁰⁴

70. LSPs are broadly district-based in England and are an attempt to bring together all the major players from the community, voluntary, local authority and business sectors in an area. Joe Montgomery explained that LSPs allow;

[...] the mainstream providers of public services, the private sector alongside the voluntary and community sector, to try and align their various programmes, their various priorities with a view to making these programmes – complex though they may be – mutually reinforcing, getting a degree of shared focus on either key feelings or key areas and sharing the expertise around the table.¹⁰⁵

71. However, there is some debate as to the abilities LSPs have, and whether they will be anything other than 'talking shops', despite the Minister's reassurances to the contrary.¹⁰⁶ Mike Shields argues;

I think there are some very significant problems (with LSPs). Certainly in my region there is a wide spectrum of capability there, a small number of very capable ones, a large number in the middle and some that are not really up to it at all yet. So there is a real capacity issue that has got to be tackled.¹⁰⁷

⁹⁹ Q 387–91 [Mr Michael Ward]

¹⁰⁰ Q 533 [Mr Joe Montgomery]

¹⁰¹ Treasury witnesses were not able to provide the committee with any details about the rationale for concentrating on the bottom 2000 wards.

¹⁰² Q 271 [Mr Rob Smith]

¹⁰³ Q 699–702 [Barbara Roche MP]

¹⁰⁴ Q 51 [Paul Lawless]

¹⁰⁵ Q 523 [Mr Joe Montgomery]

¹⁰⁶ Q 721 [Barbara Roche MP]

¹⁰⁷ Q 381 [Mr Mike Shields]

72. One LSP with well-regarded ability is Sheffield First whose work we witnessed on our visit. The director of Sheffield First explained that had sufficient powers and resources to make the LSP work although he highlighted difficulties in the speed at which he could access resources and what the LSP could spend the funds on.¹⁰⁸ Each LSP receives differing financial support from its Local Authority to fund strategy development work and the running costs of the LSP. Sheffield First relies on members “to contribute to the running of the Partnership and the creation of that [development] strategy and the consultation of it.”¹⁰⁹ It is worrying that LSPs’ funding is so dependent upon the financial commitment of the local authority and of other participants.

73. Witnesses suggested that there was confusion regarding the respective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of some LSPs and Councils.¹¹⁰ The Archdeacon of Lindisfarne highlighted that in his area, Newcastle, there were issues of authority between the LSP and the Council which had not been recognised early enough;

The danger is that unless they (authority issues between the LSP/Council) are thought through and acknowledged, some partners, especially in the private sector who could have much to contribute, may dismiss the LSP as a talking shop [...] ¹¹¹

74. It is also suggested that there are tensions between the LSP’s focus on providing a coherent strategy across a local authority area, and sub-regional partnerships who take a more wider strategic view. Much more work is required to identify the appropriate roles and responsibilities of LSPs, local-area and sub-regional partnerships.¹¹²

75. We acknowledge that it is early days, and recognise that several witnesses suggested that Local Strategic Partnerships could in the long-term play a significant role in “defining, implementing and organising the ABIs within their areas.”¹¹³ However we have received no evidence to suggest that Local Strategic Partnerships add value to the regeneration process. Without significant review, and revision of accountability to make Local Strategic Partnerships subject to the same scrutiny processes as local authorities, we fear they will amount to little but ‘talking shops’.

Local Authorities

76. It has been suggested that there should be more decentralisation from central government when formulating regeneration strategies. Different places have different problems and evidence suggests that local authorities need the autonomy and flexibility to bend national programmes to make local sense.¹¹⁴ The nine English RDAs suggest that “Government should content itself with deciding and clearly defining the outcome it wishes to achieve and the price that it is prepared to pay for that outcome. The means of delivery should be left to local determination to ensure that it fits into the regional, sub-regional and local strategic plans.”¹¹⁵ In

¹⁰⁸ Q169–70 [Mr Vince Taylor]

¹⁰⁹ Q 169 [Mr Vince Taylor]

¹¹⁰ For example, Q 171 [Mr Vince Taylor]

¹¹¹ Ev 9

¹¹² Ev 10

¹¹³ For example see, Q 50 [Paul Lawless] and Q 272 [Mr Jonathan Blackie].

¹¹⁴ Q 327 [Mr Dickon Robinson]

¹¹⁵ Ev 97

order for decentralisation to work you must have a “local representative democracy which is in touch with its community”.¹¹⁶

77. This is not to say that regeneration programmes should be channelled exclusively through local authorities; indeed, many witnesses are convinced that partnership work with other key players is vital.¹¹⁷ **It is important to recognise that authorities vary enormously in their skill base and ability to carry out regeneration.**¹¹⁸ **We recommend that government initiates a programme of capacity building in the public sector to address some of the demands placed on local authority members and staff in driving through the regeneration agenda.**

Government Offices (GOs)

78. A government report commissioned by the RCU and NRU, ‘Collaboration and Co-ordination in Area Based Initiatives’ and published in May 2002 concluded:

The Government Offices appear unable to resolve the conflicting requirements of different Government departments and are able to help only at the margins with the integration of national policy on the ground.¹¹⁹

79. A further report in July 2002 by the Better Regulation Taskforce, ‘Local Delivery of Central Policy’ suggested:

Local stakeholders did not understand the role of Government Offices. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister should:

- explain to stakeholders how GOs add value
- identify and publicise examples of the GO championing local issues in Whitehall and making a difference
- ensure that GOs with the support of regional stakeholders seek more active roles with the bodies on which they sit.¹²⁰

Obviously these reports cause us great concern. Concern that was not allayed by the Minister’s acknowledgement that GOs vary in their ability and skills.¹²¹

80. It is unclear what the GOs role in regeneration is. No witness involved with programme delivery mentioned their GO as having played a major part in delivering regeneration in their area. This suggests the Better Regulation Taskforce’s recommendations have not been demonstrably implemented. The GO witness explained their remit had changed to focus more on weaving programmes together and becoming actively involved, particularly with LSPs.¹²² In attempting to explain the role of the GOs the ODPM commented;

¹¹⁶ Q 214 [Mr Anthony Glossop]

¹¹⁷ For example, Ev 9, 28, 34, 120, 140

¹¹⁸ For examples see, Q 46 [Peter Tyler], Q 313 [Mr Richard Wakeford], Q 61 [Mr Andrew Webster] and Q 114 [Mr Bob Collins]

¹¹⁹ Regional Co-ordination Unit and Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, Collaboration and Co-ordination in Area-Based Initiatives, May 2002

¹²⁰ The Better Regulation Taskforce, Local Delivery of Central Policy, July 2002

¹²¹ Q 706 [Barbara Roche MP]

¹²² Q 272 [Mr Jonathan Blackie]

We do not expect the Government Offices to manage complex regeneration projects in-house; we expect them to support complex regeneration projects and to support local initiatives, but we do not expect them directly to project-manage, they are operating much more as intermediary bodies and joined-up links.¹²³

81. We are not convinced that Government Offices are currently serving much useful purpose in delivering regeneration. We recommend that in response to this report Ministers outline what impact the Government Offices are having on the ground. Ministers must consider whether the Government Offices add to the bureaucracy and administration costs of delivering regeneration.

Regional Development Agencies (RDAs)

82. All the evidence suggests that sustainable regeneration can only come about through ‘holistic’ and coherent regeneration. However the Cities Research Centre suggests that the separation of social and economic responsibilities between the GOs and RDAs militates against the development of a holistic approach to regeneration.¹²⁴ The targeting of different spatial areas by the RDAs and LSPs adds to this confusion.¹²⁵

83. This situation is not made easier by changing government priorities which can cause conflicting requirements for the RDAs. The RDAs commented that they do not think any current regeneration programme is truly holistic and they are left to “hopefully [...] produce an integrated solution at the sharp end, even though it may not be integrated at this [Government policy] end.” Evidence suggests this integration is not happening, in fact the Regeneration Practice told us that the RDAs create “further distance from local delivery agencies and decisions on funding programmes”.¹²⁶ The Hartcliffe and Withywood Community Partnership (HWCP) provided an example, where programmes were delayed by the time taken for the RDAs to scrutinise projects. The HWCP’s evidence called for a ‘no penalty’ readjustment of spending profiles if such a situation should occur;

If Ministers approve spend on a programme later than expected or the RDA approve a project after some delay, the programme or project should still be allowed to run for the same total amount of time - rather than having to attempt to catch up on itself.¹²⁷

84. A choice has to be made between large and potentially cumbersome organisations or smaller organisations focussed on narrower activities. Smaller organisations require skilled co-ordination to ensure coherence.¹²⁸ The evidence we have received does not convince us that this co-ordination exists. Several submissions highlight concern that the involvement of multiple government agencies adds unnecessary complication to the delivery of programmes.

85. When established, we strongly suggest that Regional Assemblies should be used to provide greater coherence and co-ordination in the delivery of economic, social

¹²³ Q 708 [Mr Alan Riddell]

¹²⁴ Ev 12

¹²⁵ Q 372 [Mr Michael Ward] and Q 44 [Peter Tyler]

¹²⁶ Ev 6

¹²⁷ Ev 46

¹²⁸ Q 540 [Mr Joe Montgomery]

and physical regeneration. This will avoid the current counter productivity that exists between different delivery mechanisms, and provide greater accountability. Where Regional Assemblies are not established, we suggest the differing roles of the Government Offices and Regional Development Agencies be carefully differentiated.

Housing Associations

86. The physical aspects of regeneration projects are often concentrated on the development of housing stock. Housing associations, as major stakeholders in areas must therefore be engaged in regeneration plans. The Housing Corporation emphasise that;

Housing associations already deliver and manage housing in some of the most deprived areas in the country. They have considerable experience of working with others in complex regenerations programmes and in providing management and maintenance in difficult-to-manage areas.¹²⁹

87. The sheer number of associations in any one area can make coherent engagement difficult. However we were concerned by the Housing Corporation's assertion that some local authorities do not "take into account the presence of these dynamic businesses".¹³⁰

88. We recommend that Government Offices and local authorities undertake capacity audits to establish the level of capacity investment required. We recognise that the best examples already do but we recommend that all local authorities be encouraged to work with agencies that add value to local regeneration: Because groups such as local housing associations and housing regeneration companies have an important role to play in regeneration.

Connecting delivery

89. There is no doubt that it takes a great deal of time and resources to establish the infrastructure needed to deliver regeneration programmes on the ground. Once established therefore delivery mechanisms should be used to facilitate several programmes. New programmes should make use of existing successful delivery mechanisms and partnerships, as the Treasury advocates.¹³¹ The NRU told us, "We will continue to look at ways in which any new resource, firstly, will not require the creation of new machinery, it will go through existing channels wherever possible."¹³² We have only heard of one example where this has happened, in East Manchester where the team running the NDC programme was the same team that managed the SRB in the area.¹³³

90. We recommend that those in Government designing programmes and the Civil Servants managing them at regional level participate in secondments with local regeneration practitioners to learn about the realities of delivering regeneration and the delivery channels available.

¹²⁹ Ev 2

¹³⁰ Q 609 [Doctor Norman Perry]

¹³¹ Q 426 [Mr Martin Wheatley]

¹³² Q 532 [Mr Joe Montgomery]

¹³³ Q 368 [Mr Mike Shields]

Mainstreaming

91. The current emphasis of government policy to ensure regeneration does not die away when special funding ends is on ‘bending’ mainstream funding. NACVS suggested that mainstreaming “appears to have been influenced by the recognition that ABIs cannot bring about long term sustainable regeneration by themselves.”¹³⁴ However NACVS argues that in practice bending mainstream funds will be difficult given the wide range of government targets that are set for local authorities and other local public sector bodies.¹³⁵

92. We have yet to receive a definitive definition of what mainstreaming means, or a detailed explanation of how this process will work in practice. Mainstreaming could mean:

- using main programme budgets to fund special projects (rather than regeneration funding)
- adopting good practice from regeneration projects to other activities
- changing policy to reflect the needs of disadvantaged areas.

93. The Audit Commission in its June 2002 report on Neighbourhood Renewal found that there was confusion amongst local practitioners about what mainstreaming actually meant:

The need for central and local government to refocus regeneration activity on core budgets and services, rather than on short-term initiatives, stands out as one of the key lessons from past regeneration activity. Government has responded to this with its call to ‘bend the mainstream’. However, [the Audit Commission’s] fieldwork indicates a degree of confusion about what the calls to ‘bend the mainstream’ ... mean in practice.¹³⁶

94. Barbara Roche defined mainstreaming as “making sure that the principles, perhaps of a particular area-based initiative, are incorporated in the way that either local authority departments, or government departments deliver their programme for everybody.”¹³⁷ Rob Smith suggested that mainstreaming comprised two strands. Firstly an attempt to expand successful area-based programmes into areas that were not the subject of special funds: “In terms of mainstreaming Sure Start, it is not about abandoning the area-based approach; it is about extending the practices of cooperation between services into the areas between the area based Sure Starts.”¹³⁸ Secondly an attempt, “through specifying minimum standards of service provision, to try and make sure mainstream funding in public services achieves minimum standards across geographical places.”¹³⁹ Jonathan Blackie highlights that the mainstreaming of Sure Start in the north east was very successful; “I think Sure Start is a classic example of the new style of public services that reflect that transformation and modernisation, to make the client the absolute priority and agencies work around that child, that family, to offer support.”¹⁴⁰

95. In their evidence CABE argue that the ‘bending’ of mainstream funds to support regeneration activity is beneficial;

¹³⁴ Ev 30

¹³⁵ Ev 30

¹³⁶ Audit Commission, Neighbourhood Renewal Report, June 2002, p 19

¹³⁷ Q 724 [Barbara Roche MP]

¹³⁸ Q 277 [Mr Rob Smith]

¹³⁹ Q 279 [Mr Rob Smith]

¹⁴⁰ Q 277 [Mr Jonathan Blackie]

Government should be commended for the efforts it has made to focus mainstream funding on particular regeneration needs. At the end of the day, it should be borne in mind that special regeneration funding constitutes around £2bn per annum, compared to mainstream capital provision of over £30bn per annum, without even taking into account mainstream revenue provision. It is mainstream funding that will make the major difference in the long term.¹⁴¹

96. However others argue that area-based initiatives target extra resources on the most disadvantaged areas. It is suggested that mainstreaming will not be able to address the difficulties such areas face. The key philosophy of an area-based initiative is to provide additional resources which are targeted to the right people and places. Mainstreaming as we understand it will not do this. In highly-disadvantaged areas we think mainstreaming will be impossible. Moreover if regeneration activities are to be supported through mainstream funds, how are communities to lead the regeneration agenda as current government policy dictates.

97. Mainstreaming cannot be a viable solution to addressing the needs of the most disadvantaged areas while there are so many different central government targets for local authorities to meet and priorities for their funds. If central government rationalises the number of area-based initiatives, as we recommend, mainstreaming may become a more realistic prospect. However the definition of mainstreaming is still not clear. We recommend that Government reassess the concept, definition, scope and potential impact of mainstreaming, otherwise it will remain a well-intentioned but meaningless mantra.

¹⁴¹ Ev 196

GLOSSARY

ABI	Area-based Initiative
BPF	British Property Federation
CABE	Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
DETR	Department of The Environment, Transport and the Regions
GIDA	Government Intervention in Deprived Areas
GO	Government Office
HWCP	Hartcliffe and Withywood Community Partnership
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
NACVS	National Association of Councils for Voluntary service
NDC	New Deal for Communities
NRS	Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy
NRU	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PSA	Public Service Agreement
RCU	Regional Co-ordination Unit
RDA	Regional Development Agency
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget
UDC	Urban Development Corporations
URC	Urban Regeneration Companies
UTF	Urban Task Force

LIST OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) **One of the strongest messages we received was the importance of a ‘holistic’ approach to regeneration. The most deprived areas suffer from a combination of physical, economic and social problems. We are convinced that regeneration will only be successful and sustainable if programmes seek to address the array of challenges, striking a balance between ‘people’ and ‘place’ based regeneration, and recognising that neither can succeed without the other (paragraph 18).**
- (b) **Funding for a regeneration initiative should only be given to an area that can demonstrate a genuine need for the outcomes of that particular initiative. We recommend that Local Regeneration Plans should be adopted at the sub-regional level to establish whether funding should be made available under any specific initiatives. Bids should be aligned with the strategic steer given in regeneration plans (paragraph 20).**
- (c) **The Regional Coordination Unit should make it its business to ensure that no initiatives get through its portals which do not provide for real-time and funded evaluation (paragraph 23).**
- (d) **There would be benefit in the professions concerned with economic and social evaluation in creating a more challenging and persuasive framework for evaluation of regeneration outcomes (paragraph 23).**
- (e) **We recommend that some places be selected for evaluation of outcomes taken as a whole over the 30 and more years of a proactive urban policy, with a view to determining more closely the appropriateness of different categories of scheme for different types of place (paragraph 23).**
- (f) **There is no particular merit in ensuring areas are consistent in size, we look to rapid completion of the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit’s work with the Office of National Statistics in creating a public data set for neighbourhoods which will make it easier for those at every level seeking to minimise the artificiality of areas defined for the purposes of regeneration (paragraph 27).**
- (g) **We recommend that the Community Cohesion Unit follows up its May 2002 guidance with regular reports on implementation, and that it be tasked with reporting publicly on the community cohesion implications of any new regeneration initiatives, including the recently announced Enterprise Areas. The consequences of area-based initiatives upon community cohesion should be covered routinely rather than exceptionally in project, neighbourhood and programme evaluations (paragraph 28).**
- (h) **One function of regeneration initiatives is to re-instate a sense of pride in an area. We think it is important that people can feel a sense of pride and ownership in both their neighbourhood and the wider city. It need not be a question of choice between regeneration of the neighbourhood and the city, if the need for connections is explicitly recognised in the early stages of local planning and discussion (paragraph 32).**

- (i) **We recommend that Government establish a central resource which can provide extra support and resources to cities where heavily disadvantaged wards are the norm rather than the exception. Larger disadvantaged towns such as Hull and Stoke which are outside the core cities require support through a special unit to develop strategic thinking, to learn from the shared experiences of core cities, and to enhance innovative practice in regenerating these areas (paragraph 33).**
- (j) **We recommend that all regeneration partnerships, including Local Strategic Partnerships, engage with local transport providers. Consideration of transport requirements should be a mandatory and fundamental part of all regeneration plans (paragraph 36).**
- (k) **Asset-based regeneration provides sustainable benefits. We recommend that Government review the existing structure of rules and regulations, including the fiscal system, to ensure there are no unintentional or perverse obstacles to asset-based regeneration (paragraph 38).**
- (l) **Brownfield redevelopment has been of poor quality in many deprived areas, often compounding negative external images - we recommend that public subsidy for regeneration should be conditional on an urban design guideline being in place for the scheme. We recommend that the Regional Development Agencies' objectives be reworded to include an explicit aim to improve the design of buildings and public spaces in regeneration areas. In order to measure this objective we recommend that design standards and targets be built into the Regional Development Agencies' Tier 3 targets (paragraph 49).**
- (m) **If talented, experienced regeneration practitioners close to retirement were moved into managerial positions, Government would be able to capitalise on their expertise. We recommend a forum for all those involved to identify practical measures to increase wider-graduate and post-graduate training opportunities in regeneration and to take forward an agenda for generally recognised professional accreditation. Skills training and capacity targets should be an essential component of local regeneration plans (paragraph 51).**
- (n) **Despite the attempts of the Regional Coordination Unit, there remains a plethora of area-based initiatives, too many of which attempt to address single issues. We recommend that in response to this report, Government sets out a programme for the Regional Coordination Unit to continue its plans to reduce area-based initiatives and works to enhance the integration of those remaining programmes (paragraph 62).**
- (o) **We recommend that Government clarify whether the respective roles of the Treasury and Regional Coordination Unit in the control of area-based initiatives (paragraph 66).**
- (p) **The announcement of Enterprise Areas without prior consultation is symptomatic of the Regional Coordination Unit's weakness. The Regional Coordination Unit will not have sufficient powers of**

enforcement in Whitehall if departments are excused from following the system whenever there is a 'policy imperative'. Ministers must reinforce the role of the Regional Coordination Unit in co-ordinating area-based initiatives (paragraph 68).

- (q) We acknowledge that it is early days, and recognise that several witnesses suggested that Local Strategic Partnerships could in the long-term play a significant role in "defining, implementing and organising the ABIs within their areas." However we have received no evidence to suggest that Local Strategic Partnerships add value to the regeneration process. Without significant review, and revision of accountability to make Local Strategic Partnerships subject to the same scrutiny processes as local authorities, we fear they will amount to little but 'talking shops' (paragraph 75).
- (r) It is important to recognise that authorities vary enormously in their skill base and ability to carry out regeneration. We recommend that government initiates a programme of capacity building in the public sector to address some of the demands placed on local authority members and staff in driving through the regeneration agenda (paragraph 77).
- (s) We are not convinced that Government Offices are currently serving much useful purpose in delivering regeneration. We recommend that in response to this report Ministers outline what impact the Government Offices are having on the ground. Ministers must consider whether the Government Offices add to the bureaucracy and administration costs of delivering regeneration (paragraph 81).
- (t) When established, we strongly suggest that Regional Assemblies should be used to provide greater coherence and co-ordination in the delivery of economic, social and physical regeneration. This will avoid the current counter productivity that exists between different delivery mechanisms, and provide greater accountability. Where Regional Assemblies are not established, we suggest the differing roles of the Government Offices and Regional Development Agencies be carefully differentiated (paragraph 85).
- (u) We recommend that Government Offices and local authorities undertake capacity audits to establish the level of capacity investment required. We recognise that the best examples already do but we recommend that all local authorities be encouraged to work with agencies that add value to local regeneration: Because groups such as local housing associations and housing regeneration companies have an important role to play in regeneration (paragraph 88).
- (v) We recommend that those in Government designing programmes and the Civil Servants managing them at regional level participate in secondments with local regeneration practitioners to learn about the realities of delivering regeneration and the delivery channels available (paragraph 90).

- (w) **Mainstreaming cannot be a viable solution to addressing the needs of the most disadvantaged areas while there are so many different central government targets for local authorities to meet and priorities for their funds. If central government rationalises the number of area-based initiatives, as we recommend, mainstreaming may become a more realistic prospect. However the definition of mainstreaming is still not clear. We recommend that Government reassess the concept, definition, scope and potential impact of mainstreaming, otherwise it will remain a well-intentioned but meaningless mantra (paragraph 97).**

VISIT TO BIRMINGHAM, STOKE AND SHEFFIELD

24–26th November 2002

Members, Staff and Advisors Participating During the Visit

Andrew Bennett, MP

Clive Betts, MP

Alistair Burt, MP

David Clelland, MP

Chris Mole, MP

Dr John Pugh, MP

Christine Russell, MP

David Harrison, Clerk

Libby Preston, Clerk

Ian Hook, Committee Assistant

Ian Cole, Specialist Advisor

Michael Parkinson, Specialist Advisor

Brendan Nevin, Specialist Advisor

BIRMINGHAM: 25th November 2002

Birmingham City Centre

The visit started with a walking tour of Birmingham city centre, led by Mike Taylor, team leader on the Birmingham Council Planning Committee. The main focus of Birmingham's regeneration initiatives over recent years had been the city centre. The tour started at Brindley Place, a private 17-acre mixed-use site that backs onto the canal. Brindley Place and the surrounding canal apartments had cost approximately £400 million to build. Development of Brindley Place began in 1993, at a time when there had been considerable nervousness about such mixed-use development. Ten years on development was coming to an end with the completion of the final two buildings. The Sub-committee was told that government tools in the planning armoury such as Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) had been vital in securing the development of Brindley Place.

The Sub-committee proceeded on foot through Gas Street basin towards the International Convention Centre (ICC). Regeneration of the canal had made the Gas Street Basin a popular tourist attraction with waterside pubs, living accommodation, offices and leisure facilities. The ICC had opened in April 1991, it had 11 main Halls and had cost over £200 million to build. It staged more than 400 conferences and related events annually, including the 2002 Urban Summit. The ICC had been a central feature of Birmingham's regeneration and hosted approximately 80% of the UK's trade conventions each year.

Further down the canal, the Sub-committee saw one of Birmingham's most recent developments - the Mailbox. The £150 million mixed use Mailbox opened in 2000 in the old central Royal Mail sorting office. The 25-acre site had been a sprawling maze of administrative, processing and storage spaces divided by alleys and neglected canals. The Mailbox had recreated this space around a new street (Wharfside Street) and a bridge overlooking the Canal. The Mailbox now provided an essential link from New Street to the Convention Area where much of

Birmingham's renaissance was focussed. The Mailbox was therefore a key private development in Birmingham's regeneration plans.

Conclusion

There had been a 20-year focus on developing Birmingham's Central Business District which had successfully redeveloped areas of the city, as the Sub-committee witnessed. There were now long-term ambitious plans to continue this regeneration on the East Side of the city centre.

The Sub-committee heard that there had been considerable debate locally about the distributional consequences of focussing resources for 30 years on small fragments of the city. There was concern that improvements were not integrated with the adjacent poorer inner-city neighbourhoods. However the Sub-committee was impressed by the scale and quality of the urban redevelopment. Several features were identified which could benefit any scheme, and these included;

- The necessity of a long term commitment
- A clear vision which is shared by officers and politicians (although in this case not necessarily the local population)
- Prioritisation of resources (both staffing and financial resources)
- Use of planning tools, such as CPOs

Castle Vale

The Sub-committee was then given a tour of Castle Vale, accompanied by Paul Spooner, director of economic development and Jackie Culliford, regeneration lead officer, of Birmingham Council and Richard Temple Cox, chair and Angus Kennedy, chief executive, of Castle Vale Housing Action Trust (HAT).

Castle Vale Housing Action Trust (CVHAT) was established to improve housing and general living conditions in Castle Vale, 6 miles north-east of Birmingham, after a tenant/leaseholders' ballot saw 92% in favour of a transfer. The Castle Vale estate formally transferred from Birmingham City Council to the HAT in 1994. The HAT was a NDPB - a Non Departmental Public Body - directly funded by Government through the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR). The planning figure for the regeneration of Castle Vale was £300 million - this included public (with £205 million Grant in Aid) as well as private finance. The HAT would be dissolved in 2005 once its business was complete.

When the HAT was established Castle Vale had been one of the largest post-war council estates with a population of approximately 11,000 people and 34 high-rise tower blocks. There were now 3,746 homes in Castle Vale covering an area of 2.5 square kilometres (1.5 square miles).

Progress of the Trust so far included:

- Homes Demolished: 2,001 (including 29 out of 34 tower blocks)
- Homes started: 1,356, with 1,060 completed.
- Refurbishments started: 1,285, with 1,260 completed.
- Jobs created: 1,348
- Training places created: 2,803

- Government Funding so far: £157.1 Million
- Funding / Other Leverage: £88.1 Million

The Sub-committee heard that during the course of the HAT, unemployment in Castle Vale had dropped from one of Birmingham's highest at 28% to one of the lowest at 4%. Life expectancy had increased and negative perceptions of the area had reduced. The Sub-committee was told that Sainsbury had opened a retail park in the centre of the area; and public art schemes, linked to local schools had produced dramatic environmental improvements. Redeveloped housing had been designed to minimise energy use and traffic problems.

The HAT had, through land assembly been able to develop a Venture Park in which they retained a stake. This asset would provide income to ensure programmes started by the HAT would continue once the HAT itself had ceased to operate.

Conclusion

The Sub-committee returned to the HAT office where several issues important to Castle Vale's success were highlighted;

- A long-term focus, and the ability to commit involvement for a long-term period
- Community involvement; although this must be realistic about what people can contribute and should recognise there may be a need for capacity building.
- An open communication channel between practitioners and the community
- Development of asset based regeneration to ensure programmes are sustained after the initial funding support expires
- The need for central government to retain regeneration 'implementers'. The Sub-committee was warned that when the HAT was wound down in 2005 there was a danger that the capacity and experience of the team would be lost. It was suggested that government should retain a core team of experienced staff centrally and allocate them to regeneration initiatives which need support.

The Sub-committee was impressed by the HAT's achievements but was concerned that employment and residential improvements might not have benefited those who had lived in the area before redevelopment, especially white young single men who frequently become disenfranchised from such processes. The Sub-committee was also concerned that transport provision from Castle Vale to the city centre was insufficient.

The Sub-committee then proceeded to the Rotunda building in the city centre, via Masshouse and Eastside where Richard Green, director of Eastside gave the Sub-committee a brief overview of the planned redevelopments. Eastside is 420 acres (170ha) in size, and it was hoped that Eastside would regenerate the east of Birmingham City centre in the same way as Brindley Place and the ICC had the west.

Development at Masshouse Circus - now simply Masshouse - was being seen as the gateway to Eastside and the launch pad for further schemes inside the regeneration area. David McLean, the developer was planning a mixed-use scheme of more than 1.6 sq. ft. Birmingham City Council was preparing the second phase of Masshouse and new development plots - 4,5,6 and 8 - were expected to come to come onto the market in November 2003. The development would break the inner ring road and allow a mix of uses including a 60,000 sq. ft foodstore, a residential scheme and some office provision.

The Bullring, a huge retail scheme which alongside Martineau Galleries would act as a gateway into Eastside from the west of the city was a key element of the Eastside development. The Bullring was seen as crucial in reversing the perception that Eastside was somehow out on a limb. Although yet to be granted planning permission, one of the more unusual proposals for Eastside was the Birmingham Wheel, a huge Ferris wheel structure, which at 476 ft high, would be bigger than the London Eye.

The wealth of private sector development taking place in Eastside was being matched by public sector funding from European Union Objective 2 and Advantage West Midlands, as well as the city council. The council was looking at entering into a joint venture with Aston University to bring forward a new technology park at Eastside.

Arriving at Rotunda OneFive the Sub-committee discussed the morning's visit with:

Councillor Andrew Coulson (Cabinet Member Regeneration)
 Jamie Morris (Assistant Chief Executive)
 David Pywell (Strategic Director of Development)
 Paul Spooner (Director of Economic Development)
 Emrys Jones (Chief Planning Officer)
 Mike Taylor (Team Leader, Planning)
 Richard Green (Director of Eastside) and
 Jackie Culliford (Lead Officer, Regeneration).

Conclusion

The key conclusions of the Rotunda onefive discussion were the importance of:

- Community capacity building
- Transport infrastructure and
- Recognition of the difficulties caused by the plethora of different government regeneration initiatives - each with different timescales and administration

STOKE-ON-TRENT: 25th November 2002

Stoke-on-Trent was actually made up of six towns, which in turn formed over a hundred identifiable geographic communities. The spur for area-based regeneration initiatives in Stoke-on-Trent had stemmed from the fact that over a quarter of the City's housing pre-dated 1914, and was built and maintained to standards that were no longer acceptable. Since the early 1980s, the City Council had embarked on a series of initiatives to improve older housing on an area basis.

The economy of Stoke-on-Trent was a low skill, low wage economy heavily dependent on the manufacturing sector, and the pottery industry in particular. The Sub-committee was told that Stoke-on-Trent's employed population totalled about 115,000, although around 24 percent of jobs were part-time. In spring 2002 unemployment had been running at 4.1 percent or 1526 people in the Stoke-on-Trent North constituency; almost the same rate as the West Midlands as a whole. The decline in recent years of the traditional steel, coal and ceramics industries had resulted in job losses and an increase in derelict land and premises. In partnership with the private sector the City Council has pursued a policy to diversify the economy by attracting new

investment, principally in the service sector, by promoting a range of well located strategic employment sites along the A500 corridor. The Sub-committee conducted a tour of four of Stoke-on-Trent's key regeneration sites, led by Bob Collins, director of regeneration.

Middleport

Middleport formed the western half of Burslem Town centre. The pottery industry - although reduced & re-focussed on smaller craft workshop production - still existed in the area. However there were obvious issues; derelict buildings, housing in disrepair and other environmental problems. Large scale, long term intervention was needed to regenerate Middleport.

Burslem Town Centre

Burslem was the most historic of the six towns that formed Stoke-on-Trent. The town centre was rich in industrial heritage but in the past two decades it had suffered from depopulation, economic decline and lack of investment. The loss of spending power had resulted in local businesses closing and the town had become rundown. Since 1989 the town had received regeneration funding to improve the environment and reuse vacant historic buildings. However, it appeared to the Sub-committee that these regeneration projects had been too fragmented. Few had had any tangible impact and they had failed to halt the decline of the town. In December 2001 a new regeneration initiative had been launched in Burslem through the Burslem Regeneration Partnership.

Eturia Valley

The Eturia Valley was a 11 hectare site situated on part of the former Shelton Steelworks. Developed as a joint venture partnership between British Steel and Stoke on Trent Regeneration Limited the site had been promoted as a high quality employment site for inward investment and regional location. It formed part of the portfolio of strategic employment sites along the A500 Corridor designed to diversify the local economy. The Sub-committee was told that a new road link across the canal and the railway to the A500 would improve access to the Middleport area. Council officials believed it would act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the surrounding area to attract new housing, retail and employment uses, and include the reopening of a disused canal arm. The scheme as a whole had been branded as 'Festival Waters'. The next phase of the Eturia Valley scheme would be delivered through a joint venture agreement between Corus and Stoke on Trent Regeneration Limited.

Trentham Lakes

Trentham Lakes was a garden-city site, located on the site of the former Trentham Colliery which had closed in 1996 with the direct loss of 2000 jobs and resulted in the creation overnight of 162hectares (400 acres) of derelict land in a prominent location. Working to an agreed masterplan, the site had been promoted as an employment-led, mixed-use development with the potential to create 3500 jobs. The site had good access to the M6 and M1 motorways via the A500/A50. The main features of the development were:

- a range of high quality development sites of different sizes with the ability to accommodate large floor space uses
- an early flagship development (Britannia Stadium)
- housing, leisure and outdoor uses to provide a 24 hour environment and to benefit the local community

- a new 1.5km, internal spine road and the encouragement of alternative forms of transport which had been built into the design of the scheme
- the creation of a high quality environment
- permission for 435 new dwellings

Successful development of the Trentham Lakes Project had been due to:

- partnership working with the private sector through Stoke-on-Trent Regeneration Limited, a partnership between the City Council and St Modwen Properties Ltd
- the ability to attract public sector funding (European Union Objective 2 and English Partnerships) to undertake significant up front reclamation and infrastructure works. The rest of the funding was provided by Stoke on Trent Regeneration Limited

The Sub-committee was concerned that the poor design of buildings on the sites regenerated in Stoke-on-Trent could render the regeneration unsustainable.

After the tour, the Sub-committee went to Stoke Civic Centre for a discussion with;

Major Tom Wolfe

Cllr Roger Ibbs - Chair of Regeneration Overview Commission

Cllr Jean Edwards - Chair of Environment Overview Commission

Cllr Paul Billington - Chair of Regeneration & Community Scrutiny Commission

Cllr Ian Norris - Chair of Environment & Transport Scrutiny Commission

John Cornell - Director of Environment & Transport

Bob Collins - Director of Regeneration & Community

Conclusion

The key points that arose in discussion with council officials and politicians were;

- the ability for the local authority to adjust national programmes to be more appropriate to the local situation
- the need to address problems in the road, land, employment and housing infrastructures
- the need for large-scale intervention, not just neighbourhood level because of the extent of regeneration required
- the importance of balancing high quality urban design guidelines with the need for inward investment
- the need to engage and build capacity in the local community given the scale of the restructuring tasks
- the need to consider social/leisure provision in each town as part of regeneration plans
- the need to ensure that successful regeneration would not mean the more able left Stoke-on-Trent

SHEFFIELD: 26th November 2002

The Sub-committee drove to the Manor through Burngreave, accompanied by Joanne Rooney (Director of Housing) and John Mordecai. Burngreave was an area at the start of a 10-year New Deal for Communities (NDC) programme which had been launched in 2001. Historically the area had problems with violent crime, poor educational achievement, and a lack of skills. The area was multi-cultural and focussed around small ethnic minority shops and businesses. The NDC team had encountered difficulties in engaging the local business community because previous initiatives and consultations had not brought about improvements. The Sub-committee was told that a visible presence by public sector workers/regeneration practitioners was vital in creating positive perceptions and communication channels with the community. There was now a high level of community involvement on the NDC board.

In an effort to bring back confidence to the area and alter negative perceptions, the NDC team had begun a 'facelift' programme. As a past Housing Market Renewal Area, the housing stock in the main was adequate but needed maintenance and attention. A community building company using/training local people was established to carry out the work which was funded by a grant system from the NDC partnership. Success was demonstrated by increased house prices, and better perceptions. Despite having more career opportunities people stayed in Burngreave because the housing and the general area had become desirable and the physical improvements had gone hand-in-hand with training opportunities.

The NDC team voiced concern over funding, they felt that there was a negative attitude towards areas which applied for regeneration funds but already had one funding programme in operation. They emphasised to the Sub-committee that further funding could enhance the results of the scheme already in operation, not dilute it.

The Manor

The Manor was made up of three housing estates and a commercial area called Manor Park. It had received £16 million in round three of the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB). The principal aim had been to reduce the number of maisonette and other non-desirable properties, 4000 in total had been demolished. Gap funding was used to secure a series of new private leasehold housing developments. The ground rent from these properties, currently £50 per annum was used to maintain the 'green' spaces among the houses. Such environmental improvements had made a huge difference to the area; enhancing its reputation and desirability - thus boosting house prices.

Norfolk Park

The Sub-committee then drove to Norfolk Park, an area predominantly made-up of council housing, a high proportion of which had been demolished as a consequence of the council being unable to let it.

Conclusion

The Sub-committee met members of the Manor and Castle Development Trust at Norfolk Park for a discussion about the impact of the various regeneration initiatives they had witnessed. The key issues discussed focussed on the need to:

- ensure house prices varied across different areas in order to maintain some 'affordable' and some 'luxury' housing
- create assets, such as shops that would continue to provide a revenue stream (eg rent) to fund programmes even after the initial funding expires
- maintain experienced and skilled professionals in the public sector, too many of whom were drawn to the private sector where contracts were longer
- develop capacity within the community and in the public sector, potentially by using people from the private sector
- maintain a long-term commitment to the area
- ensure good communication channels with all involved parties, especially the community and the private sector
- encourage growth of the private sector who should be encouraged to invest and commit to an area because they add value
- develop methods of involving more disenfranchised groups, such as ethnic minority communities or single, young, white men
- reduce the pressures caused by central government's bureaucracy - 'more delivery not more paperwork'
- reduce annualisation pressures on spending and increase flexibility to allow programmes to adjust figures if initial targets had been miscalculated or over-ambitious

Sheffield City Centre

The Sub-committee then met with representatives from Sheffield One, an Urban Regeneration Company (URC) who highlighted the regeneration activities that had been taking place in the centre of Sheffield. This meeting was followed by a walking tour of the developments, including the Winter Gardens which were to be opened the following month and the Peace Garden. Various future development opportunities were discussed and Alison Nimmo of the URC highlighted issues of public space maintenance with the Sub-committee. The Sub-committee met various officers and councillors at Sheffield Town Hall before taking formal evidence for the inquiry into *The Effectiveness of Government Regeneration Initiatives*.

Conclusion

High-quality, well-designed public spaces, such as those in Brindley Place and the Peace Gardens were vital in inspiring a sense of ownership in the local community. In Sheffield this sense of ownership was linked to an increase in civic pride as demonstrated by the lack of vandalism incidents in the Peace Gardens.

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE URBAN AFFAIRS SUB-COMMITTEE RELATING
TO THE REPORT**

WEDNESDAY 9th APRIL 2003

Members Present:
Clive Betts, in the Chair

Andrew Bennett
John Cummings
Chris Mole

Bill O'Brien
Dr John Pugh
Christine Russell

The Sub-committee deliberated.

Draft Report [*The Effectiveness of Government Regeneration Initiatives*],
proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 97 read and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Second Report of the Sub-committee to the
Committee-(*The Chairman.*)

Ordered, That the Chairman do make the Report to the Committee.

Ordered, That the provisions of Standing Order No. 134 (Select committee
(reports)) be applied to the Report.

[The Committee adjourned.]

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE RELATING
TO THE REPORT**

WEDNESDAY 9th APRIL 2003

Members Present:
Andrew Bennett, in the Chair

Clive Betts
John Cummings
Chris Mole

Mr Bill O'Brien
Dr John Pugh
Christine Russell

The Committee deliberated.

Report [*The Effectiveness of Government Regeneration Initiatives*], proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the Report be read a second time paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 97 read and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Seventh Report of the Committee to the House-
(*The Chairman.*)

Ordered, That the Chairman do make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That the provisions of Standing Order No. 134 (Select committee (reports)) be applied to the Report.

Ordered, That the Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee be reported to the House.

[The Committee adjourned.]

LIST OF WITNESSES

Monday 28 October 2002

HC 1207-i

LIVERPOOL NEW DEAL FOR COMMUNITIES

The Rt Revd James Jones

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Dr Peter Tyler

SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY

Prof Paul Lawless

AUDIT COMMISSION

Mr Andrew Webster, Mr Scott Dickinson and Ms Katie Smith

Tuesday 26 November 2002

HC 76-i

MANNINGHAM HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Mr Anil Singh

COMMUNITY COHESION UNIT

Mr Ted Cattle

STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

Mr Bob Collins

SHEFFIELD COUNCIL

Mr Bob Kerslake

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

Ms Lin Homer

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

Mrs Pauline Davis

SHEFFIELD FIRST PARTNERSHIP

Mr Vince Taylor and Mr Mohammed Dajani

Monday 2 December 2002
HC 76-ii

GALLAGHER ESTATES

Mr Clive Dutton

ST MODWEN PROPERTIES

Mr Anthony Glossop

PADDINGTON REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP

Mr Julian Barwick, Jackie Sadek and Ruth Duston

GOVERNMENT OFFICE FOR THE NORTH EAST

Mr Jonathan Blackie

REGIONAL COORDINATION UNIT

Mr Rob Smith

COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY

Mr Richard Wakeford, Lynn Watkins and Richard Turl

Monday 9 December 2002
HC 76-iii

THE COMMISSION FOR ARCHITECTURE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT (CABE)

Mr Jon Rouse and Mr Dickon Robinson

LONDON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Mr Michael Ward

NORTH EAST REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Mr Mike Shields

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Mr Martin Wheatley, Mr Paul O'Sullivan and Mr Stephen Mitchell

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Mr Alan Riddell

Monday 16 December 2002
HC 76-iv

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Mr Joe Montgomery

ENGLISH PARTNERSHIPS

Mr Trevor Beattie

HOUSING CORPORATION

Mr Max Steinberg and Dr Norman Perry

Monday 3 February 2003
HC 76-v

BRITISH PROPERTY FEDERATION (BPF)

Mr Ian Henderson, Mr David Hunter and Ms Liz Peace

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Mrs Barbara Roche MP

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Mr Alan Riddell

APPENDICES TO THE MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

GRI:

01. The Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR) (GRI 45)
02. Bradford Trident (GRI 46)
03. eb4U (GRI 47)
04. Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) (GRI 48)
05. BURA (The British Urban Regeneration Association) Steering and Development Forum (GRI 49)
06. Supplementary Memorandum by BURA (The British Urban Regeneration Association) Steering and Development Forum (GRI 49(a))
07. Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (GRI 50)
08. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (GRI 51)
09. Core Cities Group (GRI 52)
10. Leeds city Council (GRI 53)
11. Hull Cityventure Ltd (GRI 54)
12. Supplementary Memorandum by Hull Cityventure Ltd (GRI 54(a))
13. Castle Vale HAT (GRI 55)
14. Manningham Housing Association (GRI 56)
15. Sheffield First Partnership (GRI 57)
16. St Modwen Properties plc (GRI 58)
17. Nottingham New Deal for Communities (NDC) (GRI 59)
18. Community Cohesion Review Team (GRI 60)
19. Stoke-on-Trent City Council (GRI 61)
20. Birmingham City Council (GRI 62)
21. Sheffield City Council (GRI 63)
22. Chief Executive, Sheffield City Council (GRI 64)
23. Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) (GRI 65)
24. Government Office for London (GRI 66)
25. English Heritage (GRI 68)
26. Joan Walley, MP (GRI 69)
27. HM Treasury (GRI 70)
28. North West Development Agency (GRI 71)
29. Supplementary memorandum by Gallagher Estates (GRI 30 (a))
30. Supplementary memorandum by the British Property Federation (GRI 42 (a))
31. Supplementary memorandum by the ODPM (GRI 51 (a))
32. Supplementary memorandum by the ODPM (GRI 51 (b))
33. Supplementary memorandum by Birmingham City Council (GRI 65 (a))
34. Supplementary memorandum by CABE (GRI 65 (a))

UNPUBLISHED MEMORANDUM

The following memoranda have been reported to the House, but to save printing costs has not been printed and copies have been placed in the House of Commons Library, where it may be inspected by Members. Other copies are in the Record Office, House of Lords, and are available to the public for inspection. Requests for inspection should be addressed to the Record Office, House of Lords, London SW1 (telephone 020 7219 3074). Hours of inspection are from 9.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday;

Braunstone Community Association (GRI 67)

LIST OF REPORTS

ODPM: HOUSING, PLANNING, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE REGIONS COMMITTEE

Session 2002-03

First Report: Local Government Finance: Formula Grant Distribution (HC 164)

Second Report: Annual Report to the Liaison Committee (HC 288)

Third Report: Affordable Housing (HC 77)

Fourth Report: Planning, Competitiveness and Productivity (HC 114)

Fifth Report: Departmental Annual Report and Estimates 2002 (HC 78)

Sixth Report: The Evening Economy and the Urban Renaissance: Interim Report [Responding to issues in the Licensing Bill] (HC 541)

Seventh Report: The Effectiveness of Government Regeneration Initiatives (HC 76-I)