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**Life in the Shadow of the 2012 Olympics:
An Ethnography of the Host Borough of the London
Games**

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ABSTRACT

On 6th July 2005 the London Olympic bidding committee won the right to host the 2012 Olympic Games. Some seven years later London's Olympic venues were built on time, Team GB accumulated an unprecedented medal haul and no significant security incidents occurred. These outcomes facilitated an understandable positive evaluation of the 2012 Games. It would be churlish not to be positive; Olympic venues experienced during Games are *brehtaking*. World records and Olympic contests are *exciting*. Olympic narratives that bond competitor and audience alike are *inclusive* and *unifying*. However, the prevalent belief that Olympic hosting provides unambiguous benefits to local communities is less sound. The evaluation of this assumption provides the focus for this inquiry, it follows French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu by considering that 'one cannot grasp the most profound logic of the social world unless one becomes immersed in the specificity of an empirical reality' (1993, p. 271). Accordingly, this research contrasted the rhetoric and reality of 2012 Olympic-delivery via an ethnographic inquiry in the Olympic borough of Newham. This location is defined as a '*non-place*' wherein the majority of the Olympic restructuring and events occurred. This research addresses Olympic-delivery issues of inclusion, exclusion, power relations, ideology and identity, in doing so it argues that the relatively short Olympic-delivery time-frame necessitated a divisive segregation between 'Olympic' and 'non-Olympic' Newham. Furthermore, it is argued that 2012 Olympic-delivery was orientated towards the needs and goals of Olympic migrants, of various description, rather than enhancing the lives of those living within a community that was rife with crime, poverty and deprivation. Consequently, this research considers that the Olympic milieu disseminated the capitalistic norms and values to global, national and local audiences. The outcome of such processes facilitated a re-negotiation of place-identity and place ownership within Newham that was orientated toward attracting a future affluent populace whilst concomitantly vilifying the pre-Games community. This research concludes that such attempts to re-mould Newham into a post-Olympic utopia where prosperous and educated families, to follow the Newham council strap line, 'live, work and stay' are based upon the short-sighted assumption that creating an aesthetically pleasing entertainment location is tantamount to creating a desirable location for sustainable family life.

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List of Abbreviations

AGM	Annual General Meeting
AM	Aston Mansfield
BOA	British Olympic Association
CARP	Carpenters Against Regeneration Plan
CLC	The City of London Corporation
CLO	Community Legal Observer
CLT	Community Land Trust
COF	Citizen's Organising Foundation
DCLG	The Department of Communities and Local Government
DCMS	The Department for Culture, Media and Sport
ETOA	The European Tour Operators Association
GLA	The Greater London Authority
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
IAF	Industrial Area Foundation
IF	International Federations (IOC)
IMD	The Index of Multiple Deprivation
IOC	The International Olympic Committee
IPCC	The Independent Police Complaints Commission
LC	London Citizens
LDA	The London Development Agency
LLDC	The London Legacy Development Corporation
LOCOG	London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games
MOD	The Ministry of Defence
MPS	The Metropolitan Police Service
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NHPS	The Newham Household Survey Panel
NI	National Insurance
NMP	The Newham Monitoring Project
NOC	National Olympic Committees
NVSC	The Newham Voluntary Sector Consortium
NYPP	The Newham Youth Providers Partnership
ODA	The Olympic Delivery Authority
ONS	The Office of National Statistics
OPLC	The Olympic Park Legacy Company
ORN	The Olympic Road Network
OSD	The Olympic Security Directorate
NL	The UK National Lottery
SWF	Save Wanstead Flats
TBAG	Tower Block Action Group
TELCO	The East London Citizens Organisation
TFL	Transport for London
TMO	Tenant Management Organisation
TOP	The Olympic Partner Programme
UCL	University College, London

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UEL	The University of East London
UVG	The Urban Villages Group
WCC	The Worshipful Company of Carpenters
YOT	The Youth Offending Team

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PROLOGUE

Squashed, jostled, pushed and pulled the researcher was engulfed in a crowd that surged, as one, through the exit doors of an overcrowded, early morning Central line tube arriving at Stratford underground station. Stratford, located to the North West of the London Borough of Newham, was to be host to the main public transport entry points to the 2012 Olympic Park. However, on this 2009 winter morning inside the cold interior of a truly unremarkable tube-station there were no indicators of this being the portal to what were being sold as the Golden Games. There was no sign of the plush carpets that the Olympic top-brass had walked upon months previously whilst on their inspection visit, and definitely no harmonic sounds of the consummate orchestra that had serenaded them through the rat run of grey walkways towards the stadium of impending Olympic deliverance. The streets in this part of London were at this time definitely not paved with Olympic gold.

Stratford station was this morning a quintessential London commuter-processing mechanism, impossible to differentiate from many other stations on the network. The customary fight for ground amongst the commuting hordes was being played out as usual with incalculable numbers of the faceless competing for woefully inadequate carriage space. One individual, for reasons unknown, fell foul of the automated barriers that was ideally a matter of a quick swipe of an electronic ticket, much to the collective irritation of the impatient pack biting at his heels all eager to board a carriage in the virtually futile pursuit of the most scarce of London's resources – a seat on a rush hour tube. Outside, long snaking queues for the ATMs and ticket machines demarked the approach

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which meant those with somewhere to be were required to slalom through the crowds utilising unscripted, unpredictable manoeuvres to negotiate a quick passage, tinged with anger and annoyance at the randomness and lethargy of others.

For those, such as the researcher, in pursuit of the 2012 site alighting into Stratford ensured a swim against this human tide but, if one believed all one was told, one could expect to be met by a multitude of smiling, happy local people thrilled to host the Olympics. However, such an idealistic notion would quickly disappear in the unmistakable harshness of a Stratford reality that was operating the apparent business-as-usual chaos that constituted the customary throng of East End people going about their daily lives. Their Stratford was one where one lived and survived. The Olympic dream was not on their minds.

On the paved concourse outside the station, amid a still massing throng of commuters, stood a large bus depot – a terminal point for 45 routes that served the locality. Form seemed to mimic function at this depot, which was demarked by what appeared to be an abundance of huge white upturned umbrellas but officially were an array of individually lit ‘inverted conics’ that offered protection from the elements. A dated shopping centre, built in the early 1970s, stood to the left attempting to outlast the three dilapidated high-rise 23-story council built tower blocks that stood on the opposite side of the railway tracks to the right. The Olympic Park development lay behind the station, easily observable from any of these aforementioned places. This was intended to dominate the neighbourhood physically and metaphorically by the summer of 2012. However, at this moment in time the development was conspicuous only through the lack of deference paid to it. It was simply a run of the mill, albeit sizeable, building site.

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Conversely, the rest of the Stratford cityscape crackled with the energy of contradiction. The most cursory of examinations revealed a number of diversities; rich / poor, old / young and a confusion of races, cultures, accents and dress styles. In this urban thrall construction workers in high-vis bibs and work-soiled clothing jostled with suit wearing City-Types and liveried shop assistants. Black youths in their late teens seemingly oblivious to the discipline of the quasi-efficient queuing system ambled along in baggy jeans that showed too much of their underpants and hinted towards an MTV-orientated US stereotype of black gang allegiances. Groups of chatty teenage girls, of various skin shades took the opportunity to scream, shout and laugh – their noise punctuating the silences of the hunch shouldered pensioners making their way towards the shopping centre.

Newspaper sellers, coffee vendors and concession stands speckled the area – but not for long. Such enterprises had been told that one-day soon their business permits would be discontinued hinting at what it meant to become, in planners' parlance, an 'Olympic City'. Contests of sound and smell took place all around. The guttural murmur of the crowd amidst the smell of fresh coffee, urine, stale lager and cheap aftershave saw life both oral and aural compete for air space. Few of the voices spoke native English. This was a neighbourhood of the working classes but one that seamlessly combined both well-established and emerging occupational cultures. Exponential change would unfold here within the following few years as the Olympic delivery took shape. This neighbourhood was in a sense marked out for a quick death but for those that remained a better life was promised. The researcher began to busy himself trying to explore the

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themes that underlined this research, namely to document life in the shadow of the Olympic Games during 2012 delivery.

INTRODUCTION:

IN PURSUIT OF OLYMPIC GOLD: A THESIS FRAMEWORK

This thesis aims – amongst other things – to consider an intellectual paradox. The prism for this paradox begins with the researcher – an indigenous Londoner – and his personal experience of the embryonic stages of the London 2012 Olympic-delivery¹ narrative. When it first became apparent, in 2003, that London would be bidding to host the 2012 Games (in the East side of the city) few Londoners it seemed were taking the bid seriously; it was widely assumed that Paris, the long-time favourite (whose odds fluctuated between 1-3 and 4-9 during the bidding process²) would win the beauty contest to be awarded the right to host the 2012 Games.

The dichotomy that emerged between this aforementioned personal experience and the media representations of 2012 Olympic narratives became clear during the bidding campaign, which in 2004 began to resonate within the public consciousness. The claim made by the Olympic bidding team³ that the demographics described as ‘East London’s communities’ universally ‘backed the bid’⁴ appeared oppositional to the reality this researcher experienced. This should perhaps not have been entirely unexpected. Olympic critic Lenskyj had previously purported that the Olympic industry had the power to ‘promote the illusion of unequivocal support on the part of host cities and countries’

¹ To avoid unnecessary repetition, unless otherwise stated, all references to the Olympics, Olympic delivery and the Olympic Games is inclusive of the Paralympic Games.

² Centrebet (Australia) 2012 Host Betting Odds, November 2004-July 2005.

³ The Olympic bidding team will be addressed in greater detail in chapter 2. Its composition included Princess Anne, Lord Sebastian Coe, Olympic Chief Executive Keith Mills, Chairman of the British Olympic Association Craig Reedie, {then} Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell, {them} Mayor of London Ken Livingstone and a plethora of British sportsmen and women including David Beckham, Kelly Holmes, Sir Steve Redgrave and Tanni Grey-Thompson, amongst others.

⁴ This was exemplified by the London 2012 candidate city Bid Bulletin that stressed the passion and support for the Games, see <http://www.london2012.com/documents/bid-publications/bid-bulletin-march-05.pdf>

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(Lenskyj, 2004, p. 152). It seemed that all within East London were included within this cynical 2012 promotion, either through choice or circumstance.

That said, the researcher habitually found that, in its embryonic state, the 2012 Olympic bid simply did not seem to resonate with the communities that were, some eight years later, to host to the world's premier sporting 'Mega-Event'. Moreover, members of the communities that occupied the proposed Olympic spaces appeared for the most part either disinterested or, amongst those that did express an interest, largely oppositional to the event. The Games were not for them; they were, in their self-evaluation, not 'Olympic People'. One apparent unifying factor in this milieu was the belief that London was considered exceedingly unlikely to win the bid. In truth most people spoken with in 2004/2005 had more pressing concerns and decisions to make. The East of London was high on most indices of poverty and deprivation and the people who lived there appeared too busy surviving to worry about the ramifications of Olympic hosting. Most showed an indifference to the matter; what was more pressing was what to have for dinner that evening. Opinions around the Games were not two-sided, they were multi-faceted – but the *leitmotif* was disinterest.

However, in 2005 when the unexpected happened and London won the bid the experiential reality that began as a personal fascination was, post-2007, transformed into the academic pursuit of a PhD. This pursuit saw the researcher examine both the people subjected to the ramifications of building the Olympic structures and infrastructure in their communities and the political merry-go-round that winning the bid brought to these locales. This research – spread over 5 years – saw into being variously: changes in national and local government policies; elections of London Mayors and UK

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governments; changes in the composition of the demographics that lived in East London; a post-2008 world economic crisis that impacted upon the domestic purse; inner-city riots; protests of various dimensions and many other social and cultural occurrences. All of the while, 2012 Olympic-delivery continued, unabated and largely unchallenged.

Being an indigenous Londoner this PhD research was never going to be a vilifying chronicle of the working classes formed from the lips of a softly spoken, well-heeled researcher entering an exotic location of danger and nuance. The researcher was advantaged by being male, white, able-bodied and in his late 20's. He was able to 'fit in' in the locale and assume a degree of 'invisibility' with those researched, even if they were often of a different ethnic origin. The researcher was in the words of sociologist and ethnographic theorist Michael Agar, 'knowledgeable' of the rhythms of East London, having danced to its beat throughout his childhood. He was, in most instances, capable of understanding on the basis of minimal cues (1980, p. 456) and held what Bourdieu would define as the 'cultural competence' (1984, p. 2) to ease his movement in the interplay with the varied demographics the area hosted. The question that dominated the early interactions therein was whether East London was a competent locale to host the world's 'Mega-Event' and how hosting the 2012 Olympics might impact upon this locale?

Five Rings of Inquiry

The attraction of the Olympic Games, as a sporting event with its ever-ready memorable athletic performances, is and remains easily understandable. World records in sport are *enthraling*. The Games and the narratives they provide are *enchanting*. The

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common humanity they provide rejoices and commiserates with those undergoing athletic rigours. However, the prevalent belief in those spouting the benefits of an after-Games ‘*legacy*’ appears less fundamentally sound. This issue has surrounded Games over the past 40 years. The promised benefits to the host communities have been for decades, and were for 2012, expected to be felt from the very beginnings of the Olympic-delivery in the shape of jobs in construction and skills training that related to the building and servicing of Olympic venues. Such beneficial narratives that emanated from the mouths and press of the Olympic *apparatchiks* was contradicted by the many first-hand accounts of Olympic-delivery witnessed by this researcher. This differentiation formed the basis of the two fundamental intellectual questions that underpinned this studies contrast of the rhetoric and reality of Olympic delivery from an ethnographic – bottom-up – perspective:

- Initially, the inquiry focused upon how the 2012 London Olympic Games milieu was conceived and implemented by those tasked with delivering the Games.
- Once these underlying methodologies were established the question became - Did perceptions and experiences of Olympic delivery differ between those that consumed the spectacle from afar and those that had first-hand experience; if so how and what were the implications?

Whilst these two lines of inquiry remained ‘core’ to the thesis and indeed the worth of this research, there were other issues to address. Philosopher Robert Nozick (1993, p. 164) pondered how to both define and resolve an intellectual problem. He

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concluded that any intellectual problem contained five key components. Firstly, Nozick stated that a goal or objective must be defined which allows for the judgment of outcomes. Bearing this in mind, the goal of this research was to discover that which might best be considered the realities and implications of Olympic-delivery, particularly from the perspective of the local hosting community. This it sought to accomplish via the ethnographic method supported by literature-based Olympic research that would address both the rhetoric and reality of Olympic-delivery. The objective of this strand of research was to add to the knowledge pool of Olympic hosting by exploring the delivery phase of the 2012 Games. This research thus aimed to provide the study of a transition, essentially a ‘before and during’ study, told with no ulterior motive than that of providing a first-hand account of the process and impact of Olympic-delivery. Surprisingly such a process had not before been considered ethnographically. This lacuna – evidenced in other aspects of Olympic research – had provoked Olympic scholar John MacAloon (1992) to criticise Olympic researchers for their general failure to employ ethnographic methods.

Secondly, Nozick advocated that the starting point of inquiry be clearly delineated around both the research resources available and their potential uses. For this research there was a plethora of Olympic-related literature, which was utilised to develop a ‘sociological’ understanding of Olympic hosting. This *de facto* inter-disciplinary pursuit provided an array of theories and texts. On top of this the contemporary nature of the subject necessitated that both academic and more mainstream sources, i.e. media narratives, punctuate what follows.

Thirdly, Nozick encouraged the delineation of a set of operations used to change the initial state of, and resources currently available to, academe. Ethnography of

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Olympic-delivery from the perspective of the local community – as previously mentioned – had not before been conducted. As it turned out this 2012 ‘Mega-Event’ was investigated for five years and proved to be a study of an Olympic ‘work-in-progress’.

Fourthly, Nozick promoted a delineation of limiting constraints be presented at the outset that would designate certain kinds of operations as inadmissible. Due to the enormity of the topic under scrutiny an account of a total ‘Olympic impact’ or ‘Olympic-delivery’ on a city-wide scale was not achievable. The overriding ambition of this project was to provide an indication of the realities of Olympic hosting from a micro perspective. As with all ethnography one can only attempt a snapshot of life that provides an indication of the larger schema.

Nozick’s final component was *outcome*, namely the evaluation the research must succumb to and the consideration of whether the work has, indeed, achieved its objective. This author’s instinctive answer to this question is ‘yes’, however, the remit to fully consider this lies with the reader. Consequently, this final point will be contested throughout this text. These steps to achieving resolution were thoroughly considered and what follows is a theoretical introduction to the research that follows.

Theorising Places and Faces: Lefebvre and Auge meet Bourdieu

This research arrived at the conclusion that the most facilitative location to undertake Olympic-delivery research was within the East London borough of Newham. The communities within this named place were given voice through two single-site ethnographies: one was to be found on the boundaries of the Olympic Park and is referred

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to hereafter as *Stratfordland*. The other is found within the direct vicinity of the ExCeL⁵ complex and is referred to hereafter as *ExCeLland*. Additionally, a secondary method of data collection, referred to herein as *spoking*,⁶ was adopted to compliment, and indeed at times contradict, the findings of these two ethnographies. This enabled data collection to extend outwards to various locations within Newham – an area defined by this author as the Olympic-delivery *Dispersal Zone*.

Contemporary Newham is a culturally and ethnically diverse location *par excellence*. This diversity has a long history. The demographics and annals of this London borough emphasise Newham as a traditional first port of call for many migrants. This has led to the area being home to a vibrant potpourri of ethnicities, and crucially, in contemporary times has contributed to the lack of any dominant, holistic identity. Newham is consistently referred to as one of the most ethnically diverse places on the planet, with over 300 languages spoken (Newham Language Shop 2005⁷). This is a community of inter-related parts with no majority minority. Within this location there have for decades existed myriad diverse cultural practices that have combined to create unique urban mosaics constantly in a state of flux, due to the high-churn of the borough's populace. As a consequence theories of race relations and the dualism of the immigrant-host model were of questionable applicability in defining this demographic because over the past 20 years there was no dominant 'host' society for smaller migrant groups to become assimilated into.

⁵ ExCeL London, opened in 2000, is located to the South of Newham and is an exhibitions and conference centre located to the south of Newham on the northern quay of the Royal Victoria dock. It would host seven Olympic events that included Boxing, Wrestling, Judo, Tae Kwon Do, Weight-lifting, Table Tennis and Fencing during the Olympics where it would cater for large numbers of spectators and Olympic visitors and would need to prepare accordingly

⁶ For a definition of *spoking* see pages 169-170.

⁷ To place this into context Russia spans nine time zones, is home to one hundred nationalities but speaks only 150 languages (Sixsmith, 2011, p.10).

Contemporary Newham might be best defined as having a holistic acceptance of difference (or at the very least a tolerance of difference), by virtue of the absence of a dominant race, ethnicity, culture, age segment or spoken language (granted, most in its boundaries spoke English but the *Lingua-Franca* might best be described as *English-Creole*). It thus provided for an interesting portrait of place that was, arguably, the embodiment of what Lefebvre (1991) would define as a *strange entity*. That is a community that although both ‘real’ and with a definable boundary was one that lived with little sense of ownership of place where the underlying belief was that life was a transitory (by virtue of low place ownership and immigration) and frequently nomadic existence. This perception at times appeared to be saturated with the belief that one had little or no control over one’s own destiny in this locale. As Lefebvre argued:

Any ‘social existence’ aspiring or claiming to be ‘real’, but failing to produce its own space, would be a strange entity, a very peculiar kind of abstraction unable to escape from the ideological or even the ‘cultural’ realm. It would fall to the level of folklore and sooner or later disappear altogether, thereby immediately losing its identity, its denomination and its feeble degree of reality.

(Lefebvre, 1991, p. 53)

The absence of a tangible, definable place-identity and the perceptible ‘feeble degree of reality’ combined – ironically – to make Newham an ideal prospective Olympic host. Shared local customs and a consensus around social mores, which are the keystones of identity and are the elements that bond people to place were somewhat absent in

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Newham. That is not to say that Newham had no cultural fabric, far from it, but there was little association evident between place and identity in relation to that which was 'Newham'. In this regard, the application of anthropologist Auge's (1995) '*non-place*' hypothesis has a degree of resonance. To consider Newham a '*non-place*' is to contrast this locale to other constructions of 'place', which has been a standard anthropological concept perhaps best defined as a 'concrete and symbolic construction of space' (Buchanan, 1999, p. 394). That which we call 'place' has been considered as a unifier in many fields including environmental psychology (Russell and Ward, 1982) and human geography (Cloke, Philo, and Sadler, 1991).

By contrast Auge insinuated that if 'place' is to be defined as relational, historical or concerned with identity then a space that cannot be defined in these terms must be considered a '*non-place*'. Although Auge's research predominantly focuses upon shopping malls, airports and the like, the underlying principles he argued for could be applied to the Newham context. In this regard Newham's diverse, deprived community that lacked a holistic identity, a shared history and even a shared relational culture may be defined as residing in a '*non-place*'.

Notions of culture and place are crucial to any pursuit that seeks to establish the dominant value systems of an area. Integral to culture and place are notions of shared language, religion, traditions and customs. This constitutes a locale's cultural history and is synonymous with place. Places however are complex things to consider, as Stokols argues they are fixed, empty and un-dialectical backgrounds to – or containers of – social action; they are dynamic arenas both socially constituted and constitutive of the social (1990). Uncovering and delineating dominant cultural systems, beliefs and practices that

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holistically link identity and place in Newham was not easy and neither was the application of a solitary theoretical underpinning to this complex research setting.

Some argue that the sense of belonging attached to place is not an aspect of place identity but it is a necessary basis for it (Korpela, 1989, p. 246). But Olympic-delivery Newham was what some might define as a ‘pot-pourri of memories, conceptions, interpretations, ideas and related feelings about specific physical settings’ (Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff’s, 1983, p. 60). The idea of Newham as the Olympic city-in-waiting had thus to be sold to the people living there who did so with an absence of a dominant sense of place identity.⁸ Furthermore this most diverse, deprived and transitory of communities was more representative of what Sennett’s (2006) calls the ‘icon of the global age’ i.e. migration, where people’s live with the prevailing belief that it is ‘not the time to settle down, but move’ (p. 10). The question became one of whether cultural significance and place identity was relevant to this inquiry, or even possible in this location.

In this regard, Olympic-delivery Newham was – subtlety maybe – enforcing the transition of the borough away from a ‘strange entity’ and a ‘*non-place*’ towards something else. This something else was a borough which was to be re-branded and injected with something called ‘culture’ where collective identity was intended to be delivered in hermetically sealed, Olympically inspired instalments. This transitional period (2005-2012) saw Newham become something Lefebvre (1991) would conceptualise as a *differential space*. This, according to Lefebvre, is an essential

⁸ The notion of a Newham identity is problematic, despite great efforts of place branding that includes ‘Welcome to Newham’ signs around the Stratford’s new Westfield shopping centre and elsewhere. The borough of Newham was created in April in 1965 by merging the long-standing locales of East and West Ham into one borough of the newly formed Greater London, which did little to create a unified identity for those that lived through this transition.

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transition for a new space to be produced. Within this '*differential space*' the functions, elements and moments of social practice are restored (or indeed created) (p. 52). This theoretical perspective suited a definition of Newham as did the idea of it being for so many of its dwellers a '*non-place*' evidencing a 'very peculiar type of abstraction' that was aspiring to be real but was unable to create a holistic identity (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 53). In toto Newham was a place that lacked inclusion but this absence was not feared because it was never missed, in this regard Auge's mechanisms of the '*non-place*'⁹ exemplified much of this borough. Olympic-delivery was meant to transform this locale into a particularly potent '*differential place*' and modify parts of this '*strange place*'. One might argue such delivery only enhanced the sense of differentiation and strangeness.

There are many ways to consider grand theory and many ways to conceive Newham. As will be argued, the IOC, the ODA and a variety of other Olympic-delivery stakeholders can be seen as hegemonic organisations engaged in hegemonic practices, however, this conclusion does not adequately theorise the Olympic-delivery context. For example, it does not indicate how people respond to Olympic messages, or why they react the way they do to legacy opportunities and discourse. That is an intriguing topic that this thesis aimed to address. To these ends frameworks from the works of theorists such as Lefebvre, Auge and Bourdieu were deconstructed, merged and applied to this milieu in a pragmatic manner. There are many contexts that each of said theorists work are directly applicable to, however, in relation to this Olympic-delivery context they did not provide enough applicability to the context separately and were insufficient to provide adequate comprehension of the complexities of Olympic-delivery Newham.

⁹ Auge's mechanisms of the '*non-place*' were exemplified by their ability to replace or enhance human interaction, such as the credit card that replaces cash or the electronic ticket barriers that replace conductors (1994).

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Simply, there was more to be said, what was missing was a bottom-up perspective of life during Olympic-delivery and this required additional theorising and a combined theoretical approach.

It became abundantly clear that this research's aim to separate Olympic rhetoric from reality was not simply about objective notions of place; it was crucially about people and their subjective experience of the place they lived in and the Olympic-related transitions their lives might have undergone. This search for guidance regarding how to adequately theorise Newham's Olympic-delivery from the bottom-up led to the theoretical framework of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu becoming integral to this research. Bourdieu argued that all sociological inquiry should begin with real, empirical data analysed using a specific set of conceptual '*thinking tools*' to act as a guide to discovery and understanding. This command was applied to Newham's three aforementioned research zones. Conveniently, Bourdieu outlined a three-tiered methodological approach¹⁰ that he argued was required to accomplish any such search for discovery and understanding. This stated that the researcher:

1. Analyse the position of the field vis-à-vis the wider context.
2. Map out the objective structure of relations between the positions occupied by agents within the field.
3. Analyse the *habitus* of these agents; notably the systems of dispositions they have acquired by internalising deterministic socio-economic predilections.

¹⁰ For a more robust review of Bourdieu's three-tiered methodology see Wacquant, 1992, pp. 104-107.

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We can take the argument further. The methodology outlined above offered a theory of research practice wherein Bourdieu's key concepts only made sense when they were applied to practical research, which then emphasised the theoretical value of what he argued (Grenfell, 2008, p. 219). Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* is best understood as the internalised generative and durable dispositions that guide perception, representation, and action in human beings (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). This is in large part the product of how social positions structured an individual's earliest experiences. It follows that similar conditions of existence result in common *habitus* and oppositional conditions of existence result in a conflicting idea of *habitus* (ibid). Therefore, *habitus* is a constant social re-negotiation that can only be maintained through exchange and evolves through continual experiences and exchanges, which subtly transforms the individual's way of being (King, 2000). With this in mind the impact that Olympic-delivery transition and its concomitant implications might have upon the agents implicated through choice or circumstance must now be considered.

Beyond Family and Kinship?

Olympic-delivery amplifies Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells' suggestion that a distinctive feature of contemporary society was the de-coupling of the sense of community from the sense of place (Castells, 1991). This de-coupling in Newham is defined and explored herein as evidencing what Bourdieu would term '*hysteresis*' the essential features of which were:

. . . the mismatch between habitus and field, the time dimension associated with it – how habitus is out of synch with field . . . differential responses of organisations and individuals lead to the dislocation and disruption of habitus which occurs in any field change . . . Often it is those already well endowed with economic and symbolic capital who are able to achieve desirable dominant positions within the new field structures.

(Hardy, 2008, { cited in Greenfell, 2008 } pp. 133-148)

If we consider that Castells' de-coupling of community and place is a distinctive feature of contemporary society, then the application of Olympic-delivery *hysteresis* symbolises an attempted reclamation of the relationship between Newham as a place and the community therein; albeit this reclamation was only accessible for a very particular demographic as will be explored herein. The outcome of such was, for some within the regenerated Olympic locales, a reconfiguration of the social cues that informed daily life. This resulted in identities being consistently negotiated and renegotiated during Olympic-delivery *hysteresis*. Consequently, within the areas that may best be defined as 'Olympic' Newham, Olympic-delivery was a tale of two cities – Newham's past and Newham's future – and of two narratives – one historical and one projected. One was a relic, informed by those that possessed knowledge of how to exist in a pre-bid Newham. The other was a vision, symbolised by an media-promoted idealistic post-Games utopian of Newham's future, which was yet to arrive. What seemed real during this particular time, in this particular place, was a sense of an inevitable – if unknown – massive transition, wherein everything was up for re-ordering and re-negotiation. The problem however was

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discovering articulate people who might wish to negotiate according to the ‘Lingua-Franca’ of ‘Olympic’ Newham. The other problem was uncovering how and with whom they were to negotiate with.

Delineating Life in a Non-Place: Defining a Disordered Community

The 2012 Games were won in part by the promises made to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) by the British Olympic Association’s Bidding Committee as to the effect the Games would have on the host ‘community’. The word ‘community’ was never far from the lips of politicians and those tasked with defining and delivering the Games. ‘Community’ is a political concept as the term speaks to narratives of power. It is also a contested term in relation to its definition and connotation. Applying the term ‘community’ to research has been argued to be problematic by any number of academics (Stacey, 1969; Seabrook, 1984; Hill, 1994). Concerns relating to its applicability often revolve around the conceptual vagueness of the terminology. Indeed, as any cursory examination of contemporary British political policy and British media discourse would reveal, the idea and concept of what constitutes ‘community’ holds debatable levels of resonance in relation to its myriad uses because ‘community’ is a prefix that is overused and has been attached to as diverse concepts as: consultation, care, development and policing to name but a few. However, this research follows the advocacy of sociologists Day and Murdoch in considering that ‘community’, when adequately defined, remains a pertinent term to centre a study of social space around (1993, p. 108). That said, it would be folly not to have acknowledged potential criticisms orientated towards this use of the

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term. The resonance of the use of the prefix ‘community’ in this research relates to the imaginary dimensions of the term as much as to the importance of its structural determinants (Anderson, 1983).

In relation to Olympic-delivery Newham, any definition of ‘community’ needed to encapsulate the complexity of those that lived within the borough and the population churn that occurred therein. If generalisations of this populace were to be permitted then the appreciation of difference needed to form a fundamental tenet of any definition of Newham’s ‘community’. Crow and Allen (1994) stated that anything purporting to be a ‘community’ study was defined as a means of uncovering ways in which individuals were embedded into sets of personal relationships (p. 177). This definition is pertinent to this analysis in that it sought to consider the relational aspect of Olympic-delivery interaction and how individuals and groups evolved and interacted therein. Consequently, ‘community’ is utilised here in relation to place and to social networks and is considered a symbolic construct that illuminates shared characteristics and signifies collective action. Furthermore, it is considered as representational and imposed both from within and from outside specific groupings.

In this regard Olympic-delivery Newham was a fragmented ‘community’ that could be considered neither ‘complete’ nor static. The Newham ‘community’ was based around ever-shifting boundaries and compositions. Therefore, a holistic definitive definition of what constituted ‘Newham’ and indeed the ‘Newham community’ remained elusive and ephemeral. This ambiguousness was heightened and emphasised by those tasked with Olympic-delivery, which – arguably – attempted to create a vision of unity

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that did not exist and had not existed since the late 1970's (Hobbs, 1988; Fussey, Coaffee, Armstrong and Hobbs, 2011).

Paradoxically, as the Olympic Games drew closer and wider media representations for unity became more pronounced this research uncovered that within Newham divisions began to become more prominent as some demographics felt excluded from specific Olympic locales. This was – arguably – best exemplified by the contestation made by the Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC¹¹) Chair Andrew Altman, at a 2009 event held at the London School of Economics, where he defined the area of East London that was to host much of the Games as '*London's Gash*' – a '*Gash*' that would be healed and reclaimed by the 2012 Olympics. This statement effectively relegated all those living within to *Gash Dwellers* who would need to be dealt with accordingly (for more see pages 124-129).

Community Studies Reconsidered

This research asserts thus that any use of the term 'community' is by necessity flexible. This flexibility permeates the analysis herein to use the term to speak of the processes in the changing relational aspects of Olympic-delivery and the segments of Newham that were changed or remained unchanged by such. Furthermore, any use of the term 'Newham community' should not exclude those that would not define themselves in

¹¹ The Olympic Park Legacy Company were a public-sector, not-for-profit organisation that were to be responsible for the long-term planning, development, management and maintenance of the Olympic Park and its facilities after the London 2012 Games. They were to be responsible for delivering the Olympic legacy promises made in the original London 2012 bid, however the OPLC became part of a Mayoral Development Corporation in 2012 that amalgamated the OPLC responsibilities into the Mayor of London's authority. From 1 April 2012 the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) took over the OPLC responsibilities of long-term planning, development, management and maintenance of the Olympic Park. They also acquired new powers, including planning powers, for both the Olympic Park and surrounding area from October 2012. (Private correspondence, LLDC, April, 2012).

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these terms. Such ambivalence toward inclusion is both an inherent and incurable part of any ‘community’ (Bauman, 1993, pp. 8-10). Therefore – to simplify matters – this analysis does not use the term ‘community’ as representational of a holistic group against which to evaluate the implications of Olympic-delivery. Rather, it considers ‘community’ to be the site where Olympic-delivery questions, issues, difficulties and contestations involved could be explored. Therefore, the Newham ‘community’ was – and is – considered a ‘relational space’ within which to consider the reality of London 2012’s ‘differential space’.

Any talk of ‘Gash’ failed to identify or acknowledge the existence or value of any of Newham’s myriad pre-Games ‘real communities’.¹² It is within such a delivery mantra that those who experienced Olympic-delivery emerged and were considered within their most appropriate setting. It is important to regard such ‘communities’ as having ‘multiple identities and linkages’ (Burns, Hambleton and Hoggett, 1994, p. 228). As such, they might be best considered as if they were Russian Dolls, or ‘Chinese nesting boxes’ where identity defining characteristics can be considered a multi-dimensional layering process (Etzioni, 1993, p. 32). The term ‘community’ that will permeate the pages that follow will not be apostrophised and will not speak to, or of, a fixed, geographical populace with specific shared characteristics. Rather, this contemporary urban ethnography will apply the sociology of biographies and histories of C. Wright Mills (1959) to the veracity of Olympic-delivery Newham’s transformative nature. As such, Burawoy, Blum, George, Gille, Gowan, Haney, Klawiter, Lopez, Riain and Thayer’s (2000) perspective of ‘global ethnography’ will be applied to Newham’s Olympic populace in relation to the

¹² The term ‘real communities’ refer to those that reflect the reality of interactions between people in contemporary society (Bennett, 1989).

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consideration that contemporary global societies are shaped by a fluidity of cultures. This enables the term ‘local’ to be representative of a Newham that is a space in a state of flux, but one that contains a plethora of interconnected sub-worlds that are highly varied in their tenure (Hall, 2012; Hannerz, 1997; Marcus, 1995). Therefore, the term ‘local community’ represents those that lived and worked within the borough of Newham and attained personal, first-hand experience of Olympic-delivery, i.e. it will denote those that were implicated by Olympic-delivery in ways additional to the media rhetoric that punctuated the Olympic period. In this regard, Newham’s ‘community’ is understood herein as a geographical baseline from which to evaluate fluctuations and modifications to the ‘social networks of interacting individuals’ that were ‘concentrated into a defined territory’ (Johnston, Gregory and Smith, 1994, p. 80) during Olympic-delivery. That stated, the issue now is to present what the various communities might seek to gain from their hosting of the 2012 Games.

Ordering Disorder: A 2012 Delivery Thesis Roadmap

This thesis explores the impact of 2012 Olympic-delivery on Newham’s communities. It does not seek to cover all aspects of policy, politicking or all things ‘Olympic’. Issues of subjectivity and objectivity, of theory and practice permeate the entire thesis, both in terms of underpinning rationale and issues of practical applicability. As such, conclusions can be found throughout the paradigms discussed within each thematic section. To contextualise the findings herein a historical analysis of the Olympic phenomenon forms the initial focus of this research. This is followed by the consideration

of such to its applicability to the 2012 edition of the Games. The findings facilitated a differentiation between Olympic rhetoric and experiential reality. This differentiation was based upon the premise that those with first-hand experience of Olympic-delivery may well have a different interpretation of the Olympic Games than those that consume their perceptions of Olympic-delivery from afar. Furthermore, it was questioned whether much of what was considered *factual* Olympic rhetoric might – under closer inspection – not stand up to scrutiny. This thesis is divided into the following three sections:

- **Section A – The Olympic Games: Purpose and Process:** This section provides an exploration of the Olympic Games and the discursive narrative that accompanies them. It outlines the larger schema from which Olympic-delivery is formed and considers the power relations involved in Olympic bidding and delivery with particular reference to the 2012 edition of the Olympic Games. This analysis evaluates the role of Olympic ideology and the dissemination and consequences of such in relation to London 2012. It concludes with a consideration of how and where to best explore the 2012 Games in relation to their delivery consequences.
- **Section B – London Calling: The Games Played in Newham:** In this section the pre-Olympic East London milieu is explored to provide insights into the social landscape where the 2012 Olympic meteor was to land. Who it was expected to impact upon is considered, as is the construction of the expectations of Olympic-delivery. This section examines who constituted the ‘local communities’ and

outlines the theoretical perspective and methodology that were used to define this research populace.

- **Section C – Life in the Shadow of the Olympics: Ethnography Unmasked:** In this section the Olympic-delivery reality is brought to life via the ethnographic method. It contrasts the rhetoric of the previous sections to the reality of ethnographic accounts of life within the evolving field of 2012 Olympic-delivery. This section explores how social structures and *habitus* evolved in the local contexts throughout this highly transitional time. A discursive narrative ensues that indicates life in the shadow of the Olympic torch.

Broadly speaking the findings of this research discovered that the local communities perceptions of 2012 Olympic-delivery permitted it to be separated into three distinct eras:

- I. *The Anti-Climactic Acclimatisation Phase* – wherein community members struggled to attain that presented as ‘Olympic benefits’.
- II. *The Realisation Phase* – wherein community members and community leaders realised that the Olympic opportunities would not translate directly into community benefit without being fought for.
- III. *The Segregation Phase* – wherein the everyday lives of community members were restricted and modified because of Olympic securitisation and uncertainty, which as criminologist Richard Sparks (1992) argued can be considered the basis for fear. This fear was grounded in the expectation

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of significant disruption that would make everyday Newham life impossible.

This thesis is not historically chronological. A reader may consider that after making the above statement such a chronology would have made sense. To the contrary the author argues that this would sacrifice coherence. The complex inter-relation of the themes addressed herein overlapped and interwove throughout the delivery period. Chronology would have prevented a regimented ordering of such messy data. Therefore, the findings are categorised into thematic sub-sections to give the impression that each topic unravelled in isolation. This of course was not the case; these unfurled concurrently.

However, all was not struggle during Olympic-delivery and as with Britain at large. 2012 ‘Olympic Fever’ of a sort resonated within Newham’s community. Enthusiasm for the Games was initially a slow burner, but it did arrive, albeit relatively late in the day during the phase wherein the locals were able to consider the 2012 Olympics in the same way as the rest of the country; as a unifying, identity-creating and identity-affirming event. By this stage the widely publicised notions of ‘Olympic community benefit’ were all but forgotten, having been superseded by the demand to consume the Games and all they entail as entertainment.

The 2012 Governance Structure

A variety of bodies were formed to facilitate the diverse objectives of Olympic-delivery. These bodies¹³ are indicated below (Figure 1). These Olympic-delivery bodies, which will be explored herein, holistically created the impression – real or imagined – that traditional forms of government were to be distanced from the *realpolitik* of Olympic-delivery. This delivery structure permitted a separation of power and accountability between Olympic-delivery and governance at both local and national levels and pre-empted segregation between local people, local politicians and local Olympic-related political discourse. This action meant that Olympic-related concerns rested in the hands of the Olympic deliverers rather than the politicians who were – ostensibly – accountable to the public through the electoral system. Crucially, these Olympic-delivery bodies were short-term, unaccountable hegemonic organisations that had specific life spans and, consequently, if they were to be challenged, the challenge needed to occur during the Olympic-delivery period.

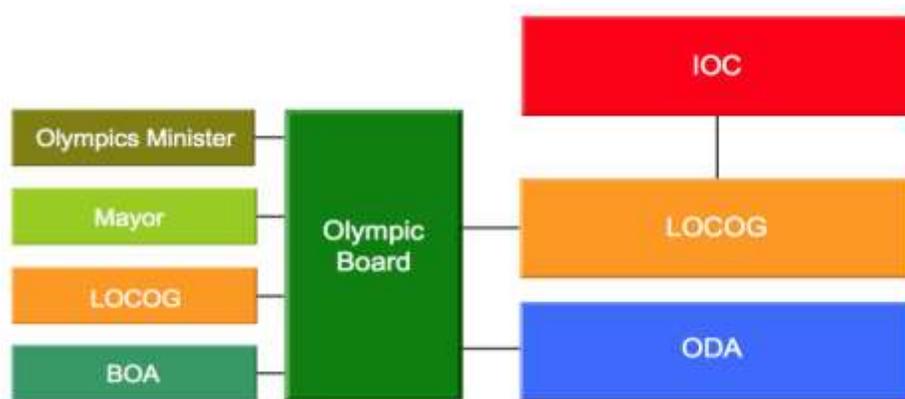


Figure 1. 2012 Olympic Governance¹⁴

¹³ The term ‘Olympic deliverers’ will be used generically hereafter to indicate the official delivery bodies involved in Olympic delivery. Wherever appropriate these bodies will be referenced individually throughout the text.

¹⁴ http://www.apm.org.uk/sites/default/files/Liz_Underhill.pdf

The separation of roles between the various Olympic-delivery bodies created what Bourdieu would call mental structures that impose common principles of vision and division (1994, p. 7). In this case division occurred between the government, the Newham community and the Olympic deliverers. Delivery of the Games was epistemologically oppressive with public understanding and complicity lubricated by the ideologies presented around '*Olympic identity*' and '*Olympic legacy*'; this facilitated the belief that the ends would justify whatever means were necessitated. Once won the 2012 Olympics were always going to happen; the monies invested in them were huge and the political resonance was larger still. Some local community groups in Newham sought to challenge what they perceived were undemocratic, illegitimate or illegal delivery consequences but resistance, as will be illustrated, was largely futile. These challenges were habitually outshone by the promised brilliance of impending Games.

In this regard, the role of the Olympic Games in such processes provides an powerful example of what Lefebvre (1996) would describe as a spatial action used to overcome accountability issues, potential concerns and objections. As he argues; 'a spatial action overcomes conflicts, at least momentarily, even though it does not resolve them, it opens a way from everyday concern to collective joy' (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 222). As will be demonstrated the Olympics – in their paradigm – deflected concerned gazes away from concern and towards the collective, commercialised enjoyment that was to come. In this regard, as a tool to minimise and marginalise objection there is arguably no more influential spatial action than that of the Olympic Games. The broad diversity of contexts that were mitigated in this manner provides much food for thought for any

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Olympic-related evaluation. However, this research seeks to avoid such all-encompassing generalisations and is in accord with MacAloon, who suggested that:

. . . a productive view of the 'whole' – to speak ironically, since the Olympic Games are not only 'mega' but literally unknowable in their full complexity – can only be built up in this mosaic fashion. Totalizing theoretical deductions may be satisfying, even necessary, for other purposes, but they can never, in my opinion, have any standing in social science.

(in Tomlinson and Young, 2006, p. 17)

Accordingly, this thesis attempts to provide a unique contribution to the Olympic mosaic in the form of an ethnographic portrayal of 2012 Olympic-delivery. To these ends the theoretical underpinning will, where applicable, merge key components from the theorising of Auge, Lefebvre, Gramsci and Bourdieu and apply these to the Newham setting. It was considered, as indicated above, that none of these theorists' perspectives were alone adequately applicable to the highly complex Olympic-delivery narrative within the highly complex Olympic-borough of Newham during the transient times of 2012 Olympic delivery. There are key themes that percolate throughout this thesis such as Olympic-led regeneration, hegemonic delivery discourse and gentrification narratives. As a consequence, what follows will provide a theoretical composite of the aforementioned theorists work applied to Olympic-delivery, from a bottom-up perspective to support the extended ethnographic inquiry conducted. Analysis begins with an overview of the hegemonic contextual structure of Olympic-delivery.

Section A:

The Olympic Games: Purpose and Process

This section applies a Gramscian perspective¹⁵ to the Olympic Games by considering the politics and power relations of the Olympic milieu in relation to its hegemonic structure. There is significant evidence, as will be explored, to support the applicability of hegemonic theory to Olympic-delivery discourse. The necessity for its use within this thesis is the intention to provide contextualisation for the forthcoming analysis of those that often go unrepresented in such analysis. This inclusion of voices from the ground-level challenge often challenged the applicability of hegemony to this context, which will be addressed in latter sections that use the theorising of Bourdieu to consider these inconsistencies. This initial section that outlines the contextual rhetoric and permits such differentiation is broken into the following four constituent chapters:

1. Going for Gold: Olympic Hosting
2. Olympic Bidding: Process and Politics
3. The All-Consuming 2012 Ethos
4. The 2012 Transition: Promises and Politics

This opening section begins with an analysis of the Olympic hegemony before providing a holistic indication of the Olympic bidding process. Analysis then considers

¹⁵ “The Gramscian perspective shares some of the components of the orthodox Marxist critique of sport (for example, the pivotal role of class politics and conflict) but it differs in certain important respects. It does not see the ruling class as being in complete control of the working class, but instead as having to make important compromises with it. Furthermore, it licenses critical analysts of sport to share – with reservations – the thrill of the sports stadium and the frisson of sports fandom (Rowe, 2004, p.102).

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these findings in relation to the 2012 Olympic bidding contest. From here the inquiry progresses from these analyses to explore Olympic ideology and its dissemination with regard the 2012 edition of such. This section culminates with a delineation of the motivations, outcomes and agendas that were outlined during the 2012 bidding contest and provides insights relating to where these hosting outcomes were expected to be experienced most significantly.

Chapter 1. GOING FOR GOLD: OLYMPIC HOSTING

Olympic hegemony has to be considered using examples that highlight the organisational power structure and motivations of the Olympic movement. The following examples illustrate the power relations that are sustained within the Olympic schema through the sporting properties of the Olympic Games, which inspire the ‘common consent’ of the masses through the ideological superstructure of Olympic sport¹⁶ (Gramsci, 1971; Rowe, 2004). The data uncovered within these findings are then applied to their relevance to 2012 Olympic-delivery. This section places focus upon the Olympic ideology, how it is formed and how it fulfils the dual role of disseminating the ideological needs of capitalism whilst concomitantly providing a departure from much of everyday life (Morgan, 1993, pp. 44-45). This chapter seeks to provide an overview of the complex interweaving between the Olympic Movement¹⁷ and the cultural, economic, and political dimensions created through the production, distribution, and circulation of meanings attached to the Games.

¹⁶ In this regard forms of popular culture, particularly sporting Mega-Events such as the Olympic Games, emerge within a Gramscian framework as crucial battlefields where social values and relations are shaped, represented and contested. Consequently, the application of Gramsci’s concept of hegemony will facilitate an exploration of the dynamic framework of the Olympic industry and their actions, motivations and ideologies. It will also enable an analyses of how these are disseminated and perceived throughout Olympic delivery and beyond (Gramsci, 1971; Hargreaves, 1986; Rowe, 2004; Giulianotti, 2005).

¹⁷ The Olympic Movement (sometimes called the Olympic Family) comprises a number of different bodies that purport to share the values of Olympism and are integrated into the broader governance of the Olympic Games via regulatory, resourcing or supporting functions. Led by the IOC, other members include international sporting federations, domestic Olympic Associations, host Olympic organising committees and the participants of the Olympic Games themselves (Fussey *et al*, 2011, p1). It includes National Olympic Committees (NOCs), International Sports Federations (IFs), Organising Committees for the Olympic Games (OCOGs), TOP partners, broadcast partners, United Nations agencies and of course the athletes themselves.

1.1 – Creating Olympic History

There has been extensive Olympic-related research conducted from a wide variety of paradigms. A cursory examination of Olympic-related literature reveals analyses that illustrate the Games' relevance to many aspects of contemporary society including amongst many, many others: politics (Espy, 1979; Kanin, 1981; Burbank, Andranovich and Heying, 2001), sponsorship (Brown, 2000; 2002), tourism (Brown, 2007), religion (Rothenbuhler, 1989; Guttman, 1992), social movements (Armstrong, Hobbs and Lindsay, 2011), capitalist economics (Lenskyj, 2000) and terrorism (Charters, 1983; Reeve, 2001; Toohey and Taylor, 2008; Richards, Fussey and Silke, 2010). Indeed, it seems quite conceivable that one would be able to build a life sized papier-mâché replica of London's Olympic Stadium using just a small selection of such publications.

The appeal of inquiring into the IOC and the Olympic Games as academic subject matter is reflected throughout mainstream non-academic publications. These include historical studies of specific Games such as those conducted by Walters (2006) of the 1936 Nazi Berlin Games and Kent's (2008) cautionary tale of the 1908 London Olympics. In Olympic literary terms the quest for 'inside knowledge' on a variety of issues has seen into print behind the scenes accounts of the internal ramifications of Olympic bidding and delivery. These incorporate Yarbrough's (2000) portrayal of the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and Lee's (2006) account of the 2012 London Olympic bid to name but two.

The wide variety of Olympic-related literature reflects the malleability of the

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Olympics as a subject matter with many studies going far beyond the single 'sporting' domain. Those that take what might be called an 'Olympic outcome' perspective have formed depersonalised, 'before and after' geographical analyses of Olympic hosting (Preuss 2004; Gold and Gold 2007), which illustrate the benefits and pitfalls of Olympic hosting. One expanding theme of contemporary Olympic academic analysis explores the risk that accompanies Olympic hosting and the need for the intense security and surveillance of Olympic locales (Boyle and Haggerty, 2009; Coaffee, Fussey and Moore, 2011; Cornelissen, 2011; Eick, 2011; Fussey *et al.*, 2011; Giulianotti, 2011; Samatas, 2011; Schimmel, 2011). Yet, despite such well-publicised risk a consistent positive Olympic narrative proselytises the belief that becoming an Olympic host is hugely sociologically and economically beneficial. This initial section will explore why this is and how such confidence transferred to London 2012.

That is not to say that there are no Olympic critics and both academe (Lenskyj 2000, 2002, 2008; Boykoff, 2011) and investigative journalism (Jennings, 1996, 2000) provide interesting counterpoints to the more commonplace positive Olympic eulogies. However, it can be argued that such counterpoints appear to be orientated toward an anti-Olympic perspective from their outset rather than beginning with an open-minded academic orientation and arriving at their destination organically.¹⁸ Consequently, this account begins by objectifying Olympic history in the pursuit of an open-minded orientation to creating an informed sociological analysis.

¹⁸ As Lenskyj herself stated in the introduction to her 2008 work *The Best Olympics Ever? Social Impacts of Sydney 2000* 'I make no claim that the book is comprehensive or balanced, or that it employs a traditional scholarly approach. Rather, it is an attempt to examine social inequities generated or exacerbated by Sydney's Olympic preparations from the perspective of disadvantaged people whose voices would not otherwise be heard' (2002, p. 1).

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The nature and significance of the IOC and the Olympic Games have evolved over time to earn the lofty social signifier that is the prefix of the ‘Mega-Event’ (Dunn and McGuirk, 1999; Roche, 2000; Burbank *et al.*, 2001; Close, Askew and Xu, 2006; Brownell, 2008). Thus, any examination of the delivery of the Olympic ‘Mega-Event’ must begin with an overview of its key figures, in terms of power, influence and control, what follows is such a beginning.

1.2 – Editing Olympic History

In 1871 French novelist Gustave Flaubert insinuated that our general ignorance of history makes us likely to slander and vilify our own age (cited in Scammell, 1995). Paradoxically, the Olympic Movement appears to concurrently bolster and contradict Flaubert’s assumption, dependent upon which version of history is read. As each Olympic Games is an episode of a larger Olympic narrative a Games can either be engulfed by history or left to stand-alone for consideration. Thus, one can argue that to explore a single edition of the Olympic Games is to ignore history, which supports Flaubert’s assertion that because past Olympics – accurately or not – are generally perceived positively the current version may easily be vilified during nostalgic comparison. However, any true exploration of the history of the Olympic Movement may discourage the slander and vilification of Games from our own age simply because the IOC have so many skeletons in their closet that are rarely remembered.

In recent history the Olympic Movement has become synonymous with bidding corruption (Simson and Jennings 1992; Cochrane, Peck and Tickell, 1996; Jennings

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1996, 2000), contradiction (notably through commercialisation, see Tomlinson, 2005) and scandals around performance enhancing drugs (see Dudley, 2001). Such potentially hegemonic concerns seem habitually mitigated by institutional Olympic idealism, which has seen any potential vilification of the Olympic Movement diverted towards individual athlete or representative or the perceived incompetence of the host. In this regard it remains to be seen whether knowledge of Olympic history would categorically help or hinder Flaubert's assumptions, but historical awareness does provide an interesting yardstick with which to contextualise 2012 hosting considerations. Consequently, heeding the advice of Flaubert, this section will explore pertinent examples of Olympic history in an attempt to prevent unwarranted vilification of the 2012 Games.

This analysis begins by briefly taking into account how contemporary society gathers and uses information. As a result of the introduction of, and ever-growing dependence upon, 24/7 news (available through 24-hour news TV and radio stations, the internet, Twitter and other forms of social media), access to a plethora of extremely current but depth-limited information is available at society's fingertips and is relied upon as a valuable source of truth. The application of such technology to the Olympic Movement is most readily apparent in the period immediately before an Olympic Games. In these times Olympic-related information is presented by the media in abridged forms where loquaciousness is frequently at a premium and erudition is obsolete, presumably reserved for the off-message Parliamentarian or the dissenting sections of academe. It is within the Olympic-delivery time-frame that the plethora of current Olympic-related news presents its content merely hinting at the wider political, social or cultural settings they apply to.

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Integral to the above issues are the notions of knowledge and power. Bourdieu's 1998 work *On Television and Journalism* highlights the follies of this means of knowledge processing. The main theme of his work is the means with which television constructs and produces news, information and debate in abridged forms. Condensing the news into bite-sized snippets has, he argues, made it impossible for journalists to conduct any meaningful analysis; they are constrained by issues of time and effect. Because of this Bourdieu elucidates news is pared back and becomes less concerned with factual depth and more concerned with catching a viewer's attention. This is achieved through the use of buzzwords that disseminate a specific narrative without any substance. One such buzzword for the 2012 Olympics was '*legacy*', as will be explored in what follows.

This structuring of televised news, Bourdieu argued, had a wide homogenising effect upon news purveyors, creating as it did the template for other news disseminators, such as newspapers, to follow. The advent of Twitter, created after Bourdieu's death, takes this further by providing news stories to the globe in 140 letters, or less. This significantly effects society's ability to critically assess sociological events – such as local level Olympic-delivery impact, without personal experience – and, as Bourdieu contends in relation to the homogenisation of news, this 'sort of game of mirrors reflecting one another produces a formidable effect of mental closure' (1998, p. 24).

This mental closure is intrinsic to the discursive narrative of Olympic-delivery interpretation and assumption because the media formed the perceptions of 2012 Olympic-delivery for those without personal experience, which constituted the vast majority of the globe. Consequently, the origins and reasoning that support Olympic-related mental closure need to be historically considered in relation to the Olympic

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Movement to reveal the validity of these assumptive beneficial links between Olympic rhetoric and Olympic-delivery reality. This perception management then needs applying to issues of accountability of Olympic hosting outcomes. What follows examines whether the IOC should be held accountable for all associated implications of Olympic hosting and asks if not, who should be? This analysis begins in 1894 with the creation of the Olympic Movement and the management of its image.

1.3 – The IOC: A League of Gentlemen?

The IOC, founded in 1894, is the organisational body for the entire Olympic Movement. Its foundation is attributable to French nobleman Baron Pierre de Coubertin whose philosophical ideals were the basis for a set of guidelines that led to its creation, embodied in something known as the Olympic Charter.¹⁹ These guidelines whilst well intentioned were extremely vague, very poorly defined and lacked the rigid identity commonly associated with such a significant global organisation. Yet, as Nigel Crowther (2001), Director of the International Centre for Olympic Studies, states, what was clear from its outset was that the IOC had aspirations that extended far beyond sport:

The goal of the Olympic Movement is to contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport practiced without discrimination of any kind, in a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.

(Olympic Charter, Rule 1)

¹⁹ The Olympic Charter is a set of rules and guidelines for the organisation of the Olympic Games and Olympic governance. It is a codification of the fundamental principles, rules and laws of the Olympic Movement.

The Olympic Movement was and is defined by its fundamental goals, which are:

- Promoting sport and competitions through the intermediary of national and international sports institutions worldwide.
- Co-operating with public and private organisations to place sport at the service of mankind.
- Assisting to develop 'Sport for All'.
- Seeking to advance women in sport at all levels and in all structures, with a view to achieving equality between men and women.
- Opposing all forms of commercial exploitation of sport and athletes.
- Pursuing the fight against doping.
- Promoting sports ethics and fair play.
- Raising awareness of environmental problems.
- Facilitating financial and educational support for developing countries through the IOC institution Olympic Solidarity.

(The IOC²⁰)

As the above wholesome Olympic goals would indicate, the idealistic aspirations of the IOC are difficult to oppose, except perhaps on the grounds of realism, practicality or applicability to the tangible actions and decisions of the IOC. In the altruistic endeavour of the dissemination of their peaceful, inclusive message the IOC differ from other global sporting organisations. This is because they use their sporting event to

²⁰ <http://www.olympic.org/about-ioc-institution>

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promote principles that are applicable not only to the sporting context they are applied to but more broadly, as a moral ideology for life. The ideals behind the IOC are referred to as the Olympic Ideals, or Olympism (Muller, 2000; Schaffer and Smith, 2000; Bale and Christensen, 2004; Parry, 2006; Girginov, 2010). It can be of little wonder that Olympism has often been referred to as a secular religion (Rothenbuhler, 1989). Critics have argued however that Olympism is ‘more accurately understood as the projection of the values of a specific patriarchal, Western, elite sector of society’ (Maguire, Butler, Barnard and Golding, 2008, p. 172) as opposed to an all-encompassing humanistic philosophy. Moreover, Wamsley (2004) has described Olympism as a ‘metaphoric empty flask’ (p. 232). Who, we might ask, are the guardians of such morality?

The IOC has evolved greatly since its formation and currently comprises approximately 205 national Olympic Committees. It remains the absolute authority over the entire Olympic Movement and is the creator of the Olympic Games hosting criteria. A sub-group of the IOC selects the best fit for these criteria from potential Olympic Games host cities. The IOC Executive Board consists of a President, four vice-Presidents and ten other elected officials with all members elected via a secret ballot.²¹ The Executive board assumes the general overall responsibility for IOC administration and affairs management and has a political manifesto, of sorts, known as the Olympic Charter.

The Olympic Charter provides the road-map for governing the Olympic Movement and has five chapters containing 61 articles. As highlighted, the IOC mission statement is to globally promote the values of Olympism²² which aim to uphold ethics in

²¹ For more details regarding the hierarchical structure of the IOC visit www.olympic.org

²² An IOC definition of Olympism is outlined in Chapter 1, article 2 of the Olympic Charter.

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sport, encourage participation in sport, ensures the Olympic Games occur regularly, protects the Olympic Movement and encourages and supports the development of sport. Therefore, it may be said that the IOC is chiefly concerned with self-preservation, retaining dominance within the sporting realm, promoting the significance of said realms and upholding the continuation and significance of its politically pliable sporting event – the Olympic Games. Interestingly, US political analyst David Kanin stated that the malleability of the Games is only possible because, as an institution, the Olympics have:

. . . no intrinsic political value, it can be used by any state to demonstrate the physical prowess of the human resources of any ideology or value system.

(1981, p. 2)

It appears that the IOC achieved global significance as a result of the absence of any political definition combined with a lack of intrinsic political values. The political blank slate the IOC presents has thus enabled the Olympics to evolve continuously to become an effective vehicle to promote myriad issues pertinent to extremely divergent situations and yet retain its sovereignty. The IOC and their empty flask of Olympism can be utilised as a vehicle to further political causes. This malleability provides an insight into why the IOC and the Olympic Games have achieved and maintained global significance in contemporary society. The IOC are – in a sense – detached from the Olympic Games in a similar way to how a business owner may franchise out a store. The brand can be relied upon even if the shop owner is incompetent and the umbrella organisation can deflect blame upon others if their product is tarnished in any way.

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The precise nature and implications of the role the IOC fulfil, beyond the selection of the host city, is an intriguing topic that to fully explore requires implicit knowledge to contrast with external scrutiny. This was perhaps best exemplified by Dick Pound who provided an interesting, if somewhat biased, insider's perspective of the IOC, Olympism and the Olympic Games. His revealing 2004 *Inside the Olympics* provides an Olympic narrative from the unique perspective of being a former Olympic athlete, a national sports administrator, a former President of a national Olympic Association (the Canadian Olympic Committee) and a member of the IOC. The themes Pound touches upon offer a potted history of historical threats to the Olympic Movement including institutional corruption, human rights violations, drug abuse and terrorism. Perhaps unsurprisingly for an account written by someone with such personal investment in the Olympic Movement, such narratives are permeated by the mitigation of ethical sport and deference to Olympism.

Despite threats to IOC integrity the fact remains, that the dissemination of Olympism is a highly successful political and commercial endeavour. Intuitively it appears that politicisation and commercialisation should be the greatest threats to the legitimacy of the IOC as an organisation and Olympism as an ideology. However, as the IOC have become more and more influential, their embrace of such, particularly of commercialism has become ever more profound. This action appears an ill-fit with their ideology and yet this embracing of commercialism seems to have bolstered the IOC as a leading global brand in its own right, and even enhanced Olympism as an ideology, rather than threaten or question it.

1.4 – What Fuels the Olympic Flame?

Any cursory examination of newspapers or television advertising in the months before an Olympic Games would indicate that Olympic advertising amounts to an astronomical sum. One source cites the figure of approximately 2 billion Euros for the four Games between 1996 and 2004 (Preuss, 2004). The role of commercialisation, particularly in terms of influence upon the Olympic Movement, cannot be underestimated. That said the IOC maintains that the primary consequence of this commercialisation has been the greatly enhanced dissemination of Olympism – an enhancement that allows Olympism to be presented to infinitely wider audiences than would otherwise have been available had commercialism not been embraced.

Supporting this line of thought are those (such as Barney *et al.*, 2002) that have directly correlated the social significance of the IOC to their increased commercialism. Such commercialisation has been explored in a number of studies (Davies, 2008; Dolles and Soderman, 2008 and Preuss, Gemeinder and Segun, 2008). These works suggest that to raise pre-requisite status defining and image enhancing revenues the IOC relies heavily upon commercial endeavours.

The pie chart below indicates that over 90% of the contemporary revenues of the IOC comes from broadcasting rights and sponsorship. This clearly delineates the overall significance of the importance of commercialisation to the IOC that supports the assertion

that commercialism is the fuel that drives the IOC engines. However, money, influence and power are rarely a comfortable fit with idealism.

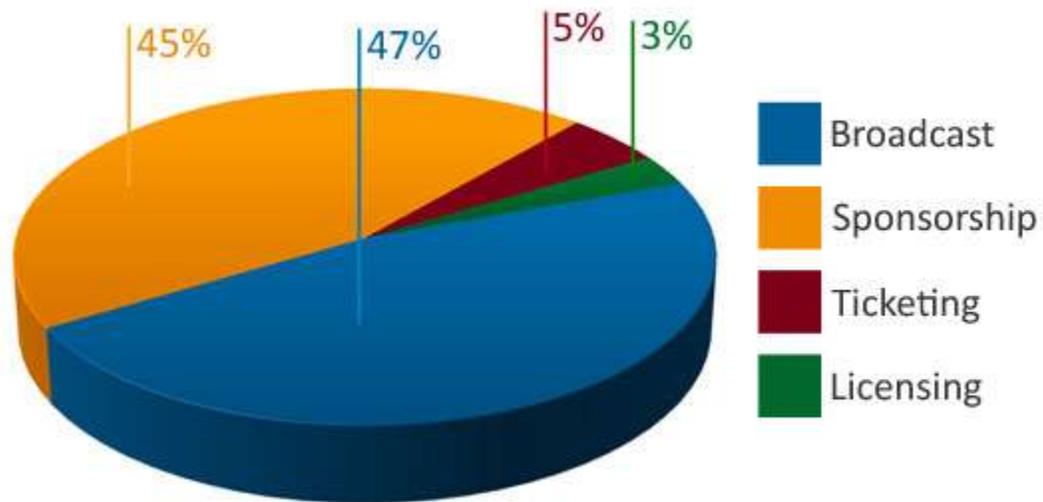


Figure 2. Olympic Revenue²³

Presumably, Olympic-related commercial viability and the longevity of the IOC and the Olympic Games depend upon a deeply significant two-way relationship. The Olympic name and iconic five-rings *motif* are much sought after by corporations because they are assumed to make a positive contribution to the image of a brand in the eyes of the consumer (Wernick, 1991; Stipp and Schiavone, 1996; Brown, 2002). The Olympics play an important role in the globalisation of brands; city branding and promotion will be discussed later. This branding explains why companies (and Olympic hosts) are willing to pay considerable fees and commit significant hosting funds to be part of the The Olympic Partner²⁴ (TOP) programme – the official licensing/merchandising program of

²³ <http://www.olympic.org/ioc-financing-revenue-sources-distribution?tab=Sources>

²⁴ In 1997 the TOP acronym was changed from 'The Olympic Programme' to 'The Olympic Partner Programme', suggesting an evolution in the relationship between the 'Olympic Family' and its corporate sponsors. The TOP programme aimed to develop a diversified revenue base for the Olympic Games and to establish long-term corporate partnerships. The TOP programme operates on a four-year cycle and there is only one TOP sponsor allowed in each commercial categorisation

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the IOC – and thus, to gain commercial access to Olympic symbols be associated and promoted in ideology (Bellamy, 1998; Seguin and O'Reilly, 2008a, 2008b). This two-way relationship attracts some criticism as to the appropriateness of the IOC's choice of commercial partners and indeed the value that becoming an Olympic partner extols (Farrell and Frame, 1997; Grohs, Wagner and Vsetecka, 2004). However, as MacAloon states, critical judgements should be made only when considered in relation to the context to which they are applied:

I am certainly critical of the 'Olympic industry,' but I have nothing in common with critics who cannot seem to imagine (if they do not do fieldwork they could hardly know) that many of the same Olympic officials who sign the sponsorship contracts proceed to battle those sponsors in defence of the values of the Olympic Movement.

(MacAloon, in Tomlinson and Young, 2006, p. 32)

To paraphrase Bourdieu, if there are no ways out of the games that are played, in this case the commercialisation of Olympism, the best option is to understand the game, and work out the most appropriate and useful means of play to achieve favourable outcomes (1984). This perception resonated throughout the following IOC statement; 'without the support of the business community, without its technology, expertise, people, services, products, telecommunications, its financing – the Olympic Games could

section. The success of the TOP programme was immediate. The programme has generated nearly \$2bn US since its inception in 1985. (See Seguin and O'Reilly, 2008a).

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not and cannot happen' (IOC²⁵). This raises question as to whether it is a case of the Machiavellian iron fist of global commercialism being covered by the mitigating velvet glove of Olympism, or is it more a case of the nail of Olympism being driven home by the might of the commercial hammer? It is logical to assume that it is a mixture of both, especially when considering that corporate branding and its attendant capitalistic ideology have become naturalised in Olympic coverage to the extent that the Olympics and commercialism are now synonymous (Slater, 1998; Roche, 2000; Barney *et al.*, 2002, Scherer, Sam and Batty 2005).

For some, it appears difficult to comprehend how Capitalism can fit so readily with Olympism and vehemently voice their objections to this relationship. These critical views are encapsulated here by French Marxist Jean-Marie Brohm (1978), who purported that 'the primary aim of the organisers of Olympic competitions is not sport for its own sake but sport for capitalist profit' (p. 117). Moreover, considering Brohm managed to ascertain such a capitalistic slant to IOC orientation back in 1978, his hypothesis was strengthened exponentially nearly three decades later when in 2005 the IOC were described as 'the world's most valuable and important franchise' (Payne, 2005, p. xiv). Other research indicates that those from the commercial sectors are less concerned with Olympism as an ideology and more concerned with how they, through association with the IOC, can use Olympism to build markets, construct brand awareness, and create local-globalised consumers and identities (Rowe, McKay, and Miller, 1998; Slater, 1998; Jackson and Andrews, 2005; Silk, Andrews, and Cole, 2005; Maguire *et al.*, 2008; Perryman, 2012). The Olympics are without a doubt a theatre of dreams, which sells a

²⁵ For more information see: <http://www.olympic.org/commercial-sponsorships>

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variety of material goods and food and drink. For many observers it is hard to find any losers in this relationship.

The philosophical nature of the debate regarding the appropriateness of combining the pursuit of corporate commercial interest with Olympism has been conducted by various scholars (Eyquem, 1976; Lenk, 1979, 1984; MacAloon, 1981; Segrave, 1988, Maguire, *et al.*, 2008). Such a relationship will not be explored any further here other than to recommend such reading to the inquisitive. One can add that this *modus operandi* has served the IOC and their partners extremely well. A plethora of evidence suggests that the commercial underpinning of the Olympics has played a significant role in the global expansion of the Games over the past 30 years that has directly promoted the growth and influence of the IOC (Real, 1996; Whitson, 1998; Smith and Schaffer, 2000; Barney *et al.*, 2002; Ritchie, 2002). Throughout this on-going pursuit for global significance the IOC depends upon the media as a means of promoting themselves as an organisation, their sponsors, their athletes and, concomitantly, enhancing the allegory of Olympism.

This is not a new process and as Espy (1979) highlights the origins of the commercialism of the IOC and the Olympic Games began in the 1960s and has expanded ever since. Crucially for this research, these commercial benefits are not limited to the IOC, as Zakus illustrated economic benefits are mostly available to the bodies involved in the staging of the Games. Which, in addition to the IOC include the Games organising committee and the sub-IOC bodies (International Federations, National Olympic Committees, etc.) (1992, p. 346), not to mention those involved with the myriad other aspects of Olympic hosting. It seems fair to conclude that the IOC has, in the form of the

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Olympic Games, a unique, malleable, economically exceptional, globally alluring catalyst of change for hire. It would appear that hosting benefit is all but guaranteed for the IOC, their plethora of official (commercial) partners and whichever other bodies are able to become involved in Olympic hosting.

1.5 – Institutional Accountability?

The IOC are the facilitators of the Olympic Games; they wield their power publically by overtly bestowing their gift of Games to any city of their choosing in accordance with their specific, evolving selection criteria. This necessity leads bidding committees and hosts to adopt and promote a deferential stance toward the IOC, most notably validating their image as that of altruistic benefactors. However, once this selection is made, it appears the reality of IOC involvement in Olympic hosting and delivery is somewhat more akin to a silent partner than an influential contributor as will now be explored.

There are those that view the Olympics and the IOC through rose-tinted lenses, perceiving the Games as a shining example of altruism. These Olympic evangelists, such as Guttman (1984), romantically proclaim that the ‘gross social and economic injustices of the imperfect world in which we live do not exist within the Olympic domain’ (p. 28). Adding that within the Olympics there is ‘no commercial connivery, nor political chicanery’ (ibid). However, do such statements consider the wider context that the IOC and the Olympic Games are situated in? Do these evangelists choose not see that the

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Games are used as a catalyst for urban change? If not, would they if their view were not restricted, voluntarily or otherwise, by that of Olympism?

These perspectives appear to be based upon assumptions that coming from their lofty ideological origins the Olympic Games can be used to illuminate disparity with every swoosh (presumably sponsored by Nike) of its beneficent Olympic Torch.²⁶

However, these narratives seem to overlook the fact that the primary goal of the IOC is the wider promotion of Olympism, rather than the sociological benefits of hosting the Olympic Games. This reality presents a key consideration of this research; at what point are non-sporting outcomes attached to the Olympic Games and by whom? Furthermore, what are the motivations for Olympic hosting and are those that become involved in Olympic-delivery following their own personal agendas that are strengthened and mitigated by Olympism?

The above questions resonate around notions of power, the intrigue of decision-making and accountability. Collectively they are pertinent to an understanding as to who calls the shots with regards the delivery of the Games. Fundamentally, the IOC are the ultimate authority that govern the Olympic Movement but there are other entities that make-up this organisation who often evade the public spotlight.

²⁶ Despite the underlying historical narrative the Olympic flame itself is 'a relatively new piece of ritual . . . invented by the Dutch for the Amsterdam Games of 1928, and had no roots in ancient Greek culture' (Walters, 2006, p.12). In fact the torch relay actually began at the 1936 Olympic Games where it was 'hi-jacked by the Nazi propaganda machine, which immediately understood its power and symbolism . . . The Olympic torch has become a magic wand of the Games. The torch carrier is transformed into the bearer of the Olympic message as the flame makes its great journey from Olympia, Greece, to the site of the Games' (Payne, 2005, pp.125 - 126) It is fair to say that if one would look for something to give the Nazi's credit for, it was surely their ability to uncover and exploit powerful symbolic narratives that had great unification potential. Accordingly, the Nazi-instigated torch relay has grown in Olympic resonance and the 2012 route incorporated 74 locations, which included 8,000 torchbearers who ran through their local areas (Or areas where they were well known, as in the case of celebrities). According to Short the relay is now 'one of the most important rituals . . . culminating in the eventual entry into the stadium to coincide with the official opening ceremony of the Games. The torch's ritualised journeys throughout the country generate enthusiasm for the Games, prime commercial markets, and create spectacles of national cohesion and unity. As the torch crosses the country, it binds regional differences in a shared and common experience' (Short, 2004, p. 94).

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To consider who influenced what in Olympic-delivery necessitates an inquiry that begins at the bidding stage, the main constituents of which are the IOC, the International Federations (IFs) and the National Olympic Committees (NOCs). The IFs are international non-governmental organisations that administer international sports and encompass organisations administering such sports at the national level. They govern their respective sports and ensure its promotion and development. They monitor the everyday administration of their sports and guarantee the regular organisation of competitions. Fundamentally, it seems IFs have little or no bearing upon the outcomes of the Olympic-delivery.

The latter, i.e. the NOCs, develop, promote and protect the Olympic Movement in their respective cities and countries. The NOCs are the only organisation that can select and designate the host city. They then apply to the IOC for permission to organise an Olympic Games in their respective countries. The NOCs promote the fundamental principles of Olympism at a national level within the frameworks of their respective sports. NOCs are committed to the development of athletes and support the development of 'Sport for All' programmes and high performance sport in their countries. On top of this NOCs supervise the preliminary selection of potential bid cities. This appears to be of consequence to considerations of 2012 hosting. It was in fact the British NOC that selected London as a viable Olympic host and submitted their selection to the IOC for selection. This raises the question as to what motivated the British NOC to select London as a host and what impact those who made such a choice envisaged it would have.

1.6 – The BOA and London's Olympic insemination

The British Olympic Association (BOA²⁷) are the British NOC. They are an independent organisation funded privately through sponsorship, asset-sales and IOC contributions.²⁸ The BOA was founded in 1905 and the President (until the culmination of the 2012 Games) was Lord Colin Moynihan, who served as Margaret Thatcher's Minister for Sport between 1987-1990. The principal role of the BOA is to prepare Britain's athletes for international competition. They receive no funding from the National Lottery²⁹ or government and are reported to have, akin to the IOC, no political interests, despite the fact that they have an ex-cabinet Minister as their President. The relevance of the BOA as an organisation can be considered dependent upon the status, income and interest generated by British athletic sporting events and their athletes; as we have seen hosting the Olympic Games is an globally significant, not to mention incredibly successful commercial venture. Thus making Olympic hosting a primary objective to the significance of the BOA as an organisation.

Before London won the right to host 2012 the BOA had bid to host the Olympics on two separate occasions. These bids had promoted the city of Manchester as a potential host for both the 1996 and 2000 Games. Following Manchester's second Olympic bid failure Simon Clegg, Chief Executive of the BOA, conceded that, as a result of their choice of Manchester they were never really in the race to be an Olympic host:

²⁷ For more information regarding the BOA see: <http://www.teamgb.com/about-boa>

²⁸ In 2011 it was reported that the BOA had received a £6million bailout from Locog in addition to a £28million, seven year, Joint Marketing Programme Agreement income between the two that had been secured as a condition of London hosting the 2012 Games. Additionally, the BOA received another £6.5million in sponsorship and asset sales in 2009, taking its reported total funding to at least £40million in the seven year Olympic delivery period (Kelso, 2011). (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/olympics/8360671/London-2012-Olympics-British-Olympic-Associations-6m-funds-raises-new-questions.html>)

²⁹ British Prime Minister John Major established the UK National Lottery in 1994. For every £1 spent on a lottery ticket some 28 pence goes to 'good causes'. The National Lottery Distribution Fund decides upon what causes that are to be awarded funds. This NLFDF board is, coincidentally, administered by the government Department for Culture, Media and Sport, which at the time was overseen by Tessa Jowell . . .

'The very clear message was that only when we came back with London would the IOC believe we were serious {or should that be marketable enough?} about wanting to host the Olympics'

(Cited in Lee, 2006, p. 5)

It may be inferred from this that the British NOC's motivations were to secure the Olympics for London to benefit their own agenda of attaining athletic success and providing an economic boost to their organisation. This view was echoed by Israeli IOC member Alex Gilady who stated that 'if you want to be taken seriously, come back with London' (Livingstone, 2011, p. 478). Consequently, the British NOC perceived London as the only plausible route to attain their ambition of Olympic hosting and it is reasonable to assume that they did not consider the wider Olympic hosting implications. It appears that, at the international and national levels of Olympic hegemony, the Olympic bodies show very little regard for the community impact of the Olympic Games *per se*. Rather, the bidding process from the NOC perspective is focused upon furthering their agenda by appealing to the contemporary IOC selection panels' whims. These findings lead to the conclusion that the much heralded 'community impact' of Olympic hosting is somewhat irrelevant to the relationship between the NOC and its perception of the IOC selection criteria. Those involved both with the initial bidding and ultimate selection processes (the Olympic Movement) appear to have very little direct relationship with those who might one day be the Olympic hosts.

This chapter therefore concludes that evaluating the consequences of Olympic-delivery requires an initial scrutiny of the processes involved within Olympic bidding. Ideally research needs to discover what role – if any – that entity called ‘local communities’ played within the 2012 proposal and indeed if and when ‘local communities’ ever become or became a consideration at all. In this regard, the Olympic Games must be evaluated in relation to its perceived role as a tool to disseminate the social values of the controlling institutions through negotiation (Gramsci, 1971). It must also be considered in relation to the Games being a facilitator of the hegemonic tools that condense and crystallise ‘the processes of cultural domination and conflict’ through sport (Clarke and Critcher, 1985, p. 228). Therefore, the bidding process carries great significance for this research, particularly in relation to how, why and when host cities commit to time-limited Games-related urban regeneration, which will be addressed in the next chapter.³⁰

³⁰ In agreement with Fussey *et al's* (2011) conclusions Olympic-related urban regeneration is considered ‘a comprehensive integrated vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems and which seeks to bring about lasting change in the economic, social, physical and environmental condition of an area’ (Roberts and Sykes, 2000, p.17).

Chapter 2. OLYMPIC BIDDING: PROCESS AND POLITICS

This chapter will consider the constructs and contestations involved in the competition for arguably the greatest prize in all of sports – ‘Olympic legacy’. This – implicit – prize is awarded to the victors of the IOC Olympic bidding contest. The conceptualisation of this reward provokes one to focus upon both sports and non-sports-related outcomes that are perceived as achievable only through Olympic hosting. This widespread conviction has led to the term ‘legacy’ becoming both self-evident and a means of justifying and legitimising the costs of bidding for and hosting the Olympic Games. Accordingly, ‘legacy’ is often portrayed as a panacea to address any and all shortfalls of a host city – economic, social, political and everything in between. This chapter explores the Olympic bidding milieu and considers the creation of the London 2012 ‘*legacy*’ narrative and its implications in relation to 2012 Olympic outcomes.

2.1 – What Am I bid?

As discovered earlier the IOC are singularly responsible for making the ultimate decision regarding who will host the Olympic Games, with candidates being evaluated exclusively against their own bespoke criteria. To be considered a viable nominee all potential hosts have to present a detailed plan of why they would create the most appropriate next chapter of the on-going Olympic narrative. To enable a coherent plan

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that theoretically fulfils such criteria each host is permitted by the IOC to spend up to \$25 million on their Olympic campaign (Hill, 1996).³¹

The Olympic Movement has always been free to move around the world to select whichever national city / nation they deem to be the most favourable 'political, financial and social regime' (Forster and Pope, 2004, p. 9) to further their movement. This bears credence to the statement made by Olympic critic Lenskyj (1996) who purported that 'it appears the rhetoric about keeping politics out of sport has been replaced by the explicit politicising of the bid process' (p. 395). However, if we reflect upon the Olympic Charter we might remember that the IOC goals are 'to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of man, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity'.³² The apparent dichotomy between these orientations ensured that whilst on this quest for dignity and harmonious human development the IOC have at times become synonymous with corruption, bribery and elitism (Jennings, 1996, 1997; Jennings and Sambrook, 2000; Lenskyj, 2000, 2002). This raises the question as to what motivates the decision-making process. Furthermore, who calls the shots and to what ends?

These questions relate back to the IOC's earliest incarnations. Baron Pierre de Coubertin handpicked IOC members to oversee the movement and the decisions therein. The composition of such was limited to 'princes, counts, barons, nobles and generals and the rest were wealthy bourgeois' (Jennings, 1996, p. 34), promoting in some an early scepticism around considerations of impartiality and widespread Olympic corruption.

³¹ According to the Director of Communications and Public Affairs for London's 2012 bid Mike Lee (Lee, 2006) the figure stood at approximately £30 million (\$48 million).

³² The Olympic Charter is available at: http://www.olympic.org/Documents/olympic_charter_en.pdf

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According to journalist Tom Fordyce³³ such scepticism has followed ever since. Over the past 25 years rumours of dubious and unethical practices by IOC members have appeared in the media and academe alike, particularly regarding the bidding process (Jennings, 1996, 1997; Jennings and Sambrook, 2000; Lenskyj, 2000, 2002). For example when Barcelona won the right to host the 1992 Games, reports of corrupt practise in the bidding process from Toronto, Sweden, Atlanta, Manchester and Cape Town delegates were all suppressed by the IOC (Jennings, 2000). These accusations remained buried until 1998, when a Swiss member of the IOC publicly proclaimed that bribery, vote-buying and selling was a long-standing practice undertaken by IOC members from prospective host cities (Christie, 1998; Lenskyj, 2000).

One particularly well-publicised example of corruption was the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics bid where it was revealed that up to 20 of the 110 IOC members had been bribed with holidays, jobs, university places for relatives and cosmetic surgery. One IOC member even requested Viagra, a vibrator and a Violin from the hosts during an official Olympic visit (Jennings and Sambrook, 2000; Lenskyj, 2000) – faster, higher, stronger, indeed. The revelations that the Salt Lake Olympic Bid Committee had authorised the distribution of payments and gifts to IOC members in return for their votes (Lenskyj, 2000) became more damaging to the IOC's reputation when it was alleged that it was IOC members that instigated the impropriety (Associated Press, 1999; Christie, 1998; Mason, Thibault and Misener, 2006).

Another example of duplicity arose when IOC vice-president Kim Un-Yong was prosecuted for corruption and sentenced to two and a half years imprisonment and fined

³³ Tom Fordyce views were available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/olympics/tom-fordyce/>

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\$763,000 by the Seoul Central District Court.³⁴ He was found to have embezzled \$3 million and to have accepted \$700,000 in bribes from various businessmen wanting positions on sports committees.³⁵ These efforts to mask corruption are consistent with Price's assertions that in the Olympic sphere there is a propensity to 'intensely manage {the} narratives of the Games' (2008, p. 89).

2.2 – The London 2012 Bid

The NOC's are the only organisations able to offer a city to the IOC for Olympic hosting. The message from the IOC selectors was – as mentioned earlier – very clear; second tier British cities such as Birmingham or Manchester were simply not feasible vehicles for Olympism. Only a London bid would do it. Consequently, in 2002 the British New Labour government commissioned consultancy specialists Arup to carry out a feasibility study for a London Olympics. The findings were presented to a small group of Cabinet Ministers that had formed a special Olympic sub-committee. Arup informed this sub-committee, chaired by then Foreign Secretary Jack Straw that the Games would cost £1.8 billion to host, of which £484 million would have to come from governmental contributions. The Games, however, would generate £610 million in revenues, projecting an overall surplus of around £79 million.

All Olympic bids must be backed and fully supported by national and local governments, who are – in theory – held accountable for their decisions through the

³⁴ For more information see: http://www.olympic.org/Documents/Reports/EN/en_report_913.pdf

³⁵ Furthermore, Olympic critic Andrew Jennings, author of *The Lords of the Rings: Olympic Corruption and How to Buy Gold Medals* (1996) highlighted the continuing suspicion surrounding the IOC bidding campaigns. 'Olympic bid campaigns are run increasingly by private corporations or government quangos and the bills, receipts, secret correspondence, records of deal making and plain corruption are hidden forever' (p.116).

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electoral system. The Arup report did little to convince a sceptical New Labour government that a London Olympic bid would be a politically beneficial manoeuvre to further the political stability of their regime. This can be evidenced by a Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Committee report entitled *A London Olympic Bid for 2012, third report of session 2002-2003* established by the New Labour government to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the DCMS in relation to their ability to green-light a 2012 bid. This committee report found many flaws in the process and stated the following in relation to:

Transparency:

So far the process followed by Government has produced in public no more than an anaemic 12 page summary of a 250 page document containing only impenetrable, estimated, aggregate costs. We are grateful to receive confidential copies of the full report containing financial estimates for a 'specimen' Games. However, this was of limited use for the purposes of accountability and none whatsoever with regard to public debate.

(Paragraph 9)

Cost:

There are three key questions that the Government need to answer before being able to commit itself to a bid . . .

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- *That the costs and risks are understood as far as is possible at this distance from the event, can be afforded, and are justified in comparison with other sporting and wider spending demands on Government.*
- *That the challenges and implications of delivering the necessary facilities and infrastructure developments on time are understood and catered for.*
- *That any infrastructure legacies created will be free from on-going, possibly open-ended, subsidy necessary from the public.*

(Paragraph 17)

The report concluded the following:

- *It is clearly desirable in principle that London should host an Olympic and Paralympic Games. But it should not do so at any price. (Paragraph 39)*
- *The Government must assure itself, before deciding to support a bid that it understands what it is committing itself, London and the country as a whole, to spend and deliver. (Paragraph 40).*
- *The Government could have been much more transparent in this process; reflecting the recommendations of our predecessor Committee. The Arup summary published, for what it was worth, was an abridgement too far. The Government should publish Arup's work in full, as well as its own subsequent calculations on cost and delivery of facilities and infrastructure, before a decision is taken. If release is not possible in the time available then the Government must publish a full account of the facts and figures on which it based its decision, to*

- allow a proper degree of scrutiny and accountability to take place. (Paragraph 42).*
- *In answer to the question as to whether 2012 was London's only chance to host the Olympics for the foreseeable future, possibly ever, the Secretary of State said '... you are not categorically right in what you say, but there are certainly judgements that would support your view'. We took that as a 'Yes'. (Paragraph 43).*
 - *If we are right in interpreting the evidence of the Secretary of State to mean that 2012 is indeed the last chance to host the Olympic Games in this country, the decision to be made by the Cabinet next week is of fundamental importance. We therefore urge the Government to take full and careful account of the issues set out in this report. (Paragraph 44).*

This report emphasised a number of points that the government considered intrinsic to the bid. These issues are the transparency, or lack thereof, observable during this decision-making processes. There were also issues of accountability and the unpredictability of costing estimates. Such trepidation was understandable; the process required decisions to be made far in advance that were subject to all manner of unpredictable increases, particularly evident in the field of the Games' security. Additionally, the imposing Olympic timeframe made any decision-making process limited. There was also a concomitant fear of missing out upon the opportunity to host the Games. As emphasised above, the UK Government believed that the Olympic Games

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were clearly desirable and, crucially, 2012 was considered Britain's last ever realistic chance to host Games.

This provides an interesting background and perspective upon the decision making process. This fleeting hosting opportunity narrative ensured that the New Labour government perceived Olympic hosting as a 'once-in-a-lifetime' political opportunity for a New Labour Britain to be illuminated by the Olympic Torch. As British Prime Minister Tony Blair reflected in his memoirs:

When the bid was first raised as a possibility, most of the Cabinet were dubious and the Treasury was hostile. I liked the boldness of the notion, but it didn't seem likely we could get it – the French were runaway favourites, with other powerful bids from Madrid and New York – and after the Dome we were all a trifle nervous of anything so immense, costly and liable to turn out tricky. The athletics community, however, immediately understood its significance, came out strongly in support of a bid, advocated it intelligently and showed admirable firmness for it all the way through.

(Blair, 2010, p. 545)

Not all were firm in their commitment; Tessa Jowell, the Secretary for the DCMS, was advised by a further departmental report prepared by DCMS senior civil servants to reject the idea of a London bid. This report warned that the bid was not winnable and the Games would cost too much money. Furthermore, they warned that the event was doomed to failure and was therefore a high political risk. However, Jowell 'ignored the advice' and spent the time after this report 'reanalysing the costs and trying to persuade

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her Cabinet colleagues in a series of critical private meetings' (Lee, 2006, p. 9). As Blair reflected 'she {Jowell} was telling me it was an enormous opportunity. Think of the impact on our young people, on fitness, on sport, on the country's self-belief' (2010, p. 545).

In a final attempt to reassure her sceptical Cabinet Ministers Jowell ordered a review of the Arup report, which had come under criticism for being far too assumptive. For example, their costing estimations were consistent with the costs of pre-September 11th Olympics such as Sydney 2000 (£1.9 billion) and Atlanta 1996 (£1.8 billion) and appeared to optimistically suggest that the cost of the Olympics had reached stagnation point. Robert Raine, a senior civil servant, conducted a re-evaluation. Raine's findings reported that Arup had underestimated the costs by no less than £800 million (Lee, 2006).

Arup's estimates fell in line with traditional conceptualisations of 'Mega-Event' costing, which cited that such estimates lacked realism, habitually underestimated financial contingencies and significantly undervalued safety and environmental costs (Merrow, 1988; Flyvbjerg, Bruzelius and Rotherngatter, 2003). Other more unforgiving interpretations of such include the allegation that such estimates often systematically and deceptively hide the real costs of construction until the project has begun (Fussey *et al.*, 2011). The re-evaluation – either amazingly or predictably dependent upon perception – found that Arup had failed to consider the costs of purchasing land, upgrading transport facilities, security, project risks and inflation. Furthermore, Raine concluded that Arup's proposed contingency fund of £450 million would need to be quadrupled. These new

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calculations increased the projected £1.8 billion cost of London 2012 to £2.4 billion (Lee, 2006).³⁶

Naturally, after this re-evaluation Chancellor Gordon Brown remained opposed to committing any national investment in the 2012 bid. He stated that there would be no Treasury money to pay for either the bid (approximately £35 million) or the Games if London won (Lee, 2006, p. 11). Brown's posture on this issue ensured that financing the 2012 bid would rest in the hands of London's Mayor, Ken Livingstone, which provides an interesting political footnote.

2.3 – Olympic Political Posturing

Olympic bidding involves all levels of government. The decision for London to bid for 2012 ultimately rested with the then New Labour Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and certain key members of his Cabinet, in this instance Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown and Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport Tessa Jowell. The subsequent role of national government in Olympic-delivery revolves around making an official decision to launch a bid in the first instance and to subsequently define the legislation governing the Games, appoint the heads of the delivery agencies and determine the transport infrastructure budget.

In relation to the 2012 bid the position of London's Mayor introduced another powerful Olympic stakeholder in the bidding process, which provided the opportunity for

³⁶ It should be noted here that Arup, together with two other firms, were subsequently awarded the £59m contract to design the Olympic Park.

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a greater legitimisation of the, then still relatively new, Mayoral role.³⁷ In the inaugural 2000 London Mayoral election independent candidate Ken Livingstone attained 57.9% of the final vote (beating Conservative candidate Steven Norris who attained the remaining 42.1%) and was elected as an independent candidate. However, he was firmly entrenched in the Labour party's history and had a direct bearing upon the 2012 bidding narrative. Consequently, the party political narrative of Livingstone's election is worth noting.

In the 1999 inaugural London Mayoral election Livingstone was included in the New Labour party Mayoral candidate shortlist and attained a majority of the total party vote but was beaten out by another candidate – Frank Dobson – as a result of the complex Electoral College system. Despite Livingstone being the popular choice, former Secretary of State for Health Frank Dobson was chosen as the New Labour representative. Tony Blair famously stated that the election of Livingstone as Mayor would be a 'disaster for London',³⁸ purporting that Livingstone would be a disastrous and embarrassing Mayor; advocating instead that voters select Dobson (Livingstone, 2011).

That said no politician was more entrenched in London politics or more skilful at street fighting than Livingstone, a man who earned the nickname *Red Ken* in his titanic struggles against Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s, when she was prime minister and he ran the now obsolete Greater London Council (Williams, 2012, p. 20). Undeterred by New Labour not backing him, Livingstone ran as an independent in the Mayoral contest and was victorious. His first term popularity (2000 – 2004) ensured he was the favourite to retain his position for a second term. Consequently, Tony Blair encouraged him to

³⁷ The Mayor of London role was created in 2000 as a result of the London devolution referendum. The Mayor is an elected position that, along with 25 members of the London Assembly is accountable for the strategic governance of Greater London.

³⁸ For more information see: http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/may/4/newsid_2503000/2503809.stm

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rejoin the Labour Party, publically recanting his ‘disaster’ comment.³⁹

Livingstone was welcomed back to New Labour in January 2004, wielding significant negotiating power after emerging victorious from his very public row with the party. As part of his re-election campaign Livingstone had prioritised the regeneration of East London (as can be evidenced within his strategic plans, see the *GLA 2004 Housing Capacity Study* for an example). In accordance with his redefined relationship with New Labour Livingstone, from a position of considerable power, began lobbying for significant investment to improve London’s transport infrastructure. Consequently, the possibility of a 2012 London Olympics that would facilitate these regenerative schemes proved very appealing for both New Labour and Livingstone. The Games could be used to further policy priorities.

To return to the embryonic 2012 campaign, Tony Blair began publically stating that it was important that they (Blair and Livingstone) work together on the Olympic bid. That said Gordon Brown remained unwilling to commit any funds to a bid for the Games; the funding of the bid was resting squarely on the shoulders of London’s Mayor. Livingstone’s personal reflections regarding these negotiations reveal this:

The IOC insist on support of the host city’s administration before accepting a bid . . . Within months of my election {London Mayor} the BOA’s Craig Reddie and Simon Clegg came to outline their work on possible sites . . . in the East End it could be the catalyst for twenty years of regeneration . . . {Livingstone stated that}

³⁹ For more see: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/3370803.stm

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if the BOA would site the Olympics in the Docklands⁴⁰ {East London} I would throw everything behind it . . . and agreed there would be a contribution from {London's} council tax payers . . . a legacy from the games, some continuing benefit from them, was crucial to the IOC and needed a post-2012 commitment of £10 million a year to run the facilities the Games would leave behind. At the key meeting civil servants insisted no government could commit its successor to this so I said I would commit the Mayor's office to support the facilities after the games. Horrified at seeing a decision taken rapidly, a civil servant said, 'You can't do that' but the sports people smiled as I said, 'I think you'll find I just did'.

(Livingstone, 2011, p. 478-481)

Ultimately, the financial deal that solidified the 2012 bid was a relatively straightforward affair combining National Lottery (NL) contributions and investment from the London Mayor's office and London taxpayers. Some £1.5 billion would come from the NL and the remaining £900 million from Livingstone through the London Development Agency (LDA⁴¹), the Mayor's regeneration body, and an increase in Londoner's council taxes. The delineation of this financial package symbolically and literally united the New Labour government, both locally and nationally behind the 2012 Olympic bid and delineated specific East London locales and their communities into this milieu.

⁴⁰ Docklands was the new name for the Pool of London, which at one time was the largest port in the world. It covered an area of 8½ square miles. For more information see <http://www.londondrum.com/cityguide/docklands.php>

⁴¹ The London Development Agency (LDA) was a functional body of the Greater London Authority (GLA). It was the Regional Development Agency for Greater London whose purpose was to drive sustainable London-wide economic growth. The LDA ceased to exist in March 2012.

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Entry into the 2012 bidding contest provided the Mayor with an enhanced global platform to both promote London and emphasise the significance of the Mayoral role. Blair and Livingstone's shared objective – to represent London to an international audience – bolstered a traditionally unstable relationship between Livingstone and the New Labour party and indicated to Londoners that the Mayor was a worthy figurehead to champion London, locally, nationally and internationally. The Mayor therefore became an essential stakeholder in the pursuit of the 2012 Games. In this regard, within London particularly, Livingstone was seen as much of a leader of the Olympic project as Blair. The notion of the 2012 Games regenerating East London began with Ken Livingstone.

2.4 – The Changing of the Guard

Away from Blair and Livingstone another key figure for the instigation of the 2012 bid was Tessa Jowell who had led London to the point of entry. As Blair effused:

. . . when the Olympics open in London in 2012, many people will be remembered as having brought them to Britain, but it all started with Tessa Jowell (2010, p. 545). However, once the bid was solidified her involvement came to an end. As BOA chairman and IOC member Craig Reddie purported Jowell 'deserves great credit for getting it {the bid} through the Cabinet. But she learned that politicians and governments who by their very nature have to compromise and debate {and be held accountable for their actions} couldn't lead Olympic bids. If they had led from that moment on, we would have found it difficult to build momentum.

The uncomplimentary nature of politics, politicians and Olympic bids, as highlighted by Reddie, are essentially problematised by conceptualisations of legitimacy, accountability, trust and popularity. The distancing of politicians at the outset of the bidding contest and their relegation to the role of figurehead, whilst pragmatic and even sensible at the same time holds problematic resonance for notions of accountability. Through hindsight it was apparent that the various stages of a bid have very specific players, playing very specific games and forming very specific Olympic life spans:

- The initial stages of facilitating a bid are the responsibility of the NOCs and the politicians.
- The middle stages of bid formulation and solidification introduce business people into the equation and a selection of other key stakeholders.
- The later stages, being the clamour for popularity, acclaim and above all votes emphasises the importance of publically fashionable, globally popular, IOC hegemony fitting, figureheads to attain positions of authority.

London 2012 embodied all three of the above stages. Its Olympic bid began as a sporting pursuit then became a highly politicised endeavour, but would end in an idealistic beauty pageant adjudicated by Olympism evangelists. The consequences of this held the potential to alter the course of the lives of many of East London's citizens and

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directly impact upon policy decisions. The outcome will undoubtedly be frequently returned to in the political realm, but lacking the notion of accountability.

It is paramount not to forget that Olympic hosting is a political decision. Moreover, politicians are able to make such decisions regarding Olympic bidding only because the public has elected them into positions of power; they are – theoretically – held accountable for their actions through the electoral system. Consequently, compromise, debate, responsibility and public accountability is intrinsic to democracy and the decisions of policy makers. However, as the BOA's Craig Reddie purported above such democratic process are anathema to Olympic bidding.⁴²

Once the 2012 bid was officially underway politicians began distancing themselves from it. Notions of public accountability and democratic process disappeared with them. Autocratic short-term unaccountable hegemonic bodies replaced individual and party political accountability with the heads of these organisations often far removed from the political sphere.

Somewhat surprisingly, during its embryonic stages the British government turned to 42-year-old American businesswoman Barbara Cassani to publically lead the 2012 bid. Cassani came with an accomplished track record of a successful businesswoman and was held in high esteem for her business acumen. This was best exemplified by her creation of budget airline Go for £25 million, which was sold four years later to Easyjet for £374 million. Such an appointment indicated a clear shift in the nuances of Olympic bidding, the process that began with a sceptical government and their

⁴² This is quite ironic considering that the Olympic Games themselves are defined by the IOC as 'a philosophy of life and a state of mind based on equality of sports, which are international and democratic' (Lucas 1992, p.211).

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desire to minimise risk and public stigma had shifted towards an economically-driven and commercially-orientated approach.

Cassani began a hiring process indicative of the hegemonic practises involved in Olympic bidding. She recruited to her team two former Olympic athletes, Alan Pascoe and her future successor, Lord Sebastian Coe. Ultimately, however, Cassani did not last long. Despite having a proven business track record, only eleven months into the contest and with London heavily unfavoured, it became clear that her business acumen could only take her so far in the incestuous world of Olympic-delivery. The intricacies of Olympic bidding proved to be her downfall. She had no experience in the internal IOC politicking that was to be crucial to the bidding process and stepped down in favour of a more appropriate figure. Cassani 'had the integrity to recognise that when it came to lobbying IOC delegates Seb Coe would be more effective' (Livingstone, 2011, p. 497).

Lord Coe was an IOC insider who understood the intricacies of this political sphere, he had a reputation as a winner within the sporting domain that afforded him a degree of credibility that was unobtainable to an American businesswoman with no Olympic track record. Indeed, Coe knew the IOC ropes very well indeed. A former Olympic Gold medallist and Conservative MP, he had at one stage in his career been groomed by former IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch to become a future IOC President. However, much to the IOC Presidents disappointment, Coe chose to enter into British politics instead (Lee, 2006) – a career trajectory that had now come full circle.

2.5 – And So It Begins . . .

The promotion of Lord Coe symbolised another change of direction for London 2012. He modified the emphasis of 2012 Olympic ‘legacy’. Coe’s personal account of the transition explains his thinking:

The IOC had dubbed it ‘The Great Race’ – and in fairness, it was. But the initial evaluation of London’s suitability as a host city had not been kind. Our immediate job was to change the perception, both within and outside the bid team, that there were no pre-ordained reasons why we were destined to fail . . . We needed to show confidence and purpose to the electorate and the IOC, as well as to our stakeholders, to international sport, to domestic and international media and crucially, to the public at home . . . Unless you can influence and inspire others to buy into and share your vision, you will not succeed . . . Our bid was about the desire to make a difference to millions of children in the UK and around the world . . . Once we were able to articulate the vision . . . we were able to communicate our message . . . The media were crucial. With the media generally supportive, we were able to gain traction with the public locally, nationally and internationally.

(Coe, 2009, pp. 32-34)

Interestingly Coe made no reference to the fact he was intimately involved up to this point and rapidly set about altering the perceptions of the London bid, casting

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himself in the role of representative figurehead of this change of direction. Under Lord Coe's stewardship the evolving motivations for Olympic hosting began to incorporate more than the BOA / Tessa Jowell-promoted sporting benefit that had caused the bid to stutter and fail to attain significant IOC traction. The emphasis shifted toward the promotion of the 2012 Games as being the provider of a holistic benefit for London's youth. Mike Lee, Director of Communications and Public Affairs for the 2012 bid, outlines the modified London 2012 framework for the more nuanced bidding campaign:

It was essentially like an international political campaign. We needed to understand our audiences and develop a global election manifesto. Building domestic support was important but it was just one part of the game. At times this made us unpopular with the wider group of stakeholders who felt we should have been paying closer attention to their demands. But we were clearly focused on the objective and that was to win in Singapore . . . We also set about developing key themes that we could reinforce through presentations and communications events. The core elements were regeneration of the East End of London, the diversity of London, the legacy of the Games, use of London's landmark iconic sites and what the Olympics could offer British and world sport. Finally, and this was just as vital to our success, we had to get the best use of the star personalities connected to the bid . . . For us that was always the question we came back to – how can we develop a campaign that will attract votes and give us a chance of winning.

(2006, p. 35)

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The focus was to win the bid by any means necessary. To accomplish this objective whichever themes would resonate most with IOC delegates were to be the ones emphasised. East London's Olympic '*legacy*' was simply a means to win votes and influence delegates. The political processes attached to Olympic bidding can be defined at one level in terms of strategies that favour urban economic development, consumption and image of the host city (Burbank *et al.*, 2001). But in the pursuit of winning the success of the political machinations involved within the bid depended upon appealing to the IOC selectors and ticking their boxes even if they were on another continent. This was far removed from the concerns of what were arguably the principle stakeholders of the bid, i.e. East London's communities that would have the Games built within their neighbourhood.

2.6 – Backing the Bid?

One key consideration that must be overcome for any successful bid is its ability to generate the perception of significant public support for the venture. To gain Olympic bidding traction evidence needs to be supplied for such support. This could be real, imagined or highly exaggerated. To contextualise the terms of 'community support', it is necessary to shift focus away from the pursuit of prostituting East London to the IOC for the benefits of Olympism towards the politicking utilised to achieve said 'community support'.

At the outset of London's Olympic hosting crusade David Stubbs was employed as London 2012's Head of Environment to assess the practicalities of the London 2012

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bid. In 2005, Stubbs stated that to be a credible candidate public support was critical and London had to ‘engage with the community so that they felt part of the process’.⁴³ Stubbs went on to explain that his ‘advisory group’ made up of representatives from NGOs, public authorities, academia and business, ‘did a lot of work with the voluntary groups to get them involved in the process. By the end, they were really championing the whole thing’ (cited in Kinver, 2005⁴⁴).

But was this really the case? The following case study indicates a London 2012 delivery reality from the perspective of community representatives that were included in the bidding process. This example illustrates how local communities were portrayed as being ‘behind the Games’ during the bidding phase. Such unification was the product of interaction with selected members and groups; then portrayed as indicative of community perceptions at large.

2.7 – TELCO: A Social Movement Thwarted?

The London 2012 bidding committee approached The East London Citizens Organisation (TELCO) to seek their contribution to the Olympic bidding process. TELCO (formed in 1996) encompasses a diverse alliance of active citizens and community leaders that promote democratically selected causes intended to benefit the local community. TELCO were a social movement that acted on behalf of East London’s citizens in negotiations with the Olympic-delivery team. Over thirty-five institutions including faith groups, schools, student organisations, trade union branches and charities,

⁴³ For more information see: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/4299714.stm>

⁴⁴ For more see: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/4299714.stm>

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across five London boroughs constitute its membership. Moreover, they form an integral part of a London-wide social movement, 'London Citizens' (LC), which is affiliated with the nationally recognised Citizens Organising Foundation (COF), who, in turn, are affiliated with the internationally recognised Industrial Area Foundation (IAF) based in the United States. All of these movements interact and share advice, resources and methodologies.

In 1993, the Reverend Timothy Stevens, funded by the Church of England Diocese of Chelmsford, visited the US to examine the Citizen Organising Foundation (COF). The visit was to fact find with a view to transfer the COF model to major UK cities. In 1994, following Stevens' report to the diocese, the East London based Reverend Peter Walton began recruiting members to form such an organisation and, by November 1996, these organisations (including various religious and community groups) officially formed, choosing the name 'The East London Communities Organisation' (TELCO).

Over 1300 attended the November 1996 inaugural TELCO launch in York Hall, Bethnal Green. The audience included the late Cardinal Hume, Victor Gauzelli (Catholic Bishop for East London) and Roger Sainsbury (Anglican Bishop of Barking). TELCO soon agreed to affiliate to the London-wide 'London Citizens' (LC) Organisation which, by 2002, incorporated some 80 London institutions claiming to best represent the city's ethnic diversity. Self-funded, with organisational membership fees of £1800 per year, TELCO remain an organisation directed by a board of members elected by those attending its annual general meeting (AGM).

A percentage of the board, usually one-third, stand down every two years to make way for new blood – albeit the out-going can stand for re-election. Its primary objective

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is the ‘pursuit of social justice’, which was defined in a private interview with a representative of the organisation as ‘a collective responsibility to put right what is unjust’ and the cultivation of relationships that enable the diverse communities of London to mobilise whenever collective action is perceived necessary.

TELCO recruitment revolves around what its former Chair, Paul Regan, describes as ‘purposive conversation’. This essentially involves encouraging members to put the movement in touch with other institutions. TELCO’s membership thus encompasses myriad smaller groups that share a commitment to social change (Zirakzadeh, 1997, p. 4). Tangible victories were crucial to TELCO’s emerging profile and, in its founding year, one campaign focused on a notoriously ‘smelly’ factory, polluting the environment around districts in the boroughs of Newham and Tower Hamlets, namely Canning Town and Poplar. TELCO mobilisation resulted in the owners (Pura Foods) installing a filter at a cost of £1.5 million to prevent the odour – a victory announced at the first annual TELCO assembly (the People’s Assembly) in York Hall.

Factory issues were later supplemented with structural ones and TELCO’s commitment to diversity and inclusivity became evident in their ‘Affordable Housing Campaign’. During the lead-up to the 2004 London Mayoral elections, the then Mayor Ken Livingstone signed a pledge at a TELCO assembly committing himself to the piloting of a Community Land Trust (CLT). Theoretically, this allowed for houses to be built and then sold to the ‘community’, minus the cost of the land; thus making them affordable to those on low wages. The problem was that no location for the proposed building was delineated, although the pledge indicated that within an allotted time a piece of land was to be placed under CLT ownership.

When Livingstone failed to specify the site within the designated deadline, TELCO decided on a mobilisation that took the form of a tented village (consisting of 50 tents) on parkland next to the Mayoral HQ at City Hall, central London, and involved a wide range of prominent multi-faith leaders, and community figures. This attracted wide media coverage. Considered to have been reasonably successful, the action led to what were said to be ‘positive’ discussions with Livingstone. However, despite a Mayoral change following a 2004 election, no site has yet been delineated for the CLT ‘affordable housing’. Meanwhile, TELCO transferred their focus in particular to the pursuit of an ethical 2012 Olympics.

TELCO felt that their support for the 2012 bid should be conditional upon certain guarantees from those bidding to benefit the East London populace. These guarantees included employment opportunities, affordable housing, greater sporting provisions and better educational opportunities. Consequently, an agreement was put in place to publicise the rewards for public demonstrations of support for Olympic hosting. This became known as the ‘*Ethical Olympic Charter*’. This charter consisted of six key points:

- i. Affordable homes to be built for local people and managed through a Community Land Trust where the value of the land is removed from the property price – making homes more affordable.
- ii. Olympic development monies to be set aside to improve local schools and health services.
- iii. University of East London to be the main higher education beneficiary of the sports legacy with a view to becoming a sporting centre of excellence.

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- iv. At least £2m to be set aside immediately (upon winning the bid to coincide with the first building phase) for the construction of an academy in Leyton to train local people in employable trade.
- v. That at least 30% of construction jobs be set aside for local people which would require the implementation of a 30% local labour clause with the contractors responsible for construction.
- vi. The Lower Lea Valley to be designated a 'living wage' zone with jobs in the defined boundary guaranteed to pay a 'living wage' (set at £6.70 per hour in 2004).

The proposed benefits were agreed upon between the TELCO and the Olympic bidding team. As a result of this shared commitment Lord Coe stated that the Games were now 'eminently more winnable' (Lydall, 2004, p. 12). This agreement was solidified during its public signing in 2005. Signing on behalf of the Olympic Bidding Team was its Chair Lord Sebastian Coe, incumbent Mayor Ken Livingstone and John Biggs, Deputy Chair of the LDA.

2.8 – Community Involvement?

This act of unifying the community through a written agreement between Olympic deliverers and TELCO was meant to solidify the boundaries and expectations of the local populace. This was an agreement that instilled hope, promise and expectation. In the eyes of many involved such signatures created what Benedict Anderson (1983) would

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refer to as an ‘imagined community’. Anderson’s definition relates to a sense of nationalism where citizens unite despite being unfamiliar with each other by virtue of shared characteristics and criterion, although it can be argued that the principles of this conceptualisation are pertinent here. In this instance the community was a diverse realm of people unified through hope and promise. As such they became such an imagined community (albeit not one defined by nationalism) because the assurances evidenced by the signatories of the ‘*Ethical Olympic Charter*’ instilled a sense of ownership of place, and of resources therein, during Olympic-delivery and beyond. The promises instilled a sense of right and entitlement into the communities that TELCO represented, which were generally incoherent entities in the varied post-industrial, transitory, impoverished and deprived locale that constituted Newham. This communities’ members whose everyday lives would be the most severely affected by 2012 Olympic-delivery were assured that they would benefit commensurately.

Therefore, it is argued here that the principles of the imagined community are applicable to more than nationalism. Throughout any individual’s life they will become part of many identity-defining imagined communities, often concurrently. Identity of any type must thus be considered a psychosocial process and, as Schlesinger (1991) purported, identity is continually constructed and reconstructed (p. 173). Essentially, it is problematic to define ‘identity’ – or indeed community – as a fixed construct, as the sense of self is dependent upon reflexivity and the individual is capable of holding apparently contradictory beliefs and desires (Giddens, 1991, p. 52). That said, the sense of collective identity, however fleeting, allowed TELCO to reconstitute and solidify its

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symbolic boundaries and its expectations in relation to a holistic, if pragmatic, identity that was, in theory, to be commensurately recompensed for Olympic-delivery upheaval.

However, if the promoted outcomes of hosting the Games were to be orientated towards improving East London in some enduring way then it was important to determine what kind of changes the bid supported at its outset (Chalkley and Essex, 1999). A significant factor in this process is the credibility and transference of support for the Olympic Games to expectation of Olympic-delivery outcomes. However, the delineation of Olympic-delivery benefit was all very superficial during the bidding phase where London remained very much an outside bet to host the 2012 Games. Consequently, few people took the Olympic Games seriously, as most expected the London bid to be trounced by Paris.

2.9 – A French Farce: And the Winner is . . .

Mr President, Technical excellence is essential in delivering the Games. London's bid takes that as its starting point . . . But we aim to go much further. Allow me to outline the three principles, which have guided this bid. First, we want to deliver a magical experience for competitors and spectators . . . Our second principle is to be your best partners . . . Our third principle is to deliver a lasting sporting legacy.

(Lord Sebastian Coe, London's 2012 Singapore Olympic Bid Presentation to the International Olympic Committee, 6th July 2005⁴⁵)

⁴⁵ For more see: <http://www.london2012.com/documents/locog-publications/singapore-presentation-speeches.pdf>

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London's final Olympic pitch, cited above, was performed by an ensemble cast of a British Prime Minister, a member of the British Royal family, a BOA Chairman, former Olympic Gold medallists, a London Mayor, an Olympic Minister and, perhaps most conspicuously, a gaggle of some forty ethnically diverse children drawn from Newham state schools. The bid was widely considered both exceptional and unique. Accordingly, it won the 2012 Games. The *piece de resistance* was children from the borough's diasporas. As Graeme Evans purports 'London's coup de grace, another steal from the French, was a multicultural-faced group of excited East End children, in contrast to the sombre suited Parisian messieurs' (Gold and Gold, 2007, p. 298). Having been intimately involved in winning the bid these children might have – reasonably – expected to be amongst the main beneficiaries of the Games.

According to one representative of these 'East End' children they were well trained before they left and were schooled in what to do, what to say and how to behave in Singapore.⁴⁶ However, no potentially crucial questions were asked of these 'chosen ones'. They were not quizzed on what it was like growing up in East London or what jobs their relatives had or aspired towards. They were not there to provide a reality of life in East London or to comment on health, education, housing or any of the other proposed Olympic '*legacy*' benefits. Simply, they were there because they were ethnically, culturally and perhaps most importantly – visually – diverse.

Olympic bidding is a subjective process that is presided over by selected IOC delegates. This process, as highlighted, had become synonymous with corruption. This the IOC claimed was 'eradicated' because of new measures, designed to tackle iniquity. However, as the saying goes – history is written by the victors. A retrospective analysis

⁴⁶ For more see: <http://www.community-links.org/linksuk/?p=3374>

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of accounts published by those that participated within the victorious London bid attempted to emphasise the validity of the contest and allay fears that corruption of any kind played a part. According to Mike Lee (2006), Director of Communications and Public Affairs for the London 2012 bid:

For the first time, media strategy and vision would be more important than shady deals carved out in hotel corridors – for this was to be a bidding contest unlike any other. The Olympic Movement had set down tough new rules for bidding cities . . . One of the most important things to understand about the 2012 campaign was that this was the first Summer Olympics campaign to be held under a completely new set of rules . . . A lot of traditional things that had been accepted in previous bids such as visits to cities and gifts were completely outlawed.

(Lee, 2006, p. 32-33)

Essentially, Lee validated the belief that the IOC decision-making process was at one time rife with bribery and corruption. However, he would now lead us to believe that such inequity was a relic and 2012 was above board and squeaky-clean. Lee purports that, following the implementation of ‘*strict*’ guidelines initiated to prevent corruption in the 2012 process London’s victory could not have been anything but a result of an excellent bid. The fact remains that throughout the race for 2012 hosting the Paris bid was widely considered the front-runner for much of the campaign⁴⁷ and the London victory was ‘greeted by the winning bid team with a mixture of delight and shock’.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ For more information see: http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/front_page/4655555.stm

⁴⁸ For more see: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/4299714.stm>

The overriding belief that Paris would win the 2012 race was emphasised in a December 2004 BBC2 televised sports debate former London Sports Minister, Kate Hoey announced that London ‘did not deserve to host the {2012} Olympics’ adding it was wrong to waste vast amounts of money on a bid that would most likely be won by Paris. Table 1 indicates this belief by cataloguing the 2012 hosting odds provided by an Australian bookmaker up to the IOC vote:

Table 1

Centrebet (Australia) 2012 Host Betting Odds, November 2004-July 2005

Candidate City	Odds Nov. '04	Odds March '05	Odds April '05	Odds June '05	Odds July '05
Paris	1-3	4-9	1-2	2-11	4-9
London	3-1	7-4	11-4	7-2	5-2
Madrid	7-1	20-1	12-1	25-1	5-1
New York	9-1	12-1	10-1	12-1	25-1
Moscow	33-1	50-1	50-1	66-1	80-1

Predictably, in the aftermath of the 2012 decision that saw the London bid eventually beat Paris by 54 votes to 50, allegations of corruption were raised. In the month following London’s selection, members of the Paris delegation argued that London had violated IOC rules regarding transparency and fairness. Lee (2006) highlighted the crisis that occurred as a direct result of a BBC *Panorama* TV

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documentary, which claimed that London secured the winning votes via cash payments to various national delegates (p. 72).

This matter was quickly put to bed by a public statement from IOC President Jacques Rogge who dismissed such accusations by stating; ‘in my opinion, the competition was fair’, adding, ‘I don’t think it is very useful to have a post-mortem over this election. The election was won on merit by London. The IOC thought London was the best bid and it awarded the Games to London’, effectively brushing the issue under the carpet rather than risking further damage to the reputation of the IOC and their Olympic selection process.⁴⁹

True to form, the IOC distanced themselves from the reputational threat to their organisation by protecting their hegemony through denial. This transformed London’s Olympic bid fantasy into a delivery reality that the communities of East London were to experience. It was now time for East London’s communities to remind themselves, or indeed discover, what London had committed itself to and what consequences lay in store for them.

As Foreign Secretary Jack Straw reminded Parliament the day after London was announced as the 2012 Olympic host, the London bid was premised upon:

. . . a special Olympic vision. That vision of an Olympic Games that would not only be a celebration of sport but a force for regeneration. The Games will transform one of the poorest and most deprived areas of London. They will create thousands of jobs and homes. They will offer new opportunities for business in the immediate area and throughout London . . . One of the things that made the bid

⁴⁹ For more see: <http://www.gamesbids.com/cgi-bin/news/viewnews.cgi?category=1&id=1123175331>

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successful is the way in which it reaches out to all young people in two important respects: it will encourage many more to get fit and to be involved in sport and, whatever their physical prowess, to offer their services as volunteers for the Olympic cause.

(House of Commons, 6 July 2005)

It appears evident that the 2012 bid was disseminated as a panacea to make East London healthy, literally, socially and economically. The Games were to be a special purpose vehicle for these outcomes that reached far beyond the sporting domain. The success of which was dependent upon how this assumptive Olympic ‘*legacy*’ narrative resonated throughout Britain and beyond. The next chapter will analyse this dissemination.

Chapter 3. THE ALL-CONSUMING 2012 ETHOS

The allure of the Olympic Games and the role of Olympic ‘*legacy*’ in relation to its distracting properties that divert attention away from the oft-mundane nature of everyday life and the implications of Olympic-delivery is the focus of this chapter. To paraphrase Public Relations expert Philip Lesly (1974) London 2012 spoke to the urges, interests and desires of contemporary Britain and was attuned to the mental and emotional bent of the society therein. There are significant complexities to consider within this debate and as such attention must be awarded to the contested narratives that are apparent within this context. There can be no doubt that within this ideological domain complexity exists. There is significant evidence, as considered earlier, to support the applicability of hegemonic theory to this milieu. However, this thesis will provide analysis and examples of the voices of those that often go unrepresented in such analysis. This inclusion of voices from the ground-level challenge often challenged the applicability of hegemony to this context, which will be addressed herein. This chapter sets the scene for such analysis by exploring how the Olympic milieu accomplished this during 2012 delivery and why what we might best call ‘*Olympic themes*’ resonated with the British people. This requires insights into the wider landscape of Olympic-delivery, i.e. that which was consumed *in absentia* of first-hand experience.

3.1 – An Olympic Identity?

The presentation and pageantry associated with the Olympics has been described as fiercely nationalistic (MacNeill, 1996; Hargreaves, 2000; Billings and Eastman, 2002; Wensing and Bruce, 2003). This interpretation has led to research exploring the nationalist undercurrents of the reporting and broadcasting of the Olympics (Hoberman, 2004; Barnard, Butler, Golding, and Maguire, 2006; Elder, Pratt, and Ellis, 2006). Such views are based upon the premise that the Games are portrayed as representations of nationalistic imagery and promotion. This is true to an extent. However, this research suggests that the London 2012 Games transcended traditional, segregating nationalistic overtones and created a temporary, powerful inclusive hybrid form of identity that was both *Universalist* and *politically quietist* in dogma.

The 2012 ‘*Olympic identity*’ was delivered through carefully choreographed discursive narratives that created and perpetuated a specific perception of the London Games during its delivery. Accepting that all identities are based on division, be it race, class or myriad other segregating factors, and that every identity is a political rather than a natural collective, it is argued herein that all identity is based upon violence; literal, discursive or symbolic. The less literal forms of this violence ensure that identity can be created and bolstered through consistent rhetorical narratives that establish baselines for inclusion and exclusion. Whilst a football World Cup could be said to be strictly based upon nationality as a general rule the 2012 ‘*Olympic identity*’ does not fit within this traditional model of segregational identity formation. This was considered the result of two key factors:

- Firstly, very few people that embraced the 2012 '*Olympic identity*' were invested in the sporting contestations that took place during the Games. This minimised the importance of the competitive outcomes and ensured that each event was merely a small facet of a much larger diverse whole. This meant that investment in the experience and the '*Olympic identity*' far exceeded the outcome of the events, which minimised the importance of nationalistic contestation.
- Secondly, as a result of this lack of personal investment in the sporting outcomes, the '*Olympic identity*' was not segregational. This is supported by the altruistic image of Olympism, true or imagined, which is built upon the impression of amateurism, fair play and ethical competition where taking part is more important than winning.

This perception of an inclusive identity was perpetuated through the British media during Olympic-delivery on a regular basis. This discourse was bolstered by assertions from figures of authority, such as politicians and Olympic-delivery officials, which contributed to the construction of an 'official' history and holistic national impression of the 2012 Games. This ensured beneficial outcomes of Olympic hosting were inferred to be natural and inevitable and virtually unquestionable. Furthermore, easily understandable terms were created such as '*legacy*' that seamlessly associated the Games with positive outcomes. These terms were repeated and reproduced so often that they

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entered the vocabulary of the British public and were used to signal the legitimacy of the association between Games and the benefit they would bring. This inclusive process is incredibly potent in relation to identity formation and the management of subjectivity, as Lesly proselytised, the communication that is almost real and is powerfully inclusive has the greatest power to sway opinion. When a concept is continually outlined and repeated individuals tend to take its premise for granted. It becomes part of life and taken for granted as knowledge (Lesly, 1974).

3.2 – 2012: Unifying the Choice Generation

American economist and author Chris Anderson (2009) contends that society has, as a result of the Internet and the near infinite number of life choices it presents, become a series of niche markets. To apply this assertion to everyday life is to contend that there are becoming fewer and fewer unifying water-cooler, bus stop, coffee queue or barstool topics which facilitate conversation. Such examples speak to the same milieu of the colonisation of the self from society, which has deep significance in relation to contemporary socialisation. This is not a new argument; it is simply a rehashing and updating of Robert Putnam's (2000) *Bowling Alone*⁵⁰ argument within which he attributes America's decline in socialisation to technological advances, greater choice and the solitary consumption of technology.

⁵⁰ There are critiques of the theoretical underpinning of *Bowling Alone* particularly with regards the conceptual vagueness of the term 'social capital' that was, for some, merely represented by social groups exhibiting 'good behaviour' (Portes, 1998). Furthermore, political scientist Everett Carl Ladd purported that Putnam's study ignored existing field studies that predicated *Bowling Alone*, which attributed the decline in socialisation to older technologies such as the radio (Foley and Edwards, 1999). Additional critiques of this work revolve around its America-centric orientation citing the work of Andersen, Curtis and Grabb (2006) who conducted studies over a 40-year period in the USA, Canada, the Netherlands and the UK and reported that only the USA had witnessed a decline in civic participation.

This theme resonates with German sociologist Amital Etzioni's conceptualisation of 'communitarianism' that emphasised the sociological importance of the connection between the individual and the community (1995). Additionally, it speaks to UK Prime Minister David Cameron's 'Big Society'⁵¹ policy idea that purported to empower local people to increase their involvement within their communities and, as a consequence, increase socialisation. However, as Putnam contends there are exceptions to the assertion that technology is at the root of decreasing socialisation and television can provide the medium for certain topics to transcend a diversity of choice and become ingrained in the public consciousness.

Putnam focused upon television's ability to bridge a social ambivalence gap by providing large-scale dissemination of narratives that enable access to emotions of loss, fear or disbelief. These emotions are then vicariously experienced through the medium to elicit a wider, communal response, which is then shared in everyday life. This indicates the powerful and enduring potential of television, highlighting its ability to become a social, shared endeavour in particular circumstances.

Television's ability to accomplish this unification is not limited to socialisation through grief; it can also unify people through more positive emotions. Furthermore, it is not limited to common individual private consumption to be regurgitated in the social sphere; the act of watching television itself can become a shared experience. This is particularly pertinent in the sporting context where, during large sporting events, huge numbers of people mass together to experience watching televised coverage as a group (Appendix A – Figure 9).

⁵¹ For more information see: <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/big-society>

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In this regard, televised sports correlates with agenda-setting theory (McCombs and Shaw, 1972) which contends that although the media do not have the power to tell the viewer what to think, it is an effective means of conveying what the viewer should think about, where they should think about it and how they should behave once they are there. Helpfully, these directions are often accompanied by testimonials giving guidance as to how one should expect to feel during the experience.

In this unifying discourse, sporting events provide the substance for the platform of television to facilitate widespread, positive, identity affirming unity, something that is rare within contemporary society. For this reason, Billings (2008) purported that the Olympic Games was the ‘biggest show on television’. A belief grounded upon the premise that viewers tuned in to watch the Games in such significant numbers that it facilitated communication and participation on an unmatched scale. It is argued here, in relation to the 2012 Olympics, that sport-related unity was not confined to televised events, but was also available for consumption across various disseminating platforms, including newspapers, social media and so forth. Moreover, in this field the mediatised agenda-setting of Olympic-delivery contributed considerably to the impact of such identity formation.

3.3 – Shaping the Olympic Narrative

That said, the race to host the 2012 Olympic Games was a contest wherein success was based upon differentiating between social, political and cultural characteristics. This bidding contest was a contest of cities and nations, where the nationalistic narrative was

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predicated upon the notion that the Olympic Games are a national – indeed a nationalistic – event. This national perspective ensured the outcome of the bidding contest depended upon a practice that lies ‘at the heart of sociology’s self-definition’ which is ‘created in the image of the nation state’ (Billig, 1995, p. 53). Moreover, the use of the nation-state as the pre-eminent constituent of Olympic bidding identity supports the views of sections of academe that proselytise nationality as the fundamental differentiator between peoples. Such academics include Calhoun, who stated that nationality acts as a ‘trump card in the game of identity’ (1997, p. 46). Interestingly, during Olympic bidding Britain’s *Trump* card was the ethnic diversity of its East London identity. Such diversity formed a significant component of the bidding campaign. As the following excerpt from Sebastian Coe’s 2005 Singapore speech to the IOC indicates:

London's vision is to reach young people all around the world. To connect them with the inspirational power of the Games. So they are inspired to choose sport. I'm delighted we have with us today representatives of the next generation. Here on stage, Amber Charles, an emerging Basketball player. Amber delivered our Candidate File to Lausanne last year. And in the audience, 30 of her contemporaries, aged from 12 to 18. Why are so many here, taking the place of businessmen and politicians? It's because we're serious about inspiring young people. Each of them comes from East London, from the communities who will be touched most directly by our Games. And thanks to London's multi-cultural mix of 200 nations, they also represent the youth of the world. Their families have come from every continent. They practice every religion and every faith. What unites

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them is London. Their love of sport. And their heartfelt dream of bringing the Olympic Games to our city.

(Lord Sebastian Coe, 2005⁵²)

The results of this contest were broadcast throughout the globe and constituted a plethora of water-cooler moments for the days, weeks, months and, indeed, years to come. Interestingly, in the immediate aftermath of London 2012's conformation, on the sixth of June, 2005, Prime Minister Tony Blair attempted to distance the bid from such London-centric identity rhetoric, purporting the award of the Games marked a 'momentous day for Britain'⁵³ signifying the multi-dimensional identity discourse that persists in 2012 narratives that, depending upon the context, shifted ownership towards or away from the 'local' i.e. London whilst concomitantly promoting London as the coolest city on Earth.

3.4 – Olympic Sport and Identity Formation

Following London's award of the 2012 Games, Lord Sebastian Coe effused around the Games arguing that they offered 'the most fantastic opportunity to do everything we've ever dreamed of in British sport . . . We have a chance over seven years and way beyond that to change the face of British sport'.⁵⁴ It was, therefore, of paramount importance to demonstrate how the nation could expect to both benefit from, and enable

⁵² For more information see:

<http://www.london2012.com/documents/locog-publications/singapore-presentation-speeches.pdf>

⁵³ For more see: http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/july/6/newsid_4940000/4940112.stm

⁵⁴ For more information see: http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/other_sports/olympics_2012/4654821.stm

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all to have a stake in, the Games. Accordingly, a plethora of documents outlining such an ideology were bandied about. For example, the DCMS government document: *Before, during and after: Making the most of the London 2012 Games*,⁵⁵ published in 2008, clearly delineated the expected outcomes of Olympic hosting and placed ‘sporting outcomes’ as the number one priority. This action plan regurgitated a previous strategy document titled *Our Promise for 2012*, published in June 2007, and was intended to re-stress the previously indicated national Olympic benefits. To avoid repetition, only the 2008 outcomes will be focused upon here, these were:

1. To make the UK a world-leading sporting nation
2. To transform the heart of East London
3. To inspire a generation of young people
4. To make the Olympic Park a blueprint for sustainable living
5. To demonstrate that the UK is a creative, inclusive and welcoming place to live in, visit and for business.

This DCMS document outlined that in relation to sport its ‘Headline Ambitions’ were to ‘inspire young people through sport’, to get ‘at least two million more people in England {it is interesting that they used England and not Britain} to be more active by 2012’ and to ‘aim for 4th in the Olympic medal table’ (p. 6). Furthermore, the DCMS were ‘determined that the evidence that emerges from the London 2012 Games will be of a significant and sustained increase in participation – across all communities in the

⁵⁵ For more see:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/2012LegacyActionPlan.pdf>

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United Kingdom {now shifting perspective back to Britain}, including ethnic minorities, men and women, and young and old’.

Unfortunately, the premise that these benefits were based upon was that the Olympic Games would have a significant bearing on inspiring young people to take up sport (DCMS, 2008, p. 19). This premise is highly debatable, especially, when considering research conducted in 2003 by Sport England (the government agency responsible for community sport) which indicated that ordinary people watching ‘models of perfection’ performing on the elite stage were actually put off participating (2003, p.5). Furthermore, in 2002 the UK government itself concluded, in a strategy document named *Game-Plan: A Strategy for Delivering Government’s Sport and Physical Activity Objectives* that hosting an Olympics would not inspire people to take up sport: ‘depending on the scale of the subsidy, it would seem that hosting events is not an effective, value for money method of achieving . . . a sustained increase in mass participation’ (DCMS / Strategy Unit 2002, p.75). However, shortly after this report the Government released the *Legacy Master-Plan Framework* and directly contradicted the earlier *Game-Plan*, professing that hosting the 2012 Olympics would result in the UK becoming a leading sporting nation and encourage its population to participate in sport. As Harold Wilson once memorably stated – a week is a long time in politics.

Sport England was responsible for the facilitation of a target of one million people that were to be involved in sport and the Department of Health was tasked to co-ordinate health-related activities to engage the other million. Unsurprisingly, despite the UK Department of Health – incredulously – cataloguing pursuits such as ‘gardening’ as ‘active’ to help boost participation figures these objectives were never achieved.

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Evaluation of the actual increase in participation during Olympic-delivery is muddled by the fact that accountability for the figure was shared. However, in March 2011, Olympic Secretary Jeremy Hunt, positing blame on the previous UK Government, quietly but officially scrapped the targets.

The 'second target {the department of health's million} had been quietly dropped shortly after the coalition government came to power {in 2010 and without registering in the press}. The first target, towards which the sports have made only glacial progress, nominally remains in place for now but it is understood that it too will shortly be dropped in favour of a "more meaningful" national measure'.⁵⁶ It was no surprise when in December 2011, Sport England released official figures that indicated, despite being only eight months from the start of the Olympics, that only '111,000 more people . . . {participating} in sport since 2007, just 11 per cent of the target they have been pursuing for the last four years'.⁵⁷

Interestingly, such apparent failure seemed to do little to curtail Olympic fervour, which would suggest that the outcomes of governmental targets had little bearing in terms of '*Olympic identity*' or Olympic enthusiasm. One reason for this is the fact that Olympic '*legacy*' is incredibly pluralistic and, accordingly there are myriad diversions for Olympic scrutiny to follow. One frequently relied-upon Olympic hosting justification was the Olympic Game's potential 'boost' to the ailing national economy via Games-related tourism (Stevenson, 1997; Chalip and Costa, 2005). Headlines such as 'Games a

⁵⁶ For more information see: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/sport/2011/mar/28/jeremy-hunt-london-2012-legacy>

⁵⁷ For more see:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/olympics/news/8944428/London-2012-Olympics-Sport-England-to-miss-legacy-target-as-Games-fail-to-inspire-youngsters.html>

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£2bn UK tourism boost⁵⁸ proliferated the media following the award of the Olympics. An article in the Daily Mail newspaper, citing the VisitBritain campaign, also reported that the 2012 London Olympic Games was ‘worth more than £2billion in tourism revenue for the country’.

The above statement articles intimated that the responsibility of Britain attaining such an economic boost from 2012 hosting lay outside the remit of Olympic deliverers citing that it was the responsibility of the British tourism industry to capitalise on the impending Olympic opportunities. However, as the European Tour Operators Association (ETOA⁵⁹) stated in its *Olympic Report* (2006) the profitability associated with the Olympic audiences regularly cited to attend the Games are exaggerated. Moreover, these tourists displace normal tourists rather than add to their numbers. ETOA stated that because of their nature and spending habits Olympic tourists are less financially beneficial than regular tourists. In fact the ETOA went as far as to suggest that hosting the Olympic Games is actually bad for the tourist industry of a nation.⁶⁰

Such a dichotomy between *facts* offered by those who have legitimate experience and the proliferation of *belief* peddled by Olympic *apparatchiks* is crucial to the epistemology of Olympic benefit and ‘*legacy*’. These examples shed light upon the fact that Olympic euphoria is not about *truth*; it is about *faith*. It is not about sporting outcome; it is about the holistic spectacle of the event and all that it brings. Consequently, there must be dimensions that facilitate this peculiar Olympic-related identity formulation, that which supersedes sport and transcends nationality, but what precisely

⁵⁸ More information regarding this assumption is available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4656771.stm>

⁵⁹ The ETOA are a trade organisation for European travel companies who, as such can be relied upon to provide a relatively neutral perspective of Olympic impact upon tourism.

⁶⁰ For more information regarding this suggestion see: <http://members.etoa.org/Pdf/ETOA%20Report%20Olympic.pdf>

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are they?

3.5 – Nailing down the Olympic I.D.

One answer to the question of what constitutes ‘*Olympic identity*’ that particularly resonated throughout this research lay within the human psyche and the innate, fundamental need for that we can call ‘belonging’. There appears to be a safety and reassurance in identifying oneself as ‘pro-Olympic’ – which can be defined as not being ‘anti-Olympic’ and became manifest in a plethora of ways that will be addressed herein – this is rarely apparent in other aspects of identity-formation (which will also be explored). Indeed, being ‘pro-Olympic’ appears to be an additional identity that one can assimilate into one’s existing self-perception without fear of contradicting most other facets of the self.⁶¹

The inclusivity of Olympic-related identity, when delivered in the contemporary context, satiated a fundamental social hunger that permitted a sense of national unification. Rather than being segregational, this ‘*Olympic identity*’ was, unlike Olympic tickets, made accessible to all, inclusive of creed, colour, age, sex, sexual orientation and

⁶¹ The grounding for this perspective is outlined below ‘Humans are inherently social creatures. We gather in groups the world over and form affectional pair-bonds in every known human society (Brewer and Caporael, 1995). Social exclusion is an effective and ubiquitous form of punishment across all age groups and cultures (see Williams, 1997, for review), and a lack of positive social relationships has repeatedly been associated with startling decreases in physical and mental wellbeing (for review, see Gardner, Gabriel, and Diekmann, 2000). Indeed, the need to belong—a need fulfilled only through affiliation with and acceptance from others—is so universally powerful that it has been proposed to be as basic to our psychological makeup as hunger or thirst is to our physical makeup (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). Past research has presented ample behavioral {sic} evidence consistent with a need to belong; individuals who are rejected will symbolically or explicitly (Williams and Sommers, 1997) attempt to connect themselves to a larger social whole the importance of belonging has been emphasised throughout the history of psychology. The need to belong was stressed by early motivation theorists (e.g., Maslow, 1971), and more recently, cogent arguments for its fundamental nature have been presented (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). We believe that just as physical hunger increases sensitivity to food cues (Atkinson and McClelland, 1948), social hunger increases sensitivity to social cues, implying that an individual’s shifting levels of belonging may fundamentally shape the perception and representation of his or her social world’ (Gardner, Pickett and Brewer, 2000, pp. 486-495).

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race, regardless of ownership of a VISA card. As such, it was not ‘embedded within {segregating} notions of nation-state, citizenship and national society’ (Urry, 2000, p. 6) but embedded within – largely – accessible notions of time, place and being.

The Olympic spirit (for want of a better term) can be argued to be the personification of bland political correctness in the realm of identity, which is perhaps its most significant and endearing quality. There is no need for any more personal investment than being requested not to object too strongly to the Games, and if one would like to participate and engage in the events, how nice. This inclusive, highly accessible identity affirmation is referred to herein, in the interests of brevity, as ‘*Olympic identity*’.

‘*Olympic identity*’ needed to be something instinctive, easy to engage with, universally accessible and instantly comprehensible. This re-imagination of Great Britain could not be mutually exclusive to other imaginations of identity, at any level. This was probably best exemplified by the easy co-existence of ‘*Olympic identity*’ and the highly nationalistic fervour created by the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee celebrations that occurred in June 2012, where the two celebrations proved extremely compatible. The malleability of ‘*Olympic identity*’ allowed the individual to take ownership – or maybe possession – of such without making any sacrifices in terms of other forms of identity. Fundamentally, there were no required actions or sacrifices needed to be able to adopt the ‘*Olympic identity*’. This malleability was bolstered by a widespread positive portrayal of its Olympic implications, as portrayed by the media (explored herein). This arguably deeply resonated within the banality of everyday life for many British citizens and facilitated its widespread appeal.

Interestingly, reproduction or demonstrations of ‘*Olympic identity*’ was not a

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prerequisite for such belonging. Opportunities, however, for its display, both individual and collective, permeated the local and the national during Olympic-delivery. This optionality of participation in identity affirmation, when combined with the short Olympic time frame (17 days of Olympic Games plus an additional 12 of Paralympic Games), ensured that the numerous signifiers of ‘*Olympic identity*’ were extremely unthreatening. These safe reminders permeated the communal and private spaces of everyday life, be that through signs, conversations, in newspapers or on television, which gently informed people what to think, what to do and how to behave. This *innocuous* Olympic invasion into Britain’s quotidian routines facilitated a subconscious engagement with Olympic-delivery, which was complimented by spectacular, but safe, releases of identity-affirming belonging.

From the outset of, and throughout, London’s Olympic-delivery, the articulation and re-articulation of ‘*Olympic identity*’ was grounded by quotidian demonstrations of inclusive ownership. This delineation of ownership was peppered with the use of the empowering word ‘we’ which was used to signify the sense of belongingness that accompanies the conceptualisation that there is an ‘us’ – the members of the 2012 Olympic collective, an ‘*Olympic family*’. As observed earlier in the DCMS report, this narrative was prevalent through the more public articulations of Olympic-delivery made by local and national politicians and the media:

- *There will be massive regeneration but what we are already seeing is the extent to which sport can really impact on people’s lives (Sir Robin Wales, Mayor of*

the London Borough of Newham, cited in Muir, 2005⁶²).

- *Today we can celebrate. From tomorrow, we start to realise the Olympic vision in our bid . . . before the summer recess, the Government will introduce a Bill to set the statutory framework that we need to ensure the delivery of a successful Games (Jack Straw, Foreign Secretary, 6/7/2005⁶³).*
- *London 2012: How we won the Olympic bid (London Metro⁶⁴).*

Much of the time, such representations are consumed unconsciously. As Billig (1995) purports, these messages are manifested and reproduced in the everyday and this assumes that the ‘us’ and the ‘we’ referred to require no qualification and will be uncritically accepted by consumers. This intimated belonging appears to be a self-fulfilling prophecy of sorts within which the ‘we’, those residing within Britain, are assumed to be part of the imagined community, part of the ‘us’ that are experiencing Olympic-delivery together. This constitutes a major part of the naturalisation of the ‘*Olympic identity*’. At both national and local levels the ‘*Olympic identity*’ seemed to inhabit a space that was separate from reality, the conceptualisation of ‘*legacy*’ and ‘*Olympic identity*’ often seemed to disguise some crude strategies for engineering consensus. These included holistically labelling Olympic-delivery realities as necessary precursors to the event and any scrutiny being offset by a simplistic ‘*legacy*’ argument.

⁶² For more information regarding Sir Robin Wale’s opinion see:
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2005/aug/08/olympics2012.ukcrime>

⁶³ For a more complete account of these comments see: <http://www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=2005-07-06a.404.0>

⁶⁴ This report is available in full at: <http://blogs.metro.co.uk/olympics/london-2012-how-we-won-the-olympic-bid/>

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As Durkheim noted to ‘illustrate an idea is not to prove it’ (1964, p. 155), however, this seemed lost to those who readily consumed the ‘*Olympic identity*’.

This ‘pro-Olympic’ assumed identity would require people to visibly and demonstrably opt out of or be presumed an Olympic advocate. This reality was evident right from the outset. For example, during the bidding phase in London’s *Response to the questionnaire for cities applying to become Candidate cities to host the Games of the XXX Olympiad and the Paralympic Games in 2012* document clearly outlined the assumption of inclusivity in regards to ‘*Olympic identity*’ under the section where ‘objection to the bid’ was to be defined. The official response was ‘There is no organised opposition to hosting the Games in London’ (p. 3). In fact, this was categorically untrue, as the organised opposition group ‘No to London 2012’ would attest.⁶⁵ The following call to action, taken from their website,⁶⁶ clearly exemplifies their organised anti-Olympic action during the Olympic bid:

SAY NO TO LONDON 2012

From February 16-19 2005, delegates from the International Olympic Committee will be visiting east London, providing an opportunity to expose the misleading and shallow populism of the London bid supporters. This may be one of our few chances to stop the bid in its tracks – the final decision will be made in July 2005.

⁶⁵ The ‘No to London 2012’ group was formed in late 2004. It was a coalition of East London residents, academics, community groups, anti-authoritarian and social justice campaigners who were concerned about the implications London bidding to stage the Olympics. Concern regarding London in 2012 came from a variety of perspectives that included environmental issues, policing concerns, displacement and use of public land. In 2005 the group organised demonstrations including that advertised above and a flotilla of canal boats along the river Lea in an attempt to raise awareness for the movement. These demonstrations resulted in local and national media coverage. Following London’s award of the 2012 Olympic Games the group created a forum that aimed to provide a collection of counter-Olympic narratives that indicated the realities of Olympic hosting, this internet resource was named Games Monitor and can be accessed at <http://www.gamesmonitor.org.uk/> (Private interview, Carolyn, ‘No to London 2012’ founder member, February 2012).

⁶⁶ For more information see: <http://www.nolondon2012.org/>

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A corporate-sponsored, multi-million pound Olympics in London will be a financial and environmental disaster built on lies told to some of the poorest communities in Britain. It will lead to even more draconian 'anti-terror' and public order legislation and be paid for not by the rich or businesses but by Londoners – Our chance to say WE DON'T Back the Bid!

However, despite sporadic and relatively localised objections and demonstrations (some of which will be explored herein) there was no large-scale opting out. This led to the assumption that there was a solidified imagined community, which concomitantly bolstered the '*Olympic identity*'. The cornerstone of Anderson's concept of the imagined community, as discussed earlier, was the invention of the printing press and the subsequent rise of print media, which he postulated provided the technological means for the widespread dissemination of national identity. In this regard Anderson contends that the concept of national identity is rooted in the banality of human existence, attesting that newspapers formulate an imagined community that 'is visibly rooted in everyday life' (1983, p. 36). However, this study argues that Anderson's considerations should be applied to contemporary '*Olympic identity*' formation in a similar but more expansive way by examining the print-media, as highlighted above, but also extending focus to other means of identity dissemination. Consequently, focus will now be placed upon the formulation of '*Olympic identity*' in various contexts by exploring pertinent examples of the diversities utilised to accomplish the production and sustenance of this communal identity.

3.6 – Rhetorical Living

Following the opening of *that* envelope in 2005, London 2012 was an inevitable occurrence that would change parts of East London forever. What was once a collection of diverse, multi-cultural East and South-East London boroughs was now to be transformed into an ‘*Olympic City*’. This city needed to develop an ‘*Olympic identity*’; accessible to both those that lived within the area and the rest of the nation. That we can call ‘London 2012’ was – and remains – an ideological creation and in this ideological realm there were no borders, no segregation, no vilification. ‘London 2012’ was a fantasy, a Camelot re-imagined, with Lord Sebastian Coe playing King Arthur. The house on the hill was needed. Futuristic artist impressions of this new Olympic land habitually entered the public consciousness (Appendix A – Figure 10). These utopian images were bolstered by the conceptualisation of ‘*legacy*’ and benefit for all.

Olympic-delivery evidenced the heady inference that Olympic benefit would permeate all parts of the nation in a variety of ways. Concomitant was the notion that the 2012 Games were to be a showcase for Great Britain to prove to a global audience the greatness of the nation. This message was been recast and repeated by an abundance of agents which bears testament to the universal applicability of the Olympic Games, a selection of such comments, made at different stages of Olympic-delivery are highlighted below:

- The Games are already a fantastic advert for Britain, promoting the country as a place to live, to work, to visit and to do business. With the eyes of the world

on London in 2012 it is a unique opportunity to strengthen our international reputation (Lord Sebastian Coe⁶⁷).

- As London is about to host the 2012 Olympic Games next month, the UK's construction sector could benefit from this summer's excellent completion of the Olympic venue and one of the greatest showcases on the Earth to bid for major international project in the future (Train4TradeSkills⁶⁸).
- 'I am confident that we can derive over £13bn benefit to the UK economy over the next four years as a result of hosting the Games. I am certain that when you add in the benefits from construction the total gain will be even greater. These four weeks in a British summer are going to be like no other four weeks in a British summer. They will be about making the most of our country, being everything it can be, at the centre of the world's attention' (UK Prime Minister David Cameron⁶⁹).

The above statements and many others along the same lines were consistently portrayed throughout the British media during Olympic-delivery. Olympic hosting was habitually inferred to attract enormous investment and consumption during and after the Games, particularly in the tourism and retail sectors (Dunn and McGuirk, 1999). The statements resonated along the same beneficial themes and were presented without contradictory evidence, often absent any epistemological justification and were delivered

⁶⁷ For more information see:

<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/london-2012-olympic-and-paralympic-games-showcase-british-industry-and-power-of-sport-as-catalyst-for-social-economic-and-community-change-games-leader-and-1984-la-gold-medallist-seb-coe-tells-american-business-leaders-139466088.html>

⁶⁸ For more information see:

<http://train4tradeskills.wordpress.com/2012/07/02/the-olympic-venue-is-an-excellent-showcase-for-british-construction-industry/>

⁶⁹ For more information see: <http://www.lbc.co.uk/cameron-olympics-will-boost-economy-by-13bn-56837>

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as intends to capitalise upon the *concrete* beneficial outcomes of Olympic hosting. The ignored reality was that there was much historical epistemological underpinning that emphasised the dubious nature of a belief in *concrete* beneficial outcomes, such as the tourism example highlighted earlier (for more see Perryman, 2012).

These examples from a variety of stakeholders, illustrate the all-encompassing emphasis of positivity and national benefit that added a dimension of ownership for those that lived and worked in Britain; which was not limited to British people in any nationalistic sense. As such, this perspective reinforced the Games with a national resonance as opposed to a national identity. It is argued here that this inclusive national resonance was vastly different to segregational national identity, which, according to Guibernau (1996), represents a ‘socio-historical context within which culture is embedded and the means by which culture is produced, transmitted and received’ (p. 79).

Consequently, Olympic-delivery needed to temporarily re-imagine Great Britain as an inclusive host of ‘London 2012’ and jettison exclusive aspects of identity in the process. To accomplish this lofty aim, the Olympic deliverers had to create a British ‘*Olympic identity*’ that had its physical form in East London and its ideological form resonating throughout the British Isles. The creation of specific Olympic logos and themed paraphernalia was thus crucial to the success of this inclusive ‘*Olympic identity*’ (Appendix A – Figure 37).

The creation of such an inclusive, accessible identity ensured that the British populace were able to take ownership of the Games. This allowed the nation to buy into the notion that they too were part of a historic British event, despite the fact that the sporting facet of the Games was particularly London-centric. To accomplish such an aim,

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the 2012 Olympic-delivery adopted a variety of methods to enable Olympic consumption, in many divergent spaces and across many divergent themes.⁷⁰

‘*Olympic identity*’ was a fleeting, momentary identity. The invented highly repeated tradition of the Olympic torch relay was employed to help accomplish such unity. This Olympic relay, which has been utilised by all recent Olympic hosts, is ‘governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past’ (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983, p. 2). Fundamentally, the pageantry and created mythology of the relay was a great exemplar of the inclusivity of the ‘*Olympic identity*’. Crucially, this identity used the ‘resources of history {real and imagined}, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being. It was less about “who we are” or “where we came from”, so much as what we might become’ (Hall, 1996, p. 4).

3.7 – Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Hope[iness]

The identity-affirming inclusivity and the positive perceptions of the Games legitimised the power and authority awarded to the various constituents of Olympic-delivery. Consequently, the dissemination of fabricated Olympic ideology sustained

⁷⁰ One clear example of which was the Olympic Torch Relay that transported the Olympic Flame around the British Isles in the months before the Games (See Appendix A - Figure 11). This relay highlighted the transitory re-imagination of Great Britain into London 2012 that appeared to attain quasi-natural resonance, rather than appearing a highly social construct. This belief resonates with the themes discussed within Hobsbawm and Ranger’s edited work titled, *The Invention of Tradition*. These themes contend that, in relation to the concept of national identity, the powerful generate traditions that create an illusion of primordality that indoctrinates ‘certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past’ (1983, p.2). In this regard the Olympic torch relay was another of these quasi-Olympic manufactured mythologies that helped form the Olympic identity. This concept resonated with Sarup’s definition of identity, which was delineated as a ‘mediating concept between the external and the internal, the individual and society . . . a convenient tool through which to understand many aspects, personal, philosophical, political, of our lives’ (1996, p.28).

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identity-affirming notions that were built upon the perceptions of history, ritual and *rite de passage*. 2012 Olympic-delivery used other mythologized neo-historical forms and practices to facilitate the construction of ‘*Olympic identity*’, which helped to foster positive perceptions.⁷¹ Importantly, and in testament to the success of such endeavours, official Olympic related collective engagement, such as the cultural Olympics, were replicated throughout Britain during this period in myriad unofficial events. These informal events and gatherings saw ideologically similar, but smaller scale, ‘*Olympic identity*’ affirming rituals take place. These were particularly evident in the local communities observed within this research throughout everyday contexts where various festivities including parties, gatherings and community events (Appendix A – Figure 12) took place.

Such celebrations involved Olympic-themed communal customs, including fancy dress and sporting contests seamlessly intermixing with other identifying features such as locally themed cuisine. The safe – if quirky – inclusive banality of ‘*Olympic identity*’ resonated throughout Britain and facilitated a diversity of identity affirming themed rituals that replicated the effectiveness of the inclusive qualities of the larger Olympic schema.

3.8 – Creating Consumable Identity For All

It appeared apparent that the 2012 ‘*Olympic identity*’ was based upon *faith* of

⁷¹ One came in the shape of the Cultural Olympiad which was the largest cultural celebration in the history of the modern Olympic and Paralympic Movements. Over four years, it aimed to give everyone in the UK a chance to become part of London 2012 through various non-sporting events. The culmination of the Cultural Olympiad was the London 2012 Festival that ran from 21st June to 9th September 2012. This aimed to make London 2012 accessible to non-sporting audiences by providing Olympic events that included dance, music, theatre, the visual arts, film and digital innovation, which aimed to deliver yet another post Games Olympic legacy (VisitEngland). For more information see: <http://www.visitengland.org/england-tourism-industry/tourismin2012/2012festivals/20121festivals.aspx>

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benefit, regardless of contradictory evidence. Attention now turns to how this ‘*Olympic identity*’ was processed through Olympic rituals, commercialisation and representation. This placed focus upon the spectacular and the mundane, the exceptional and the everyday, the traditional and the contemporary. This was the ethos and agency of the ‘*Olympic identity*’. It was an identity experienced in the familiar local environment, with one’s friends and families, neighbours, strangers, other creeds, colours, classes and religions. It was also felt in pubs and bars, in fast-food outlets and supermarkets with strangers. It was bought, eaten, driven, spent, drunk, worn, touched, heard and consumed. It was everywhere.

This commodification permeated every strand of everyday life, familiar, everyday objects that formed part of the affective and cognitive structures of quotidian life, those regular, reliable features around which mundane habits and routines were organised fleetingly all became Olympic-related. Consequently, ‘*Olympic identity*’ was embraced, simply by living one’s routine existence. The diverse, inclusive, unifying nature of Olympic-delivery facilitated the easy consumption of the inclusive ‘*Olympic identity*’. This was resplendent in its transient, ‘once-in-a-lifetime’, rhetoric and ideology.

Hobsbawm and Ranger’s (1983) perspective that traditions, such as those highlighted here, are created to generate an identity-affirming illusion of primordality are pertinent here. This illusion, they state, indoctrinates the populace with ‘certain values and norms of behaviour {that through} repetition . . . automatically implies continuity with the past’ (1983, p. 2). However, this research questions their suggestions that such identity affirming actualities are solely Machiavellian techniques created by a power elite to control the masses for some ulterior motive. To apply the full context of this post-

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modernistic, conspiracy theorist perspective to the 2012 Games would lend too much credence to the supposition that there exists an underlying controlling motive that uses this ‘Mega-Event’ exclusively for ideological manipulation. Despite the allure of constructing a Machiavellian – or Marxist – caricature that pulls all of the Olympic strings towards the ends of the ruling classes, it appears that the creation of the Olympic mythology provided something lacking in strands of contemporary British society – notably a sense of belonging and the hope of better things to come in otherwise bleak times – an Olympic-related imagined community (Edensor, 2002, p. 68).

The Olympic Games promised hope, inclusivity, excitement, riches, opportunity and adventures to come. It included you, whoever you were, your community, your region, your nation, all were welcome in the ‘*Olympic identity*’ family. Moreover, once the excitement of the Games was over, those that bought into this identity affirming Olympic clique were free to return to their pre-Games existence, full of happy memories stored in their nostalgia banks ready to relay at choice moments in the future. The retort to the Marxist critique from many may be; who cares if it was pseudo-Machiavellian, it was fun while it lasted and it’ll never happen again!

‘*Olympic identity*’ provided an exception to overt displays of nationality and traditional British apprehension around such displays. This explains why the 2012 Olympic Games was to unify vast swathes of British society without contradiction and absent of fear of racism, elitism, regionalism or classism. The universality of ‘*Olympic identity*’ was effectively interpreted and claimed by myriad groups of great diversity their mutual enthusiasm emblematic of the Olympics broad appeal that facilitates inclusive identity sharing. The following chapter applies this generalisation of ‘*Olympic identity*’ to

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a local Olympic hosting context – the host borough of Newham – and considers its relevance to a borough wherein day-to-day existence was, for many, a struggle.

Chapter 4. THE 2012 TRANSITION: PROMISES AND POLITICS

The fundamental questions raised within the preceding chapters speak to the accountability of the Olympic milieu, the realism of the intended delivery outcomes that were formed and disseminated during the London 2012 bid and how and why the British public bought into this narrative. This raises questions regarding who committed to what and why? This chapter thus explores and delineates the 2012 rhetoric against which the ethnographic realities of later chapters will be contrasted. It also analyses those involved in the 2012 decision-making process and considers the underlying motivations behind their decisions. It explores who attached themselves to this process and what their roles were during implementation. Finally it asks, who would be most significantly impacted by 2012 Olympic-delivery?

4.1 – Olympic Infused Globalisation

This analysis of the transition from Olympic bid to delivery begins by considering the direct implications of the decision to select London as 2012 host. What was once a far-fetched pipe dream was very much a reality by the mid-noughties. This former perception dictated, for some, a lack of interest throughout the bidding phase. This was evidenced by life-long Newham resident 32-year-old Indian-born Preeti who stated:

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'I didn't see the point in going to the meetings {community consultations} I didn't think we'd get 'em {Olympic Games} and I had better things to do than waste my life in a draughty hall listening to people talk about something that probably wouldn't happen'.

(Fieldwork notes, January 2008)

Using the evidence addressed earlier, it seems reasonable to conclude that the IOC and Olympism may be considered strictly limited to the ideological domain and the IOC involvement within Olympic-delivery would be restricted to that of overseer. It may be inferred that as long as the 2012 Games were seen to promote ethical sport and the holistic goodness of Olympism then the IOC would be content to watch and clap, regardless of other outcomes. In the eyes of the IOC London was simply the next chapter of the ongoing Olympic narrative.

When London won the race to host the 2012 Olympics the bid indicated that the Games would be utilised to regenerate East London and facilitate a number of post-Games legacies that would be attributed to Olympic hosting and the virtues of Olympism. As we have seen this regenerative outcome was delineated by the London Mayor and bid-time politicking and only emphasised as a reaction to a stuttering, failing bid that lagged behind Paris. The delivery of London's idealised utopian vision of Olympic urbanity was defined, constructed and protected by a course of actions that resonated with urban sociological notions of 'cleansing space' (Sibley, 1995; Fussey *et al.*, 2011). This process was mitigated by the spatial action of the Olympic Games with all aspects of Olympic-related infrastructure, regulation and attendant securitisation defined as necessary precursors to event implementation (Smith, 1996).

Those tasked with urban regeneration appear to increasingly perceive Olympic hosting as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for both the large-scale redevelopment and rebranding of a city and to advertise a particular urban geography to an international audience (Burbank *et al.*, 2001). As we have seen the contemporary Olympic Movement is arguably so successful because it is a highly commodified and commercial endeavour with global ramifications. Consequently, the Olympic Games have become synonymous with the processes and enhancement of globalisation. Indeed, to reflect upon the IOC's primary objectives they undoubtedly promote Cobden's definition of globalisation (cited in Ferguson, 2003). Richard Cobden, a nineteenth-century promoter of peace and free trade, postulated that globalisation was an economically determined phenomenon in which the free exchange of commodities and manufacture would unite mankind in the bonds of peace. This is a very Olympian idea. Conversely, opponents of such globalising processes may categorise Olympic hosting motivations as Machiavellian exemplars of the voracity of international capitalism. So where does London 2012 stand in this debate?

Olympic hosting, as will be demonstrated herein, supports the generalised association that increasing global economic openness and flows of international capital raises the living standards of the geographical spheres they interact within. This facilitates the processes of gentrification⁷² and encourages a homogenisation of landscape that is central to the globalisation / glocalisation⁷³ schemas (Harvey, 1989; Albrow, 1990; Robertson, 1992; Sassen, 2001). Bauman stated that being local, a term that can be

⁷² The processes of gentrification include the production of the potential gentry, the generation of the potential gentrifiable neighbourhoods and the creation of the potentially gentrified. These processes explain why only certain inner-city areas with inexpensive housing opportunities occupied by the 'powerless' become gentrified. (see Lees, Slater and Wyly, 2010).

⁷³ The term 'glocalisation' was popularised by Robertson (1992, pp. 173-174). It describes how global pressures and demands are made to conform to local conditions. These processes include how global companies may customise their products for particular markets and allows for the potential of influential outcomes to come from democratic engagements between local and global actors.

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inferred to be interchangeable with non-gentrified, in a globalised world was a sign of social deprivation and degradation (1998, p. 2). The question became whether the parts of East London earmarked for such were ‘ready’ for Olympic gentrification and whether those intended to seek the outcomes of such would want to live and work in a post-Olympic East London landscape.

4.2 – The Regeneration Game

In 2006 the New Labour Mayor of 2012 host borough Newham, Sir Robin Wales, spoke at a community event addressing the forthcoming hosting of the 2012 Games. He argued the event offered ‘a means of reducing deprivation in our {Newham’s} community. The Games offer an exceptional opportunity to dramatically change our society’. He thus intimated that this opportunity to recalibrate the borough would not – really – be possible without Olympic-related regeneration. This Olympic re-branding narrative has been prevalent since the beginning of the reign of former IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch (1980-2001) who upon becoming President identified that the IOC was missing a great opportunity to brand the Olympic venues and competition sites with Olympic imagery. Accordingly, he developed a consistent Olympic brand. During his Presidential reign he developed a programme, called *Look of Games*, that reinforced the unique nature and a presentation of the event. By the time of his last Games as President – Sydney 2000 – the *Look of Games* project had become one of the key success factors of the Games. Samaranch was quoted as remarking that a \$300 million stadium is

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not complete until the *Look of Games* has been applied. Why throw the world's greatest party, and not bother to get dressed? (Payne, 2005, p. 168).

Newham Mayor Sir Robin Wales publically and consistently advocated his desire to dramatically change Newham via the hosting of the 2012 Olympics. He stated that London was unlike any other Olympic host city because, in his opinion, for the first time in history the Olympics were being used to completely transform a deprived area. He believed the regeneration of Newham was the primary reason why London won the Games in the first place.⁷⁴ Consequently, procedures for systematically modifying Newham as an Olympic host, became intertwined with the issues of addressing its deprivation levels; this narrative became increasingly more prevalent as 2012 Olympic-delivery progressed.

Sir Robin's beliefs, paraphrased above, provided a succinct example of the primary motivations for a host city to enter the Olympic bidding process as were delineated by Burbank *et al* (2001). These academics purported that Olympic hosting desires are underpinned by two factors that are central to the entire process. These were 'the existence of an established growth regime in the city . . . {and secondly} a desire to create or change the city's image' (p. 7). The *Look of Games* Olympic place branding superseded the variety of established forms of identity and was undoubtedly intended to rebrand Newham. This concomitantly benefited the coalitions of interest that were able to take advantage of the outcomes of this place rebranding. These coalitions included politicians such as Newham's Mayor, planners, real estate developers and business leaders who used the Olympic Games for diverse motivations particular to their

⁷⁴ For more information see:
<http://www.newham.gov.uk/2012Games/MayorSirRobinWaleshailsarrivalofthe2012Games.htm?Printable=true>

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professions. They accomplished this by attracting new flows of capital and direct investment through the Olympic-delivery-related regeneration of specific areas. These Olympic transformations supported various forms of business development and employment creation and enhanced the image of Newham as a place within which to *live, work and stay*.⁷⁵

Newham's regenerative narrative suggested that the 2012 Olympics would instigate wholesale modification of the borough. This belief was best exemplified by the OPLC Olympic Legacy event hosted by the London School of Economics in 2009. This event emphasised the perceived bleakness of the area pre-Games, vilifying the borough and its residents as part of the aforementioned 'Gash'. The following illustration was presented by OPLC Chair Andrew Altman to indicate how the 2012 Olympics would heal the area, which he referred to as 'London's Gash'.



Figure 3. London's Gash (as seen by the OPLC Chair in 2009)

⁷⁵ 'Live, work and stay' is a Newham Labour council motto that describes the borough as a 'place where people want to live, work and stay'. This attempted self-fulfilling prophecy Newham mantra that describes the borough as a place within which to 'live, work and stay' implicitly addresses the notion of low place ownership addressed earlier. It validates the perceptions that many residents in fact believe the opposite i.e. they 'exist, earn and then leave'. Two interesting and opposing perceptions of such are available at the following websites:

Rhetoric - http://www.newham.com/live/about_newham/discover_newham/449,10,0,0.html

Reality (albeit tinged with bias) - <http://www.forestgate.net/a-place-to-live-work-and-stay>

In referring to the area in such a way Altman effectively denigrated all that came before the Olympics as worthless and – arguably – vilified all those that lived within this locale. This was then contrasted against utopian visions of the future; the delivery of which deeply inferred a different Newham and a different post-Games populace therein (Appendix A Figures 1 and 2). Such presentations indicated traditional tactics employed during Olympic-delivery that perform a masking effect, diverting attention away from reality toward a utopia (Essex and Chalkley, 1998). This vilifying narrative is encapsulated by Echanove and Srivastava (2010) who, in relation to New York City's urban regeneration policy, purported that the policy makers and planning departments that delivered its regeneration disregarded the local communities' wants and needs. They warn that ignoring local actors comes at a high cost for policy makers because, more often than not, they result in urban development that leaves much to be desired from a community use perspective. These authors argued for a paradigm shift in urban planning citing that in an age of information there should no longer be a dependence upon the 'master-planner's map' and the one-way PowerPoint presentations that pass for 'community involvement' in urban planning (Echanove and Srivastava, 2010, p. 145-146).

Interestingly, this paradigm shift advocated was – to a certain degree – visible during the 2012 Olympic bidding process. Arguably, this was the result of the belief that Olympic hosting is an award that is only bestowed after a nation in general, and a local community specifically, publically displays an overt openness for Olympicisation.⁷⁶ This vision must be sold to the public and appear accessible to all, dovetailing nicely with ideals of both Olympism and 'community inclusion'. This value of such perceptible

⁷⁶ The term Olympicisation is used to represent Olympic-related regeneration.

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‘inclusion’ and implicit public support was underscored by former IOC Vice-President Kevan Gosper who stated that ‘public support is very high on the list of priorities, it is, for example, the first thing I look at in a bid’ (Bose and Grant, 2005).⁷⁷ Fundamentally, because a host is only selected after demonstrations of widespread public support, all objections and objectors will have – ideally – been minimised and marginalised at the outset of the Olympicisation process. Olympic-bid-time community consultation events indicate an opportunity for continued dialogue throughout Olympic-delivery, which was an effective tool for minimising community objection, particularly when considering that at that time Olympic hosting was, for most, merely a pipe dream. Once a bid becomes a reality, however, Olympic-delivery subservience is supported by a plethora of hosting laws and regulations, such as the *London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act of 2006*,⁷⁸ which helps lubricate whatever actualities are to be faced.

With that in mind, attention now turns towards an evaluation of Olympic-delivery actualities. Analysis begins with the consideration of how one might define the Games in relation to their impact on and in the local context. This political act of modifying the visual landscape of an area, particularly one associated with disparity and deprivation carried undertones of the liberation and reclamation of space that were emblematic of punitive revanchist techniques (Smith, 1996, 1998; Wacquant, 1999). Olympic-delivery

⁷⁷ For more information see: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/olympics/2355352/IOC-panel-are-ready-to-assess-public-support.html>

⁷⁸ This 2006 Act is available at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/12/pdfs/ukpga_20060012_en.pdf. There are historically clear restrictions placed upon the rights of anti-Olympic protest, such as at Vancouver 2010, where protests and public demonstrations were aggressively minimised and marginalised far away from the global media (Boykoff, 2011). Similar restriction of expression and the control of assembly are enshrined within the *London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act of 2006*. Section 22 of this Act enables the police (or those defined as an ‘enforcement officer’) to ‘enter land or premises on which they reasonably believe a contravention of regulations under section 19 is occurring’. Section 19 pertains to the offence of advertising unofficial or unlicensed products and permits authorities to cover or remove advertising. In addition, this Act provides legislative powers to constrain both the bearers *and* producers of placards. The wording of the Act ensures these measures extend beyond commercial endeavours to encompass political activity. A fundamental tenant of Olympic hosting is delineated by the IOC’s Olympic Charter rule 51 - section three. This explicitly forbids public protest near Olympic venues, thus overriding centuries old, enshrined domestic rights and freedoms.

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outcomes, as illustrated in pictorial form in Appendix A, demonstrated visions of enhanced Newham landscapes that created a contrast between the old and the new. They acted as an indicator of what was to come and ensured that the post-Games utopia would not be compromised visually through associations to any potentially stigmatising pre-Olympic Newham visions.

4.3 – London 2012: The Road to Newham

Author Neil Fraser's 2012 pseudo-historical publication *Over the Border: The Other East End* opens with a summary of London's 2005 Olympic bid victory celebration. The prose resonated deeply with many local people's perceptions that the researcher encountered throughout this research and is worthy of inclusion at this juncture:

This story starts with some people celebrating the fact that London was awarded the right to host the 2012 Olympic Games. Images of these people in Trafalgar Square show lots of cheering faces and flags and branded clothing, to remind us, in case we aren't paying attention, that celebrating the spectacle is somehow patriotic {See Appendix A – Figure 3}. Or something like that. People waved flags because they were given flags, and cheered because it is part and parcel of the spectacle these days, for those lucky to be part of it. This was history. Very small history – it was after all just the result of a vote, of a selection of men and women who had been wined and dined at various cities around the world and then

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pressed a button to say who they thought should get to host the Olympics. And the winner was London. More specifically it was Stratford. Those cheering and waving flags in Trafalgar Square weren't celebrating a victory for Stratford – indeed it is debatable whether it was a victory at all . . .

(Fraser, 2012, pp. 1-2)

As previously stated the research focus of this study was the community impact of the delivery of the 2012 Olympic Games, which was not exemplified by the crowds that gathered in Trafalgar Square (Appendix A – Figure 3). As such it is imperative to delineate how and where to find Olympic-related 'local people'. Therefore, clear research boundaries of this potentially vast subject needs to be established – along with a lens through which to examine said subject matter. This methodological quandary is explored within the following section but before that, it is considered imperative for the purposes of clarity, a delineation of the physical research boundaries will be provided. This demarcation will present an overview of said research boundaries and consider the validity of their construction in relation to evaluating the impact of 2012 Olympic-delivery.

This thesis needed to build upon the previous explorations of motivations for Olympic hosting (as explored earlier) and contrast these against the experiential reality of those impacted most significantly within the delivery of the 2012 edition. This type of analysis involved stepping away from the macro-level hosting outcomes, which revolve around the nation-state perspective and intimate that:

. . . hosting the Olympic Games can provide one of the most powerful platforms for any nation. Governments spend billions of dollars every year managing their national image around the world. They seek to influence how they are perceived by other nations. National images, they know, affect political and economic relationships. Whether it is to increase tourism, change foreign and domestic policy, attract investment or aid, or boost international trade, the goal of national image management is to cast the nation in a more favourable light . . . It is no coincidence that the Games have become an international showcase.

(Payne, 2005, p. 167-168)

Clearly, as has been highlighted here, Michael Payne's assertions, as former head of the marketing division for the IOC, are correct; Olympic outcomes can, and should, be evaluated at the national and international levels. Indeed, there are many macro-level analyses of the Olympic Games that do exactly that (as previously indicated). However, within these analyses there are few accounts of the community impact of Olympic-delivery and none that address this schema through an ethnographic lens.⁷⁹ The national perspective does provide insight into the general impact of hosting at the macro-level, but it simply does not explore how hosting impacts upon the everyday lives of those who live through the reality of Olympic-delivery. The experiential perspective of Olympic-delivery, uncovered herein via the ethnographic method, will provide illustration of the wider implications of Olympic hosting. Consequently, the quest for definition turns away from nationalistic perspectives of Olympic-delivery considerations and outcomes in favour of concentrating upon defining the community impact of 2012 Olympic-delivery.

⁷⁹ To the best of the author's knowledge at time of print.

4.4 – Olympic Positivism: Outcome or Agenda?

It seems readily apparent that an Olympic host, and its citizens, will feel the effects of hosting considerably more extensively than the rest of the country, both through delivery upheaval and Games time disruption. The parody of Olympic bidding necessitates that for host communities the realities of the aftermath of national celebration and the precursor of the Olympic Games and ‘*legacy*’ are seven years of what might best be called ‘upheaval’. During this period some residents will be moved, voluntarily or otherwise, from homes and areas they have spent their entire lives within. For others the main impact will be experienced through local traffic and transport disruption. Local services would not be exempt as officials must cede some of their authority to the unelected quangos that comprise the Olympic deliverers. Moreover, Olympic-delivery will subject those that live within its vicinity to intense policing and security regimes over the Olympic period that will significantly impinge upon the lives of local people. Simply put, everyday life will be altered significantly as a result of becoming an Olympic host. The question becomes, from a host-specific perspective, what generates positive attitudes towards hosting the Games?

According to sports economist Holger Preuss (2004) there are numerous reasons that motivate cities to stage the Olympics. These include the fact that the Games provide a unique opportunity for politicians and industry to follow hidden agendas, including the improvement of infrastructure for sport, housing, communication and traffic policies. Additionally, Preuss states that political, cultural, ecological and social issues related to the Olympic Games ensure that Olympic hosting is a complex multi-dimensional project.

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Preuss exemplified the use of the Olympic Games as a vehicle to reach political consensus in terms of national trade (Seoul 1988) and infrastructure construction (Athens 2004 and Barcelona 1992). Furthermore, he illustrated the Games ability to showcase ecological sustainability technology (Sydney 2000) and demonstrate cultural presentations intended to boost post-Olympic tourism (Sydney 2000 and Barcelona 1992). These were examples of contents that have filled the IOC's 'metaphorical empty flask' (Wamsley, 2004, p. 232). The question becomes how best to consider the contents of the 2012 instalment?

Ultimately, the 2012 Olympics were prefixed by the geographical prefix of London and not UK 2012, or England 2012. This adds validity to the contestation that the impact of the Olympic Games should be considered primarily in relation to its relevance to the host city's dynamics, particularly when the host is considered a global city. In terms of relevance to the boundaries of this research the question now becomes: is the prefix of 'London' sufficient to adequately delineate the community that will be impacted by the hosting of the 2012 Olympic Games?

4.5 – London 2012?

The answer to this question begins with the consideration of what exactly constitutes 'London'. London as a whole (as Figure 4 below indicates) is a significant landmass that encompasses thirty-two London boroughs, holistically referred to as Greater London. These boroughs are sub-divided into inner and outer London, which problematises any holistic-orientated classification of London. Inner London

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encompasses twelve boroughs (Camden, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth and Westminster) and outer London the remaining twenty.



Figure 4. The London Boroughs⁸⁰

London is never fully divisible and the sheer diversity of borough demographics that comprise contemporary Greater London ensures London's categorisation as a 'dual city' i.e. one wherein the growth of the highly skilled and highly paid financial and business services sector is mimicked, in symbiotic differentiation, by the growth of the low skilled, low paid service sector, which coincides with the decline of the skilled middle income groups of industry and manufacturing (Mollenkopf and Castells, 1991). Historically London has been divided by poverty, class, ethnic and racial divisions with

⁸⁰ Map available at: <http://directory.londoncouncils.gov.uk/>

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the poorer, more deprived neighbourhoods encircling the ever expanding more affluent centre, which is dominated by The City of London.⁸¹

As the City of London began evolving into a hub of global capitalism over six centuries ago the East evolved paradoxically. As Dench, Gavron and Young (2006) illustrate, initially the East supplied food to the emerging urban community to the west. Then, as the City concentrated increasingly on the pursuit of profit, the less valuable and more polluting trades were relocated eastwards. As the City became wealthier and more important its contrast to the East became more pronounced. Together, they became the hub of the British imperial trading system. They were inextricably linked and yet contradictory narratives of the same story. One clean, wealthy and powerful and the other dirty, poor and powerless. In this pursuit of wealth the City bought, sold and financed, whereas East London took, stored and transported. This unequal partnership transformed East London into the largest impoverished urban enclave in the world that was ‘abandoned entirely to the working class’ (Sanders, 1989, p. 91). It has, by and large, remained this way ever since.

⁸¹ The City of London, or the ‘Square Mile’, is a major business and financial centre, represented in Figure 8 as ‘City’. It is a local authority in central London but it is unique in that it is administered by the Corporation of London rather than a standard local authority council. The ‘City’ has a unique status in British local government in that it is part of Greater London for most administrative purposes but it remains a separate ceremonial county retaining many independent local government powers and civic identity, including its own police force.

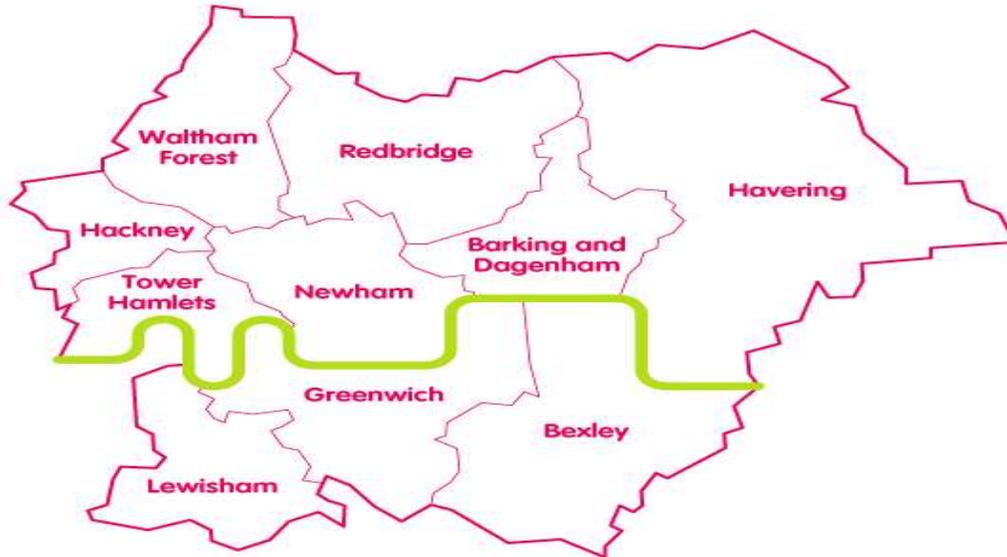


Figure 5. East London⁸²

4.6 – An East End Games?

The 2012 Games were concentrated across five Olympic Boroughs. Four of these were found within East London, traditionally the home to the London working classes – Newham, Waltham Forest, Tower Hamlets and Hackney (the other was the borough of Greenwich which lay within South London).⁸³ Consequently, it was from the start reasonable to predict that the 2012 Olympics would not impact upon London as a whole; the event would be primarily an East London one with impact evidenced also in the West

⁸² Figure 6 indicates East London although other definitions may include boroughs such as Southwark. This map includes Lewisham, Greenwich, Bexley and Havering which are not traditionally considered 'East' but Greenwich is an Olympic borough, hence the validity for inclusion. Map available at: <http://www.elbp.co.uk/what/>

⁸³ Arguably the most comprehensive way to measure such is by considering the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and contrasting these boroughs accordingly. An IMD score indicates deprivation levels that incorporate seven main areas; income, employment, health, education and skills, housing, crime and living environment. Each of these areas incorporate sub-sections and are relationally weighted to their impact upon deprivation with income, employment and health being deemed most vital. In a 2007 ranking that included 354 English local authorities the Olympic boroughs ranked accordingly (the higher the ranking the more deprived the location): Waltham Forest – 27th, Greenwich – 24th, Newham – 6th, Tower Hamlets – 3rd and Hackney – 2nd. For more information see: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/576659.pdf>

End where the five star hotels are located. This assumption delineated the boundaries for this community-centred research, this time shrinking the confines of this research to within a five-borough perimeter.

The five Olympic boroughs are highlighted in Figure 6 below. The 2.5Km² Olympic Park development dissected the boundaries of four working class boroughs (Greenwich being the exception). Clearly, 2012 delivery and concomitant Olympic-related regeneration might be expected to impact significantly upon these boroughs during the delivery phase and beyond. East London boasts fertile ground for the expansion of London, as visible in a presentation by the OPLC in 2009 that encouraged anyone interested in the future expansion of London to ‘look East’. Unsurprisingly, the Olympic regenerators were not the first to see East London’s regenerative potential. The area has long been at the heart of urban renewal schemes and initiatives and for many years it has been earmarked for widespread development (Imrie, Lees and Raco, 2009).



Figure 6. The Olympic Boroughs⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Map available at: <http://www.ypg2el.co.uk/boroughs/>

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A 2007 report by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) described the Olympic area as remaining ‘particularly deprived with Newham, Hackney and Tower Hamlets continuing to exhibit very high levels of deprivation’ (DCLG 2007, p. 40). On the basis of an averaging of rank over 50 different indices of deprivation, England’s three most deprived local authority areas were the Olympic Boroughs of Hackney, Newham and Tower Hamlets (respectively) with the fourth East London Olympic Borough, Waltham Forest, placed fifteenth (DCLG 2007).

As University of East London (UEL) academic Gavin Poynter (2009) argues, East London’s regenerative potential led to the area becoming ‘a laboratory, a site of social experiments in community development that incorporate a mix of wealth and poverty, high and low rise and social inclusion and exclusion’ (p. 132). Poynter advocates that it was in this context that London’s bid for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games was conceived which led to the west Newham location of Stratford being identified as the prime location for the Olympic Park. He argues that the IOC’s selection of London’s bid revolved around its focus upon regeneration in an area of cultural diversity and social deprivation, such a contestation holds a modicum of resonance with what has been explored so far.

As illustrated above, the 2012 Olympic Games were to predominantly impact upon the East of London. However, to categorise the five Olympic boroughs as indicative of the community impact of Olympic hosting is problematic. Of these five Olympic boroughs all were to experience Olympic-delivery differently, with Newham being considered the Olympic borough that would experience Olympic-delivery most severely.

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The conclusion that Newham was the location most appropriate to explore the community impact of Olympic-delivery was two-fold.

Firstly, the majority of the Olympic infrastructure, including the Olympic Park, was built within its boundaries. Newham also contained the ExCeL,⁸⁵ London City Airport and a host of other Olympic and quasi-Olympic related infrastructure at various stages of development (including the Westfield Stratford City shopping complex). This location thus promised accessibility to experiential reactions pertaining to the introduction of Olympic related restrictions and behaviour modification tools such as borough-wide Olympic regulations. These included dispersal zones, parking restrictions and road closures, amongst many others. Olympic-delivery necessitated an intense securitisation of parts of the borough which, along-side the infrastructure, introduced significant modifications to the various constituents of identity and expected behaviour through a widespread altering of the aesthetic, the symbolic and the cultural capital of the borough.

The second reason why Newham could be considered the most conducive location to conduct Olympic-delivery ethnography within out of the five Olympic host boroughs was because this borough had undergone systematic vilification, demonization and denigration during Olympic bidding and delivery. Newham was considered the absolute embodiment of East London's 'Gash' that, according to OPLC chair, Andrew Altman, needed to be healed by the Games. This perception was based upon statistical evidence that ranked Newham highly in the various constituents of the index of deprivation that can be considered as a precedent to regeneration (see Hobbs, Armstrong and Lindsay, 2011). These two considerations combined to ensure that if there was an ideal location to explore the community impact of 2012 Olympic-delivery, then Newham was surely that

⁸⁵ The ExCeL hosted seven Olympic events and within its five arenas eighty 2012 Olympic medals were decided.

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place.

This chapter has indicated the methodological orientation of the 2012 delivery ethnography that follows in Section C and this rationale completes this section. As has been demonstrated the role the IOC played within 2012 Olympic-delivery was minimal following London's selection as host. This award charged those involved in London's Olympic delivery to transition from candidate (involving appealing to the whims of IOC delegates and limited engagement with local people) to mandated Olympic deliverers. This transition was perhaps best exemplified by the modification of the name of those involved with this process, going from the Olympic Bidding Committee (which suggests discussion and malleability) to the Olympic Delivery Authority (with significant linguistic undertones of power and control).

These were the Olympic promises; we will see how they played out in chapter 11. From this point on it arguably became possible to separate 2012 Olympic delivery into two distinct categories, firstly – the majority of the country (and indeed the world) who consumed Olympic-delivery reality through the media and absent personal experience. Secondly - those who experienced Olympic-delivery and all that it brought personally and were able to contrast these experiences against the media rhetoric they consumed alongside the rest of the nation. The specific 2012 Olympic-delivery context that constitutes the 'local' experiential reality that will be illustrated in the ethnography that follows in Section C. Firstly however the analysis within Section B deliberates upon the socio-geography of the borough that was to be the primary host of the 2012 Games.

Section B:

London Calling: The Games played in Newham

Section B contains three component chapters that combine to explore the geographical and theoretical margins of 2012 Olympic delivery. This section indicates the uniqueness and research nuances that facilitated the findings assimilated within this text. It delineates the methodological underpinning for the segregational strategy for tackling this complex research setting and elucidates upon the epistemology of the findings. These chapters are titled:

5. Species in the Capital
6. The New(ham) World
7. Newham: Divide and Document

The aforementioned Chapter 5 provides analysis of the theoretical construction of this research and how this was applied to the Newham context, which is a necessary proviso for the ethnography that follows in Section C. Chapter 6 profiles the London borough of Newham and provides an insight into everyday life within this diverse and deprived milieu. This Section concludes with Chapter 7 which divides this borough into the research components and introduces the three key research spheres of *Stratfordland*, *ExCeLland* and the *Dispersal Zone* that inform all of what follows.

Chapter 5. SPECIES IN THE CAPITAL

What follows sets the theoretical scene for the aforementioned Olympic-delivery findings to come alive within. It outlines the ‘thinking tools’ used to construct, structure, absorb and apply knowledge within the diverse Newham locale. The insights herein explain the evolution of the ethnographic method undertaken in this setting and illustrate the difficulties of conducting time-limited research in a diverse transitory location. An overarching theme is the application of Pierre Bourdieu’s *species of capital* that proved integral to this analysis and fundamental to enabling the framework for documenting and understanding the complex interplay involved. Consequently, this chapter begins with an overview of this French academic and his contemporary theorising.

5.1 – Developing the Habitus: The Parisian Personal Best

Bourdieu’s *species of capital* offers the following 4-dimensional explanation as to what constituted such an idea:

- *Economic capital* – The command over economic resources.
- *Cultural capital* – The knowledge, experience or connections that allow an individual or group to succeed more than those with different sets of knowledge, experience or connections.
- *Social capital* – The resources based upon group membership, relationships and networks of influence and support.
- *Symbolic capital* – The resources available to an individual on the basis of honour, recognition and prestige.

It is argued herein that 2012 Olympic-delivery necessitated a significant re-negotiation of these *species of capital* directly involved in the hosting of the Games, which led to a re-ordering of parts of the host Olympic borough of Newham.

Bourdieu was academically active during the second half of the twentieth and the early years of the twenty-first century. He was a committed if alienated – in the Marxist sense – activist who believed that intellectual autonomy and civic engagement should be intrinsically linked (Bourdieu, 1989⁸⁶). Arguing that research should never theorise for the sake of it but be considered a response to a particular practical context (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 50), Bourdieu’s primary academic quest was to attempt to explain the social, political and cultural practices of contemporary society and then to ‘restore to people the meaning of their actions’ (Bourdieu, 1962, p. 109). To this he also considered the meaning behind action – or *practice* – to be hidden deep within an agents’ subconscious, or what he referred to as their ‘*habitus*’.

Data collection may presuppose an initial gathering of personal – *habitus* – accounts as a way of building up ethnography of *field* participants. However, biographical accounts are never enough on their own. They need to be analysed in relation to field position, structures, and their underlying logic of practice; and, crucially, the relationship between *field* and *habitus* what we can call *field analysis*, and its

⁸⁶ Whilst Bourdieu’s theorising was to play an important role in this analysis of Olympic-delivery it is important to briefly situate his perspective in relation to other sociological intellectual traditions that resonate within this framework. Another notable French-born academic Auguste Comte (1798-1857) advocated that social laws, which form the basis of social order, should be treated as natural laws that may prescribe with certainty the limits and character of social action, which was a principle that Bourdieu readily assimilated as evidenced above in relation to behaviour guiding practice. Bourdieu in fact was a prolific assimilator taking what he liked and discarding what he did not, consequently, legacies of the beliefs of the other key sociologists, namely Marx, Weber and Durkheim permeate Bourdieu’s writings. The ideas of Karl Marx (1818 – 1883) were combined with those of Weber and Durkheim to create a focus that applied a Marxist philosophy of practise to real life situations without generic political rhetoric. Bourdieu, a social historian of sorts also adopted Weber’s (1864 – 1920) contrasts of traditional and modern society and questioned the way rationality developed in relation to underlying norms and criteria (See Bourdieu, 1979 and 1984). Bourdieu’s use of Durkheim’s work (1858 – 1917) revolved around the governance of social organisations and the incongruent forces that influenced perception and action. A deeper analysis of the ways in which Bourdieu borrows from each of these theorists can be found in the excellent account by Grenfell, 2008, in particular see chapters 3 and 4.

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interactions with individual *habitus*, need to be connected with a further analysis of the relations between the *field* and its position in the overall structures of *fields* of power. In order to construct such a *field* analysis the researcher needs to obtain the maximum sense of data analyses to undertake the construction of a relational analysis, both within and between *fields* {including} biographical studies and ethnographic case studies. These principles (or stages) can consequently be understood as the bedrock of the ‘realist third way’ to research (Bourdieu, 2004, p. 200).

5.2 – Using Bourdieu’s Research Tools

The crux of Bourdieu’s approach is the interconnectivity of three thinking tools: *habitus*, *field* and *capital* (Wacquant, 1989, p. 50). This equation suggests that practice results from the relationship between an individual’s outlook (their *habitus*) and their standing within a *field* (i.e. their accumulation of status giving *capital*). This concept varies dependent upon the *field* in question and is relational to the share of *capital* that the other agent possess, which is relational to the ever-evolving demands of a particular social arena (i.e. the *field*). Consequently, everyday life is not the result of *habitus* but rather the result of the two-way relationship between *habitus* and *field*. Bourdieu refers to these terms as his ‘thinking tools’ that emerged during his empirical studies (Bourdieu, 1994, pp. 20-21).

Bourdieu’s *habitus* ‘stands out because of the sophistication it provides in dealing with complex processes of embodiment’ (p. 521) it is an invaluable tool for exploring the Olympic-delivery milieu. As Maton (in Grenfell, 2008, pp. 49-65) surmises it was

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defined by its author as a ‘structured and structuring structure’ (1994, p. 170),⁸⁷ Bourdieu is thus arguing that *habitus* is structured by an individual’s past and present circumstances (Noble and Watkins, 2003). These include upbringing, education and class. At the same time *habitus* is structuring because the *habitus* of an individual guides the shaping of present and future practices. It is also a system of individual dispositions, which generate perceptions, appreciations and practices – sometime called tendencies – are durable which last over time and are transferable in being capable of becoming applicable to a wide variety of theatres of social action (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 50; 1993, p. 87). In short *habitus* places great importance upon personal history and its role in guiding behaviour, perspective and choice. In the sense it is an evolving process where everyday life modifies personal history. Thus each forward step on life’s historical journey is guided by a decision-making criteria developed in the past.

This *habitus* schema facilitates reasonable expectations to be made regarding likely behavioural patterns governed by the individual’s understanding of themselves and the world they live in. Importantly, Bourdieu states that the field where the individual makes choices is under constant evolution thus to truly understand practice there is the necessity to understand both the evolving fields within which social agents are situated and the evolving *habitus* which those social agents bring to their social fields of practice (Bourdieu, 1990, pp. 52-65; 1991, pp. 37-42).

It is pertinent at this juncture to address criticisms directed towards Bourdieu’s work (Calhoun, LiPuma and Postone, 1993; Grenfell and James, 1998; Shusterman, 1999; Fowler, 2000; Lane, 2000; Robbins, 2000). The most common criticism considers

⁸⁷ Bourdieu’s concept of *habitus* has been applied to many contexts including historical, geographical, anthropological, sociological and the political (Reay, 1995, 1998, 2004; McNay, 1999; Bridge, 2001; Howe and Langdon, 2002; Crossley, 2003; Mutch, 2003; Noble and Watkins, 2003; Ostermann, 2003; Scheuer, 2003; Lau, 2004; Allen, 2004; Thrift, 2004).

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the conceptualisation of *habitus* as vague, deterministic and lacking in historical perspective. Typically, critics argue that the concept has chameleon-like qualities that allow it to be instantly applicable to all scenarios (Prior, 2000, p.144). However, in accordance with Wainwright, Williams and Turner (2006) this research argues that this supposed weakness is, in fact, a strength. It is the very applicability of Bourdieu's notions that give enables the concepts of *habitus*, *capital* and *field* to be employed to address the diversity of Newham's Olympic-delivery. Bourdieu (1986, p. 101) succinctly surmises this example using the following formulaic terms:

[(Habitus)(Capital)] + Field = Practice

To paraphrase Bourdieu, the true value of such inquiry comes from the veracity and result of their application.⁸⁸ Crucially, Bourdieu does not suggest that *habitus* is pre-programmed or inevitable, rather, the *habitus* is about percentages and odds.⁸⁹ Bourdieu's research paradigm advocates the necessity to understand the underlying factors that govern everyday life, rather than merely taking into account the interplay observed and provides a theoretical means for documenting these findings, which would not be apparent to the research participants.⁹⁰ This research also aimed to follow Bourdieu's mantra; namely to 'make heard the voices of those who cannot speak for themselves

⁸⁸ For a more thorough analysis and rebuttal of some criticisms of Bourdieu see Wainwright, Williams & Turner, 2006, pp. 550-553.

⁸⁹ For example, if one has a particular upbringing or a particular lifestyle then they are more likely to respond in specific ways in specific locations and are likely to receive in return a certain type of validating message, which facilitates 'an obscure double relation' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p.126) that forms the 'unconscious relationship' between a *habitus* and a *field* (Bourdieu, 1993, p.76).

⁹⁰ That is to say that social laws are defined by shared commonalities found within peoples everyday lives that governs behaviour through shared interaction: It is also relational, i.e. working class kids will, if they're lucky, get working class jobs (Willis, 1977) and yet there are no explicit laws limiting them to such and is not a foregone conclusion but it is an exceedingly likely outcome that is governed by social laws. The implications of which provide much food for sociological thought.

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(Bourdieu, 2002, p. 68) and to heed his call for academics to leave their ivory towers and engage in active politics, rather than simply engaging in paper revolutions (Bourdieu, 2003, p. 19). In accordance with Bourdieu this research is an account of the researcher throwing ‘their grain of sand into the well-oiled machinery of resigned complicities’ (ibid, p. 65).

5.3 – The Quest for Life in the Shadows

Life within the shadows of the Olympic torch began with securing positions within Newham’s third sector. The nature of these positions involved the researcher fulfilling a number of roles that were intended to facilitate conducive research findings. Examples of these positions included working within a community centre on the Carpenters estate and representing community organisations in Olympic discourse with Olympic-delivery agencies, amongst many others. At the initial stages the research methodology involved ‘putting the hours in’ in the field to establish relationships in the quest to become a ‘familiar face’. This involved such diversities as clearing out cupboards in community centres, sweeping floors with those on community service orders, supervising bouncy castles at Islamic religious functions, overseeing sport events and working in youth clubs, with much more besides. These actions, in addition to a willingness to say ‘yes’ to every opportunity to build relationships no-matter the task, helped develop a complex, inter-woven string of networks through the snowball method.

An important consideration of such ethnography is, according to Poplin (1979, p. 275) that this type of research should attempt to describe the research community as ‘a

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totality and see the manifold and complex interrelations of its parts'. This theoretical perspective would prove problematic in this ultra-diverse, multi-linguistic location even before Olympic migration, this was to become manifest in both linguistic and cultural interplay. The question at the outset of this ethnography revolved around considerations of how best to approach research in this highly diverse and generally deprived location. As van Maanen (1979) suggests, ethnography is infinitely more than a single method and can be distinguished from participant observation in that it has a broader aim of achieving an analytical description of a culture (p. 539). In this setting the initial ethnographic question was that of considering how best to approach the discovery of what it is to be a member of the Newham community and how best to categorise and delineate said community.

There are many research methods texts and manuals available that advocate best practise policy or those that provide anecdotal accounts regarding an incredibly diverse spectrum of research interests (Whyte, 1943; Burgess, 1991; Marcus, 1995; Burawoy *et al.*, 2002). To compliment these volumes others have considered how to read and evaluate ethnographic research (Hammersley, 1990 and 1992) or produced edited digests providing insight into the difficulties of ethnographic research and immersion into the lives of others (Hobbs and May, 1993). To paraphrase the latter, ethnography is a 'messy business'. This honest observation of a field of enquiry that proves exceedingly difficult to generalise methodology for but this statement is often circumvented in ethnographic research methods texts that aim to do exactly that, often uncomfortably so. Indeed, ethnographer Geoff Pearson observed that published accounts of fieldwork were invariably cleansed of the 'private' goings-on between the researcher and the researched.

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Arguing that if and when such a lid was taken off the outcome can be both shocking and revealing. To emphasise his point he cited the private diaries of Bronislaw Malinowski, which when they were first published in the 1960s caused controversy by revealing his irritation and disdain for the New Guinea life around him (1993, p. vii).

The complexities of ethnography are herein addressed by, hopefully not too uncomfortably, delineating the researchers immersion into the lives of others in Newham. The particularities of this research demanded it be undertaken during Olympic-delivery and is concerned with the everyday life during this period. It is an explanation of the pursuit of 'closeness' and 'authenticity' of Newham life experiences that were to be latterly presented as a social scientific account of life during some elements of the Olympic transition years.

Whilst the nature of the investigation is unique the method is not and what follows will reference previous ethnography that exemplify or amplify the observations made herein. What follows is, in part, a 'personal' commentary of methodology that evolved and altered throughout the course of the research sanitised and de-personalised so that the words 'I' and 'me' do not appear. That said, the researcher-as-subject proved impossible to separate from this narrative.

The ethnographer is never a neutral channel of communication, and to assume to be such a fly on the wall is an unambiguous deception. The researcher will always fundamentally guide any discovery no-matter how carefully disguised in the text or how meticulously planned a depersonalised generic pre-research methodology has been. Consequently, the common thread of personal subjectivity that runs through the text will inevitably be quite different to any previously published forms of research methods.

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A valid starting point is to consider exactly what constitutes Ethnography? One author who utilised the method attempted the following techniques, by way of definition suggests that every field situation is different and luck in meeting good informants and striking the right chord in relational interplay may be just as important as technique. The author cited added that much successful fieldwork could be attributed as much to good luck as to sophisticated planning (Sarsby, 1984, p. 96). In other words, fieldwork is an unpredictable pursuit. That is not to say that one should approach this type of research in a *laissez faire* manner, content with seeing how things unravel; flexibility must be built into the approach to allow for the unexpected.

5.4 – Taking off the Blinkers

Ethnography, as a means of chronicling life from an ‘insiders’ perspective, will always reveal that life is anything but predictable. Therefore, an inflexible research methodology that considered itself capable of capturing East End life in this milieu in a regimented manner may be considered an over-simplified view of the composite aspects necessary for insights. What was possible was an ‘inside tale’ written by an outsider. The consideration of developing relationships with ‘insiders’ in the first place was problematic enough within the limited research time frame let alone having true aspirations of becoming an ‘insider’ oneself.

Sociologist Dick Hobbs (1993) refers to the academic demands for personal dualism as a requirement for an ethnographer to be in two metaphorical places at once. The ethnographer is only able to write the researcher findings because they have been

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‘there’ (the field) but the ethnography can only be read, quoted, understood and criticised because the ethnographer is also ‘here’ (within the academe). Consequently, ethnographic research is a very subjective business that must attempt to serve two masters concurrently.

Ethnography in practice describes a number of methods. It can, for some, involve gathering information by living or working with people and observing everyday life. In other studies the modus operandi is ‘participant observation’, which is a central tenant to the discipline of anthropology. In other research, in-depth interviews are the keystone to authenticity, often combined with the collection of life-stories that could never hope to be obtained through ‘hanging around’ or ‘observing’. In accordance with Bourdieu’s theory of practice and in many other cases, including this one, a combination of these approaches is adopted. Throughout this account, interviews provided a depth of ‘background’ to the ‘foreground’ uncovered during observational fieldwork to combine with the ‘incidents’ and ‘excerpts’ that proved conducive to a deeper narrative than any singular approach.

Fundamentally, ethnography is the quest for authenticity and because of this judgment calls will have to be made during prolonged research, and addressed accordingly. This bespoke, situational and personality-driven approach should not be considered as a means to justify what could be considered poorly planned methodology. Rather it should emphasise the importance of considering each methodological case as unique. According to Pearson there are few golden rules for successful ethnographic research other than following a commitment to the maintenance, sustenance, and

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adequacy of one's information-base and the veracity of attempts to render this accessible to a wider audience. Furthermore, he purports that:

If ethnographers are sometimes sceptical about what counts as 'technique' and 'skill' in research, this is not to be mistaken for sloppiness, but it is in the nature of the enterprise.

(Pearson, 1993, p. xi)

The nature of ethnography provides many obstacles. The search for authenticity and then the conversion of such into a conducive narrative involves negotiating access, getting in, staying in, surviving and then getting out with enough insight to convert into academic prose. This conversion may appear ostensibly foreign to the versions of knowledge acquired in situ but this conversion from 'reality' to academia may well be considered the key to good ethnography. To paraphrase Hobbs (1993) who was to study working-class 'villains' and entrepreneurs drawn from the same location as this research, the final text must reflect the authenticity of the street whilst resonating with the rhythms of the library. The text, Hobbs states, is influenced at every stage of its production up to and beyond publication by the rules specific to the intellectual, political and economic milieu within which the writer performs. Fieldwork is a crucial part of the process but the most crucial is the translation. Therefore, ethnography may be seen as a bridge between authenticity and distance. What follows is the blueprint of how this researches bridge was built and crossed.

5.5 – Hanging Tough

As befitting an area of high deprivation parts of Newham rank highly in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) rankings of street robbery throughout London with Stratford top of the tree.⁹¹ The MPS crime mapping statistics also demonstrated that Stratford far exceeded many nearby wards in terms of overall crime ratings and crime count.⁹² Forebodingly, Internet guides to living in London categorised symbolised commonly held views of Stratford by describing them as a ‘place to avoid living in’ if one had the ability to do so. Adding that it had ‘become quite dangerous over the last couple of years. A lot of street gangs have taken over the area’.⁹³ Consequently, to attain a holistic impression of Newham life the validity of these claims had to be explored and a research methodology appropriate to this location needed to be delineated. Initially, the most appropriate course of action was determined to be to adopt research techniques from other academics that appeared to have circumstantial parallels between research demographics.

Initially, Marxist sociologist Sudhir Venkatesh’s investigative techniques outlined in his 2008 publication *Gang Leader: For a Day* were adopted and were attempted to be implemented here. Venkatesh’s approach were a rehashing of William Foote Whyte and the Chicago Schools methods, but which he attributed to advice gained within his investigation of the social implications of Chicago’s ‘Corner Boys’ culture. This advice came from a gang member that informed him not to ‘ask stupid questions. What you need

⁹¹ For more information see:

http://www.thisislocalondon.co.uk/news/topstories/889199.londons_most_dangerous_streets_revealed/

⁹² More statistical information is available at: <http://maps.met.police.uk/access.php?area=00BBGU&ct=7&sort=rate&order=d>

⁹³ An example of such an internet site can be found at: <http://www.stooly.com/places-to-avoid-living-in-london/>

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to do is hang out with people' (2008, p. 4). Essentially, Ventakesh's advice resonated with Elijah Anderson's (1999) ethos which promoted that researching within 'poor' neighbourhoods, particularly impoverished inner city communities, mutual respect, acceptance and sensitivity to a particular way of living is integral to both survival and research in these communities. Drawing upon this wisdom thus began, in 2008, a period of purposive osmosis on behalf of this research buoyed by the belief that this would eventually lead to the uncovering of implicit knowledge simply by 'hanging out', providing the 'hanging out' was in an area conducive to good research and in a respectful, sensitive manner that promoted mutual respect. This was easier said than done.

Consequently, ever increasing amounts of time was spent in Newham in the hope of acquiring the inside knowledge synonymous with being 'a native'. Access was being negotiated to local 'community events' and the researcher began to attend a variety of such, including focus groups, community meetings, coffee mornings and the like. The feeling that things were going reasonably well lasted until the researcher actually stopped to scrutinise the field notes and attempted some degree of academic analysis.

Disturbingly, the findings proved to be indulgent and vacuous. It was during a period of reflection whilst assessing the hosting of poorly attended Community Focus Groups, uninspiring interviews and evaluating apathetic questionnaires that the aspiration to achieve greater depths of knowledge began to take hold. There was a clear initial desire to understand the specific cultural history that this community shared and that this place represented (this was soon to be replaced by an acceptance that there was no shared cultural history). Insightful knowledge would not reveal itself through questionnaires,

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interviews or focus groups, or indeed ‘hanging out’ on the off chance clarity would appear organically. There was a need for greater involvement over a continuous and significant period of time. Conversely, if up to this point it was relatively easy to extrapolate flaws in the research methodology, it was exceedingly more complex to delineate the solutions to remedy such shortcomings.

5.6 – Seriously . . . What’s your Job?

Whilst discussing the researchers perceptions of the value of interviews in explaining Newham, Mo, a local Pakistani-born Muslim suggested a better approach to community-orientated research:

It’s pointless. I mean, it’s important for you to know stuff but it’s not important for anyone you’re asking. There’s been so much {research, media interest, consultations, etc} and nothing’s happened. Old people might want to talk to you because they haven’t got anything better to do but no one else. We’re busy and nothing ever changes, our ideas aren’t ever used and, that’s it, it’s pointless. Waste of time.

(Private interview, Mo, 38, long-term Asian resident)

Retrospective analysis revealed that this view was echoed in many early interviews. A feeling of resentment towards ‘research’ was prevalent. The initial belief that people would be open to interviews, perhaps even grateful to have a forum to air their opinions and be asked what they think proved very naïve. This was supplemented by the insurmountable perception that all researchers were simply transient outsiders only

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interested in self-promotion, self-benefit or had ulterior motives such as working for the police, benefit agency or some other authority. The elephant in the room when a researcher is confronted with such allegations is that there is a certain amount of clarity and truth to this perception, and indeed applicability to themselves playing the role of ethnographic researchers.

Another example of this scepticism was evident with a conversation with a black youth, T, who was working in the area to fulfil his community service as part of his conviction for transporting stolen goods. After a few weeks of small talk and relationship building, the research was outlined and his warning was to be careful as the 'only white's asking shit in these ends are the feds⁹⁴ blood'. This lowly opinion of academic research was enforced in another interview where former docker, Derek, commented:

No, but what do you do? What's your job? I know you're asking questions about what's happening but what's the point of all of this? What's it for? Do you have a real job?

(Derek, white, 58, retired Docker)

In addition to those that questioned the purpose of the researcher, the research itself, or both, there was the underlying perception that the community views regarding the Olympics was a topic that had already been researched to death during the Olympic bidding process. That all the community consultations, community-orientated research and media interest had ultimately left community members sceptical of towards the

⁹⁴ The term 'fed' is one of many colloquialisms used to describe the Police., others include filth, pigs, old-bill, five-oh the use of which can be considered an indicator of demographic, although to expand upon this in greater detail would require further research.

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purpose or point of research participation and woe betide anyone to make the mistake of asking them to participate again.

The widely publicised euphoria regarding the impending Olympic benefits that the media presented in the immediate aftermath of the victorious Olympic bid seemed to apply to a different population. Perceptions of futility dismissed colloquially as ‘tick box exercises’ or organised as an indulgence for the individual researcher prevailed whenever the term Olympic ‘research’ was mentioned was possibly best summed up by a conversation with Phil, another local resident:

It's just a big waste of time . . . We were told that we'd get jobs from the Olympics but we haven't. It's the Poles⁹⁵ that got 'em. All you're doing is asking about what's going on. How's that going to help me? If you want to know about what's happening go to town just don't waste my time. What's the point of you asking questions all the bloody time?

(Phil, white, 42, Taxi driver, local resident)

Clearly, Phil did not feel that Olympicisation delivered any of the expected social or economic benefits to his community, or at least not of the nature or scale anticipated. This process of disposing of, or at least altering, a lived reality and replacing it with a conceived city at the level and frequency of interest in this one-sided contestation has culminated an anger in Phil and indeed many others which ensures their resentment to the subject and more seeking opinions and answers. The seemingly endless stream of

⁹⁵ The term ‘Poles’ was used in this context as a generic reference to all male construction workers of Eastern European origin.

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researchers, media and other interested parties that engulfed the area meaning that this community was suffering acute research fatigue.

5.7 – Opening Newham’s Gates

This research would be prejudged by those interacted with upon the merits of those that preceded. Perceived absences of integrity, honesty, planning or considerate exit strategy of such former research would make the lives of all that come later considerably difficult. Those the researcher met that had once performed the role of informant for others were usually cast aside once their views had been given, with no idea how what they revealed would be used, or what good laying themselves bare had done to anyone. This made such residents disillusioned and reluctant to engage with future research.

This sort of experience solidified the necessity to perceive informants as not merely a means to an end but, rather, engage them in a co-dependent relationship, wherever appropriate knowledge was pooled or else the researcher actively sought ways of ‘paying’⁹⁶ for information stood the researcher in good stead for the duration of this study and steadily broke down initial barriers. In this regard, such ‘payment for information’ is reminiscent of the argument raised by Wray-Bliss (2002) who attests that empirical methodologies are generally limited to minimal, technical descriptions which rarely extend beyond listing formal methods, duration of field work and some brief background information. The same author commented on critical interpretive research by raising the consideration that the researcher was interdependent upon the researched,

⁹⁶ Such payment was not monetary but time orientated. This included various diversities of voluntary actions such as sweeping halls in community centres following important meetings, helping out in youth clubs, manning stalls at community fairs and a host of other such ‘payments’ in exchange for information and permission of access and inclusion.

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rather than independent to them. This elicits ethical concerns regarding the researchers ability to critique and commenting upon situations that they have co-constructed or contributed towards may compromise research. An admission of an alteration of research methodology, during and within the fieldwork, is for-many a risk to the validity of the researchers reputation as an 'expert', however, it is perceived necessary here to adequately portray the difficulties of studying in such a diverse area that was absent a holistic sense of place ownership during highly transitional times. As Van Maanen (1988) forewarns in *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography* the clarity of thinking and delineation of the technical and temporal details of research methodologies reinforce the impression of expert status of the researcher. Regardless of this fact, it is argued here that all research is subjective and methodologies, however well designed, can prove un-insightful and a researcher should not be reluctant to highlight their shortcomings. Provided the researcher gives voice to the account and elucidates upon the processes undertaken and implications for the research. This, therefore, aims at being just such an account.

As Baudrillard metaphorically advocated the 'point is not to write the sociology or psychology of the car, the point is to drive. That way you can learn more about this society than all academia could ever tell you' (1988, p. 54). In this regard overcoming the communities' initial disinclination toward research proved one of the larger problems to surpass. The researcher needed to get his driving licence stamped because this community had no inclination to accommodate new drivers. In addition to this reluctance was the prevalent notion that research itself was an indulgence and offered little or no

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upside for community participation, hence the necessity for creating added value and means of ‘paying’ for information otherwise the researcher was well and truly clamped.

The main obstacle, consequently, became obtaining reasons for being in *situ*. This necessity provoked a search for myriad reasons for the researchers existence and inclusion. In this environment being a ‘researcher’ was not conducive to good research. What proved more conducive was to adopt a role of ‘interested observer’ or at times or agreeable ‘Olympic critic’ to distinguish the researcher from the Olympic evangelists that permeated the media and delivered seemingly unbalanced positivistic narratives of delivery. The researcher needed to provide added value that far exceeded being a listening post, an interested party or, heaven forbid, a researcher. Whilst ‘giving something back’ the researcher needed an excuse or a reason for being there; this necessity raised two important questions. Firstly, Newham as a whole needed to be redefined and appropriate sections of this borough would need be delineated in an attempt for the study to become representative of the whole. Secondly, access to these key locations would need to be obtained. However, before these are explored some ethical considerations first need to be addressed.

5.8 – Navigating with a Moral Compass

Many ethical concerns were raised within this study. Issues such as reciprocity and internal conflicts arose regularly during this period from forming friendships with those one may in other circumstances not want to befriend because of a particular set of ideals or beliefs – notably around racism and drug abuse. These moments of ethical doubt

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are systematic of other literature that focus upon ethical and political problems of ethnographic representation (Castaneda, 2006a, 2006b; Pels, 1999, Marcus 1995; Fabian, 1983) that place focus upon representational issues. However, as appears the consensus across all research methodology texts the fieldwork experience cannot be subjected to a holistic moral compass. However, there does appear to be two opposing schools of thought that can be loosely applied in ethical situations, as outlined by D'Andrade (1995) and Scheper-Hughes (1995).

D'Andrade argued that such research is a fundamentally epistemological enterprise charged with description and analysis based upon objective and subjective forms of knowledge. This being so the ethnographers personal moral concerns must remain ancillary to their epistemological principle. He purports that moral and ethical decisions must be based upon the rationality of principles uncovered during the research. Essentially, the researcher must have a prior understand as to how things are in any given situation and use this knowledge to formulate their decisions regarding participation. Conversely, Scheper-Hughes argued that ethics are the primary mode of research. Furthermore, such ethics are defined by political engagement that is intrinsically linked to research. Scheper-Hughes argues that ethnographers must become involved in all situations they are confronted with, even if they do not have a deep understanding of the expectations or likely outcomes of a scenario.

In their comparative study of the two approaches Benson and O'Neill (2007) consider the difference between the two approaches as a distinction between 'knowing' and 'doing' or to be more academic epistemology and action. They argue that D'Andrade's approach risks involvement in the cause of knowledge and Scheper-

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Hughes's approach to potentially justifying a researcher's over-involvement. They believe that those that follow D'Andrade's approach can be considered to be conducting rational research that acquires knowledge through controlled encounters. Those that follow Scheper-Hughes are compelled to become involved in the lives of others and to generate knowledge accordingly. However, as delineated at the outset of this section, these two approaches are both problematic in their applicability to this research.

Ethics are situational as well as deeply personal. An example of the inability to pre-plan ethical appropriateness was readily apparent in a meeting with a construction site worker in a Newham bar. The worker was clearly very drunk and judging by the frequency that he visited the toilet, and by the way he occasionally rubbed white powder from his nose, he may have class 'A' drug issues on top of his alcohol-related one. This interaction awoke ethical issues; the researcher had to assess whether he was becoming an enabler, facilitating clearly underlying issues or whether this should stop the data collection process.

It can be argued that ethnographers are by trade deceitful and usury and such accusations plague many ethnographers. This is because 'real' friendships are frequently made during research some of which are genuine and will vastly outlast the duration of any fieldwork. Furthermore, a fieldworker is often faced with the decision whether to be open and honest about how they feel on sensitive issues, particularly if they feel they are likely to be opposing to the views of the informant. But such responses – no matter how honest – may impact upon perception and consequently, further discourse. Therefore, a researcher may often feel the need to take a particular position of agreement or sympathy with an informant regardless of their personal views in order to elicit future information.

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Boissevain (1970) stated how he coped with his main opponent to his presence as a researcher by drinking him under the table and also through talking commonalities, regarding no direct research driven agenda. Any personal delusions of adopting the approach of out-doing others *recreationally* in the researchers exchanges dissipated after an early social interaction based research night out which regularly culminated with the researcher being woefully out of his depth with their take on a 'boys night out' culture.

This point was proven on his very first foray into the seedier side of London's nightlife with a group of Olympic construction site workers. After a copious amount of alcohol was consumed, the evening progressed towards a wide array of illegal substances culminating with a 'wine and whores' party that involved more alcohol, prostitutes and a hotel room. It remains a matter of interpretation as to whether Boissevain would advocate the same research principles under these circumstances. This researcher, consequently, had to write the first couple of meetings with the construction workers off (not to mention the following days) as purely relationship-forming exercises. Regardless, all fieldwork helped piece together Newham's Olympic-delivery urban mosaic and all such experiences helped to develop a deeper ability to comprehend its complexity of components.

To surmise ethnography is often referred to as a means of 'telling it like it is' from an insiders view. However, ethnography can never hope to truly accomplish such a bold proclamation. Ultimately, the methodological concerns of this research that have been highlighted here revolved around the difficulties of creating an authentic account of Olympicisation in a community of great deprivation and diversity. Authenticity related concerns couldn't ever hope to be fully overcome, merely addressed and, wherever

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necessary, acknowledged as shortcomings. All disparate, anomalous subject matters have, and will, lead to many ethical, moral and academic dilemmas. Fundamentally, from all the various academic research, from many luminaries in the fields of sociology, anthropology, criminology and beyond, the best piece of methodological advice offered came from a football hooligan. That was ‘you’ve {ethnographers} got a difficult job trying to make sense of all this . . . All you can do is say this is how you saw it as an outsider and this is your interpretation’ (Armstrong, 1993, p. 37).

What follows is this researchers interpretation of 2012 Olympic-delivery. This section builds upon the generalisations, ideology and rhetoric outlined in Section A by providing accounts of first-hand experience of Olympic-delivery. This enables a contrast between the rhetoric and reality of London 2012-delivery to occur. Section B has provided the contextualisation, theoretical and methodological considerations for this study. These will now be built upon with further ethnographic accounts that occurred within the delivery of London 2012.

Chapter 6. THE NEW(HAM) WORLD

The London borough of Newham is herein introduced in an analysis that combines statistical data with first-hand accounts to provide an indication of everyday life within this complex, unique and diverse urban locale. What follows explores the composition of the borough; its familiarities, peculiarities and its dichotomies. The findings herein contribute to the consideration of how Olympic hosting was intended to transform Newham and who was involved in such attempts at transformation at this local level.

6.1 – Newham: A Place to Live, Work and Stay?

The London borough of Newham and the City of London are separated by a distance of just 5 miles. Despite this they are separated by two London Underground zones and are, to all intents and purposes, a world away from each other economically, socially, culturally and in as many other categorical regards as one can fathom. Figure 7 below shows the boundaries of this borough.



Figure 7. Delineating Newham's Boundaries⁹⁷

Newham has many characteristics that would indicate why this borough would be receptive to widespread Olympic regeneration. According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation figures (2007⁹⁸) it is one of the most deprived areas in the UK. The Newham Household Survey Panel⁹⁹ (NHPS) recorded in 2008 that, after housing costs were considered, the poverty rate was over double that of the London average (45.3% compared to 22.1%). These figures emphasised the correlation of those experiencing poverty within ethnicity. The highest levels of poverty being recorded amongst Asian Bangladeshis (61%) and Asian Pakistanis (59%), albeit white poverty at 33% was still well over the London average. Black poverty came in at 22%.

⁹⁷ Map available at: <http://www.newham.gov.uk/entertainmentandleisure/activelivingmap.htm>

⁹⁸ The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 combines a number of indicators into a single deprivation score for each small area in England. Indicators are 1) Income; 2) Employment; 3) Health, deprivation and disability; 4) Education, skills and training deprivation; 5) Barriers to housing and services; 6) Crime and Living and 7) Environment deprivation.

⁹⁹ LB Newham (2008) Newham Household Panel Survey – Wave 5 Report.

Newham's deprivation was dispersed throughout the borough and did not form the centralised pockets of deprivation observable in other locations.¹⁰⁰ Newham's visibly high levels of deprivation that permeated the borough were reflected in local public perceptions gathered from across London's 32 boroughs. This research illustrated the negative connotations attached to the borough of those intimately familiar with the locale. For example, in 2008 Newham residents reported the lowest levels in London of satisfaction with their local area, the highest levels of anti-social behaviour, and the second lowest levels of 'community cohesion'.¹⁰¹ These concerns are reflected by Newham's housing situation, which provided cause for consternation. For example in 2009 it was reported that 'over twice as many private houses in Newham were designated unfit for living within (15% compared to 6% in London) and 50% of social housing stock in Newham was below Decent Homes Standard'.¹⁰² At the same time the demand for housing increased with 33.5% of households on Newham's housing register in 2010, which represented some 10% increase from the figures reported in 2000.¹⁰³ These findings indicated the scale of Newham's Olympic regeneration and illustrated the challenges that public services, such as policing and health provisions, would face during the Olympic Games and beyond.

The 2001 British census, and additional data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS), highlighted below emphasise Newham's diversity:

¹⁰⁰ According to the 2007 English Indices of Multiple Deprivation Newham ranks second behind Hackney for 'rank of extent', which measures the 'proportion of a district's population living in the most deprived {areas} in England' (Noble et al., 2008, pp. 81, 86).

¹⁰¹ For more see Ipsos MORI (2008) available at:

http://www.ipsos-mori.com/DownloadPublication/1247_sri_localgovt_understanding_london_life_062008.pdf

¹⁰² For more information see: LBN and NHS Newham (2011, p. 84).

¹⁰³ DCLG Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix data provided by Newham Info under the 'housing' theme is available at: <http://www.newham.info/IAS/profiles/profile?profileId=44&geoTypeId=6&geoIds=00BB> (accessed 13 July 2011).

- Newham is the most ethnically diverse district in England.
- The 2001 population numbered 243,737 (a rise of 10.2% from the 1991 census).
- Newham has the highest fertility rate in the country (2009 figures show an average of 2.87 children per woman, compared to the national average of 1.95¹⁰⁴).

Newham residents have a lower life expectancy and a higher rate of premature mortality than anywhere else in Britain. The health issues within Newham are systematic of poverty and deprivation and show no signs of abating. The Newham council published demographic data¹⁰⁵ that was used to source these findings indicates that those experiencing poor health are far less likely to be in employment, resulting in lower incomes, poorer housing conditions and reduced access to opportunities. In correlation, they indicate that employment is a key element in improving long-term health, which would indicate that those who fall into this category would have an incredibly difficult time getting out of it.

6.2 – The League of Nations

One of the most significant attributes of this borough is the fact that there is no majority minority within the Newham population. The demographic is catalogued as 64.6% ‘non-white’ by the ONS in their *Annual population survey 2008*. The primary

¹⁰⁴ More information is available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2010/may/25/birth-rate-statistics-england-wales>

¹⁰⁵ Information available at: <http://www.newham.info/Custom/LEA/Demographics.pdf>

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ethnic groups are white and Asian but further sub-division is necessary to fully appreciate the diversity of this borough. Of the 39% of white residents (relying on 2001 census data which does not factor in the influx of economic migrants of particular note to this study are white Eastern European construction workers) 32.6% classified themselves as 'British'. Of the Asian 38%, 13.9% were Pakistani, 10.2% were Indian, 7% Bangladeshi and the remaining 5.1% were Asian other. Additionally 20% of Newham's population were black in 2001, with 12.4% of these African, 6.5% Caribbean and 1.1% black other. This diversity was topped off with 1.6% Chinese and an additional 2.6% of other ethnicity. As a result of this diversity, as is exemplified in the following example, the classification of being white British is considered an ethnic minority group in Newham with specific events designed to cater for this faction.

Most places you go in Newham have visual reminders of the diversity of the borough. These visual minorities posters provided by Newham council are usually full of smiley and happy blacks and Asians. As a result of these constant visual reminders the white working class feel under threat and increasingly more marginalised and foreign. They often feel like they have lost their position in society, which has been gradually whittled away by other groups that attain greater social prominence. Less than 1/3 of the community are white indigenous, or white working class, and this community tend to be much older than the rest of the borough. Their numbers are decreasing all the time as they die off or move out of Newham to be closer to their children who moved out of the borough years before.

(Fieldwork Interview with Newham Community Worker, April 2010)

This aging white, working class population had a sound basis for their feelings of marginalisation, their numbers dwindling as a result of what Hobbs termed ‘white flight’ (1988). As the document the *Local Economic Assessment 2010 – 2027* published in October 2010¹⁰⁶ succinctly summarised:

- The population of Newham is rising and is projected to continue to rise significantly.
- Newham has a very young and highly diverse population.
- Newham has high levels of population churn compared to London as a whole.
- Newham is a highly deprived borough with especially high rates of deprivation affecting children and older people.
- Poverty in Newham is high and life expectancy is lower than the London average.

The white demographic were a waning Newham group and were conscious of their ever-diminishing social standing. They may be inferred to be a lost – or certainly an aging – generation whose history was becoming less and less recognised and as a consequence, some were attempting to preserve their cultural history. This was best exemplified in the following excerpt from the researchers fieldwork notes:

¹⁰⁶ This document is available at: <http://www.newham.info/Custom/LEA/Demographics.pdf>

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Newham's older, white working class had a desire to get together to tell stories and reminisce about their shared histories but often they lacked the ability or location to do so. As a result, community centres, such as the Froud centre in Manor Park, in Newham created programmes that kick-started this basic human function. They granted permission for this to occur in schemes such as a lunch club for this particular demographic.

These groups were not simply venues for a nostalgic mourning of the past, although reminiscing does provide a large part of this endeavour. Rather, these programmes attempted to help the whites feel less marginalised in modern Newham. They did this through injecting young people into these meetings that were representative of the diverse community. These young people voluntarily cooked the old peoples food, served them and joined them in the eating of such. They were charged with listening to the old people's stories and attempted to bridge the gaps between the present and the past. They were creating the environment for informal learning to occur.

The researcher attended one such event. The walls of the cafeteria where the event was held were covered with black and white photos. These pictures showed Newham but not as it was then, the faces were too white, there were ships of all shapes and sizes in the docks and the images hinted at a lost magical past the way photos tend to do. Buddy Holly and Chuck Berry provided the soundtrack for the twenty or so old white pensioners to shuffle into the room, all wearing heavy coats and hats despite the warmth of the summer's day radiating through the large windows of the room.

These pensioners searched for their names on one of the two long tables that occupied the centre of the room. The tables were nicely set and the imagery reminiscent

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of the stereotypical Christmas dinner setting. Each table sat around 15 people and the pensioners were interspersed with gaps that would be filled by the dozen young people who either helped them to their seats or were in the kitchen helping to make the bangers and mash. 'Bangers and mash' (sausages and mashed potatoes) was a particular favourite it seemed, having been chosen over fish and chips or a lamb roast at the culmination of the last meeting of the group weeks previously.

After the food had been served, eaten and the plates had been cleared the space was filled with contented, comfortable and enlivened conversation. Conversation prompts permeated the scene, in addition to the photos that charted various decades of place modification and transformation of the lived environment were collections of magazines, catalogues and adverts that prompted discourse about fashion, technology, culture and iconography through the ages. As the barriers between the old and young, the white British and the diverse Newham representatives diminished the conversations became increasingly jovial and light-hearted, as Mary, 80 years old, recounted for all that cared to listen:

'I was married for 62 years. I fell in love with my Dave because he had a nice motorbike. When I met him I told him to take me for a ride on the back of his bike, we rode for a while and he took me out to the country. It was such fun that when we got to a field I let him have a feel'.

The day culminated with a sing-a-long to East End Music Hall tunes such as 'Roll-out-the-Barrel', which prompted other conversations between the old and young surrounding the origins and historical resonance of the terms 'Lucifer' and 'fag', and how 'during the war the bastard German snipers would shoot the British if they saw a

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cigarette being lit', which arguably proved one of the most effective anti-smoking campaigns to date. With that it was time to return back to the present, on went the overcoats and the pensioners shuffled out onto the busy, diverse Newham streets.

(Fieldwork Notes, June, 2011)

This indigenous white classification formed a segment of contemporary Newham but establishing the exact proportion of Newham's populace this group formed was a challenging inquiry. Population composition and density in Newham is a complex issue. In 2008 Greater London Authority (GLA) report raised the estimated population of Newham to 265,688¹⁰⁷ however both the figures produced by the GLA and the earlier census appeared problematic because of perceptions of significant levels of unregistered peoples living illegally within the borough. In September 2011 two new Task Forces were green lit by Newham council to tackle the growing menace of what was referred to as 'super sheds' best described as 'ramshackle illegal buildings in gardens often housing people living in squalor' which were being tracked through the use of 'aerial photography and infra-red imagery to help track down these shanty-style dwellings'.¹⁰⁸ The borough officials were also attempting to cut down on all forms of slum landlord practise, which included breaking up family homes into tiny residential units that contained no communal space (ibid).

A 2009 study by Mayhew¹⁰⁹ attempted to include residents not collated by the official accounts, including those living within the borough for less than one year and

¹⁰⁷ For more information see: GLA Round Low Population Projections (2008).

¹⁰⁸ More information is available at: <http://theehp.com/2011/09/30/housing-newham-sets-up-task-force-to-deal-with-super-sheds/>

¹⁰⁹ Les Mayhew is part-time Professor of Statistics at Cass Business School. He is managing director of Mayhew Harper Associates Ltd. This research consultancy specialise in the use of large administrative data sets and local governance and community issues.

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estimated that the Newham populace to be 270,100.¹¹⁰ Arguably, the figures generated within this study are more accurate than the official figures quoted earlier because they are based on administrative data sets (such as school rolls, council tax records and GP registrations), however the study does highlight the fact that there are many ‘sleepers’ that they could not include in the figures. Accordingly, this study predicted that in 2008 Newham contained over 15,000 ‘unconfirmed citizens’ living within unregistered addresses, predominantly estimated to be young males recently arrived in the UK. More recent Newham population estimates have reached as high as 320,000 people (Bagehot,¹¹¹ 2012).

In this regard Newham was emblematic of what anthropologist Gordon Mathews described as ‘low-end’ globalisation. He defined this by differentiating it against the globalisation of big brands and huge corporations. Instead, he purported that low-end globalisation was emblematic of informal economies; it spoke to those seeking a better life in foreign countries seeking such opportunities as temporary work, asylum and work in the sex industry to facilitate this. Mathews argues that this type of globalisation is the dominant form of the schema in much of the developing world; it is considered that it is also pertinent to this consideration of Olympic-delivery Newham (2011, p. 13). What follows is an indication of living with ‘low-end’ globalisation that, in some parts of Newham, has become synonymous with criminality; for some Newham residents their lives are governed by the fear of such criminality.

¹¹⁰ Les Mayhew (2009) *The London Borough of Newham: Counting the confirmed and unconfirmed population*, cited in *Newham, London: Local Economic Assessment 2010 to 2027* (Newham London, 2010).

¹¹¹ The Economist Bagehot columnists survey the politics of Britain, British life and Britain's place in the world. The column and blog are named after Walter Bagehot, an English journalist who was the editor of *The Economist* from 1861 to 1877, the writers of which are not explicitly acknowledged. See <http://www.economist.com/blogs/bagehot>

6.3 – The City of Dreadful Night?

Newham's crime figures, in parallel with the escalating population, are high and rising; according to a report published by a local charity, Aston Mansfield,¹¹² October 2010 Newham saw an increase in recorded crime in 10 of the 15 crime categories. Crimes that increased in Newham but not London-wide between the years ending November 2009 and 2010 were:

- Homicide.
- Burglary (residential and total).
- Gun crime (52% increase compared to 8% decrease across London).
- Motor vehicle crime.
- Violence against the person.

These crime statistics contributed to the way everyday life within the borough unravelled, as the following example indicated:

Marta, 21, and Laura, 28, were two single, female Hungarian economic migrants that moved to Newham in 2010. They had been living in Newham for a year having moved from a small Hungarian town in the hope of having a better, more interesting life, in London. They arrived in the UK early one morning after a long 3-day coach ride across Europe. Upon arrival they found the flat they were to rent that had been arranged

¹¹² This report is available at: http://www.aston-mansfield.org.uk/pdf_docs/research/newham-key-statistics.PDF

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through a family contact and were quickly moved into this small, one bedroom apartment. It was basic but seemed to have all they needed and they were happy to finally be there and were ready to get to know the area.

On their very first night they witnessed the dichotomy of quotidian Newham. Looking out of their window to the street outside they were met with the unmistakable sight of prostitutes walking up and down soliciting their wares; these streets were theirs to work from 10pm every night until the early morning. This was a new reality to the Hungarians. They were ambivalent towards the occupation and understood that for some women this was a way of life and that was how things were. What was more unsettling for the pair was the diversity of the borough, which they were completely unprepared for coming from a mono-cultural Hungarian province: Newham was very foreign to them indeed and it took them a long time to adjust.

This adjustment was predicated upon a fear of crime and their rituals and perspectives were emblematic of this fear. All of their views regarding the appeal and vibrancy of Newham life revolved around their daytime encounters, which they referred to in reverent tones proselytising about the dynamic multi-culturalism and the inclusive friendliness of the area. However, the negative impressions of the area revolved around its night-time alter ego, which they referred to as 'life in the shadows'.

They contextualised this night-time environment as being populated by unknown figures that were threatening to their existence, these faceless spectral figures lurked in the shadows. They occupied the street corners, either alone or in groups marking their territory through fear and intimidation. These fears became manifest in the everyday lives of the Hungarians whereby they both made every attempt to be home before

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nightfall. If either were to be out in Newham after dark they would arrange for the other to leave the deadbolt unlocked on the door so the returnee would minimise the time spent unlocking their front door.

(Fieldwork Notes, October 2009)

The above statistics and example are indicative of Newham's '*slow rioting*' wherein the lack of tangible economic opportunities becomes manifest in endemic crime, collective destitution and internal social decay (Curtis, 1985). The perceptions and fear of such were very real for the aforementioned Hungarians, amongst many others, and this exemplified the differentiation between Newham life and their *habitus* accumulated within a sleepy Hungarian town. However, the fear of crime within Newham was an issue for many long-serving residents and this fear was based not only upon the imagined but also upon first-hand personal experience and statistical evidence. For example, in September 2010 Newham recorded the 3rd highest number of knife crime offences in London with the *Safer Newham Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Performance Report 2010/11* identifying that from April to August 2010 serious knife crime increased by 13.1%, gun crime by 130% and serious youth violence by 9.9% than the previous year. Newham's Borough Command Unit Strategic Assessment in February 2010 reported that the level of violence against the person was 9.9 offences per 1000 population, the worst in a peer group of 15 similar areas despite a downward trend in violence against the person over the past 5-6 years.

This report noted that nearly one third of 'most serious violence' crimes had a youth offender (10-19) involved and nearly one in four a youth victim. Similarly 54%

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robbery offences had a youth offender. In 2008-9 the number of first time entrants to the Youth Justice System (under 19s) was the second highest rate in London with a 25.8% increase from 2006/7. The Youth Offending Team (YOT) caseload by ethnic group (December 2009 – March 2010) showed that young black males made up the highest proportion of young offenders, the reality of these statistics are indicated in the following section, which begins with a black youth (aged 17) involved in Newham-based Street Crime.

6.4 – Street Life: Day and Night Dichotomy

For the disaffected youth of Newham life was bleak, as the demographics of the borough, highlighted earlier, readily indicate. In search of a description for those that populate Newham's night-time economy the term urban 'underclass'¹¹³ seemed appropriate for some. This term denotes a segment of the (mostly) black American poor that are characterised by behavioural deficiencies and cultural deviance (Auletta, 1982; Sawhill, 1989; Wacquant, 2008), although it has previously been applied to the British context (1990). The application of the term 'underclass' necessitates the user to venture into contested terrain. This is a complex issue and not one that will be explored more deeply herein, the premise for its inclusion rests upon the necessity for description, context and clarity of the narrative rather than theoretical extrapolation. The applicability of the urban 'underclass' conceptualisation to this Newham context can be demonstrated through exemplifications of this gender-differentiating group wherein young males have been described as aggressive criminally inclined 'gang-bangers' and young females as

¹¹³ For a deeper review of the term, its history and its uses see Murray (1990; 1994) and Wacquant (2008).

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benefit-reliant, lazy 'welfare mothers' (for a deeper explanation of these terms see Wacquant, 2008, p. 44). Newham had its variation of both, as demonstrated herein. An account indicating the reality of life in Newham's 'underclass' follows:

Life for kids here is hard, man. No one looks after the kids round here, not their parents, no-one. So when they need food or something it's the 'olders' {elder male peers} that look after them. They are nice to them and they do look after them. The reality is the 'olders' treat everyone well. If kids are homeless they give them shelter, a job, it's a nice life. They feel accepted, protected. Some kids are kicked out of their homes when their mums move in a new man and they don't get on with them. The mums chose the man over the son. So they enter the 'road life' {Street Crime in peer-group collectives}. In the road life the young kids look up to the older ones, they see the clothes they wear and the respect they get. They look up to them, so they go robbing {theft from the person} to get money and buy clothes. People think they spend it on drugs but they don't. A bit of weed {marijuana} but that's for relaxation, everyone needs that . . . The fact is the 'crews' {peer group collectives} treat the communities well. They help people out, you'll hear Mr. X, oh he gave money to so and so, he's a good guy, because really, they want to be good. That's the reason why they get away with so much, when something happens no-one talks to the police. Not because of fear, because of loyalty.

What would you do if you were walking down a street and you saw 20 hoodies? {Young black men often wear hoods to conceal their heads and faces from CCTV surveillance cameras} Be honest, would you keep walking towards them? . . . No? . . . Then you're a victim. We know that just by looking. We're like dogs, we can sense it. Your

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body language, your walk quickens, don't know what to do with your hands, you pat your pockets, walk in zig-zags, cross the road. You're a victim . . . That's good. We do it {robbing} because we're bullies. Imagine you've been bullied all your life. You feel bad about yourself. You want to make others feel bad to make yourself feel better. It doesn't really help though. The media create this image that it's all unsafe, of knife crime but it's not all like that. The truth is the 'road way' is a nice life. You get treated well, you get money. Everyone understands you, they know what you're going through. You get respect.

(Ashley, black youth aged 19, Private Interview, February 2012)

As the examples of this section indicate within Newham there existed a constant re-negotiation of place between day and night, which indicated that although all residents believed in the legitimacy of power, fundamentally many believed more in the legitimacy of those that wielded it, which was always a situation-specific context. Bourdieu (1987) regards this symbolic power as 'world-making' power due to its capacity to impose a legitimised vision of the social world. As sociologist Charles Taylor suggests, 'the *person* of real practical wisdom is marked out less by the ability to formulate rules than by knowing how to act in each particular situation' (1999, p. 41). In an environment where fear of criminality has become normalised, negotiating criminality becomes a facet of everyday life. One option was avoidance, as was illustrated in the example of the aforementioned Hungarians Martha and Laura. The following example is more tellingly appropriate to those growing up within the borough:

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Shahid went to school in Newham and became part of a 'post-code' gang from a location appropriately named Warrior Square. Shahid, being a relatively diminutive Bangladeshi boy retold his story of growing up within the territory of a black street gang that habitually victimised others, of various ethnicities that were not part of their own group. As a consequence of feeling marginalised and victimised those of diverse Asian origins banded together in solidarity against this black gang to protect themselves and ensure the most basic fundamental human right – safe passage within one's own neighbourhood. The dynamics of inter-racial gang rivalry were complex and often superseded by confrontations with other gangs from various proximities. Membership into these protective groups often comes with a cost and for Shahid this cost came through the necessity to prove himself worthy of membership through an assortment of violent and criminal acts that contributed to the statistics that made Newham notorious.

(Shahid, aged 23, Private Interview, May 2011)

Assessing the implications and causes of crime and criminality are well beyond the remit of this thesis and to acquire a working knowledge of Newham's 'gang' culture would be a thesis in itself. The relevance of the inclusion of this topic is to profile and diagnose the role crime and criminality plays within the everyday context of Newham life in the attempt to understand the size of the task that is required to heal the systemic issues that lie within London's 'Gash' and to consider whether Olympic-delivery may contribute towards addressing such fundamental East London issues. This cultural and societal issue is best exemplified by the following example of a Bangladeshi street gang that eschewed traditional sociological norms to create their own sub-culture:

The Manor Park 'Massive' collective were a collection, or gang depending upon your interpretation, of 2nd or 3rd sons from Bangladeshi families. The core of the gang had 12 members with an additional 12-15 associates and hangers on between the ages of 15 and 18 and local to Newham. These 2nd or 3rd sons were considered less worthy than their older brothers in their family structures in that they were all NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). That said none signed on to receive unemployment benefit. To all extents and purposes they were invisible to their families and to society at large.

This group had no leader as such but one member that was clearly dominant was Ali. Ali had arrived in Newham aged 10 and had ceased attending school at the age of 13. His oft-stated ambition was to drive a big car and 'have' lots of women, both of which he was ultimately successful in accomplishing. Ali was outwardly very aggressive and threatening to all, regardless of familiarity and was heavily involved in street robbery. He was loath to pigeonhole his earning abilities and throughout the course of his involvement with this gathering his criminal activities included initially supplying and delivering drugs to punters on a pushbike and the occasional burglaries of East London homes and businesses.

As a group this gang claimed a territory and occupied the same specific street most nights of any given week. They established norms, reputation and status through their actions and made money for their members through a variety of illegal means. Fundamentally, they created for each other what was missing in all other aspects of their lives; belonging, respect and the feeling for its members that someone was looking out

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for them. Ali had attained dominance in the group as a result of his actions over the course of his involvement in criminality. He had a reputation based on the fear that he was prepared to do anything no matter the consequences if someone had 'disrespected' him or his cohort. This was perhaps best exemplified by his shooting of someone in the face with a shotgun for an action he surmised as 'disrespectful' from his victim.

Ali was involved with the gang for a number of years until they eventually grew older and went their separate ways. Some went to prison, some moved away, some turned to drugs. One member was shot in the legs and fled in fear for his life. Only three managed to attain employment, one as a traffic enforcement officer, one as a council caretaker and the other as a cook. Ali avoided being incarcerated despite his habitus and graduated into deeper criminality. His main source of income remains selling drugs from within his grandfathers' grocery store. He could thus be considered an entrepreneur of sorts and will regularly turn his hand from selling drugs to buying and selling stolen cars and stripping down vehicles into constituent parts for resale, Ali would do anything for money – and women – but most importantly, Ali would do anything to accumulate the cultural capital that equates to power within his quotidian context.

(Fieldwork Notes, November 2011)

6.5 – Changing Places: The Churn of Newham

If Ali were to leave others would replace him. One of the most significant aspects of Newham in terms of community definition and identity is that of migration. This was

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highlighted by another 2007/2008 Mayhew Harper and Associates report¹¹⁴ that indicated that the borough had an incredibly high churn of population. The word ‘churn’ refers to the movement of residents in and out of the borough. In 2007/2008 almost one fifth of the Newham population (19.5%) either left or entered the area. Such churn is evidenced in National Insurance (NI) registrations, which are necessary for legal employment in the UK. In 2007/2008 more foreign nationals registered for NI numbers in Newham than anywhere else in the UK. Of these 15% were Indian, 14% Polish, 11% Romanian, 9% Lithuanian, 7% Bangladeshi and 4% Bulgarian. The Mayhew report estimated that 12,000 people entered the borough from outside the UK with an average stay of 14 months. Furthermore, the GLA predicted¹¹⁵ that Newham was forecast to see a population increase of 46.6% between 2006 and 2031 as a result of regeneration, which translated into an increase two and a half times that of the London average.

A point of note in relation to housing, population churn and community composition was the findings of the 2008 London Borough of Newham *Newham Household Panel Survey* (NHPS) survey data regarding poverty levels. This data emphasised the association between migration and poverty and found that the new households sampled for their data were significantly more likely to be below the poverty line than those they had previously sampled indicating an decreasing trend in upward mobility. After housing costs were taken into account, longitudinal sample of households found that in 2008, 38.1% of existing NHPS respondent households were below the poverty line, compared to a staggering 74.7% of newly sampled households. The 2008 NHPS concluded that this differential meant that those moving into the borough are much

¹¹⁴ Cited in Aston Mansfield's *Newham Key Statistics* (2011).

¹¹⁵ For more information see: GLA Round Low Population Projections (2008)

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more likely to be poorer than existing households. Furthermore, complimentary evidence from the Newham Economic Development Strategy¹¹⁶ (2010) suggests that people who leave Newham were more highly skilled and generally better off than those that arrive. This is validated by the perception of a community worker that was interviewed for this research who stated that ‘the one clear unifying fact that unites most of Newham is a want to move away. Most people see Newham as a staging post, a temporary home’ as is exemplified by the following account:

Sarah and Joe were white, in their 50s, and had raised two children in Newham that had now grown up and moved away to Essex for work. The former now lived alone in the same 3 bedroom mid-terraced house in a generic Newham street where they had raised their family. The house next door was identical, to all intents and purposes, except for the fact that it did not house an aging couple newly liberated after the flight of their children. The house next door housed 15 young Eastern European men. According to Sarah and Joe, these young men were pleasant enough and did not cause them any real problems other than the fact that they were young men, who made a lot of noise ‘as young men do’ and often drank in the garden until late at night. This, the couple commented, is the way of life in the area and they had the choice of putting up with it or moving. They had open copies of the property section of the Romford Recorder {a local East London / Essex newspaper that listed properties outside of Newham} open on the coffee table. Somewhere East was the land they once knew.

(Fieldwork Notes, July 2010)

¹¹⁶ This Economic Development Strategy sets out Newham council’s vision for the economic prosperity of the borough and provides a framework for the Council to deliver a range of initiatives.

6.6 – The Ends Justifying the Means: Newham’s Socialist Gentrification

As the above examples illustrate Newham residents are highly diverse and, consequently, life in the borough is somewhat unique compared to the rest of the UK. Yet there is a common thread that links all parts of this society together. Consider the following evaluation of the place by the *Economist* Bagehot column:

It is no coincidence that Newham both elected Britain’s first Labour MP, Keir Hardie, and is home to much of the Olympic Park. The docks, and the dirty industry they spawned, made it a poor place. That is why it was receptive to socialism, and also why land prices are low enough that businesses could be turfed out, and the Olympic facilities built, at a reasonable cost . . . In a borough with a three-quarters ethnic-minority population (more than anywhere else in the country) . . . {Sir Robin Wales, Newham’s Mayor} shares the essential Newham characteristic, in that he is an immigrant . . . was elected Mayor in 2002, and re-elected in 2006 and 2010 – with 68% of the vote. All 60 councillors are Labour . . . Newham is a place of arrival . . . Living in Newham is still fairly cheap: many of its houses are in multiple occupancy (the record, says the council, is 38 people in one property). In contravention of the planning regulations, many of its gardens have been filled with breezeblock sheds to house the latest arrivals . . . The borough is funded by central government on the basis that it has 242,000 people, but the council reckons it has 300,000, and the police think the tally is 320,000 –

especially tough, when the council's discretionary grant from the government is coming down from £310m to £240m over three years. It is hardly surprising that Newham is weighed down by debt, and its financial position is deteriorating. Gentrification is not a word that a Labour politician would ever use to describe his plans, but that is what Sir Robin's look like. He wants to reduce the churn in Newham and turn it into a place where people buy houses, settle down and raise children . . . Plans for the future of the Olympic Park, which imply a high proportion of family homes, sit comfortably with his aims for the borough.

(Bagehot, 2012, p. 26)

Clearly, one unifying factor in Newham is its endemic social issues and one way that Sir Robin Wales attempted to deal with some families that did not fit with his vision of Newham. His adopted tactics included attempts to move such aberrations to other parts of the country, which led to him in 2012 being accused of 'social cleansing' ahead of the Olympics after it a housing association in Stoke-on-Trent, some 140 miles away from East London. It was alleged that Newham had contacted it confessing that it could no longer afford to accommodate tenants on its waiting list in private housing. Sir Robin admitted to this on BBC Radio 4's Today programme adding that Newham's housing officers had actually written to hundreds of organisations throughout the UK to try to find homes for its poorest families.¹¹⁷

Hosting the 2012 Olympic Games was perceived as a political, economic and cultural catalyst that would generate unprecedented momentum for the regeneration of

¹¹⁷ More information is available at:
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/9222709/London-council-accused-of-social-cleansing-as-it-asks-housing-benefit-families-to-move-north.html>

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Newham. The notion that the 2012 Olympic Games would prove a panacea to solve Newham's social issues was concisely outlined by the 2005 UK government Secretary of State, Jack Straw's statement, delivered in the aftermath of London's surprise victory in the race to host the 2012 Olympic Games.

London's bid was built on a special Olympic vision. A vision of an Olympic Games that would not only be a celebration of sport but a force for regeneration. The Games will transform one of the poorest and most deprived areas of London. They will create thousands of jobs and homes. They will offer new opportunities for business in the immediate area and throughout London.

(Jack Straw, House of Commons, 6 July 2005)

As highlighted above there appeared to be a ubiquitous conviction that the 2012 London Olympic bid would be a panacea to make East London healthy – literally, socially and economically. The Newham Mayor Sir Robin Wales perpetuated this assumption at the local level, which was supported by the media rhetoric. This use of the Olympics for significant urban overhaul revolved around the consideration that Olympic hosting would provide the potential to instigate a critical regenerative juncture. For those wishing to buy into this utopian premise the concept of Olympic 'legacy' provided the justification for the hope and expectation of a 'better' Newham. However, this view was based upon the assumption that everybody shared the same opinion of what constituted a 'better life' and that all had the ability to take advantage of the opportunities presented therein. Such an assumption, as the rest of the dissertation will argue, proved not to be the

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case. Before this argument is exemplified however an outline of the fundamental Olympic-delivery related research questions of who, what, where and why needs addressing. This is the subject of the following chapter.

Chapter 7. NEWHAM: DIVIDE AND DOCUMENT?

As has been discussed the Olympic Games promised to deliver a plethora of benefits to Newham during Olympic-delivery and beyond. The question for the Olympic researcher thus became: who would experience these modifications most severely? This chapter addresses that question whilst considering how best to capture the realities of Olympic delivery. As a result this chapter segregates Newham into three key research zones and delineates accordingly. It also imparts clarity and realism that is provided by ethnographic examples of everyday life within these zones.

7.1 – Newham: The Great Divide

Geographically speaking, and building upon the borough's demographics highlighted earlier, the entire borough could not be considered a viable ethnographic lab because, quite simply, it was too large for a solitary researcher to cover and explore in its entirety. Regardless of proximity to the venues (see Figure 8 below) those comprising Newham's communities were expected to be impacted by Games delivery to a lesser or greater degree and all of which were valuable to this research as a whole.

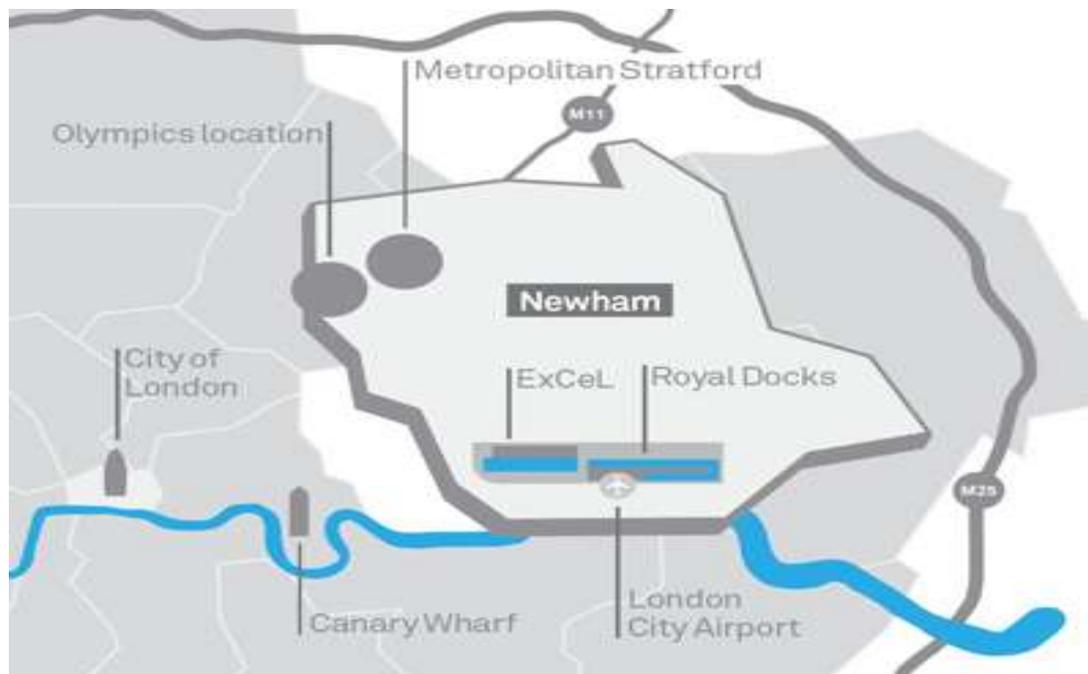


Figure 8. Olympic Newham¹¹⁸

It appeared logical to assume that those experiencing Olympic-delivery in the area surrounding the building site that was the Olympic Park would have a differential experience to that of those living outside the immediate vicinity. The ExCeL to the south of the borough would host many Olympic events and was also expected to undergo a substantial Olympic transition. Furthermore, all residents that populated the rest of the borough would have experiences to feel and lives that would be impacted upon. The researcher needed a triple-fronted approach to researching and one that embedded himself in the surrounding areas of Newham's two major Olympic venues and another that facilitated access to key exemplars of the community at large.

This conclusion permitted Newham to become segregated for research purposes into three distinct zones; *Stratfordland* (the area in the vicinity of the Olympic Park) was

¹¹⁸ Map available at: <http://www.newham.gov.uk/informationforbusiness/regenerationprojects/regenerationprojects.htm>

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represented by a housing estate on the boundaries of the Olympic Park. *ExCeLland* (the area in the vicinity of the ExCeL London) was represented by a housing estate on the boundaries of the ExCeL and the *Dispersal Zone* (the remaining parts of Newham. Researching within the *Dispersal Zone* involved research emanating outwards from two community bases to the north-east of the borough (Manor Park and Forest Gate) and considered all uncovered pertinent community groups as representative of its findings.

To accomplish this triple-fronted analysis the researcher was primarily based within four community centres across the three research zones in Newham: *Stratfordland*, *ExCeLland* and the *Dispersal Zone*. These centres formed satellite bases from which to conduct community interaction. This methodology led to involvement in a diversity of community-orientated activities including working with youth clubs, community detachment teams (youth workers that were based on Newham's streets), providing fruit and vegetables to community members who were otherwise unable to get access to such,¹¹⁹ manual labour alongside those completing Community Service Orders¹²⁰ and becoming involved in community involvement initiatives and religious festivals, amongst many others. These community centres were spaces managed by the Newham's Third Sector that were demarcated for community use. These public spheres also served

¹¹⁹ An example of such actions was evidenced when in April 2000 AM established a mobile fresh fruit and vegetable initiative in response to member complaints that some areas of the community, including Cranberry Lane, had little or no access to fresh produce. Eric Samuels, an ordained minister and volunteer co-ordinator of the Newham Food Access Partnership, stated that Cranberry Lane was 'a really poor estate. There are more children under 10 there per square mile than anywhere else in the country, but it's a food desert. There's only one way in and out of the estate so it takes 20 minutes to get to the nearest shop, which is expensive'. With help from the charity, Samuels set up regular trips to Spitalfields market buying fruit and vegetables at wholesale prices then selling them in the estates community centre once a week at the same price. Now he runs eight such 'markets' across Newham each week, two of them located in schools.

For more information regarding food deserts see (Wrigley, 2002) or:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/health-news/special-report-feeding-the-demand-for-healthy-diets-750144.html>

¹²⁰ Community Service is an Order of the court that is bestowed upon a convicted criminal and used as an alternative to a prison sentence. It is usually required that the recipient carries out between 80 and 300 hours of unpaid work within 12 months of the date of the order. For more information see:

<http://www.pkc.gov.uk/Social+care+and+health/Criminal+justice+social+work/Community+Service+Orders/>

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inadvertently as research realms for a variety of political discourse, participation and representation to which – crucially – every citizen had potential access (Young, 1990). They proved a grounded location from which to conduct community-orientated research within a highly transitional diverse locale.

Indeed, it was within these three Newham zones that the researcher uncovered a number of *public characters* that resonated in this research in a similar way to how the local shopkeepers and community activists did with Jayne Jacobs during her research:

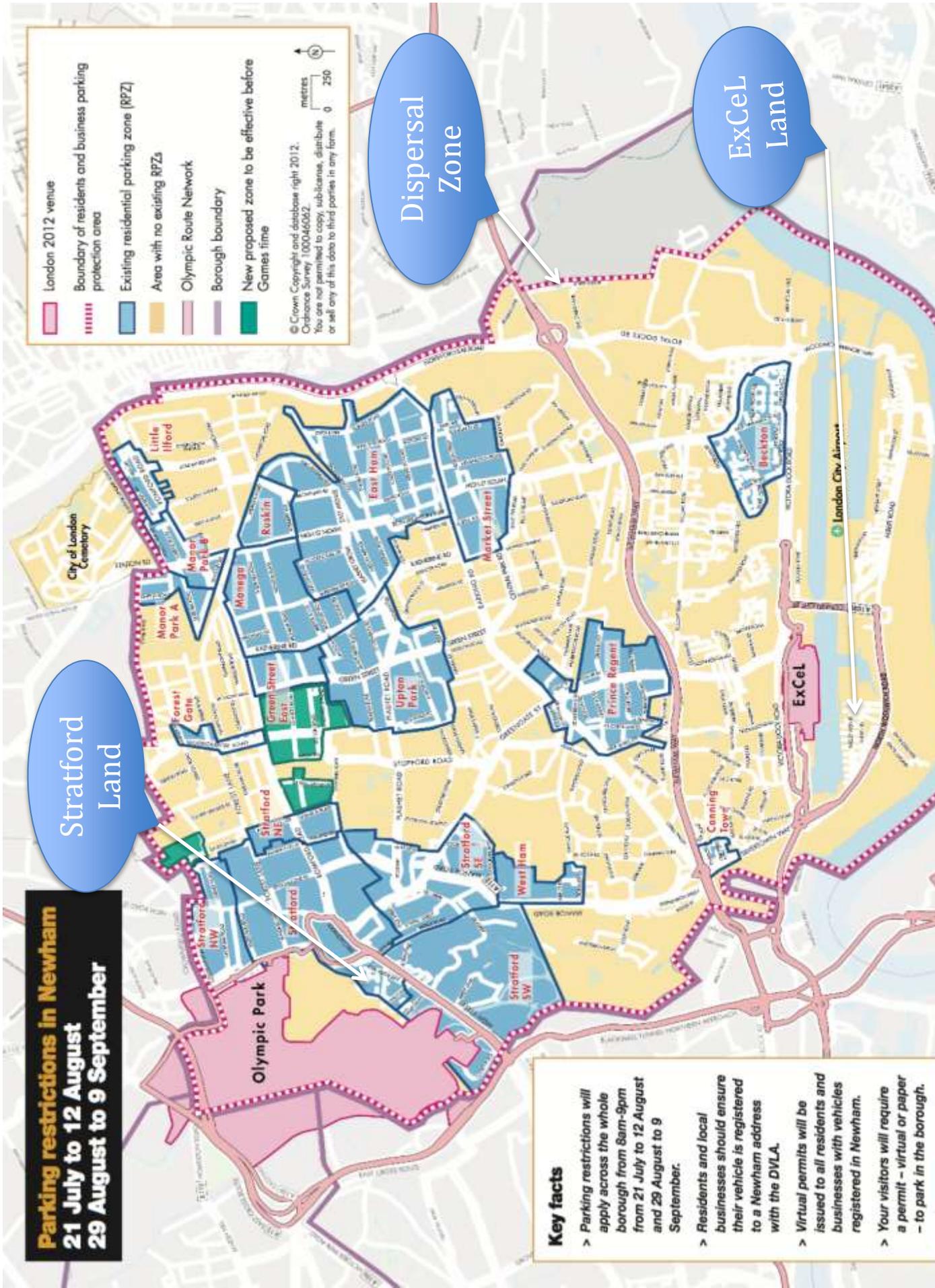
A public character is anyone who is in frequent contact with a wide circle of people and who is sufficiently interested to make himself a public character. A public character need have no special talents or wisdom to fulfil his function – although he {sic} often does. He just needs to be present, and there need to be enough of his counterparts. His main qualification is that he is public, that he talks to lots of different people.

(Jacobs, 1961, p. 68)

Such public characters helped to form the researcher's practical wisdom. These initially took the shape of community workers and youth workers but evolved throughout the research. Public characters became the gatekeepers to a multitude of research hubs, which were to form a data collection method defined herein as *spoking*. This involved cultivating positions within a Newham based community organisations and alongside these public characters within the borough and indeed East London. When trying to map these locations for reflective analysis these satellite case studies peppered the borough

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and the appearance of the mapping resembled the form of bicycle wheel spokes, with their nucleus from the same single point, hence the term *spoking*. These public characters helped shape, form and develop the researchers knowledge. Through their wisdom they helped guide the research and facilitated many pertinent contacts, meetings and events. They opened doors and helped overcome suspicions and transitions. What follows this map is an overview of these three research zones.



Parking restrictions in Newham
21 July to 12 August
29 August to 9 September

London 2012 venue
 Boundary of residents and business parking protection area
 Existing residential parking zone (RPZ)
 Area with no existing RPZs
 Olympic Route Network
 Borough boundary
 New proposed zone to be effective before Games time

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metres
 0 250

Dispersal Zone

ExCel Land

Stratford Land

- Key facts**
- > Parking restrictions will apply across the whole borough from 8am-9pm from 21 July to 12 August and 29 August to 9 September.
 - > Residents and local businesses should ensure their vehicle is registered to a Newham address with the DVLA.
 - > Virtual permits will be issued to all residents and businesses with vehicles registered in Newham.
 - > Your visitors will require a permit – virtual or paper – to park in the borough.

Figure 9. Delineating Newham¹²¹

7.2 – The Dispersal Zone: A Host Hub

To attain an understanding of social practice within Newham and how this was modified during Olympic-delivery a location was sought as a base of research operations. This base was required to operate upon many different community levels that permitted regional (East London) and local perspectives of life within Newham to be ascertained. The interactions that would follow were intended to permit a broader horizon of Olympic-delivery implications to be accumulated and contribute towards access to the diverse communities. A well-connected host hub would – ideally – enable a wide array of networking to be accomplished, which would enable greater proportionality of Olympic-delivery research to be conducted.

The host hub needed to operate on myriad levels to allow this study to contextualise Newham on differential levels that incorporated community engagement, participation, local and regional politics and interaction with those that constituted what was termed Olympic-delivery. The host needed to be based within Newham, have long established links to a plethora of community groups and organisations; it needed to have a good understanding of the way Newham worked as an urban location. They needed to be actively involved with, and impacted by, Olympic-delivery and provide access to such interplay with research fieldwork ‘spoking’ out into the borough from a central location.

A Newham based charity, Aston Mansfield (AM), proved to be a perfect fit for this criteria. AM were a long established community hub that focused upon facilitating

¹²¹ For more information on parking restrictions see the internet source of the above map:
http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/environment/london_2012_advance_warning_of_parking_restrictions_1_1373644

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everyday life within the communities that reside in Newham. They were established in 2000, whose purpose was to create social change for the benefit of local people. They accomplished this by campaigning for social justice, which their General Manager defined as ‘the quest for fairness and respect that ensures the local people are treated within their expectations of human dignity’. AM provided services for education and training, capacity building and developing competencies for local people.

AM defined themselves as an organisation that ‘implemented a community development approach’ that aimed to resolve issues pertinent to the Newham community, which they defined as an approach where they work alongside the community to identify areas of concern and improvement. To this end they assisted community members to obtain the resources, education and training to accomplish their own resolution through various facilitations. AM facilitation provided community access to the decision makers that provided the format for the community to resolve their own issues and create social change, which was particularly pertinent to this research. They also provided learning and meeting venues through the provision of community buildings.

Arguably, one of the strongest initial draws to AM as a viable research conduit was its strong links with established groups that were involved during the Olympic bidding, which this analysis sought to gain access to. In addition to providing exceptional links to the Newham community at large and, generally, if there were Olympic-related meetings or community consultations occurring within Newham during Olympic-delivery AM were either invited or facilitating them. Consequently, AM enabled access to other pertinent organisations that interacted with the community throughout Olympic-delivery including the OPLC, the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), the

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Newham Youth Providers Partnership (NYPP), Transport for London (TFL), London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) and the Olympic Security Directorate (OSD) to name but a few. The findings uncovered as a result of the vast array of interactions from this host hub were utilised to confirm, contribute to or question the discoveries found within the specific fields of *Stratfordland* and *ExCeLland*. This approach allowed for a greater degree of clarity, an enhanced depth of research and increased the credibility and generalisation of the findings.

7.3 – Stratfordland

Prior to the bid Stratford was located at the heart of the *Thames Gateway* development,¹²² initiated in 1990 by the *South-East Regional Policy Guidance Plan*. In 1991 a decision was made to create a Paris – East London *Channel Tunnel* rail link between Paris and into central London, via Stratford. This provided an important catalyst for improvements in road and rail infrastructure in the area and by 1995 the *Thames Gateway Task Force* drew up plans for 30,000 new homes and 50,000 new jobs to be established in the areas surrounding the river Thames, which will eventually – by 2021 – comprise the *Thames Corridor* (Buck, Gordon, Hall, Harloe and Kleinman, 2002, pp. 84-85). The prospect of East London hosting the 2012 Olympics pushed new life into the

¹²² The Thames Gateway stretches East from the London boroughs of Newham, Tower Hamlets and Greenwich for approximately 45 miles and encompasses three regions; London, East and South East England. Its boundary points are between Westferry in Tower Hamlets and the Isle of Sheppey. The Department for Communities and Local Government are responsible for the over-seeing of a project that was designed to regenerate the area and develop brownfield land, farmland and marsh to increase the economic prosperity of the areas therein. The regeneration of the Thames Gateway development is the latest manifestation of the regeneration of the Thames Estuary, which according to www.communities.gov.uk dates back to 1981. In the years before the Olympic Games this project contributed significantly to the improvement of Stratfordland's public transport infrastructure.

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project and resulted in 2006 in a government-inspired review of the *Thames Gateway* plan (for a deeper account see Cohen and Rustin, 2008; Poynter, 2009).

The implications of the Olympic-vigour that was injected into these regeneration plans were witnessed throughout Newham. This saw some of its districts substantially modified; by contrast some districts struggled to see any physical Olympic transformation whatsoever. All districts, however, were inundated with Olympic host connotations and the symbolic modification of the borough. *Stratfordland* provided the greatest example of Newham's literal transformation. This urban locale witnessed the delivery of the Olympic Park that loomed over the landscape during Olympic-delivery asserting most visibly its dominance upon the locale. First, in the form of a walled off building site, replaced soon after by a shiny utopian, self-enclosed Olympic hub. This hub promised to be transformed again after the Games into an 'Olympic City' that would constitute a large component of the final Olympic regeneration of East London.

To adequately understand the Olympic-delivery it was considered that those living within Stratford would experience Olympic hosting differentially to those living elsewhere in the borough. Consequently, Stratford was defined as a specific research locale – *Stratfordland*. As such, *Stratfordland* required a research operations base to be established within its borders. To accomplish this a research population needed to be identified and access to said populace needed to be secured. Initially, criteria for the research matter selection needed to be established.

This conclusion necessitated a course of exploratory research. After numerous contacts were approached, particularly from within Newham's Third Sector, regarding the research objectives and intended methodologies a specific locale of West Newham

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known as the Carpenters Estate was considered as a viable ethnographic option. This consensus was developed on many levels but mainly because of its close proximity to the Olympic Park and its relative local infamy around residents being decanted from their homes during the Olympic period. The assertion that Carpenters Estate was a viable location for research was borne out by the plethora of local, national and international media interest in the estate that latterly played out throughout the Olympic period.¹²³

7.4 – The Carpenters of Stratfordland

That known colloquially as ‘Carpenters’ was located in Stratford at the heart of the Olympic development in the northeast corner of Newham. It lay some four miles east of the City of London and next to Stratford Regional Station, which would form one of the main entry points for the Olympic Park. Dependent upon perspective it can either be argued that the Olympic Park and stadium shadowed the estate or that the estate cast a metaphorical shadow over the Games (Appendix A – Figure 4). Indeed the estate was the backdrop to the Games and the poor condition of which threatened to blot an otherwise contemporary Olympic landscape.

The issues uncovered within Carpenters Estate were representative of a common trend whereby the local authorities passed their responsibilities for social housing to private housing associations, and property development interests pressured vulnerable communities. Two facts remained constant throughout this research that provided insight into the realities of Olympic-delivery within this locale; firstly, Newham Council were committed to decanting the residents of the estate for reasons that will be expanded upon

¹²³ See: <http://savecarpenters.wordpress.com/media/> for a selection of media coverage

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herein and displaced many during this period throughout East London and beyond.

Secondly, as a result of vast amount of Olympic-related investment in the area and the surroundings, those that remained consistently reinforced the notion that their *habitus* was an ill fit for the evolving *field* within which they had once felt they belonged.

The Carpenters Estate provided an example of a community living through *hysteresis*. The Olympic-delivery period witnessed the gradual decanting of the residents of its tower blocks; the communities' death by a thousand cuts correlating with the birth of Olympic Stratford. Carpenters become emblematic of the poverty and deprivation that the Olympics intended to eradicate from *Stratfordland*, and those that lived within its boundaries were categorised as deprived, vilified and perceived to need saving from their social malady. Attention now turns to a description of this social malaise in the form of a brief history of the estate.

The land that is now the Carpenters Estate was owned in the 19th century by London livery company the Worshipful Company of Carpenters (WCC). Many of London's factories occupied the vicinity of the area and those that worked within required housing. The WCC used their land to house these workers in the form of Victorian terraced houses. An industrial community was formed, complete with a school and a social club. As with so many industrial areas in East London, World War II impacted with widespread devastation of factories and docks ruined by bomb damage.

The subsequent decision to move all dock activity some 25 miles downstream to Tilbury guaranteed several decades of stagnation and economic decline. East London was never transformed back into an economic industrial hub and, according to some, its sense of community was lost accordingly (Willmott and Young, 1957). However, Carpenters

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remained relatively unscathed until the 1960s when local authorities throughout London began an effort to provide cheap, decent homes by building council houses. These social housing projects were a solution that attempted to alleviate housing issues in deprived and derelict areas, however, they failed to address some underlying social issues and the consequences of their implementation was severe polarisation (Power, 1996). The cumulative effect of such housing policies were spatial and social exclusion and ‘area-based poverty’ (Power, 1987, 1996; Power and Turnstall, 1991) and something that future policies such as social mixing would try to alleviate elsewhere, to debatable success (as explored herein).

To return to the matter at hand, in 1969 Newham council built three 23-storey tower blocks and some 700 other units in what became known as the Carpenters Estate. Carpenters Estate became well-defined and clearly delimited by man-made boundaries on all sides. These included a busy road, London Underground tracks and what would become the Olympic Park. Margaret Thatcher’s policies of the 1980s impacted upon Carpenters with the 1980 introduction of the Right-to-Buy scheme,¹²⁴ wherein the more affluent former council residents were able to buy and become freeholders of their homes. In April 1998 residents of the Carpenters Estate collectively took responsibility for managing their homes by creating a Tenant Management Organisation (TMO). A TMO is an organisation of residents who employ their own staff to manage services that Newham Council agreed to relinquish control of. These included repairs and tenancy matters. Fundamentally, the Council remained the landlord for the residents whilst locals managed themselves. However, many found living hard to manage and the population of

¹²⁴ In 1980 Margaret Thatcher’s government introduced legislation – The Housing Act 1980 – which implemented the Right-to-Buy scheme. The Right-to-Buy scheme was a policy that enabled secure council and housing association tenants a legal right to buy their homes.

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the Carpenters Estate were categorised as amongst the most deprived in England (Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2007). This fact came as a surprise to some residents:

'I'm going to be moved. I've lived on the estate for as long as I can remember, I only found out two weeks I was deprived . . . It hasn't been a good fortnight'

(Private interview, Kath, white, English aged 77, 2008)

At the turn of the 20th Century the three tower blocks were badly in need of repair. In 2004 the Council decided that the worst of the three – James Riley Point – needed to be demolished and its residents re-housed. Soon after, In 2007/2008 Newham Council evaluated a refurbishment programme for the other two tower blocks – Lund and Dennison point – and decided that the £50m needed was prohibitive. These blocks would also be demolished and the population re-housed. Following this, in late November, 2011 a Memorandum of Agreement was announced between Newham Council and University College, London (UCL) which stated an intent to clear the site of residents, raise all the housing and convert the site into a university campus. The decanting of residents had been well underway prior to this announcement, as the tables below indicate:

Table 2

2005 Carpenters Estate Occupation Levels¹²⁵

Property Category	Secure Tenants	Leaseholders	Freeholders	Total
Estate Wide	514	98	93	705
High Rise	360	74	0	434
Low Rise	106	24	0	130
Houses	48	0	93	141
Total		612		

Table 3

2011 Carpenters Estate Occupation Levels¹²⁶

Property Category	Secure Tenants	Leaseholders	Freeholders	Total
Estate Wide	193	65	93	351
High Rise	55	40	0	95
Low Rise	90	25	0	115
Houses	48	0	93	141

¹²⁵ For more information see:

<http://www.newham.gov.uk/Regen/GreaterCarpentersNeighbourhoodredevelopmentFAQs.htm#14>

¹²⁶ For more information see:

<http://www.newham.gov.uk/Regen/GreaterCarpentersNeighbourhoodredevelopmentFAQs.htm#14>

Total	258
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The cycle of depreciation and disinvestment in the Carpenters Estate's tower blocks was indicative of how new developments undermine older investments where spending money to maintain high-value land that house low-income tenants becomes difficult to justify when compared to the potential financial windfalls of selling valuable land to developers (Lees, Slater and Wyly, 2008, p. 53). The 2012 London Olympic-delivery period saw a new skyline surrounding the Carpenters Estate as *Stratfordland* began to evolve at a dizzying pace. The Olympic Park rose from the ashes of faded industry and a plethora of other buildings, flats and offices rapidly began to emerge, and dominate the landscape. The transportation links of Stratford were enhanced and improved.

The vision for the Carpenters Estate was that it would be raised and replaced by a university campus. According to Sir Robin Wales (2012) such a deal was expected to enhance the life prospects of the neighbourhood and enrich Newham as a whole. The gradual dispersal – from 2005 – of the estate's residents, mostly to alternative dwellings nearby was justified for Sir Robin Wales by the need to embrace a plethora of Olympic-related development opportunities. Wales stated that:

. . . people in Carpenters are concerned. I would be too. I completely understand that. But with UCL we would get an amazing, top university coming to the area. Our vision is for science and hi-tech providing jobs and skills.

This vision, for the residents of the Carpenters Estate, ensured a further continuance of the ‘waiting game’ they had become used to in recent years. During the research those that remained on Carpenters waited to find out where they would be living in the future; secure in the knowledge that they had no future on Carpenters and strongly suspecting that they had no part to play in *Stratfordland’s* Olympic utopia.

7.5 – Kicked out of Paradise?

The Carpenters Estate was situated at the heart of Newham’s Olympic transition. It bordered the Olympic Park and those that lived there were within touching distance of the greatness that was to come. As a result of the decanting of Carpenters many residents felt that their Olympic gold, in the form of a place in the much-proselytised Olympic City, was snatched from their fingertips. This regenerative narrative served to reinforce an on-going Olympic predisposition that hosting was orientated:

. . . toward a greater level of segregation and separation at the micro-community level, as the Olympic Park attracts residential units that serve the needs of young professionals . . . This pattern of separation and segregation at the local level has been a feature of regeneration and gentrification schemes in East London over recent years – with stark divisions emerging in the same street between the ‘gated’ and those without.

(Imrie, Lees and Raco, 2009, p. 143)

¹²⁷ For more see: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/sport/2012/jun/13/london-2012-legacy-battle-newham>

The gated communities would arrive after the culmination of the Games. During the delivery stage the council gradually emptied the estate of tenants. As demonstrated, the eradication of the Carpenters Estate was planned long before the Olympics and this fact enforces the findings of Burbank *et al* (2001) who argued that the motivations for a host city to enter the Olympic bidding process are underpinned by ‘the existence of an established growth regime in the city . . . {and} a desire to create or change the city’s image’ (p. 7). In this instance these regimes could be holistically defined as part of the Newham Master Plan for the widespread regeneration of the borough, some of which was boosted by the 2012 Olympic Games.¹²⁸

An indication of the realities of the Carpenters regeneration at the time of Olympic-delivery was encapsulated by the following case study:

Sylvie: The Moan that Newham Forgot

As we sat on the sofa in Sylvie’s living room she motioned to the TV in the corner. It was covered in dust: ‘I can dust the room in the morning and by the afternoon I can write my name on the top of the TV again with all the crap that gets blown in from the Olympics’. Clearly house-proud and conscious of perceptions of others, Sylvie had lived in this flat for 35 years. She had raised her kids and as she stated it had ‘seen off’ her husband too. She was now being offered a £4,000 moving allowance by the local council to relocate to ‘a place of her choosing’; at the time her choices were limited to much

¹²⁸ For a comprehensive guide to Newham regeneration plans visit:
<http://www.newham.gov.uk/InformationforBusinesses/RegenerationProjects/RegenerationProjects.htm>

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smaller 1 bedroom houses in Canning Town or elsewhere in Stratford. She was offered the same amount as others that had lived on the estate for a lot less time she critiqued, suggesting that there was no value to be placed upon life or sentimentality in the relocation. Sylvie was aware she would need to downsize as she was now the only occupant of her family sized flat.

As we looked out at the emerging Olympic Park, Sylvie commented on what a great 'Panasonic view' she had and would miss it when she'd gone, believing, quite correctly, that she would not see the Park complete: 'Life here has been pretty tough since the Olympics came', she said matter of factly. 'The new flats over the road block out the sun and it is a lot harder to get to the shops now because they have shut the gateway through the station, making it off-limits for residents. Now it's just for workers. There's 24-hour drilling and alarms going off at the Station {Stratford} every couple of hours; at 2am and 4am this morning they went off. The other thing is the tannoy announcements that go on late into the night, it would be understandable if they were important but the last one shouted 'Dave, your tea is ready'. In full flow Sylvie turned from the structural to the persecuted:

'The site-workers are taking over Stratford. The Poles come over with their women for healthcare and having babies. You can tell the women, blonde hair, black roots . . . Sluts. My son is a construction worker and he was bullied on the site by Poles, Croats and fucking Paddies. It didn't stop until he threatened to put someone in the ground. At the end of the day you can build what you like, you can't make a silk purse from a sow's ear, it'll always be fucking Stratford'. Sylvie liked some people, primarily those she had lived amongst. Her life had in a sense been privileged:

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'When you grow up somewhere you learn where to go, where to avoid and what's not safe. That's hard to do again when you're not a kid anymore. We've been spoilt here; we've got shops, the doctors and our clubs right on our doorstep. I might not know everyone to talk to here but I always say hello and am stopping to chat, or to moan, I'm good at moaning. That won't happen in new places'. In Sylvie's world politicians are evasive and the indecision around her future made her avoid spending on her house.

'Five years ago when Robin Wales came to the estate to talk about the relocation we asked him if we were going to be moved; he didn't answer. He did say how good the Olympics were going to be and how good they'd be for us. But we're not running in the Olympics we're living here. If he'd have said you're moving we wouldn't have liked it but at least we'd know, it's been 7 years now and I still haven't been moved. I needed to decorate 7 years ago but I'm scared to start unless I get moved the next week and waste my money. I don't even recognise the place anymore, it's changed so much in the last year or so, it doesn't feel like home'.

(Fieldwork Notes, December 2010)

Sylvie had lived a solitary life since her grown up children had flown the nest for the leafier climes of suburban Essex. One might argue that a nostalgic longing for times past had caused Sylvie to become bitter and fatalistic and that she would perceive any modification of her locale as further indication that her best years were behind her. Throughout this research the interactions with Sylvie proved frequently paradoxical. In many exchanges Sylvie demonstrated that she was both open and adaptable to Newham's

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evolution and she demonstrated an, at times, post-racial outlook. Alternatively, as the above indicates this was sometimes accompanied by parochial and intolerant comments that resonated with frustration and self-pity more than outright bigotry, this was most notably evidenced by her intolerance of Eastern Europeans. Eventually, Sylvie and many others like her left the Carpenters. In 2012 a selection of photos were put up on the side of some of the houses that had been boarded up to prevent squatting (see Appendix A – Figures 5 and 6). This display was the culmination of photographer Nicola Pritchard's four years of work on the estate. The aim of the display was to provide insight into the experiences of those that were decanted and to give a human face to the statistics and words that would report the events after the residents had left. For those that remained life changed markedly in the years leading up to the Games. But for many of these people drastic change had been the backdrop to their lives hitherto.

Sarah: A Search for Acceptance

I moved to Carpenters in 2003, from Norwich. I converted to Islam about 15 years ago after meeting my husband. In Norwich a white woman, speaking Arabic and wearing Islamic clothes causes issues, so we moved here. I like how the Olympics have changed the area, it's much nicer to look at now and it's cleaner. Life here is weird now though, it's become a ghost town. People are going and they are not being replaced. The less people that stay the less people there are to oppose any move or to make sure we can come back after the regeneration {which was a suggestion been sporadically circulated

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by many tenants}. CARP¹²⁹ keep knocking on my door and pressurising me to come out and demonstrate against the relocation, but there's no point, it's inevitable. It's like we are on a roller coaster and we can only get off when they say 'stop', we have no say, we can scream as much as we like, it makes no difference. I don't see the Olympics as a bad thing but how they are treating the community is a bad thing. It will take years to sort this community out and to bring people back. They should invest in what's already here.

(Fieldwork Notes, March 2012)

As the above example indicates there were sporadic cases of organised resistance against the dispersal of the Carpenters Estate. These groups included the Tower Block Action Group (TBAG), formed in 2003 by the tenants of the estate,¹³⁰ those that comprised this group mostly looked back on their demonstrations as a 'waste of life', some wishing that they had done something more productive with their time like 'read a good book'. Following this initial process a collective was formed in 2011 under the acronym CARP by the leaseholders of the estate. CARP and the leaseholders that comprised their organisation had, according to one leading member Joe Alexander, replaced the tenants that had formed TBAG in 'manning the front line against the tyranny of Robin Wales'.¹³¹ The commonality of both groups were that they were ethnically, culturally diverse, many members were women and both groups rapidly deteriorated once residents began moving away.

¹²⁹ Carpenters Against Regeneration Plan (CARP) were a group of residents, primarily leaseholders that lived on Carpenters Estate. They were campaigning on two fronts – idealistically they were against Carpenters closure and pragmatically they campaigned for a 'fair deal' if they were re-housed.

¹³⁰ The TBAG campaign was formed to demonstrate against the tower blocks being decanted and for improved living conditions therein. They engaged in direct social action that took the form of hanging banners from the outer walls of the tower blocks and attempts to lobby Sir Robin Wales at public events.

¹³¹ Private interview – July 2012.

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Ultimately these pockets of resistance failed to attract significant numbers or exposure to resonate significantly during Olympic-delivery. For those that did not live on the estate, and even for many that did and failed to become involved, a lack of the corporeal disposition needed to heed the Carpenters residents' call to order predisposed people to fail to act. As Bourdieu intimates in *The Weight of the World* (1999) those without tangible political power or the abilities or forums to express their opinions often comply with the established order and submit themselves to the status quo, despite their own suffering. This is because they believe the outcome to be a foregone conclusion. In other parts of Newham regeneration had already occurred. For these residents the delivery of the Olympic Games was experienced in dramatically different ways to those of the Carpenters Estate, as will now be explored.

7.6 – ExCeLland

The Olympic Games were to unfurl within the brand-new Olympic Park, and much media attention was directed towards the building of this Park during Olympic-delivery. However, to the south of Newham there was already an Olympic venue – that of the ExCeL (see Figure 10) – where more medals would be contested than within the Olympic Stadium. The residents that surround this locale were expected to experience Olympic-delivery in relation to both preparing to host Olympic events and all that the preparation for this entails. Consequently, an estate in close proximity to ExCeL was sought to document this period.

BV was an urban ‘village’ in Newham’s Docklands. Its creation was the result of a project begun in the early 1990s¹³⁴ planned to characterise the ideals of the Urban Villages Group (UVG¹³⁵) as summarised by Aldous (1992; 1995). According to the objectives set down by the UVG BV was intended to replace the inner city environment with one that was more sustainable and ‘positive’. Urban villages were intended to restore a sense of place within an otherwise alienating and deprived locale and in their construction they offered to address a powerful sociological problem. They offered a new approach to urban planning, which arguably could be said to have its origins in the thoughts of the Control Theorists paradigm of criminological thought (Hirschi, 1969; Reckless, 1973).

The targets of such policy paradigms often earn, what Wacquant has defined as, ‘disproportionate and disproportionately negative attention of the media, politicians and state managers’ (2008, p. 1). These descriptions permit the application of definitions of ‘*lawless zones*’ and ‘*problem estates*’ (ibid) that need to be rectified through policies such as those of the UVG. The outcomes of such, as demonstrated within BV, illustrate many of the basic elements of Reckless’ Containment Theory (Reckless, Dinitz and Kay, 1957; Reckless and Dinitz, 1967), which attest that the dwellers of such *problem estates* can be influenced by social control methods – notably design is one – that can help assist them to resist criminality and deviant behaviour. Such containments, including emphasis on family and friend support systems and increased economic opportunities, are thought to

¹³⁴ This estate, completed in 2004, was between the Royal Docks and the River Thames and was a development undertaken by George Wimpey plc¹³⁴ that replaced a 1960s estate resplendent with two tower blocks - Barnwood Court - with an ‘urban village’. Containing mixed tenure housing, a primary school, a parade of shops, a community hall and an outdoor communal space – a village green. The location was rebranded, with addresses changing it from ‘West Silvertown’ to ‘Britannia Village’, which exemplified the socio-economic modification exemplified by the transformed physical landscape.

¹³⁵ In 1989 The Prince of Wales introduced the phrase ‘urban village’ in his *A Vision for Britain* publication where he outlined his hope for the development of urban villages in order to re-introduce vibrant street life (HRH The Prince of Wales, 1989, p.4). The pursuit of this ambition led to the formation of the Urban Villages Group (UVG) whose members aimed to distil the principles of humane urban environments (Thompson-Fawcett, 1996) and make recommendations as to how these principles could be applied in new developments (Franklin and Tait, 2002, p.257).

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help insulate those likely of becoming involved in deviant behaviour from such by instilling a sense of place ownership, hope and optimism. Thus BV, built on former docklands brown-fill site, sandwiched between the Royal Docks and the River Thames, was intended to help alleviate deviance and deprivation in the south of Newham through various notions of regeneration, which has significant resonance with Olympic-related regeneration circa 2012.

7.7 – Britannia Village

An urban village has very specific characteristics that include positing 3-5,000 residents into a well-defined urban space (Aldous, 1992; 1995). Such villages aim to include a mix of housing tenures, ages, social groups through something termed ‘social balancing’ or ‘mix’ which basically rests on the belief that there is an ideal composition of social and income groups which, when achieved, produces optimum individual and community well being (Pitt, 1977, p. 16). In an attempt to address this BV comprised 63 housing blocks, which translated to 650 flats. In addition there were 201 houses and numerous private parking bays.¹³⁶ A solitary road – Wesley Avenue – runs horizontally through the village segregating the private and social housing sectors within. This road created a literal and symbolic divide that was evident from the first research visit to this estate. Occupying BV’s centre was a Community Centre that provided facilities for the both sides of the local population (private and socially housed). These facilities included playgroups, after school clubs and a meeting hall, which formed a community hub within

¹³⁶ For more details see Treyaskis consulting tender document (2006). A copy of this document is available at: <http://www.bvra.org.uk/documents/ITTV5.pdf>

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which it was possible to mix with residents from the entire village. Consequently, this formed a base for ethnographic research.

The aim of the BV regeneration was to entice a new populace to Newham by offering them residence within a gated urban village conveniently located close to the City but without a City price tag. Arguably BV was the embodiment of regeneration programmes that target mobile, high income, professional groups or the ‘creative classes’ (Florida, 2005). These ‘creative classes’ require high-quality secure environments free from threat of intrusion and violent crime (Raco, 2007, p. 41). However, the social mixing policy implemented within BV promised to prove problematic if one considered such research as that conducted by Robson and Butler (2004) who demonstrated that gentrified London spaces that made inequality manifest resulted in greater incidences of crime, particularly that of robbery and burglary. Accordingly, as will now be explored, BV’s social mixing did little to separate the stigma of the ‘*lawless problem estate*’ from the socially housed tenants that occupied the hinterlands surrounding the highly securitised, gated private enclaves. This led to an uneasy *détente* between the two BV communities that was saturated with the perception of criminality and occasionally broken by instances of criminality. This uneasy negotiation of place ownership and identity that ensued between BV’s two distinct groups evoked a novel bipartite regime of socio-spatial relegation and exclusionary closure (in the Weberian sense of the term¹³⁷).

Interestingly, this area was not marketed to the newly arrived private tenants as ‘Newham’; rather it – ostensibly – formed part of something called the ‘Royal Docks’.

¹³⁷ By closure, Weber (1968, pp. 32-33) designated a set of processes whereby a specific collective restricts ‘access to the opportunities (social or economic) that exist in a given domain’: Its members ‘draw on certain characteristics of their real or virtual adversaries to try and exclude them from competition. These characteristics may be race, language, confession, place of origin or social background, descent, place of domicile, etc’. See Wacquant (2008) for more information.

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This urban location offered a compelling illustration of what can be referred to as a splintering post-metropolitan landscape, which, according to Soja, is one filled with protected and fortified spaces. BV's islands of enclosure anticipated protection against the real and imagined dangers of daily life on the estate. Soja, borrowing from Foucault, asserted that postmetropolis was represented as a collection of carceral cities, an archipelago of 'normalised enclosures' and fortified spaces that both voluntarily and involuntarily barricaded individuals and communities into visible and not-so-visible urban islands. BV's private residences could be considered amongst such islands, which were overseen by restructured forms of public and private power and authority (Soja, 2000, p. 299).

The nature of BV's 'urban-village' restructuring of public / private power and authority within such diversity required a move away from traditional categorisations of race, ethnicity and class to analyse (*inter alia* Whyte, 1943; Liebow, 1967; Anderson, 1999; Duneier, 1999) and towards an adaption of what Nutall (2009) conceptualised as a formative and informative exploration of the entanglement of history, people and place¹³⁸ (Hall, 2012) within this particular milieu. The reality of life on the estate indicated that BV was divided. What follows is a brief exploration of such division, which may provide insight into the likely sociological outcomes for parts of post-Olympic *Stratfordland*, particularly the soon to be converted Athlete's Village in the Olympic Park.

¹³⁸ Sarah Nutall (2009) conceptualised that the complex interplays of an individuals past and present or the formative and informative entanglements of history, people and place shaped contemporary urban margins. This resonates with Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* as explored earlier.

7.8 – Social Control in the Urban Village

This section considers the outcomes of the application of the premise that to reclaim valuable inner city real estate there is the necessity to first *civilise* the urban context (see Atkinson and Helms, 2007). This conflict was magnified exponentially through the implementation of social mixing into the confined geography of BV. The particularities of the locale forced two demographic dichotomies to exist within a confined area, within which re-negotiation of place was to occur between the socially and privately housed groups. This assumption advocated simplistic solutions to highly complex sociological issues, such as the neo-liberal assumption that the introduction of greater securitisation and wealth would remedy crime and deprivation through trickle-down economic principles (Harvey, 2005). However as we shall see a change in landscape does not necessarily indicate wider sociological change. The narrative that urban regeneration is a viable remedy for the underlying causes of urban decay resulted in a complex re-negotiation of place between the communities that occupied the post-regeneration BV landscape. This included those from both sides of the class divide, who were implicated in these reclamation policies either through choice or circumstance. This estate reflected the argument that regeneration directed at creating ‘sustainable communities’ was underpinned by safety and security concerns (Raco, 2003).

In this urban location, these policies legitimised and privileged the private residents. They also supported the assumption that the re-emergence of urban decay is best symbolised by crime and perceptions of ‘criminality’ that can threaten the philosophy of post-regeneration life and the perception of safety therein. Consequently,

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the private residents became fixated upon securing their homes from the ‘criminal’ other. The outcomes of which created what Sibley defines as geographies of exclusion (1995), delineated through the use of demonizing rhetoric directed at those assumed to be likely perpetrators of decay, specifically the urban poor. The findings herein resonate with wider processes where residents of deprived neighbourhoods become vilified as undeserving lazy minorities who have been given too much public assistance (Omi and Winant 1994). Furthermore, the highly valuable space they inhabit becomes characterised as misused and abused (Smith 1996) which then needs to be reclaimed.

From the very first research visit, right up until the last, it was readily apparent that BV was saturated by the bipartite fear of the conceptual *other*. The initial guarded discourse that predicated all ethnography could be clearly catalogued as an attempt to manage, legitimise and rationalise fear to the outsider. For the private residents it was a generic fear of disorder, but specifically, it was the fear of those that were deemed the producers of disorder. These producers were the, predominantly black, local youths that occupied the streets of the estate.¹³⁹ It appeared even within the diversity of 21st Century Newham ‘the sight of a young black man evokes an image of someone dangerous, destructive, or deviant’ (Monroe and Goldman, 1988, p. 27). For those that comprised the social housing, discourse was also permeated with fear. For these residents it was generically the fear of vilification, but specifically, it was the fear of those that were deemed to be the perpetrators of this demonization. These perpetrators were the, predominantly white, city workers. The pathology of fear within everyday BV life could

¹³⁹ ‘In the end, what is it that people reproach youths for? That they occupy the squares, that they sit on the benches or the steps in front of stores . . . that they stay there talking, laughing, making a racket’. Youths, on the other hand, perceive ‘the street as a mere place of well-being, a neutral ground upon which they can put their mark’ (Calogirou, 1989, p. 36-37; Bourdieu, 1991, p.12; Wacquant, 2008, p.189).

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be attributed to socio-political changes that resulted in a polarisation of the BV class structure. This had produced a dichotomy of the social and physical structure of the estate. One of the outcomes of social marginality, which was prevalent amongst the socially housed residents is, according to Wacquant a heightened stigmatisation in both everyday life and everyday discourse that is related to degradation of place and class (2008, p. 25).

The aforementioned notion of *habitus* governed perceptions of urban decay and, indeed, perceptions of the social role of everyday life in BV, be that of fully functioning citizen or vilified product of and / or producer of decay. In BV, where two vastly different social groups with vastly different *habitus* were forced to live alongside each other in one small location, conflict was inevitable. As a result, the two communities segregated accordingly and this action linked the fears of the *other* to the fear of conflict. These identity categorisations ensured segregation and concomitant segregating, differentiating actions that played out in the quotidian context of daily life in BV.

A good example of how fear facilitated segregation is the topic of security, which was evident even from the most cursory walk around the estate. The private residences therein boasted a plethora of security and surveillance devices, including private security, security cameras and security gates. These examples indicated that these residents perceived it absolutely necessary to protect themselves from the *other*. This actuality conspired to generate fear and distrust between these two communities, which paradoxically increased the likelihood of inter-community conflict. Furthermore, as a result of social mixing, perceptions of crime and deprivation became more pertinent to one demographic than the other.

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The private residents were not only concerned about the fear of crime but also the perception of the fear of crime itself. In this regard they were concerned about the effect these perceptions had upon their wider social status, not to mention the impact upon property prices. Consequently, although fear of conflict and crime are legitimate in their own right, they are both also linked to the larger schema of anxiety, which is perceived in relation to *habitus*. This can arguably be considered a core component of the post-modern condition where social significance is evaluated through the prism of social class. These perceptions are related to the symbolic nature of anxiety, but not necessarily to the specific *loci* of such anxiety, which then permeates everyday life through *habitus*.

The contestation of ownership of BV was an on-going narrative that extended far beyond this research. This quest for dominance encompassed many levels including the political, the economic and the social. The socially housed tended to be longer-term residents that used community facilities, such as the community centre, most frequently. The private residents tended to be a more transient community, reluctant to engage as a result of the predominantly temporary nature of their residency, all of which had significant consequences for the estate. As the manager of the community centre, whose role it was to provide a space that was available for the use of both community groups, emphasised:

The people that live in the private residences tend to not want to get involved in the community because they don't stay in the community for very long. They are here for maybe 6 months, or a year and the bank, or whoever it is they work for pays their rent. There is no community 'involvement' or 'ownership'. Once, they have finished their

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contracts they move away. Those that own their homes stay a bit longer but ultimately move away when they have kids.

(Fieldwork notes, Community Centre Manager, May 2012)

The above quote intimates that the private residents were not inclined to engage with the socially housed residents and were not likely to consider socially mixed locations viable, long-term homely places. However, this perception and definition of ‘reluctance’ speaks to more than a lack of will of the private residents to become ingratiated into the community dynamics; it raises questions regarding the applicability of the definition of what actually constitutes community ‘involvement’ and ‘ownership’ between these two contrasting demographics. Wallman’s (1984) study *Eight London Households* explored how individuals from different demographics, ethnicities and classes depended upon social networks to get by in everyday life. Wallman attributed these networks as organisations of ‘time, information and identity’ (1984, p. 29). The notion that time is crucial to the creation of community resonates across much identity related schema including that of Gary Armstrong’s football hooligans where the most essential component to being such was having enough ‘free time’ to participate (1998, p. 169). In this regard, it seems feasible that the differentiation between the time demands of the privately housed, young, child-free professional would be vastly different to those of the socially housed single-parent families that exist within BV. A prime example of this dichotomy was a Friday morning breakfast club that was held at the community centre between the hours of 9am and 12pm was intended to provide community integration but was only readily accessible to the unemployed or temporary workers of the estate.

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Consequently, this bears testament to the fact that there were a plethora of barriers to social cohesion within such estates that social mixing alone appeared unable to overcome.

That is not to say that the private residents did not have an apparent preoccupation with place dominance. They appeared to share a specific set of expectations of order that they expected to be implemented during their occupation of the estate, however transient, which they implemented through a variety of security related measures. This contributed to conceptualisations and expectations of order and identity that were felt on both sides of the divide. The underlying logic of this belief was succinctly delineated by Beck as the belief that ‘we’ must secure our centrality and ‘they’, those that disrupt our homely place, must be pushed out from the centre. Difference is an attribute of ‘them’. They are not ‘like us’ and therefore they are threatening (1998, p. 130). This questions the entire ethos of sustainable, shared living and social mixing; it also raises troublesome issues regarding the underlying principles of Newham’s post-Olympic ‘*legacy*’. If a new demographic is sought to enhance the locale will their lives be permeated with antagonism directed towards, and received from, those already there? The significance of this, and the following example, should not be lost on those tasked with filling the post-Olympic Athlete’s Village and the 40,000 other housing units planned on the Olympic Park.

7.9 – Protection from the Other

A de-personalised observation of BV’s socially housed would provide much confirmation of stereotypes that were used as signifiers of urban decay. This made them markedly different to those in the private residences. This community was ethnically and

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culturally diverse and had a large proportion of single mothers, some working, most not. Drug use and alcoholism were common, as were accounts of spousal (male-on-female) domestic abuse. Large extended families were frequent (one youth commented that he {literally} had 80 brothers and sisters, although this included those from other mothers that his father had children with). Education levels were low and unemployment high. Crime levels were comparatively high and groups of youths were a common sight on the streets of the estate in the evenings. These were signifiers of fear for those that lived in the private houses and this reality threatened their perceptions of correct *doxa*. Bourdieu argued that ‘one cannot grasp the most profound logic of the social world unless one becomes immersed in the specificity of an empirical reality’ (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 271) and BV’s residents had no intention of becoming immersed in an alternative reality of BV life.

Whilst ‘post-industrial cities have a growing interest in marketing themselves as being built on a foundation of “inclusive” neighbourhoods capable of harmoniously supporting a blend of incomes, cultures, age-groups and lifestyles’ (Rose, 2004, p. 281), this was far from the intended outcomes of social mixing policies that were intended to facilitate integration. The interplay that follows represents exchanges between private residents that in response to crime automatically associate the cause to the *other* without any recognition of the complex and dynamics of the ‘working classes’ that some so abominated. They then demand ever-greater *protection* from the *criminally inclined* socially housed populace that they must walk through to get from the train station to the safety of their water-fronted occupational pockets of affluence. This fear was embodied in the habitually unbridled gesticulation of multi-layered securitisation rituals that are,

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according to Wacquant, employed as much for their symbolic qualities as their practical usefulness (Wacquant, 2009, pp. xi-xii).

This was best exemplified in BV by private security measures such as CCTV cameras and gated enclaves. The realities in this location were somewhat contrary to the social idealism that underpinned social mixing. The private housing was predominantly comprised of gated compounds or privately secured blocks of flats, which within the small confines of the estate amplified the sense of segregation. Interestingly, these measures not only kept the *other* out, but they also worked to keep the known in. In every-regard, including design composition, this policy seemed intent upon amplifying isolation and muted segregation. It seems ironic that in a globalised age and in relation to a policy intent upon increasing social interaction and breaking down social divides that the actual outcome of this policy appears, in fact, to produce an ever-greater retreat from collective life and ever-increasing polarisation.

The discourse of fear and segregation permeated the social reality of everyday life on the estate and the social roles therein. Instances such as opportunistic robberies, commonly for easily spotted items such as mobile phones and laptops, proved problematic in terms of reaction because of the conflicting *habitus* of both communities. After such instances the private residents automatically blamed specific members of the socially housed community, but were often unable to challenge this behaviour publically so they became ever more reclusive within the safety of their gated colonies. The main route of fear being the path leading to and from the DLR that cut through the heart of the estate. This was the reality of life that was grounded in fear; a fear mediated by the perceptions of the value of the response to that which was feared. When feared instances

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frequently become reality in a specific location, this location then becomes a symbolic representation of physical and moral decay of social disorder, as well as a place to avoid. However, when this place is where one lives and the location is unavoidable if one is to get to work, this becomes increasingly complex. As a result, instances of disorder were generally followed by policy consequences, such as police sweeps and increases in numbers of private security guards or surveillance cameras, which further segregated these socially mixed communities.

Robert Park argued that the fundamental cause of prejudice around people was the insecurity of relations with *strangers* (1967); we fear the *other* simply because they are unknown. This perception was validated in BV during this research, from both sides of the social divide. The language used by the private residents to catalogue criminality (exemplified below) was saturated with the type of highly emotive vernacular that exemplified the vilification of the *other* and the belief that security was the only way to keep safe from such an *unknown* and *unknowable* threat (Wilkins, 1991; Stenson, 2001). This perception was perhaps best exemplified by the following exchange taken from the community on-line forum of the estate that was used, almost exclusively, by the private residents:

Just passing through BV and there has been another mugging. Was walking along Wesley Road opposite Royal Docks Estate agent and heard some screaming. Initial thought was 'its kids' but stopped to see if I could work out where it was coming from. A young woman ahead of me turned and walked back to me and I asked her is {sic} she too had heard screaming. She said she had, and that she was the woman who was mugged

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three weeks ago. We had a look around and walked back towards the surgery. At the front of the surgery, we found a young woman (being comforted by another older woman) who had been mugged by two black guys. They grabbed her from behind and made off with her handbag – purse, cards, the lot. They apparently ran back down towards the green, turning left behind the surgery. She called the police who, when I left, were on their way. I went to find the OMNI security guards {private security hired by private residents} but could not find them – just their empty vehicles parked up on the dockside by Eastern Quay. Wandered around a few streets and along the dock, but could not find them (the vans are usually parked there, empty!). Obviously they cannot be everywhere at the same time, but they never seem to be in the right place... which seems to be the area around the surgery and village hall. I really hope the young woman is OK and she gets her property back. Not nice for anything like this to happen to anyone.

(Mark, Community forum, May 2011)

The above intimated the prevailing expectation of crime on the ‘route of fear’ that linked the private residences to the DLR station. This path cut straight through the heart of the estate and, as such, made the private residents insecure and feel like they needed protection from the socially housed residents, represented above by the black muggers. The public space that cut through both communities could be considered a ‘*micro-public*’ space (Amin, 2002); that is a social space within which individuals regularly come into contact. Amin argued that such spaces were more than spaces of encounter, commenting that they were spaces of participation that required a level of investment to sustain membership. In this regard this BV ‘*micro-public*’ space was highly contested because, in

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accordance with Amin's definition, both communities were invested and used this communal land for their own means, either as a space to gather or as a route to work, and both sought ownership of this public space. Therefore this space that was inescapably central to BV life extended past simple conceptualisations of geography and was a symbolically and literally confrontational space that presented inescapable potential for literal and figurative confrontation between members of both communities. The response by a private resident to the above posting was validating of this perception and vilifying of the socially housed *other* in equal measure:

Gosh, aren't we sitting ducks around here? Given the recession, it does not surprise me that these incidents are becoming more frequent. Mark quite rightly said that the OMNI guys cannot be everywhere at the same time but the fact that there has now been a number of muggings in the past month strongly indicates that OMNI is not doing their job properly. They need to increase their numbers (my ex-flatmate saw these guys being attacked back in April which proves that they lack manpower or are not an effective deterrent) and that their strategy of keeping the area safe is clearly not {sic} working. There needs to be an urgent review of the situation. We are sitting ducks....

(Tom, Community forum, May 2011)

Travelling from secured private enclaves to the DLR station required a journey through the heart of the socially housed. This journey involved both actual and perceptual travel, for the private residents it ensured a crossing of the boundaries from the familiar and safe to the unfamiliar and dangerous. The above response was indicative of the

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perceptions of danger, the respondent posited blame for the lack of safety of the private residents squarely upon the failure of the private security measures to protect them from the dangerous *other*. In this regard these instances of criminality were perceived by the private tenants as pathologies of the lower classes and signifiers of societal breakdown of law and order (Banfield, 1970). The intimation thus was that to increase safety in this ‘urban village’ greater securitisation to protect the vulnerable ‘sitting ducks’ of the private residents was required. This perception was further enforced by another private resident’s statement:

Wasn't there a member of the Royal Docks Neighbourhood Police Team that used to post on here – wonder what happened to him? Once again, I wonder if the CCTV on the green caught the thieving gits at all – I'm starting to question whether it even works.

(Waseem, Community forum, May 2011)

The above interchange demonstrated that on a day-to-day basis affluent groups sought protection via the private market in security (Hope, 1999, 2001). This was indicative of a shortfall in the capacity of the private residents inability to cope with the demands of 21st Century Newham life, which according to Hall is ‘the capacity to live with difference’ (1993, p. 361). As such what the private residents appear to be seeking is a return to the traditional conceptualisations of explicit categorisations of race, ethnicity and class divides such as those exemplified by many ethnographers (Whyte, 1943; Liebow, 1967; Anderson, 1999; Duneier, 1999). The differentiation between these private and socially housed communities in terms of the diverse social demographic dynamics of

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the estate were readily apparent, as was indicated by the manager of the BV community centre:

The private residents want to control everything. They want to enforce from afar, they won't engage with the community. We try to put on events to bring them in, to include them, such as a Friday food market and religious meetings, but they do not engage. They just walk through the estate, in groups of two or more as they are advised to do, and quickly get to their homes. They are mostly bankers from the City and use the area as a bolt hole for work, often only five days a week. They have no interest in community engagement. They are temporary residents, for work purposes only, many young people and couples and once they have families, generally, they move away. They see the kids and the community centre as a problem for the area and we try to get them to come down and engage with us but they have no interest. We are also suffering because of their political views, we are considered outside the immediate concerns of the Labour council because the private residents are rich and so vote Conservative. That makes things even more difficult for us to implement things to help the young people of the estate.

(Fieldwork notes, July 2012)

The private residents with their notions of place ownership had, in this instance, formed pockets of intolerance and prejudice who were intrinsically exclusive in views and inward-looking in their perspective of how life should be lived within the estate (Johnstone, 2004; Herbert, 2005). Their solution to the intrinsic issues of BV appeared

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limited to increasing security measures, which when combined with ever-increasing intolerance of the socially housed *other* gave rise to ‘revanchist’ measures of controlling the public urban space that link the two communities (Smith, 1996, 1998). Many of the socially housed populace suspected that they were considered, by policy makers, politicians, police and private residents alike, objects to be moved and removed dependent upon their ability to conform to the expectations and behavioural norms determined by the privately housed. As Haylett (2001, 2003) argued working-class communities are perceived as problematic in this regard by politicians and policy makers. To posit BV into the wider context visions of urban renaissance ‘normality’ is commonly inferred as emphatically middle class in relation to norms and values (Lees, 2003; Jones and Wilks-Heeg, 2004; Mooney, 2004). This contributed towards the experiential reality on BV that exemplified a *dualization of the social and physical structure* of the estate, which consigned those socially housed to economic redundancy and social marginality (Sassen, 1991; Mollenkopf and Castells, 1991; Fainstein, Gordon and Harloe, 1992; Wacquant, 2008) and were stigmatised accordingly by those privately housed.

In this regard it seems cogent to suggest that although place identity is imagined, it is an imaginary that is embodied in quotidian context of everyday life and perceived through the prism of class. This identity was formed, negotiated and renegotiated in the houses, streets, communal spaces and indeed cyber-space of BV. It was clear that within this shared location and the daily interactions between the communities therein identity was enforced, reinforced, challenged and contested on a daily basis. The clear quest that both of these communities were on was one that aimed to fulfil the fundamental human need for belonging, which in this location, appeared mutually exclusive. With this crucial

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background attention now moves away from BV.

The demographics of this borough and the realities of life indicated herein emphasise the applicability of a Gramscian critique of 2012 Olympic delivery. This consideration rests upon the prior delineation of a context where class politics and conflict appear to play a pivotal role in the Olympic-delivery milieu. The following chapter provides the theoretical underpinning that is utilised herein to evaluate life in Newham during Olympic-delivery. This underpinning enables the creation of an account of Newham life during Olympic-delivery by merging the findings taken from the three research locales discussed in this chapter.

Section C:

Life in the Shadow of the Olympics: Ethnography Unmasked

Section C aims to bring 2012 Olympic-delivery reality to life via the ethnographic method. In doing so the following chapters concentrate upon the twin concepts of *opportunity* and *exclusion*. The findings are presented within the following four thematic Chapters:

8. Life in the Shadow of the Olympic Torch
9. Employment and Capital Gains
10. Exclusion and Securitisation: The Olympic Lockdown?
11. Big Game Hunting: Baiting the Hooks

These chapters contrast the rhetoric of the previous sections to the reality of ethnographic accounts of Olympic-delivery life. This section explores how social structures and *habitus* evolved in the local contexts throughout this highly transitional time. A discursive narrative ensues that indicates what life in the shadow of the Olympic torch involved for some. Initially, the definition of the '*local community*' under scrutiny is delineated. This is followed by an exploration of applicability, or lack thereof, of traditional concepts of '*pre-Olympic identity*' in this location. In what follows we see street gangs of black youths originally from some 20 countries and Albanian domestic cleaners fight for a variety of opportunities against well-heeled Anglo-Saxons and Oxbridge scholars. Freedom and rights clash with security and restriction. Market traders compete with high-end retail outlets, low-end bookies with high-end casinos, chicken

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shops with expensive restaurants. In this transitory time and in this transitory place everything was up for Olympic-related negotiation. The Olympic re-articulation of identity in these locales began its journey along the same inclusive lines as indicated above, but for many it descended into apathy, ambivalence, segregation, securitisation and prohibition of access before finally coming full circle to rejoining the pro-Olympic ranks as Games time emerged.

Chapter 8. LIFE IN THE SHADOW OF THE OLYMPIC TORCH

It is what lies behind and in between actions . . . that is important.

(Murdoch, 1970, p. 67)

This chapter explores the futility of some community member's quest for Olympic benefits. It also explores the power relations that unfurled throughout Olympic delivery by analysing the interplay between Olympic deliverers and those that constitute the '*local community*'. The analysis returns to the TELCO movement and their pursuit of an '*ethical Olympics*' and this enables contrasts to be drawn between the local experiential reality of Olympic-delivery and the non-experiential rhetoric of the same period.

8.1 – An Ethical Olympics?

Olympic '*legacy*' had been the buzzword of the 2012 Games and some local communities felt strongly that the much-anticipated Olympic-delivery benefits would not help local communities. These groups attempted to raise community concerns by creating a dialogue between themselves and the Olympic deliverers, this process sought to challenge the hegemony of Olympic-delivery aiming to make the process more accountable to the public. The complex interplay involved in these processes are explored in the following case study that returns to the '*Ethical Olympic*' charter discussed previously (pp. 87-88).

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After the success of the bid TELCO's priority was to solidify the '*Ethical Olympic*' charter with the relevant parties, notably the Mayoral Office, the LDA responsible for upholding the Mayoral pledges, and the newly formed Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA¹⁴⁰). Theoretically, local government should be accountable for everything occurring within its designated boundaries, yet the pressure to see the 2012 Olympics up and running necessitated the transfer of control to the ODA, which was accountable only to central government. This ensured that the ODA had relative freedom from local authority planning controls and regulations. Meanwhile, whilst the LDA maintained a rapport with TELCO concerning the '*Ethical Olympic*' charter, the 'living wage' and proposed construction of academies now fell outside the LDA mandate, making it imperative that a dialogue between TELCO and the ODA be established.

However, the ODA would not meet with TELCO and refused even to acknowledge them. As the ODA had not been in existence when the agreement was signed, they claimed that TELCO's '*Ethical Olympics*' was not their concern. Consequently, in an attempt to achieve ODA recognition TELCO organised collective action and picketed the hotels providing the high-powered breakfast meetings favoured by David Higgins (the ODA Chief Executive). This nuisance tactic attracted some media attention for TELCO, which included local and national print media and eventually led to an on-going series of meetings with Higgins.

¹⁴⁰ The ODA was the public body responsible for developing and building the London 2012 Olympic venues and infrastructure. For more information see: <http://www.london2012.com/about-us/the-people-delivering-the-games/oda/>

8.2 – Community Consultation: The Discursive Battlefield

These confrontations provided TELCO with the chance to question the ODA on behalf of the community through negotiation, this inclusion was given a value because of the investment required to get a seat at the table. In this context some TELCO members became concerned that should they dispute matters too strongly, they might jeopardise a relationship they have worked hard to forge and feared having to start again from scratch. When the meetings occurred the consultation meetings formed a symbolic battlefield wherein language and its mastery was the weapon of choice. The impact of language and organised discourse, like other weapons, are dependent upon the skills and experience of those that wield them; in this regard the Olympic delivers were in possession of machine guns and the community peashooters, as the following ethnographic excerpt illustrates:

After a short walk from the underground station the researcher arrived at the TELCO offices to meet the team that were ready to finally hold the ODA to account regarding the lack of Olympic-delivery opportunities for local people. The researcher was representing Aston Mansfield and was eagerly anticipating the other democratically chosen TELCO representatives that were my equivalents from various other community groups. The small ensemble cast the researcher met was drawn from a pool of members that were available on this 1pm meeting held on a Tuesday afternoon in London's Docklands.

As is TELCO custom the team personified diversity and this was arguably their primary strength. This band of brothers {and sisters} about to march off into discursive

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battle included school children, religious leaders, teachers, retirees, housewives, students and two full-time members of the TELCO team. As they spoke, the researcher began to get a sinking feeling. Although diversity and inclusion was commendable and fully in accord with the spirit of TELCO's democracy, the researcher couldn't help but worry about the varying levels of discursive competence of this group as they marched towards the underground station. Thus commenced their journey towards the luxurious ODA conference rooms located at the top of one of the shiny Canary Wharf skyscrapers.

The researcher was still unsure of exactly what our objectives of this meeting were to be but, reassuringly, they were to stop for coffee and a strategy discussion before they entered the scheduled meeting. The researcher hoped that one of these bright young things would provide him with an outline of an amazing scheme outlining what they wanted to discover, exactly how they would discover it and what they wanted the ODA to do next. As they sat in a café over cups of tea and coffee the excitement was palpable. They would get answers to the questions of why local people weren't getting jobs on the construction sites, they were the ones that would find out how the ODA were enforcing the London living wage and they would be the ones to get them to commit to a series of meetings in the near future where they would update us on their progress.

Caffeinated and confident they arrived, striding across the marbled floor. After being searched by security they were directed to some leather sofas to wait. They sat and waited; the ticking of the expensive clock on the wall was matched by the footsteps of the unending hordes of suits that eyed them suspiciously as if they were something altogether foreign. Half an hour ticked by, confidence was eroding, agitation and nervousness was kicking in and the caffeine had, for most, been passed into the bathrooms by the point

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they were eventually collected and taken to the top floor in the well polished, mirrored lifts that only operated with a confident swipe of an ID card.

David Higgins and his PA led them into the conference room, apologising for the wait, and proceeded to spend the next ten minutes exchanging platitudes and outlining the fantastic progress made so far on the Olympic site. Then, after 15 minutes of foreplay the moment had finally arrived, their opportunity to ask their questions had arrived, this was their chance to really put the ODA on the spot and get their much-valued answers. It started promisingly, Higgins made rapid notes in his leather bound book, optimistic glances were exchanged until it became clear that the two religious leaders on the team were not singing from the same hymn sheet, and disagreed on the level of importance of the two crucial points of the meeting – namely, wages and hiring local people and began interrupting each other.

The ODA resolutely maintained that 95 per cent of the Olympic work-force was earning over and above the average wage and that guidelines were in place to hire local residents – to the extent of requiring proof of residence from those seeking work on the Olympic site. This was challenged by the point that, because tenure of residency was not stipulated, those described as ‘local residents’ might only have been living in the area for 24 hours before being offered employment and, therefore, the guidance must surely only be a means of placating rather than actually improving the employment prospects for local people. No immediate answer was forthcoming from the ODA, silence momentarily prevailed, until one of the religious leader took her opportunity to break the silence and changed the course of the conversation to her own personal agenda, thus leaving the issue unresolved other than Higgins stating somewhat relieved; ‘we can only do so

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much'.

After this the meeting petered out and every member of the TELCO team were presented with glossy ODA packs that illustrated Olympic progress. Promises were made to look into the points raised and the results of which would be emailed in due course. Once diaries had been checked a follow up meeting would be arranged at some point in the future. With that all were back in the lift. The sinking feeling in the stomachs of the group may well have been the result of plummeting towards earth in the light speed lift or the inescapable feeling that they had just been run rings round by the ODA and achieved little. The researcher would witness this feeling become commonplace throughout Olympic-delivery, most evidently during community consultations with the Olympic deliverers.

(Fieldwork notes, June 2008)

Participation in the field of consultation where community groups attempted to challenge the hegemonic order of Olympic-delivery was only possible if the participants had the resources, the time and the abilities to attain access to dialogue in the first instance. Once access had been negotiated the community groups were far less likely than the Olympic deliverers to possess the sort of social capital necessary for achieving the desired outcomes. Anyone aspiring to participate in this type of political field needed the right type of social capital, the right contacts, the requisite amount of cultural capital and a feel for the game of political discourse to succeed. This necessity for social and cultural capital generally ensured that those that controlled the balance of the two during

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community consultation were sitting at the negotiating table on the side of the Olympic deliverers.

8.3 – Community Representative Recruitment

It is relatively straightforward to differentiate between the strengths of the Olympic deliverers and the apparent weaknesses of the local communities in relation to the contestations that took place during Olympic-delivery. To enable a true consideration of the value and validity of the local communities' attempts to challenge the perceived disparity of this period, a brief consideration of how these groups were formed is needed. To motivate communities to become active, it is important, as Brown argues, for community organisers to deliver the message that they are 'not in the business to serve you. It is your group. You, the members, are responsible' (Brown, 2007, p. 213). This philosophy is vital to enforce a sense of collective ownership, and the control and installation of a sense of personal responsibility for the group's advancement.

TELCO promoted this by awarding group members the chance to be integrated into all aspects of the movement. However, as Kleidman and Rochon (1997) demonstrate, difficulties often arise in such situations, for the balance between presenting a professional structure whilst still remaining inclusive to all (and incorporating well-intentioned but less able volunteers) can be problematic. This difficulty became pertinent in another of TELCO's Olympic-related meetings:

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The researcher gradually found that the TELCO representatives often had little or no negotiating experience. Many were often unable to comprehend the nuances of the wider political debate—something that those they met with (such as Labour Whip and GLA member John Biggs) were masters at. After one meeting in July 2008 on TELCO ‘home turf’ (their Whitechapel HQ), Biggs commented after the meeting that he had been shocked at the ‘easy ride’ he’d been given; he had expected that a group of Londoners intent on social change would be more fervent or aggressive in their contest. Yet, at the post-meeting TELCO discussion involving all of the members present in the meeting, the debate concentrated on its ‘good points’, ignoring the fact that members had failed to gain the additional information that Biggs had hinted during his parting comments that he was willing to divulge.

(Fieldwork notes, July 2008)

TELCO were typical of most of the community groups interacted with during this research of Olympic-delivery in that they were typically represented by individuals that lacked experience in political discussion, debate and nuance, did not have the contacts or the resources to compete and did not have the research available to challenge the dominant narratives discussed. Consequently, the field of community consultation was dominated by the perpetual interplay between the powerful and the powerless, whereby the ‘community’ were dominated because of their lack of the right sort of capital to compete in these games. In this regard, the Olympic deliverers controlled the facts, the official discourse and the legitimate language.

8.4 – Symbolic Power

TELCO's Olympic-delivery interplay was very anti-climatic and did little to achieve their initial goals, which led to a differentiation of interpretation as to the success of the endeavour. Srinivasa (2006, p. 30) highlights how, in the information flow of any system, information can become distorted and this generates various alternative versions of an event to be ascertained. This provides one theoretical explanation as to how TELCO members formulated different interpretations from the same meetings and formed divergent agendas for future progression.

Additionally, the organised protest demonstrations that provided TELCO with the opportunity for dialogue with the Olympic deliverers and discussion were considered a victory for this community organisation. This ensured a value was placed upon achieving a seat at the negotiating table from the outset. That said, the ODA pursued a strategy of carefully delimiting community dialogue and community inclusion, which created a sense of value for those occupying seats at the discussion table. This was translated into the sense that these selected groups, in this case TELCO, were special and facilitated a sense of gratitude from those permitted inclusion. For example:

. . . after the ODA meeting with Higgins, segments of TELCO considered the necessity for more social action—namely, public protest; others, however, favoured further committee-room discourse. Many of the TELCO members were not able critically to challenge the distorted information they were offered from the ODA, which further emphasised the necessity for better pre-planning, reflective group meetings and good

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leadership. Matthew Bolton, one of two full-time Community Organisers employed by TELCO for over five years, defended TELCO by arguing that anyone selected to speak at a meeting was already an expert in their field, by virtue of their experience, and that TELCO included many who knew a lot about a little, an attitude he felt stands up well to those who know a little about a lot. Furthermore, he argued that all members were as well briefed as possible prior to every meeting and that, at the culmination of every meeting, a period of reflective learning takes place and these learning experiences are then, ideally, taken back to their individual groups. This, he contended, increased the individual and collective skill-sets and subsequently strengthens TELCO.

(Fieldwork notes, July 2008)

In this context it proved prudent for the ODA to present to the community groups the impression that they were an entity willing to compromise and negotiate. This kept malcontents at the negotiating table and dissuaded them from protesting on the streets. This view of the insidious nature of Olympic-delivery was exemplified by the fact that those groups who were publically challenging the authority and legitimacy of 2012 Olympic-delivery and accumulating sufficient support were rewarded with discourse. To follow Poulantzas (1973), Olympic deliverers – as hegemonic structures – had the dual function of representing the general interest of the people/nation, whilst maintaining dominance over how this ‘interest’ was defined and pursued. Olympic deliverers maintained their control and strengthened their position by conceding some pre-determined acceptable ground, thereby placating those who formed opposition with the illusion of progress while still maintaining their hegemony. In this regard Olympic

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hegemony was the dominant representations and practices of those in power who maintain the 'dominant story lines' to consolidate their standing (Agnew, 1998, p. 6). The ODA disseminated this perception by ceding a modicum of symbolic power to TELCO for the course of some future meetings between the two groups.

This proved indicative of legitimacy and progress for TELCO but had very little impact upon the course of the meetings. TELCO had cultivated a system that attempted to control the flow of information during meetings to enable them to maximise their opportunities with organisations such as the ODA who were notoriously smooth operators in the field of discourse. This was achieved by requesting at the outset of a meeting that a pre-determined TELCO member chair them. TELCO's paid Community Organisers would brief the chair on the points to be raised, the ideal duration of the debate and which people would present the issues for consideration. It was the intent that the chair would maintain progression towards a pre-determined set of objectives by ensuring progress was made on each point in a timely fashion.

As Srnivasa (2006) states, the effective use of such information crucially depends on the selective release, or indeed withholding, of information. Whilst theoretically the chairing of meetings was a sound proposal, in Olympic-delivery reality it proved flawed because arguably this stratagem is only as successful as the choice of chair. For example, at one TELCO / ODA meeting that was intended to provide additional updates regards the Ethical Olympics a 16-year-old schoolboy was selected to chair the interplay, in what followed:

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. . . during this hour-long discussion, the ODA regularly talked over the unconfident chair who looked completely out of his depth when confronted by two wily veterans of boardroom interplay. The ODA delegates never deviated from a carefully choreographed script and were clearly intent on delaying events and limiting the information that we {TELCO} required. When pushed they reverted back to their script or a stock answer of not having the information to hand to answer the questions asked, most notably this information related to construction employment figures. This might, of course, have been the case, although it could easily have been avoided with better pre-meeting planning and conversation between TELCO and the ODA. It was clear from a brief analysis of a pre-meeting that TELCO should have requested the information prior to this meeting to ensure more informative discourse. The lack of forethought and the consequent absence of the data thus prevented any real progress at the meeting.

TELCO were reassured that the data would be available later, via e-mail, from the department that had those figures to hand. Even though they came to the meeting short of the facts and figures necessary for TELCO to argue against any lack of substantial progress regarding their campaign, the ODA representatives did present another 'Site Update' leaflet, which again demonstrated the 'excellent Olympic progress' they were making.

(Fieldwork notes, July 2008)

A post-consultation TELCO meeting emphasised the symbolic power of the Olympic deliverers which, according to Bourdieu, 'can be exercised only with the complicity of those who do not want to know that they are subject to it (1991, p. 164).

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Bourdieu argues that symbolic power is similar to gravity in that although it is clearly restrictive and limiting it is not regarded as oppressive, it simply is. In the same way Bourdieu believed that individuals comply with domination not through agreement but because there is no practical alternative course of action available that is considered likely to produce a different outcome. On this topic in *Masculine Domination*¹⁴¹ he writes:

. . . by what might be called the paradox of doxa – the fact that the order of the world as we find it, with its one-way streets and its no entry signs, whether literal or figurative, its obligations and its penalties, is broadly respected; that there are not more transgressions and subversions . . . still more surprisingly, that the established order, with its relations of domination . . . ultimately perpetuates itself so easily.

(Bourdieu, 2001, p. 1)

8.5 – Strength in Numbers

As the above examples indicate, the power dichotomy between community groups and Olympic delivers proved problematic for tangible results to come from discursive interplay between the two groups. That is not to say that community groups do not wield substantive power in certain situations. However, it appeared this power was

¹⁴¹ Bourdieu's work *Masculine Domination* (2001) wherein he argued that women accepted being dominated by men, considering this interplay as a matter of course. He refers to this acceptance by using the term *doxa*, which defines the practise of accepting oppression without realising one is being oppressed.

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most effectively wielded through the use of ambush tactics. The example below indicates this:

TELCO's intermittent strength was evident at an Olympic legacy public meeting held in Newham in 2006, when members adopted what they termed, a 'pincer movement' strategy. This involved members spreading themselves around the room and barracking, from various locations, any speaker that avoided answering a question. This dispersed strategy gave the illusion that a wide and articulate audience was present, and concomitantly increased the pressure on the speaker. This tactic unsettled the Authority. A TELCO member asked Lord Coe 'who would pay the council tax for the Olympic Stadium and the new facilities after the Games finish?' Coe avoided giving a direct answer and was barracked by the dispersed members. Ultimately, he conceded to the pressure in the room and stated that the University of East London (UEL) would pay the council tax—at which point (according to TELCO members in the audience) the UEL representative 'nearly fell off her chair', insisting that such an imposition would bankrupt the institution.

(Fieldwork notes, June 2008)

In attempting to challenge the hegemonic structure of Olympic-delivery community groups, such as TELCO, were competing against the bodies backed by a national '*Olympic identity*', these major organisations with a multitude of resources and a vastly superior accumulation of capital were able to dominate the consultation outcomes and easily navigate their way past such community concerns. As Bourdieu advocates in

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such contexts the dominated groups are often not aware of their conscious complicity with the domineering discourse of such interactions.

As demonstrated the Olympic-delivery governance structures, as exemplified above by the ODA, were characterised less by democratic properties and more by their hegemonic objectives. As Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodrigues (2002, p. 34) stated such organisations are particularly skilled in giving the impression that their actions are democratic and legitimate when decisions are actually made well in advance with little or no possibility of reversal. The consequence of this philosophy is that all community consultation events, such as the TELCO / ODA interaction, were tokenistic gestures intent upon maintaining the façade of democratic process, which the community had no real possibility to influence any decisions made therein.

This on-going consultation process was a peculiar abstraction to observe, particularly in relation to intended community outcomes and motivations for participation. Fundamentally, it was readily apparent that when a position of representation and dialogue was secured and consultations occurred it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to effect change. However, as Sherry Arnstein wrote regarding such participation in the decision-making process ‘citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power’ (1969, p. 216; see also Dowding, Dunleavy, King and Margetts, 1995). As a consequence it is pertinent to explore the validity of the Olympic-delivery community inclusion and what that represents, regardless of their likelihood to affect change. To analyse TELCOs participation in Olympic-delivery discourse is to consider their power, in this regard Burns, Hambleton and Hoggett’s 12-rung ladder of citizen empowerment can be applied (1994, p. 161).

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Citizen Control

12. Independent control

11. Entrusted control

Citizen Participation

10. Delegated control

9. Partnership

8. Limited decentralised decision making

7. Effective advisory boards

6. Genuine consultation

5. High-quality information

Citizen Non-Participation

4. Customer care

3. Poor information

2. Cynical consultation

1. Civic hype

Figure 12. Burns, Hambleton and Hoggett's Ladder

The example highlighted within this section could, in accordance with Burns *et al*'s classification guide¹⁴², be classified as 'citizen non-participation' that speaks to a lack of citizen power during Olympic-delivery. The examples highlighted in this section provided an indication of the plethora of community consultation events attended during the course of this research, all pointing towards the same conclusion – that Olympic-delivery consultation events were tokenistic tick box exercises or 'cynical consultations' that delivered 'poor information'. The 'outsiders' that were permitted access were only permitted to represent a specific perspective, that of the 'community'. Furthermore, they were only authorised to discuss specific issues in relation to specific concerns. This effectively relegated the role of their representative to little more than an information giver / gatherer with little or no legitimate power. Regardless of the actualities of consultation the fact that they existed provided Olympic deliverers with the illusion of equity that they were able to trade off when challenged regarding a lack of community inclusion, which provided them with proof that the views and perspectives of dominated and marginalised groups were represented during Olympic-delivery.

One has to conclude with the suggestion that TELCO were emblematic of a larger community who became dispossessed and silenced during Olympic delivery. These assertions are indicative of Gramsci's postulation that power relations need to be sustained by more than brute force and economic domination, rather power must be constantly re-made by securing common consent (Rowe, 2004). The uneven negotiation process demonstrated by TELCOs pursuit of an 'Ethical Olympics' was evocative of the use of providing subordinate and subaltern groups with sporadic tactical 'victories' that illustrate progress but do not provide any significant challenge to hegemonic structures.

¹⁴² For a full explanation of the ladder and its categorical rings see Burns, Hambleton and Hoggett (1994).

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Unsurprisingly, TELCO drifted away from their pursuit of an ethical Olympics to focus upon other democratically selected concerns, such as their '*CitySafe*' campaign.¹⁴³ Other groups sporadically emerged in their stead pursuing entry into a consultation process for myriad other causes, as will be addressed in latter chapters. The futility of these consultations contributed to the impression that the dominated communities were unable to compete with the Olympic deliverers. TELCO were not a mass movement; neither could they claim to speak for all Newham residents, nor could it be said that all were in support of or even aware of the '*ethical Olympics*' campaign. Consequently, attention will now be placed upon contrasting this milieu to Olympic-delivery consequences for Newham residents, beginning with Olympic-related employment.

¹⁴³ See: <http://www.citizensuk.org/campaigns/citysafe-campaign/> for more information.

Chapter 9. EMPLOYMENT AND CAPITAL GAINS

This chapter provides an indication of Newham's employment realities, perceptions and possibilities and considers how these were impacted by Olympic-delivery. The practicalities and assumptions that underpinned the notion that Olympic-delivery would provide a plethora of employment opportunities for local people are explored. A consideration of Newham's ability to benefit from the Olympic employment opportunities that were created follows and an evaluation as to whether these should have ever been considered beneficial or accessible for the majority of Newham residents is provided. Ultimately, this chapter considers the impact that localised perceptions of a lack of Olympic-delivery employment opportunities for 'local people' had upon beneficial '*legacy*' narrative and overall perceptions of the 2012 Olympic Games as an entirety. Analysis begins with an overview of Newham's employment demographics.

9.1 – Newham's Olympic Employment

Statistics published in 2011 AM document¹⁴⁴ produced by the *Advance to Deliver* project¹⁴⁵ demonstrated that statistically Newham was not seeing the widespread Olympic-delivery benefits that were expected to accrue. The report indicated that in 2008/09 Newham's employment rate was the lowest in London at just 56.2%, significantly below the average London rate of 62.7%. The report commented that 'over recent years this gap widened with employment rates for women and ethnic minorities

¹⁴⁴ This document is available at: http://www.aston-mansfield.org.uk/pdf_docs/research/newham-key-statistics.PDF

¹⁴⁵ For more information see: <http://www.aston-mansfield.org.uk/a2d.php>

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being particularly low, for women 46% (compared to the London average of 62%) and ethnic minorities 49% (compared to 59% across London)'. These statistics indicated that Newham's Olympic-delivery employment boon was not narrowing the gap between themselves and other boroughs; to the contrary the gap was increasing.

This AM document demonstrated that levels of, what is referred to in political circles as, 'economic inactivity' were higher in Newham than anywhere else in the country. This categorisation of those not active in paid employment included the sick, disabled, carers, students and retirees. Of these 57,000 Newham residents less than one in five were recorded as 'wanting to work' at all. The report illustrated Newham had far more manual, poorly paid workers than anywhere else in the country and far fewer workers in management or professional occupations. The employment rates increased in both Newham and London during 2009/2010 (Newham's employment rate was 59.5%), however, this period increased the negative differentiation between Newham and the rest of London grew from 6.5% in 2008/2009 to 8.6% in 2009/2010 (the London average for this period standing at 68.1%). This picture did not correlate to the Olympic expectations. This should not have been the case. As the Borough Council explained (accessed in 2009):

The London 2012 Games represent a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for us to raise the profile of the borough, improve our transport networks and inspire people to participate in sport and healthy lifestyles. They will speed up the regeneration of Newham, East London . . . providing hundreds of jobs and business opportunities before, during and after 2012. To ensure that we take full

*advantage of this opportunity, we have set six objectives {which included the maximisation of} . . . the Games delivery process to develop a thriving economic legacy – **where all people share in the growing prosperity.***

(Newham London website, emphasis in original¹⁴⁶)

The differentiation between the much promoted employment opportunities and the statistics produced during the Olympic-delivery period indicated that employment opportunities were either not reaching local people at the expected scale or they were not in fact the employment opportunities that the local communities were promised. The fact that local people were not gaining employment actually prompted the Mayor of Newham, Sir Robin Wales to launch a scathing attack on the residents of the borough at a conference organised by the Commission for Racial Equality during a debate regarding London 2012 and its benefits for ethnic minorities. The Mayor's comments, printed in a national newspaper,¹⁴⁷ described Newham residents as follows. They:

- Were too idle to get jobs on 2012 projects.
- Struggled to get out of bed before 11 a.m.
- Were used to being unemployed.
- Had the sole aspiration in life to be given a council house.
- Were lazy and the outcome of their laziness was the hiring of Eastern Europeans to fill the employment void.

¹⁴⁶ The original explanation is available in full at: <http://www.newham.gov.uk/2012Games/AboutThe2012Games/default.htm>

¹⁴⁷ The newspaper account is available at: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-419161/Mayor-Olympic-borough-says-locals-lazy-jobs-project.html>

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Responses to the above comments reverberated around Newham's Third Sector organisations and could be surmised accordingly: That Robin Wales was dismissed as a heavy drinker and prone to outlandishly foolish comments that he would later seek to retract. Furthermore, such comments validated the commonly held belief throughout Newham's Third Sector that the Mayor 'was as much of an arsehole as we thought he was'. Whilst there were few, if any possibilities to get rid of him as a Mayor – because he was publically elected – the only possibility for removal was his standing down or defeat at an election. Somewhat perversely there was a commonly held begrudging deference to him, an incredibly astute politician who would prove very difficult to defeat on any issue. One such issue was hard-working incomers to Newham.

9.2 – Eastern People but not East-Enders

The perception that 'Eastern Europeans' were filling the Newham employment void and taking the indigenous communities jobs highlights at times the preposterousness of attitudes around race and ethnicity in Newham. In this locale vast majorities are immigrants or the sons and daughters of immigrants and the only differentiation between many groups that form Newham's diverse cultural mosaic is length of tenure. Sir Robin's comments did, however, resonate with some members of the white working class met with during this research. The following excerpt was from a conversation with Maureen, a 'decanted' member of the Carpenters Estate aged 75, white and a life-long resident of Stratford. Maureen was now living in Forrest Gate some two miles away. This account

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indicated the complexities of having what might best be considered aging white working class values in contemporary Newham:

I don't hate foreigners; there's just too many of them. Where I live {Carpenters at the time} I'm the foreigner. Even Ava moans about it and she's Iranian. You can't go to Stratford now and hear English and going to the doctors {on Carpenters Estate, which had its own surgery} is like going to Bangladesh. The one's I don't like are the Eastern Europeans, even the Indians moan about them. Everyone knows that if there are jobs going over there {pointing at the Olympic Park during construction} the English need not apply.

(Private interview, Maureen, white, Irish, 75, November 2009)

The Olympic Park was the largest construction site in Europe during the Olympic-delivery years. Consequently it attracted many immigrant workers seeking employment. The examples of politicians, community members and media articles that are analysed here provide easy to follow narratives that blame both local people and / or foreigners for these construction jobs not being filled by Newham's residents. What follows explores why this was the case and considers the reality of Olympic construction employment through the use of case studies. Analysis begins with the story of two Eastern Russian immigrants who came to Newham specifically to take advantage of Olympic employment and thus formed a small part of this vilified group of economic occupiers:

Maria and Yosh: Coming in From the Cold

Maria and Yosh were both 28 years old and came from a small town near Siberia. They had many tales of the bleak, cold landscape that they called home and welcomed the opportunity to work in the relative warmth and luxury of Newham. Back home Yosh was an 'odd-job' man and Maria a schoolteacher, between them they earned very little in Russia and struggled to make ends meet. They lived in a small house with Maria's parents and their 4-year-old daughter. In 2009 they decided to move to Newham and try to save enough money to return home and buy a house of their own. They left their daughter with her grandparents and came to seek their future by becoming part of Newham's Olympic gold rush.

Upon arrival they rented a small room in a shared house, in this room they washed, cooked, ate and slept. The house was a three-bedroom, one bathroom terrace that they shared with 9 other Russian men that were also seeking construction work on the Olympic site. Yosh like the other men in the house found work through a Russian contact he had been told to meet in a local pub and began manual unskilled minimum-wage labour on the site almost immediately. The men worked long hours. The work was hard. Life in the house was noisy as most nights were alcohol fuelled as is likely to be the case when nine young men live together. However, the couple were generally happy with their lot.

Maria, whilst a qualified teacher, sought work within Newham in any employment area she could. Neither her, nor Yosh could speak much English so communication – and employment – was difficult. Eventually, she stumbled into a Kurdish café where the

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owners could similarly not speak much English, this was one of the only things they had in common. Somehow, within a laborious dialogue of pidgin English Maria got her message across that she was after work and to her delight was offered a job. Newham life for Maria now also entailed long hours for low pay serving all-day breakfasts.

As the novelty wore off and reality began to set in the transition into Newham life began to take its toll on Maria and Yosh. Whilst Maria gradually learnt to speak Turkish to communicate with her employers and co-workers she knew very little English. Yosh likewise, so they had problems understanding life outside their particular diaspora. Thus, language and cultural barriers became minimised as they became more and more inclined to stick to their own. A more pressing issue was the cost of living. Even living in squalid and over-crowded conditions they found the cost of rent prohibitively high and the savings they expected to make were not emerging. Consequently, after a year away from their daughter they decided to return to Maria's parents house in Eastern Russia. Maria returned to a £15 per month teaching position, Yosh sought manual work. Their dreams of building a house out of Olympic gold failed to reach fruition.

(Fieldwork notes, September 2011)

Local and national newspapers perpetuated the view that Maria and Yosh *et al* were taking Olympic employment away from more deserving local people. This narrative was disseminated through headlines such as:

- 579,000 East Europeans register for work (The Telegraph, 28th February 2007).

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- Influx of 10,000 foreign workers for Olympic jobs (London Evening Standard, 4th March 2009).
- Polish plumbers return: Number of migrant workers from East Europe hits new high (The Daily Mail, 18th November 2010).

However, it was not plain sailing for those that did move from Eastern Europe:

In 2009 two filthy, smelly, dishevelled Eastern Europeans were found sleeping in the doorway of AM Froud Community Centre (see Appendix A – Figure 17). It was AM policy to offer such rough sleepers a cup of tea and some food but never any money and to request them to move away from the centre's entry point. The two men graciously accepted such charity and went on their way. This ritual continued for some days as a relationship began to develop between the two men and AM's British cleaner. Through the daily slow and stilted morning exchanges in pidgin English between the three (or four) a level of trust and understanding grew.

It transpired that the two men, Stan and Evgeny, had moved from Russia seeking Olympic-related employment but found things incredibly difficult upon arrival. They had not found the construction work that they were expecting and ran out of money very quickly. They had soon to resort to sleeping on the streets, unable to afford to return to Russia. To make sleeping rough a little more bearable they turned first to alcohol and then to drugs, both were now addicted to heroin, a habit they funded through acquisitional crime; notably shoplifting and stealing items from parked cars.

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Despite concern about the wisdom of helping perceptible strangers and drug addicts from other members of AM staff, the AM cleaner offered these two men the opportunity to get their lives back on track and invited them to sleep in her home in Manor Park. This routine was a very strict living arrangement where the men were only permitted to stay in the residence whilst the cleaner was present, generally between the hours of 10pm and 5am – when she left for work in the mornings. This regime suited Evgeny, who remained but after a few weeks Stan moved, back to the streets and was not heard from again. Evgeny even managed to abstain from drugs and enrolled in ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) classes,¹⁴⁸ he became clean (literally and figuratively) and was in mid 2012 in search of gainful employment.

(Fieldwork notes, May 2012)

The realities and necessities of Olympic-delivery construction ensured that contracts were awarded to construction companies through competitive tender. Project completion was extremely time-sensitive and a considerable amount of employment came about through sub-contracting. Olympic deliverers could not easily regulate such ‘subbing-out’ nor could others that sought to monitor the demographics of those hired therein. Hiring in this milieu was, to a large extent, conducted through word of mouth. The proportion of employment opportunities going to local workers therefore was always questionable. Jobs went to men who knew men who were hiring. Some of these only employed professional foreign-born labour. This practise was not widely articulated but was calculated; those employed were used to poor wages and long hours in their native

¹⁴⁸ For more information regarding the ESOL programme see:
http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/educationandlearning/adultlearning/improvingyourskills/dg_10037499

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countries. A more significant issue was the issue of the presupposition to match local skills profiles to the specialist requirements of the construction period. There was simply insufficient time to redress the balance between the skill requirements of the construction companies and the existing skills profile of the Newham workforce. The following indicates this.

9.3 – The Immigrant Job Thieves

Newham's Albanian population provides an example of Eastern Europeans that could be classed as representative of the 'Eastern Europeans' that were vilified during the Olympic-delivery period, as evidenced above, despite the fact that the vast majority of this demographic were Newham residents long before the Games were mooted most having arrived in the early 1990s.¹⁴⁹ Some of the boroughs Albanian residents – having been in Newham for the previous decade – formed an organisation known as the Shpresa programme. This was a user-led organisation that promoted the participation and contribution of Albanian-speaking residents into the wider community. Shpresa was begun in Newham in 2001 by Albanian residents to fulfil a self-diagnosed community need to facilitate opportunities for Albanians in many aspect of everyday life including employment and socialisation opportunities. They aimed to provide advice, help and support to their members and since 2005 had been a registered charity receiving numerous awards including in 2006 the nationally recognised Queen's Award for Volunteering. They supported some 500 people per week and are funded through a combination of membership fees and government grants. The following narrative is an

¹⁴⁹ This data was obtained from a personal interview with an Albanian Shpresa organisation leader, October 2011.

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explanation of aspects of the Albanian diaspora in Newham offered by a female founding member of Shpresa and is in a sense the Albanian perspective of Olympic-related employment:

Albanian culture is very family orientated and traditional in its values. The men are seen as the providers; they work and women raise the children. However, in the UK such cultural mores are different. The men have had a difficult time in adjusting and have had great difficulty in finding work and are often turned away from any jobs they apply for without the courtesy of a response, even from jobs shelf-stacking in Asda. You cannot get a job in Asda unless you can complete an on-line application form, that is something that the men do not understand, they go into the shops and are turned away and told to find a computer rather than talk about even the most lowly positions. Traditional Albanian roles have begun to invert because the women are inclined to begin at the bottom and often volunteer to work for free until paid opportunities become available, which has often led to paid employment. However, the men perceive volunteering as beneath them and would not consider working for free. This has resulted in many men feeling worthless and spending time together mourning the lack of opportunities in local cafes, when they feel they should be working. Also, the men are not very open to study as they feel it goes against their traditional values. Studying, which is considered by many as childlike.

As an organisation we aim to guide our members into work. The more successful members of our community are those who have started their own businesses such as cafes and restaurants or car washes. However, all this changed when London was bidding for

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the Olympics. We were promised many opportunities for employment by {Sir} Robin Wales if we won the Games. We were invited to community meetings between us, the Mayor of Newham and the Olympic people and were told that there would be free training for the unemployed that would lead to jobs in construction and not just the menial work but skilled positions too.

London obviously got the Games and because of the meetings we really pushed the education in our community and encouraged the males to participate in training programmes. Many did and became trained in various fields. However, once the men became qualified they could not find work anywhere. Sub-contractors that we wouldn't even know how to contact to apply for work did a lot of the construction work and hardly any positions were advertised openly. It was a closed shop. Worse than that though, the jobs that were openly advertised were the menial positions and when our members applied for these jobs they were turned down because they were thought to be over-qualified as a result of attending the training courses!

This caused incredible stress between our members and us as an organisation, and has ensured that the men feel even more outsiders than previously. They now feel more suspicious of the institutions and their traditional views have been validated that education is worthless and will lead nowhere. We attended a community meeting with the Mayor of Newham recently and I challenged him on this point, he flat out lied and said that he had made no such assurances and refused to take any other questions on the matter.

(Private interview, Luljeta, white Albanian, 37, October 2011)

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The illusion that Newham residents of varied backgrounds and origins could be transformed from unskilled into skilled workers in time to take advantage of Olympic employment proposals proved a mischievous dyad. Those outside the community seemed to assume the Newham communities' needs, but what they promised had little plausibility in relation to the communities' abilities and aspirations. Meanwhile, the trend that blamed foreigners for taking 'indigenous' local peoples jobs in Newham continued in the ever-reliable Daily Mail which commented on March 7th, 2009 that:

{Indian construction site workers} . . . earn 55 times more than the daily £1 pittance paid to unskilled labourers back in their own country – India. Although they only wield shovels and dig trenches, Amit, Gurpreet and Randeep think they have struck gold. They have the jobs that local – and better-qualified – men like Scott, Robert and Glen can only dream about. Yet those three Britons . . . like thousands of jobless in the area, they don't stand much of a chance.

The shortcomings of this type of reporting are not fully explored here, however, the underlying premise – that local people were not benefitting from Olympic construction jobs – was being raised with consistent regularity. One might well assume that Scott, Robert nor Glen did not in fact dream of digging ditches in the Olympic Park, between them they were qualified and experienced bricklayers, carpenters and builders. Simply put, the Olympic employment opportunities were proving far from ideal from a variety of perspectives, however, there was Olympic volunteerism opportunities for Newham to depend upon.

9.4 – Volunteerism: Something for Nothing?

One way that was mooted as a means of increasing the skills and employability of local people was through the Olympic volunteering scheme. In 2010 when applications for Olympic volunteering closed LOCOG had received a staggering 240,000 applications for the 70,000 Games Maker posts¹⁵⁰ (the official title the successful volunteers would be attain). However, Olympic volunteerism is arguably less about the teaching and learning of the volunteers, or about integrating local people into the Olympic experience, than about unpaid labour where participation is its own reward.

The most important category of emergent actors in the Olympics is unquestionably the volunteers, tens of thousands of whom are now required to stage any Olympics at all (Moragas, Belen and Pulig, 2000). Though commentators, whose only source of information about Olympic Games are media texts, typically fail to realize it, growth in the numbers, training and dedication of the volunteers has been the chief means of absorbing the 'spectacular' growth of the Olympic Games and of their burden on the host city . . . they are (with the Police) the most important category of actors in determining whether the tone for a vast public navigating the hurdles of passage among event venues will be good-natured and convivial or stressful and antagonistic . . . Their chief reward . . . is the very festival experience that they themselves do so much to create.

(MacAloon, cited in Tomlinson and Young, 2006, pp. 22-23)

¹⁵⁰ http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/N11/Newsroom/DG_190795

2012 Olympic volunteering resonated with Durkheim's theoretical perspective as outlined within *The Division of Labour and Society* (1893). To apply this text is to infer that delivery success was deemed dependent upon a division of labour, wherein each person fulfils different, but inter-related, roles. The success of the endeavour was dependent upon the net result of all of these inter-locking components that result: it is idealistically inferred to facilitate integration. This is based upon the assumption that the by-product of the division of labour is solidarity. This appears an ill-fit with much of contemporary society.

Community volunteering, arts centres and sports clubs all provide activities for young people to make new friends, learn new skills and bolster self confidence. Getting young people engaged in community activities benefits us all, regardless of age. 2012 will generate a host of these kinds of opportunities. We want to use the London Games to inspire more young people to get involved, to reap these benefits, and to engage more with the communities in which they live. Our plans . . . {are to create} an active generation through an unprecedented range of volunteering opportunities for everyone around the UK, including young people before, during and after the 2012 Games. We will need around 70,000 volunteers during the Games-time, and Pre-Volunteering Programmes across the UK will give people with no qualifications the necessary skills to volunteer in 2012 and help them towards a volunteer placement, job or further training.

(DCMS, 2007, p. 13¹⁵¹)

¹⁵¹ More information is available at:
<http://epress.lib.uts.edu.au/scholarly-works/bitstream/handle/2100/449/Ourpromise2012.pdf?sequence=2>

As the following ethnographic excerpt indicates, for the majority of Newham residents the notion of volunteering was fantasy. The belief that even if they applied they would not be chosen was based within their *habitus*. They refused to contemplate applying for the positions and making themselves vulnerable to what they considered the likely rejection. Questioned on this matter those researched gave the following explanations for not applying to volunteer:

- ‘All the volunteering jobs are going to old white people’ (Charles, 21).
- ‘What’s the point in that, we don’t get paid and it don’t lead to no job?’ (Herc, 24).
- ‘I don’t know anyone that is doing that’ (Vanessa, 19).

For unemployed Newham residents, who formed the above views, voluntary Olympic employment opportunities appeared more facilitative of a sense of alienation, castigation or vilification than anything resembling integration. It seemed readily apparent to them that the average Tesco shelf-stacker did not feel satisfied and fulfilled by their minimum wage employment thanks to an increased awareness that they were as necessary a component of a functioning society, so why should an Olympic volunteer work for free? Interestingly, this division of labour theory did have resonance throughout Olympic volunteerism, but this resonance appeared within those that comprised Newham’s working population. The following example indicates this:

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Celina: The Public Face of Newham

Celina, 55, was a white British Newham resident that volunteered to participate in Olympic-delivery through the Olympic volunteering initiative. Working as a community development worker and a cycling teacher within Newham Celina was a capable, skilled, qualified professional careerist who volunteered for the position of coach driver during the Games. Her motivation for this application was, in her words, 'to play a part in the world event that would occur only once during my lifetime'. Money did not matter when the opportunity to be involved in London 2012 and show the world how great a place London is presented itself.

(Fieldwork interview, May 2012)

In contrast the chair of the Newham Youth Providers Partnership (NYPP), a partnership of 35 state funded youth and community services within Newham, when spoken with in June, 2012 argued that he 'could not name a single young person that he know in Newham that was an Olympic volunteer'. These examples indicate a clear dichotomy between those with the disposition to invest in the '*Olympic identity*' as those that do not. For those that hold this disposition Olympic volunteerism and the notion that 'everybody has a role to play' towards the success of the Games has agency. For others, the concept of working for free is ludicrous, however, such reactions are indicative of the larger schema of *habitus* for such groups.

9.5 – Capital Gains and Taxing Situations

The application of Bourdieu's theorising helps to understand and explain the relationship between Newham's residents and their inability to take advantage of the Olympic opportunities presented. These included employment and volunteering. Bourdieu refers to these contexts – discourses, institutions, values, rules and regulations – that produced and transformed the attitudes and practices of these communities as *cultural fields*. Which Bourdieu defines as fluid and dynamic rather than static; made up not simply of institutions and rules but of the interactions between institutions, rules and practice. A *cultural field* can be defined as a series of institutions, rules, rituals, conventions, categories, designations, appointments and titles, which constitute a formal hierarchy of power. This produces and helps legitimise, by virtue of real and perceived hegemonic authority, certain discourses and activities. Alternative discourses and conflicting activities within *cultural fields* occur when groups or individuals attempt to determine what constitutes *capital* within that *field* and how that *capital* is to be distributed and what it represents. As Harker, Mahar and Wilkes elucidate:

. . . the definition of capital is very wide for Bourdieu and includes material things (which can have symbolic value), as well as untouchable but culturally significant attributes such as prestige, status and authority (referred to as symbolic capital), along with cultural capital (defined as culturally valued taste and consumption patterns) . . . For Bourdieu, capital acts as a social relation within a system of exchange, and the term is extended 'to all goods, material and symbolic, without

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distinction, that present themselves as rare and worthy of being sought after in a particular social formation.

(1990, p. 1)

To relate this conceptualisation to this research, Newham's cultural capital was a contested fluid concept and the perceived importance of occupying such varied accordingly; much to the apparent frustration for Sir Robin Wales. Bourdieu's findings, which resonate here, indicated that those with the least amount of capital tend to be less ambitious and more satisfied with their lot stating 'the subjective hope of profit tends to be adjusted to the objective probability of profit' (2000, p. 216). This inevitably leads to a reproduction of the symbolic dominance between those that are able to take advantage of opportunities and those that are not, as is illustrated in the case study below:

Anthony: A Carrot or a Stick?

On a sunny morning in ExCeLland the researcher, a community worker and two young unemployed men that lived on the estate met at the BV community centre. On the agenda this morning was to transport soil for the community centre's garden from a location half a mile away. This involved numerous journeys back and forth pushing wheelbarrows, it was hard work for no pay but the two young, black unemployed men approached this job happily and with gusto. One, Anthony, who now aged 21 had left school at 15 with no qualifications and had been unemployed ever since.

(Fieldwork notes, June 2012)

Anthony was part of a growing group of young men that the government refer to as NEET. The number of young people not in employment, education or training has risen by almost 2% annually in recent years (according to research published in 2009 by *Learning and Skills Network* that was conducted by the Institute of Education, University of London – *Tackling the NEET Problem*). They found that results for the second quarter of 2009 indicated that 24,000 more 16-24 year olds were NEET compared to the previous year. This figure stood at 950,000 in August 2009.¹⁵² Their research stated the consequence of such a position:

Research shows that disengagement at this age is disastrous in personal terms; causes problems in the community in the form of nuisance and crime; leads to long-term costs in increased criminality, welfare, dependency, housing and a wide range of social and economic factors . . . combating this growing problem, which is likely to be exacerbated by the recession, requires thorough research into disengagement in a local area to tease out the particular demands of the locality . . . the effects of the recession, however, may be dramatically changing the landscape and how we see the issue.

(Hodgson, Spours and Stone, 2009)

Anthony lived at home with his mother and three sisters. One was Courtney, a bright, outgoing, vocal 18-year-old studying sociology at Newham College, another was 24-years-old Flower who was a dancer and then came Britney, aged 15. Their father had

¹⁵² More data regarding NEETs is available at: <http://www.ioe.ac.uk/TacklingNEETs.pdf>

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died of a heart attack on Christmas day when Anthony was 9. An ever-present at the community centre Anthony seemed to enjoy the social gatherings, albeit his motivation for attendance seemed to be as much to look out for his sisters as be there for his own enjoyment. He was difficult to engage with at first; reluctant to speak and hesitant to offer his opinions, the topic that broke the ice between researcher and participant was football. What follows is the results of conversations that emerged as a result of a shared passion:

Anthony was trying to get a community football team going. He spoke with passion about this dream of playing in a league but this passion was delivered with an undercurrent of scepticism and pre-emptive sense of failure that he wouldn't be able to get enough players, investment or opportunities to realise his aim. This attitude was emblematic of his overall perception of life. He would love to achieve things, he has dreams but he did not feel he had the skills, abilities or opportunities to make them a reality. Fundamentally, he steeled himself for disappointment because his experiences had taught him that life would let him down at every turn. Thus he removed himself from this sense of wider society and, secure in his micro-environment, was reluctant to re-engage.

Anthony refused to sign on to collect state benefits. This raised an interesting issue in the overall structure of society and NEETs. Anthony puts his refusal down to the fact that there was a stigma attached to signing on and a hopelessness and futility about hanging around job centres and attending the compulsory interviews the office would send claimants to. Consequently, he opts out. Sarah, a local resident and sociology lecturer at a nearby University, argued for another perspective to explain opting out. She

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felt that Anthony, and many others like him, did not want to sign on because they did not want to be recorded on official records; they preferred a life of anonymity from the state. This, she feels, is the result of consistent instances of abuse of authority by the police and other officials that has fostered an environment of distrust of officialdom.

Like many other young men of the estate Anthony could recount a plethora of stories of police racism and persecution. Such tales included physical violence, victimisation, threats and personal vendettas. Every young man on the estate that the researcher came into contact with had variations of the same story that resulted in perceptions of both a fear and a distrust of police. As community centre manager Fred stated, in reference to a police Community Support Officer who had worked in BV for a while until he 'cracked' and began racially abusing some of the young men; 'it takes a long time to build relationships but only a matter of seconds to destroy them. We thought he {the PCSO} was a good guy but we were wrong'.

Anthony's rejection of many of societies norms constitutes incontrovertible proof for those who work, earn and pay taxes that Anthony is lacking in the requisite attributes to be a contributing member of society. Consequently, he and most like him must form part of a sub-culture that they must be protected from through any means necessary. His actions, they would say, lack the aspirations, goals and desires of a person that achieves employment, self-worth and functionality. The residents of BV who live on the other side of Wesley avenue from Anthony and his co-hosts do not allow themselves to dwell upon subjunctive conditionals; they refuse to believe that if Anthony hadn't opted out of society, or any other specific individual for that matter, someone else would have. They find it difficult to accept that Anthony is a product of the same society that they

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themselves inhabit and influence.

Through their inaction Anthony and his peers are supporting this sense of opting out and, furthermore, through the vilification and castigation of Anthony, and the others like him, his critics are perpetuating the very cycle that creates what they fear and want to be protected from – a violent, criminally intent, hopeless underclass. Rather, they believe that Anthony operates within a different set of norms and values to that which they do because they would never allow themselves to be in the position where they would not be prepared to do whatever it takes to get themselves off of the bottom rung of society, let alone opt out. The rejection of benefits and of engaging with employment opportunities is not straightforward ‘laziness’. It does not help that Anthony has trouble elucidating upon exactly why he opts out, shrugging the questions off amid monosyllabic responses and the occasionally more elaborate ‘I dunno’ or ‘no point’. This creates misconceptions and misunderstandings.

BV Community centre manager Fred suggests that educational opportunity is a major factor to opting out. The primary school within BV, whose pupil numbers have risen by nearly 30% in the last five years,¹⁵³ is considered to be a great school in relation to others in close proximity. According to Fred, once the children leave this school and have to move away from the estate to further their education that ‘issues’ begin. The closest school is ‘failing the young people, most of them leave with no qualifications to speak of and get involved with gangs’.

Consequently, Fred is attempting to facilitate further education opportunities for BV’s children so they can get a better education locally and avoid the potential pitfalls

¹⁵³ For more information see: <http://www.britannia-village.newham.sch.uk/achievements.html>

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easily observable through people such as Anthony. Others articulate better what Fred is stating:

The children of the poor undeniably drop out of school earlier than other children . . . Schools, in lower-income areas are notoriously ill equipped to transmit interest, enjoyment, or ability . . . Middle-class school experience is both more pleasant and more profitable . . . Given these inequalities in opportunity, it might be equally valid to conclude that the poor value education more highly than the non-poor because of the greater sacrifices they make to get as far as they do.

(Schiller, 2004, p.143)

Regardless of the reasoning behind opting out, which could quite conceivably become a thesis in itself, a key point of consideration is how social class divisions of prejudice create predictable norms of belief, action, thought and behaviour on both-sides of the street, which is indicative of life within BV. Bourdieu's forays into psychoanalysis might well go some way to explaining the life perspectives of Anthony and the many others like him, particularly his perspective that:

. . . the realistic, even resigned or fatalistic, dispositions which lead members of the dominated classes to put up with objective conditions that would be judged intolerable or revolting by agents otherwise disposed . . . help to reproduce the conditions of oppression.

(2000, p. 217)

This quote combined with the above fieldwork notes paint a bleaker picture of the assumed benefits of Olympic-delivery providing a different perspective to those whose views are established absent personal experience of the context they are applied to. The easy to follow pro-Olympic rhetoric was that Newham was a borough economically and socially ‘lacking’ and the Olympic Games were regenerating the area and were simultaneously providing endless opportunities. The implication being that the locals would automatically take advantage of these opportunities and Newham’s Olympic ‘*legacy*’ would benefit all. However, as has been illustrated, the reality is somewhat more complex. This complexity will be further explored in what follows.

9.6 – We Have Work . . .

This injection of Olympic-related employment opportunities into this deprived borough was delivered with the expectation that those who populated this locale would grab them with both hands. As is evidenced herein, these expectations were built upon premises that held little or no resonance. The question then becomes: were there not studies conducted to attempt to match the likely Olympic employment opportunities with the unemployed local populace?

The answer to this question was yes. For example, in January 2006, the LDA and the Learning and Skills Council conducted a major skills study for the London 2012 Games.¹⁵⁴ This study was to be a tool to identify the range of skills that the local

¹⁵⁴ For more information see: <http://www.lda.gov.uk/news-and-events/media-centre/press-releases/2006/major-skills-study-for-the-london-2012-games-gets-underway.aspx>

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community lacked in relation to the demands of Olympic employability. It would then address shortcomings by designing a curriculum to deliver these learning skills. This was promoted as a means to ensure that such citizens were given the opportunity to reasonably compete with migrant workers for employment opportunities during the construction period. Incidentally this research began over six months after London had been awarded the Games, and it did not take much learning skills to be able to deduce that the recruiting process for construction was already well underway.

Despite this, as David Hughes, LSC Regional Director for London, enthused, ‘for London to host a successful Olympic and Paralympic Games the LSC has an important leadership role in delivering the training and skills to the employers who will build the infrastructure and deal with the competitors and visitors’.¹⁵⁵ In effect this opportunity injection into Newham communities required local people to participate in a sociological game of stick or twist wherein they were expected to forget all past experience of the education system and be willing to gamble their *habitus* for *capital*. This gambling was predicated upon the belief that local people would believe in the probability that the outcome of such education would be likely to improve their standing in the ever-changing *field* of Olympic-delivery Newham.

As Bourdieu purports those willing to take this type of gamble were largely doomed to failure (exemplified in the case of Shrpresa – see above);

. . . although lower class migrant families may strive to get their children educated, the habitus of the children will, in advance, disqualify them from

¹⁵⁵ More information is available at:
<http://www.lda.gov.uk/news-and-events/media-centre/press-releases/2006/major-skills-study-for-the-london-2012-games-gets-underway.aspx>

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success, both in the sense that the children will signal, in everything they do and say, their unsuitability for higher education, and as a corollary, the children will themselves recognise this, and more or less expect failure. As Bourdieu writes, those ‘who talk of equality of opportunity forget that social games . . . are not “fair games”. Without being, strictly speaking, rigged, the competition resembles a handicap race that has lasted for generations (2000, pp. 214-215).

(cited in Webb, Schirato and Danaher, 2002, p. 24)

In this accord many Newham residents, such as Anthony, refused to participate in such schemes at all, citing their futility. These beliefs underscored Sir Robin’s venomous anger and frustration is a manifestation of what Bourdieu would recognise as ‘*symbolic violence*’, which he defines as ‘the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p.167). In other words, agents are subjected to forms of violence (treated as inferior, denied resources, limited in their social mobility and aspirations), but they do not perceive it that way; rather, their situation seems to them to be the natural order of things. An unattributed (2008) *Daily Mail* newspaper article published Sir Robin’s comments regarding Newham residents’ inability to take advantage of Olympic employment quoted him further as saying:

Olympic employers would simply look elsewhere for the new workers they needed. They won’t get the jobs because they aren’t ready for them. They haven’t got the skills, haven’t got the training and they can’t afford to lose the benefits. I have people who aspire to a council house. There are also people who won’t come in

for work even at 11 o'clock. If we can inspire people through the Olympics we can change this, but at the moment they are not ready for jobs'. To back up his argument, Sir Robin pointed out that 400,000 jobs had already been created in the area in recent years, but the jobless total had dropped by only 40,000. The reason, he said, was that employers had recruited outside the existing population, often hiring eastern Europeans, because they had the attitude and skills that firms wanted. Although the problems were spread across racial groups, the worst levels of unemployment and skills in Newham, which has a 60 per cent ethnic minority population, were among white residents. David Higgins, the head of the Olympic Delivery Authority, who was sitting alongside Sir Robin as he issued his warning, insisted that every effort would be made to ensure that local residents were employed as much as possible.¹⁵⁶

Olympic-delivery employment practices and discourses contained a political and segregational logic. Publically officials such as Newham Mayor Sir Robin vented their frustrations that those who populated his borough were not taking advantage of the opportunities presented. However, in reality many lacked the requisite *habitus* to understand the *doxa* required to benefit from Olympic opportunities during the small time-frame they were presented within. This has resonance with Fussey *et al's* consideration that regional and economic 'legacy' benefits can often be seen to exacerbate social disadvantage and inequality (2011, p. 18). At best it can be argued that Newham's politicians were living with a false hope that many of its residents were able

¹⁵⁶ The full newspaper report of this is available at:
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-419161/Mayor-Olympic-borough-says-locals-lazy-jobs-project.html>

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to exploit these employment opportunities despite not being 'employable' or 'inclined to work' before the Games came to town. However, it can be argued that it is more likely that for Sir Robin *et al*, the real frustration was not that Newham's residents were unable to grasp these opportunities; it was that they were in Newham in the first place. The reality experienced throughout this research indicated that many of those that were in Newham felt segregated and excluded from Olympic-delivery benefit and regenerated Olympic locales. This sense of segregation is explored in the following chapter, with particular emphasis being placed upon the 2012 Olympic security milieu.

**Chapter 10. EXCLUSION AND SECURITISATION: THE OLYMPIC
LOCKDOWN?**

Previous sections of this thesis have argued that ‘*Olympic identity*’ resonated throughout Britain because of its athletic-inspired inclusivity that bolstered the hegemonic practice of securing common consent through an Olympic-themed provision of ‘bread and circuses’ (Eisinger, 2000) that allowed distraction from the realities of Olympic-delivery and more generally – everyday life. This inclusivity was bolstered by the unavoidable narrative that the consequences of hosting the Olympic Games would boost the national economy, provide local and national Olympic legacies and deliver a once-in-a-lifetime sporting ‘Mega-Event’ for all to invest in, to consume and to enjoy. To permit these positive Olympic outcomes, not to mention the spectacle of the Games themselves, significant securitisation of the areas where events would be held needed to occur. This assumption forms the basis of this chapter. It provides an exploration of policing concerns that were of particular relevance to Newham during Olympic-delivery and an analysis of organised resistance to the Olympic security processes. Analysis begins with an overview of some 2012 Olympic-related security issues.

10.1 – Securing London 2012

In recent times, sport Mega-Events have grown into major global spectacles that possess huge economic, political and social significance . . . One issue which has become central to the planning and implementation of sport Mega-Events is

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security . . . the budget for London 2012 stands at a projected US\$1.7 billion. Such expenditures are realised through the mobilisation of more security personnel, such as the 60,000 additional police officers to be drafted in for London 2012 . . . As security at sport Mega-Events has grown exponentially in recent times, so the diverse effects of these processes on the host cities and nations become increasingly complex and problematic.

(Giulianotti and Klauser, 2011, pp. 3157-3168)

The 2012 Olympic securitisation narrative revolved around the notion that if the many security measures were not implemented to the required levels then there would be no Games, no inclusive identity and no Olympic benefit. These assertions were predicated upon fear, risk and vilification of any perceptible threat to the Games, which was inferred to include everything from as visceral as acts of terrorism to more innocuous hazards such as the unauthorised use of the Olympic rings. The penalties for even the slightest oversight were predicted to be harsh; as a result some obeyed the Olympic delivers (Appendix A – Figure 18). Many didn't (Appendix A – Figure 19).

Irrespective of perception of what constituted a 'threat' to the success of the Games the securitisation narrative segregated local communities during Olympic-delivery. As a consequence, it prevented access to specific locales by instilling within them with the belief that the Games were not for them – they were for 'the tourists'. During this delivery epoch a clear warning was delivered by Olympic deliverers, through a variety of mediums as will be addressed herein, that the entire Games period would be a

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time of huge aggravation for local communities and if they had any sense they would modifying or suspending their everyday lives during the Olympic period.

This message was disseminated through a narrative of expectant disruption, which also resonated on a deeper level through symbolic exclusion. This deprived, diverse populace was excluded through Olympic securitisation that exacerbated the gaps between their *habitus* and the evolving Olympic-delivery *field*. These messages that resonated with indicators of access prohibitions encouraged local communities to abandon hope of inclusion and Olympic benefit as a result of their belief systems. This was exemplified throughout the life experiences of many a Newham resident up to this point, why should things change now? Such outcomes as Bourdieu would describe are:

. . . a result of the hysteresis effect necessarily implicated in the logic of the constitution of habitus, practices are always liable to incur negative sanctions when the environment with which they are actually confronted is too distant from that in which they are objectively fitted.

(Bourdieu, 1977, p. 78)

This brought significant segregational issues to the fore and highlighted the differentiation between those that held the *habitus* necessary to accumulate the various forms of Olympic-delivery capital and those that did not. As indicated above, Bourdieu defines mismatches that local people experienced between their slowly evolving *habitus* and the rapidly evolving field as *hysteresis*. The latter section explored *hysteresis* in relation to employment, this section explores another, less tangible manifestation of

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Olympic-delivery *hysteresis* – namely security-related exclusion. This was perhaps best exemplified by the description of *Stratfordland's* Olympic Park as an '*Island Site*', the language of such emphasised the dislocation of Olympic space from the rest of Newham (Fussey *et al*, 2011, p. 3).

The manifestation of securitisation involved modifying the landscape to prohibit access of some local people, both literally and symbolically. For Bourdieu the practise of discourse formed a potential site of resistance, he would suggest that in the contest for discursive power a battle for position between social groups can be observed, wherein all struggle to impose their own representations of the world but where the elite impose and institutionalise definitions (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The Olympic deliverers and the community during the dispersal of the community impact of the Games held exchanges which needed exploring.

10.2 – Narratives of Exclusion

Olympic-delivery was fixated upon one date and one event – the Opening Ceremony scheduled for July 27th 2012. This was to be the culmination of all the years of blood, sweat and toil that constituted the 2012 Olympic milieu. The powerful '*Olympic identity*' grew in stature and resonance as this date approached as it began to dominate the media and the British public consciousness accordingly. This created a trajectory of Olympic fervour that gradually escalated throughout the land as the Games approached.

The 2012 London Olympics would not primarily be celebrated in the newly built Olympic Park but rather upon the couches of the world's living rooms. '*Olympic identity*'

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allowing the armchair Olympian to be fleetingly elevated from their unremarkable existence to transitory significance by a sense of vicarious belonging to great exemplars of physical importance competing in the world's premier sporting events, where the results of individual competition did not matter as long as Britain won something and everybody had a jolly time.

For those more inebriated by the '*Olympic identity*' spirit but unable to get their hands of one of the rarest commodities in London during 2012 – an Olympic ticket – there would be the option of consuming the Games at local bars and restaurants or even at one of many big screen events where consumption could be shared with the likeminded. This might be understandable for those that lived in Cardiff, Manchester and Glasgow but slightly less so for those that lived in the immediate vicinity of the Newham Olympic venues. The locales of such, for many, traditionally formed part of their everyday lives during Games time were now told both implicitly and explicitly to keep away unless they were officially ticketed guests.

As has been illustrated herein, the 2012 Olympic Games would not be existing in a vacuum. However, this research argues that significant attempts towards this goal were made. Towards those ends the local communities had been managed, minimised and marginalised by a well-orchestrated campaign by the Olympic deliverers that attempted to convince them the 2012 Games should be consumed in Newham in the same way it is consumed in Glasgow, namely at home or in a specific public venue. That choice was theirs but either way it was emphasised that they must stay away from Olympic venues and locales unless one had a paid for ticket. This policy of exclusion led to the introduction of a new Newham *doxa*, one that did not resonate with the local

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communities *habitus*. The exploration of which forms the basis for this section of the research.

10.3 – Transport for (Some) London(ers)

As evidenced earlier, the Olympics carry challenges for security. In addition to the themes explored previously a plethora of logistical issues would need to be overcome. This process included planning strategies to deal with vast volumes of visitors. An independent 2011 report conducted by Oxford Economics estimated that the number of visitors staying in London for the 2012 Games would exceed 450,000. In addition the report estimated that there would be 5.5 million day visitors to the Capital over the duration of the Games (O’Ceallaigh, 2011). These vast – if maybe over-estimated – numbers presented significant logistical security challenges particularly, in relation to the notion that 2012 will be a public transport Games, which vast swathes of Newham residents relied upon for their everyday lives.

Visitor numbers concerns revolved around their potential to cause disturbance, disruption, offence or upheaval. In turn visitors needed to be protected from a percentage of the native Newham population. The rules for governing this influx followed a narrative of exclusion, which will be addressed herein. These were best exemplified by the creation of transport restrictions that would cover the entire Olympic Games period. The ODA predicted that 78% of spectators would travel to and from the Olympic Park by rail.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, the London 2012 transport strategy was for 100% of spectators to travel to

¹⁵⁷ More information is available at: <http://www.london2012.com/documents/oda-transport/final-transport-plan/transport-plan-part-2-ch-7-.pdf>

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the Games by public transport, walking or cycling (ibid). It was widely considered that the public transport system would struggle to cope with combining the Olympic influx and the swathes of regular passengers. Consequently, how Newham would cope with this was much cause for community consternation. This will now be exemplified.

There is no information given to us in the local community about how we will be affected during the Olympics. They {Olympic deliverers} are controlling the information because they fear organised resistance once we know how badly we are going to be affected.

(Private interview, Community Support worker, June 2011)

The above quote exemplified community concerns that revolved around the imposition of Olympic securitisation. Those spoken with habitually voiced their concerns regarding the impending disruption and were concerned that the policing and security implications of the Games would disproportionately affect local people. This perception was bolstered by the conceptual vagueness of ‘community consultations’ and interactions between themselves and the Olympic deliverers:

. . . I’ve been to a huge amount of different forums and hear the same things at all of them; everyone is concerned. For example, at a recent meeting with health professionals – not at the Janet and John level I’m talking ‘Director level’ – the worry was how they were going to be able to fulfil their health obligations to the local people during the Olympics.

(Private Interview, Third Sector community representative, January 2012)

These examples indicated the feelings that permeated much of the community perceptions uncovered during this research. They were based from the position of not knowing what was to come this fostered an atmosphere of fear and concern. These concerns were bolstered when official information in regards the expected Olympic community impact eventually began to filter through to the local community weeks before the beginning of the 2012 Games.

10.4 – A Community Under Siege

The following case study illustrates a community consultation event meant to delineate the transport impact of the London 2012 Games. This meeting, called by LOCOG and facilitated by the Newham Voluntary Sector Consortium (NVSC¹⁵⁸) was an invitation-only event that unfurled between 9.30am and 12pm on the 26th April 2012 in Stratford town hall.

In a ground floor room of Stratford Town Hall the tables were arranged in a U-shape, all focusing towards a large projector screen. In front of this screen sat representatives from LOCOG, TFL and the London borough of Newham ready to inform the audience of their vision of the likely transport impact that the 2012 Games would have upon local people. The audience that populated the seating comprised around 35

¹⁵⁸ The NVSC fulfils the roles that Community Voluntary Services (CVS) forms in other parts of the country. That is to provide infrastructure support networks for the third sector. A CVS is funded by the local authority, however, Newham council do not fund a CVS and, consequently, Newham's third sector formed and funded their own equivalent – the NVSC – in 2001.

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members of Newham's Third Sector and included representatives from Stratfordland, ExCeLland and the Dispersal Zone who had been invited to this event NVSC.

Each member of the audience was, upon arrival, presented with a pack that included maps of impending road closures, parking restrictions and other traffic management implementations. The package also contained a pamphlet that surmised how travel in Newham would be affected during the Games period and a flyer indicating the means with which individuals could plan to adjust their schedules to avoid the impending influx – which was known as the 'Get Ahead of the Games' strategy (Appendix A – Figures 20-23).

All documents illustrated the belief that mass disruption was pending but there were clear policies and strategies in place to counteract these impediments to daily life. The initial opening and browsing of the documents led to much muttering and searching of the maps to consider how each representatives community group would be affected. This muttering was cut short by the LOCOG representatives who was also chair who began the discourse and, as was the standard procedure at Olympic meetings, delineated the fantastic progresses that was being made towards the Games delivery. The representatives walked through some general security measures that were considered crucial to the successful delivery of the Olympics and touched upon the higher levels of policing and the police muster point that was located at Wanstead flats, however, to avoid any direct questioning from the audience on these points the representatives reminded the audience that this meeting was about transport and thereby handed over to the TFL representative.

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TFL presented information regarding transport regulations provided some subtext to the maps in the packs, explaining where specific restrictions would take place, which roads were to be closed, where right hand turns would be outlawed and so on. The agitated response was visible amongst the audience as TFL representative continued talking in a depersonalised fashion about the necessity of 'free flowing traffic for successful Games'. Questions and comments began being directed at this member who reminded the audience that there would be plenty of time to answer all questions at the end and attempted to carry on regardless.

The tension grew. One member visibly fidgeting in his chair, reminiscent of an infant school pupil with his hand in the air waiting patiently for the teacher to ask him what his question was. This atmosphere lasted for a few more moments until the TFL representative began discussing the alterations of a nearby junction described as a significant pinch point for traffic, and as something that needed to be remedied. The modification of this busy junction would entail various restrictions that would allow the road system 'to work for the Olympic family {including VIP's and officials} they would need to reduce background traffic by 30%'.

At this point the man exploded shouting 'Background traffic? You mean me!' This comment began an unabashed free-for-all with comments being fired at the TFL representative that revolved around the theme that 'the community' were considered second class citizens during the Olympics and all the traffic strategies were intended to restrict their movement and exclude community members from their everyday lives. The TFL representative made her excuses and left to jeers of 'watch out for background traffic on your way home'.

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The LBN representative took over from TFL to discuss other restrictions that painted an equally bleak picture for the local community during the Games. This representative covered such issues as the necessity for all cars in Newham to join a database and obtain a virtual permit to be in the borough. A failure to do so, it was warned, would result in a heavy fine or the vehicle being towed away. LBN also discussed the necessity for local businesses to change their delivery times and warned that the LBN would be recruiting vast numbers of new Traffic Enforcement officers who would voraciously enforce such regulations. The impression was of a zero-tolerance, highly securitised Olympic Newham where the community needed to either adjust or suffer accordingly. Some salient points were highlighted in an excerpt (see Appendix A – Figure 22) taken from the pack given to the audience members.

(Fieldwork notes, April 2012)

Away from this meeting the warning to local people to ‘Get Ahead of the Games’ was distributed by a plethora of means. This advice was displayed on billboards, on public transport and across the media (Appendix A – Figures 20-24). Essentially such information warned local people that any journeys made during the Olympic period would likely be horrendous. These public transport warnings were replicated across London’s roads disseminating messages of impending traffic chaos (Appendix A – Figures 25-26).

The measures implemented to control traffic included changing signal timings to manage traffic lights, bus diversions, suspensions of parking in key areas and road closures. One specific regulatory modification was the 35 miles of major roads around

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the Olympic Park to include ‘Games Lanes’ accessible only to VIPs and a fleet of coaches used to transport athletes, games officials and the media.

For those in vehicles Olympic road lanes and the Olympic Road Network (ORN) became visible in the two months prior to the Opening Ceremony on many busy roads in and around East London. This, in combination with various Olympic-related road closures and parking restrictions were widely expected to disrupt and restrict movement throughout Games time considering that traffic was habitually heavy in these locations. Furthermore, information regarding the penalties that would be imposed for breaking such restrictions were widely disseminated in Newspapers and Olympic-related literature.¹⁵⁹ All of which enforced the message that local people were best off avoiding Olympic locales and leaving them to those that had Olympic tickets. Other measures included restricting foot traffic from the locales marshalled by borough wide dispersal zones that permitted ordering people out of the Olympic areas for a specific period of time, usually 24 hours duration.¹⁶⁰

The dialogue between Olympic deliverers and community groups at various forums and events, which are illustrated herein, followed this exclusory narrative. The message given out by Olympic deliverers was that the borough would be under a heightened securitisation and all rules must be followed or stiff consequences would follow. These Olympic modifications, both literal and symbolic, altered the applicability of pre-Olympic accumulations of symbolic and economic capital to the evolving urban

¹⁵⁹ See Appendix A for an indication of such.

¹⁶⁰ Newham’s dispersal zone saw the police ‘join forces’ with Newham council in order to combat ‘anti-social’ behaviour. A dispersal zone enabled those policing Newham to ban ‘groups of troublemakers’ from specific locations within the borough for ‘anti-social behaviour’. Anyone who refused or breached the notice could be arrested and this was punishable with a custodial sentence of up to three months and / or a fine of up to £2,500. Such highly visible punitive solutions to urban problems can be located in a political desire for public and tabloid popularity (Garland, 2000). Wacquant (2001, 2008) argued that such attempts to govern through criminal justice was part of a more general attack on the dispossessed. See: <http://www.newham.gov.uk/YourEnvironment/ReportingAntiSocialBehaviour/DispersalzoneinStratfordtowncentre.htm>

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landscape of this period and redrew barriers of inclusion and exclusion accordingly. Newham's communities felt as if they were required to adopt the role of passive recipients of services that assimilated a dependence upon the benevolence of Olympic-delivery for intangible benefits that had yet to receive. The cost of this was their exclusion literally or symbolically of Olympic benefit, which became manifest through insecurity and fear in some sections of the community.

10.5 – The Management of Fear

The impression of Olympic-security obtained through the media and at community the following statement told to the researcher in the immediacy of the aforementioned meeting succinctly indicated these perspectives:

It's feels like being in a community under siege; the vast numbers of security guards and police and that army that are being brought in to our community worries us tremendously. The levels of security will be oppressive during the Olympics and the clear message is that we should stay away. I don't know anyone with tickets to see anything; it isn't for us. Everyone is living in fear of what it's going to be like here during the Olympics, all we hear is about security, about cars going to be towed away or roads closed. We hear that there are going to be so many people coming to see the Olympics that we wont be able to do anything. I think it would just be better if we all went on holiday while its on, I think that's what they want us to do . . .

(Private interview, female local resident, 28, April 2012)

In the words of Wacquant (1993), in all advanced countries whenever the police (and in this case security guards and the army) are considered as an alien force by the population they are supposed to protect they will find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to fulfil any other role than a repressive one. This was exemplified throughout this thesis where many in this community felt that the securitisation of the Olympic Games was something that was being done *to* them, indicating that the Games themselves were not *for* them at all. Simply, the Olympic Games and their benefits was not something that were able to access.

An under-stated problem in all of this was the gradual dissemination of information into the community regarding the expected Olympic impact and securitisation was delivered by pleasant, but ill-informed volunteers on display stalls at various community events. These events combined drip feeding limited information with child orientated distractions that included balloons, face painting and colouring in sessions, (see Appendix A – Figure 27).

Initially, community sceptics suspected that the security measures were not being defined and delineated clearly because they would cause outrage and lead to organised resistance. This is if the community had sufficient time to mobilise. These perceptions were left to ruminate until the turn of year 2011/2012 when security and traffic regulation information gradually began to be released at forums delivered by those with the knowledge of how they would work, such as the LOCOG meeting as previously indicated.

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This information did much to support the feeling of fear and created the assumption that Newham would be placed under intense securitisation and flooded with police and security personnel and all that such securitisation entails. The message to the community was that disruption was on its way and that they should avoid specific zones at all costs. It was a message of fear and apprehension and suggested that the 2012 Olympiad could go one of two ways for local communities:

- The local community could carry on as normal and be disproportionately effected by the securitisation and suffer commensurately.
- The local community could abandon all hope of inclusion in the Olympic experience and plan to modify their lives accordingly.

The twin outcomes of Olympic-delivery *hysteresis* – literal and symbolic – for some, perpetuated fear and led to their withdrawal from participation in the Olympic experience. For others these actualities resulted in loss of position and power because of the revaluation of symbolic capitals and sources of legitimacy in their field.

What follows explores the links between the objective nature of the systemic changes brought by Olympic-delivery security implementation and discourse, and the subjective implications of the responses to these changes by those that constitute the local communities. This approach seeks to provide an understanding of the nature and consequences of field changes that were experienced both individually and on the larger social environmental level. This section begins with an overview of Olympic securitisation and its role within 2012 delivery. Examples of security implications and

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interactions between the deliverers and the community are presented to highlight the possession of symbolic capital within this interplay. This is followed by a consideration of how and why the delivery and spectre of these Olympic securitisation measures negatively impacted upon some of Newham's community groups, facilitated organised action and led to many feeling detached from the entire Olympic process.

10.6 – Securitisation of the Mega-Event

The 2012 Olympic Games were to open with a grand opening ceremony that would showcase London to a global audience. The cost was estimated at £41 million. As British Prime Minister David Cameron stated in 2012, after doubling the budget for the event, the Opening Ceremony is 'a great advertisement and if you think of the millions of pounds we are spending, it's probably worth between two and five billion of free publicity for the country'.¹⁶¹ This announcement was one that might best be assessed by what Toohey and Taylor define as 'terrorist capital' (2008). The Olympic Games were widely considered an appealing target for a variety of terrorist possibilities, a view predicated upon past experiences where previous Olympic hosts have fallen victim to terrorism.

Prominent examples include the kidnapping and execution of Israeli athletes by Black September during the 1972 Munich Games (Aston, 1983; Reeve, 2001; Toohey and Veal, 2007) and the Centennial bombing at the 1996 Atlanta Games (Atkinson and Young, 2008). Amongst others these incidents have influenced the securitisation of all

¹⁶¹ More information regarding David Cameron's summation is available at: <http://www.morethanthegames.co.uk/london-2012/0916184-london-2012-cameron-defends-decision-double-olympic-ceremonies-budget>

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successive Olympic Games (Fussey *et al.*, 2011). Consequently, any Olympic host must accept myriad potential dangers and security concerns are intrinsically linked to Olympic hosting. This was emphasised by LOCOG Chairman, Lord Sebastian Coe, who in 2012 stated succinctly to the Press Association ‘everything we do at an Olympic Games is underpinned by security’.¹⁶² The necessity for security underpinning the Games is a direct result of the fact that hosting the Olympics exponentially multiplies all security concerns. Not only does the host have its own ‘domestic problems to deal with, it also must deal with all the problems of all nations of the world’ (Oquirrh Institute report, 2003, p. 36).

That known as ‘terrorism’ is arguably the most infamous of these hosting concerns because such events are perceived as soft targets where a successful terror attacks would guarantee vast media exposure (Coaffee, 2009). However, ‘Mega-Event’ exploitation is not limited to terrorism and security concerns can come in many guises. These obviously include severe lawlessness such as acts that pursue mass casualties as well as the threat of terrorist acts (Toohey and Taylor, 2008) but can also include the quasi-illegal, such as ambush marketing campaigns as witnessed at the Beijing 2008 Games (Preuss *et al.*, 2008), and the more innocuous, such as the 9,000 arrests at the Atlanta Olympics for the ‘crime’ of being homeless (COHRE, 2007, p. 197) with many more besides. The unifying factor for all of these concerns is the prerequisite manpower and resources required to deal with them, which all come under the same prefix – ‘Security’.

¹⁶² For more information see:
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/olympics/article-2025014/london-olympics-2012-Sebb-Coe-confident-Olympic-safety-despite-london-riots.html>

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There has been much contemporary research conducted in the field of ‘Mega-Event’ security and surveillance (Boyle and Haggerty, 2009; Giulianotti, 2011; Cornelissen, 2011; Schimmel, 2011; Coaffee *et al.*, 2011; Eick, 2011; Samatas, 2011). There has also been much in relation to the sociological impact of ‘Mega-Event’ securitisation. These have included concerns such as the threat to civil rights and press freedom, the criminalisation of homelessness and forced evictions (Boykoff, 2011; Lenskyj, 2000, 2002, 2008; Shaw, 2008). However, none have addressed the general implications that these measures have upon the everyday lives of those living in the Olympic securitisation shadow, what follows will focus on this.

10.7 – Securing the Mega-Event Host Community

Olympic security policies are unique and do not resonate with traditional community perceptions and experiences of methods of controlling space. As Olympic security expert, Peter Ryan (2002), emphasised during his keynote address to an Olympic Security Review Conference¹⁶³ Olympic security planners must consider scenarios that would seem ‘bizarre and outlandish to non-security experts’ which would obviously include those that lived and worked in the surrounding areas that were to be affected by such measures. This inimitable security paradigm that, in Ryan’s opinion, was understandable only to security ‘experts’, proved problematic for London’s urban Olympic Games that was required to impose Olympic security upon a complex, urban populace trying to get on with their lives.

¹⁶³ This Olympic Security Review Conference was held at the Ocquirrh Institute in Salt Lake City, Utah. It comprised some 60 participants from the private sector and from local, state and federal public safety representatives to discuss the security lessons learned from the 2002 Olympics. For more information see: <http://leavitt.li.suu.edu/leavitt/?p=578>

Hosting the London Olympics was the largest peacetime security effort of the host country. This goes for all the cities the Olympics visit and as such wars are ‘planned and executed in less time and with less people’ (Ryan, 2002, p. 24). Fundamentally, there can be no argument that securing and policing the 2012 Olympic Games is a tremendously complex undertaking. In relation to the 2012 Games this undertaking was further complicated by a plethora of security issues, not least of which was the murder of 52 people in an Islamist terror attack on the London transport system that occurred the day after the Games were won in July 2005.

The inquest for these bombings revealed that London was ‘woefully unprepared for a terrorist attack on 2012 Olympics’ (Rayner, 2011). This conclusion firmly positioned security threats within the realm of reality during the Olympic securitisation process. Another highly visible example of a security threat were the August 2011 ‘English Riots’ that erupted on the streets of North London. These riots spread throughout parts of the Capital, including within the vicinity of the Olympic Park, not to mention other English cities, and raised additional concerns regarding Olympic security (Hill, 2011). Many believed the causation of these riots was a racially-motivated shooting by police of a young black man,¹⁶⁴ whilst others saw it as a sign of ‘Broken Britain’,¹⁶⁵ either way, it carried significant consequences for the securitisation of the 2012 Olympics.

¹⁶⁴ In this regard the widening gulf between rich and poor and the increased closure of political elites onto themselves and the media, the increasing distance between the lower class and the dominant institutions of society all breed disaffection and distrust. They converge to undermine the legitimacy of the social order and to redirect hostility toward the one state organisation that has come to symbolise its unresponsiveness and naked repressiveness: the police. In the vacuum created by the lack of political linkages and the absence of recognised mediations between marginalised urban populations and a society from which they feel ejected, it is no wonder that relations with the police have everywhere become both salient and bellicose, and that incidents with the ‘forces of order’ are invariably the detonator of the explosions of popular violence that have rocked poor neighbourhoods (Cashmore and McLaughlin, 1992; Wacquant, 2008 pp.31-32).

¹⁶⁵ The term ‘Broken Britain’ was first used by British Prime Minister David Cameron during his 2010 election campaign which promised to give the police more powers to fight crime and provide deterrent. This theme evolved into Cameron’s attack on Britain’s ‘Broken Society’ in the aftermath of the 2011 Riots, which was illustrative his political orientation regarding rights and responsibilities, crime and punishment and society being unaware, or unconcerned about the consequences of their actions. For more see: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-14524834>

Problematically, for the 2012 Games, this civil unrest occurred on a day where 200 delegates from Games participating countries gathered in London for logistical testing briefings for various Olympic venues. The 2011 riots exacerbated a very public questioning of perceptions of safety, depth and adequacy of security from a plethora of nations regarding the potency of London's, already significant, Olympic securitisation. The riots provoked widespread global concern – with China (Foster, 2011) and America (Hopkins and Norton-Taylor, 2011) being particularly outspoken – concerning the security of the impending Games. This necessitated an IOC spokesman to emphasise in a national newspaper that 'security at the Olympic Games was a top priority for the IOC'.¹⁶⁶ This statement was exemplified by the estimated 60,000 police officers from around the UK that were to be drafted into London to help police the Games and throughout the Capital during the Olympic period (Giulianotti and Klausner, 2011). This was in addition to 10,000 private venue security guards, a figure raised to 40,000 in 2011. However, the riots exacerbated the very public questioning from the USA regarding the potency of London's, already significant, security measures to safeguard the Games:

The US raised repeated concerns about security at the London Olympics and is preparing to send up to 1,000 of its agents, including 500 from the FBI, to provide protection for America's contestants and diplomats . . . American officials have expressed deep unease that the UK has had to restrict the scope of anti-terrorism 'stop and search' powers . . . after conceding it {LOCOG} had underestimated the number of security guards needed . . . Originally it had thought 10,000 guards

¹⁶⁶More data is available at:
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/olympics/article-2024108/London-riots-Olympic-chiefs-confident-security-2012-Games.html>

would be enough, but after a review over the summer it now believes it will need up to 21,000 . . . but the organising committee does not have the money to pay G4S {the private security firm contracted to find and train security guards} to make up the shortfall, and does not believe the firm has enough time to do so, forcing ministers to turn to the Ministry of Defence for help. The MoD has offered 3,000 soldiers, and another 2,000 in reserve.

(Hopkins and Norton-Taylor, 2011¹⁶⁷)

The depth of the prerequisite security personnel needed to safeguard the Games, and to convey perceptions of safety was clearly proving logistically problematic for the 2012 Olympic deliverers. An additional logistical concern was also the logistical necessity to house the ever-increasing numbers of security personnel, and to provide adequate bases for operation within range of the Olympic venues to utilise these forces effectively. It is this implementation of facility and personnel required to secure the 2012 Olympic Games and its associated impingement upon the community that will provide the setting for the following case study.

10.8 – Wanstead Flats: The Land is Ours?

Wanstead Flats is part of East London's Epping Forest. Epping Forest is a taxpayer-funded amenity protected by the Epping Forest Act of 1878.¹⁶⁸ The City of London Corporation (CLC) governs this land on behalf of the public. The 1878 Act stipulates that Epping Forest must be kept unenclosed and cannot be built upon to ensure

¹⁶⁷ For more see: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/sport/2011/nov/13/us-worried-london-olympics-security-2012>

¹⁶⁸ For more information see: <http://www.aim25.ac.uk/cats/118/11487.htm>

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the land is safeguarded for community use. Problematically, the majority of this area (1.35 square kilometres) is flat, open grassland in the direct vicinity of the Olympic Park, which makes this land extremely valuable, not to mention useful real estate.

Consequently, the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) intended to use sections of this grassland as a muster point for briefing thousands of officers during the Olympic Games. As a result, Home Office officials drafted an amendment to the 1878 Epping Forest Act enabling the temporary use of the site for the implementation of security-related infrastructure. The Security and Counter-Terrorism Minister Baroness Neville-Jones stated that ‘London 2012 poses a unique policing challenge and this temporary amendment will help to deliver a safe and secure Olympic and Paralympic Games’.¹⁶⁹ This statement reinforced the narrative of fear and the necessity of taking ownership of community land to ensure the Olympic Games and all that they bring could occur.

This change in usage proved a contentious issue. The MPS described Wanstead Flats as the only site that was ‘fit for purpose’. The CLC, who were ultimately responsible for the forest on behalf of the public, promised to demand guarantees over appropriate restoration of the site and appropriate compensation for the loss of the site to be put in place, providing the community at large were appropriately consulted. Ultimately, an agreement was reached between the two parties that allowed the MPS to utilise the area for a rental cost of £170,000.¹⁷⁰

However, all were not happy with this arrangement. A ‘Save Wanstead Flats’ (SWF) campaign¹⁷¹ formalised to oppose the agreement; beginning in June 2010 SWF

¹⁶⁹ More data regarding this consultation is available at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2012-consultation-wanstead-flats>

¹⁷⁰ For more see: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-13985226>

¹⁷¹ For more information see: <http://savewansteadflats.org.uk/>

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campaigned to fight plans to allow the MPS to base its Olympics operational centre on the land. In order to facilitate this proposal, the Home Office needed to amend an Act of Parliament that has protected Wanstead Flats from enclosure and development for well over a century. Ultimately, the order amending the Epping Forest Act was passed with little debate by Parliament. SWF opposed this on four primary levels. Firstly, they felt there was inadequate community consultation. Secondly, they had an underlying objection to the alteration of the Epping Forest Act and the potential ramifications of allowing the Act to be altered. Thirdly, they were campaigning for greater transparency regarding the selection of Wanstead Flats and a delineation of the other areas that were considered but ruled out. Finally, they felt that the CLC / MPS agreed compensation figure was woefully inadequate.

On this fourth point one local resident surmised their case concisely during a SWF campaign meeting held in an AM property – Durning Hall in Forrest Gate. One member of the SWF made his case by comparing the rent demanded for the operational base to how much the CLC charged Newham borough council for holding their annual fireworks display on the same site:

Newham Council are charged £5,000 for 2 hours access to the site. That's £2,500 an hour. Ninety days is 2,160 hours, I think you can reasonably argue the police operation will be 24/7, so 2,160 x £2,500 is £5,400,000 . . . The paltry £170,000 equates to £78 pounds per hour.

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This disproportion, as perceived by SWF, was even more iniquitous when considered in relation to the following statement in the CLC's Epping Forest newsletter that forewarned:

Currently it costs the City of London £4.4 million per year to run Epping Forest including income generated. Carefully targeted reductions in service are being made totalling £457,000, which will sadly result in reductions in funding for tree work, ride maintenance, equipment and machinery, together with less improvement work on the Forest's farmed estate. Safety will remain paramount.

The SWF campaign continued to argue that because the consultation carried out by the Home Office was, in their opinion, 'insufficient' it denied local people their democratic right to challenge the decision and, consequently, should be overturned. Ultimately this stand petered out as interest waned and the sense of futility prevailed as the Games approached and the muster point began being built. However, conflict between the police and Newham's communities was not limited to the development of muster points on public land. One far more fundamental issue pertaining to perceptions of policing and concerns regarding the vastly increased number of police officers and security personnel that were about to police Newham's streets was that of racism, which will be addressed in what follows.

10.9 – Policing a Complex Society: Institutional Racism?

One of the most infamous moments in the contemporary history of London occurred in 1993 when Black British teenager, Stephen Lawrence, was fatally stabbed in a South-East London racist attack. During the initial investigation into this murder five suspects were arrested but not convicted. This action led to a 1998 public inquiry that examined the MPS and their murder investigation. The results, published in a 1999 inquiry report, labelled the MPS as ‘institutionally racist’ (for an excellent review of the Stephen Lawrence literature see Rollock 2009).¹⁷²

This 1999 finding came as no great surprise to some in East London’s communities. One example of a pre-Lawrence response to institutional racism, discrimination and injustice was the creation of the Newham Monitoring Project (NMP). The NMP was formed by campaigners in 1980 as a direct response to another racist murder that the police were considered to have failed to respond adequately to. In this instance it was the murder of teenager Akhtar Ali Baig in Newham. As an organisation NMP:

. . . believe that racism remains rooted in the very fabric of British society, as shown by recent anti-terrorism legislation and stop and search powers, disproportionately affecting working class black communities.

(NMP Manifesto¹⁷³)

¹⁷² See: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/285553.stm> for more information.

¹⁷³ For more data see: <http://www.nmp.org.uk/p/about-nmp.html>

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Disturbingly, a report of the community perceptions of the instigating factors of the riots led to headlines such as that of the regional on-line newspaper and information source London24: London for Londoners who surmised – ‘London riots: Police stop and search blamed for tension that sparked Tottenham riots’ (Youle, 2011). The report attributed causation of the escalation of the London rioting to the tense relationship between the police and the community as a result of stop and search. Although they do also offer a number of alternative causations throughout the report, the headline is suggested to encapsulate the greater public perceptions of the causation of the riots, and their rapid escalation. These perceptions were supported during this research by innumerable accounts and regurgitations of this perception from both white and non-white residents. A clear indication of which was represented in the following example taken from interactions with a young black man from *ExCeLland*:

I had just got home from work {and was} in my uniform. I was just hanging around with my family outside the house and they {the police} threw me on the ground, put a gun to my head and started kicking me. That's when they went too far, there was no need for that. One police tried to get me on my own and hit me with a cosh, that's when I started shouting {to get other people's attention} and he put his cosh away. The police are always offering to fight us one-on-one but we always say 'take your vest off' that's how we know if they're serious. We've got them on tape {mobile phone video recording} doing {assaulting} a friend. We always tape them now but what can we do? We can't go to the police, the only option is the media, they're the ones that can do something. The police label you and take your picture.

(Private interview, black male, 19, *ExCeLland* resident, June 2012)

One example of the media using such recordings to raise awareness of the types of incidents outlined above unravelled in March, 2012, just months before the Games and the securitisation began in earnest. A 21 year old black man from Newham was arrested and placed in a police van the day after the 2011 riots, what follows is a report of this incident based upon his recordings:

Scotland Yard is facing a racism scandal after a black man used his mobile phone to record police officers subjecting him to a tirade of abuse in which he was told: 'The problem with you is you will always be a nigger' . . . he was made to feel 'like an animal' by police. He has also accused one officer of kneeling on his chest and strangling him. In the recording a police officer can be heard admitting he strangled the man because he was a 'cunt' . . . another officer . . . subjects the man to a succession of racist insults and adds: 'You'll always have black skin. Don't hide behind your colour'.

(Lewis, 2012)

As a consequence of such instances, this research discovered that the perceptions of policing and security from the community perspective were generally very distrustful. Furthermore, because Olympic policing and securitisation would vastly increase numbers of police in the borough this exemplified the fear of escalation of the persecution that formed a significant part of many of the non-white Newham *habitus*. This fear can be encapsulated in the following example that considers the controversial policing tactic

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known as ‘stop and search’ and its application to the creation of Olympic security concerns that foster the impression of fear.

10.10 – Stop and Search: The Implications of Section 60

With the Olympics around the corner the whole of Newham has been made into a control zone. This is particularly to do with limiting parking and traffic, but it has implications for the dispersal orders and the powers to move people out of the area. Our expectations are that community members, particularly young people, will continue to be targeted by the police and security forces because of the heightened state of alert created by the Olympics. This is where the stop and search techniques will be used. Stop and search is a very aggressive and intimidating form of policing that is conducted by a group of police officers, often against the individual. It often leaves the recipient angry, frustrated and resentful when they have done nothing more than walking down a street. This does the police no favours with local perceptions of police tactics or their opinions regarding public service or racial stereotyping.

(Private interview, Community worker, White, Female 35, May 2012)

Stop and search is a policing technique intended to be used as a preventative measure to reduce crime and increase safety.¹⁷⁴ This legislation empowered police with

¹⁷⁴ In 1984 Section 1 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) standardised the power of police to stop and search for stolen or prohibited articles throughout England and Wales. PACE determined that there must be an objective basis for police suspicion to stop and search – such as reliable information from the public or an individual ‘acting suspiciously’. The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act of 1994 (Section 60) empowered the police to stop and search members of the public in anticipation of acts of violence. Further legislation in the form of the Terrorism Act of 2000 (Section 44) enabled the police to stop and search persons and vehicles in order to look for articles that could be used in acts of terrorism. Ministry of Justice figures published in October 2007 revealed that black and Asians were more likely to be stopped than whites. Within London

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the right to stop members of the public and search them for a variety of reasons. Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act of 1994 states that Police have:

The right to search people in a defined area at a specific time when they believe, with good reason, that; there is the possibility of serious violence; or that a person is carrying a dangerous object or offensive weapon; or that an incident involving serious violence has taken place and a dangerous instrument or offensive weapon used in the incident is being carried in the locality.

There are two points of justification for stop and search and both revolve around ‘suspicion’. In the generic use of stop and search a Police officer must have a good reason to conduct a stop and search and are required to inform the person of this reason before conducting the search. According to the MPS website,¹⁷⁵ being stopped does not mean you are under arrest or have done something wrong. In some cases, people are simply ‘stopped as part of a wide-ranging effort to catch criminals in a targeted public place’. Furthermore, the website lists other *legitimate* reasons for being stopped and searched:

- If they think you're carrying a weapon, drugs or stolen property.
- If there has been serious violence or disorder in the vicinity.
- If they are looking for a suspect who fits your description.

these figures indicated that, in 2005/2006, black people were more than seven times more likely to be stopped than whites. This is particularly problematic in diverse boroughs such as Newham. For more information see: <http://www.historyextra.com/feature/stop-and-search-what-can-we-learn-history>

¹⁷⁵ For more information see: http://www.met.police.uk/stopandsearch/what_is.htm

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- As part of anti-terrorism efforts.

The MPS claimed that this tactic had the support of the people. In 2012 Commander Tony Eastaugh stated that ‘stop and search is an important policing tactic and a deterrent to crime. We know from public attitude surveys that communities support us when it is used fairly and professionally’.¹⁷⁶ However, in response to public allegations involving the perceived racial profiling of ‘Stop and Search’ the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) stated that searches that yield no arrests were ‘antagonistic and highly intrusive’ (Townsend, 2012). Indeed, analysis conducted by the London School of Economics and the Open Society Justice Initiative revealed that ‘a black person was 29.7 times more likely to be stopped and searched than a white person’. The findings, based on government statistics, represent ‘the worst international record of discrimination involving stop and search’ (ibid). In an area of hyper-ethno-diversity, such as Newham, ‘Stop and Search’ becomes increasingly problematic. When such a tactic became magnified by the ever-increasing fears bound up in Olympic securitisation and the associated increased threat of terrorism those stopped and searched increased exponentially.

The overriding perception that Section 60 had racial connotations is perhaps best emphasised by the following example that somewhat absent-mindedly provided for an unbiased perspective on ‘Stop and Search’ tactics that went unsaid throughout Newham. It was stated from the perspectives of white Albanian migrant community organisation Shpresa:

¹⁷⁶ More information is available at: <http://www.met.police.uk/stopandsearch/>

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We, as an organisation are invited to lots of community events to talk about the policing of the area. Stop and search doesn't really affect us because we are white.

Although, the blacks and Asians do have a lot of issues with it.

(Private interview, Shpresa Founder, Female, 33, October 2011)

10.11 – Olympic Neighbourhood Policing

To step away from any notion of institutional racism what was beyond debate was that the Games brought additional concerns regarding the drafting of police and security from outside of the MPS. These concerns evidenced within a personal interview (January, 2012) with the Chair of the NYPP who was a white male in his mid-50's and to some extent a quintessential middle-Englander:

There is a London way of policing and there is significant community anxiety concerning bringing in police officers from outside of the Metropolitan area that do not understand how to police within Newham. This is a unique community because of its composition and demographics. The local policing style reflects this uniqueness. For example, the local police know you don't shake a Muslim woman by the hand and you take your shoes off when entering someone's home. Little things like that make all the difference. It's a London attitude, it's basically how you walk and talk. People unfamiliar with the culture simply act differently and will not know the particular dynamics of interaction within this community which is vastly different from anywhere else. Unfamiliarity and ignorance breed tension.

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This anxiety will, I feel, be increased by the vast numbers of police officers that will be working in this area that are not from within the Met {MPS}. The concern is that heavy handed policing will occur as a consequence of simple miscommunication, difference or unfamiliarity. The community concern is that this will disproportionately affect young people from ethnic minorities, which will raise levels of discontent. This will provide a flashpoint. We are worried about the consequences for young people and, indeed, the whole community.

(Private interview, March 2012)

The implementation of security measures during Olympic-delivery formed a *de facto* highly visible occupying force represented by a massive additional force of police, security and British army. Security narratives also took non-human shape. This was most visible literally and through the media in relation to deploying high-velocity Anti-Aircraft missiles in residential areas. Some deployed on top of council tower blocks, some missile bearing aircrafts deployed along the river Thames. Both had their aim focused on Newham's airspace. Residents of the Fred Wigg tower block in the London borough of Waltham Forrest who had to endure living underneath such weaponry sought an ultimately futile judicial review regarding the legality of the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) decision to place missiles in such a residential area. Reports of such described the residents shock, anxiety and worry regarding the prospect of missiles being stationed on their towers and the fact that they were under a misapprehension about the nature of the equipment to be deployed and the risks their deployment would bring. (Norton-Taylor, 2012).

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In relation to this research the lawfulness and appropriateness of the positioning of these missiles are of secondary consideration to the fact that the belief they were necessary in the first place. To refer back to Ryan (2002), such actualities not only seemed ‘bizarre and outlandish’ to the local communities interacted with; in fact they seemed to be downright troubling. As a consequence of the fear regarding the anticipated community impact of such measures various organisations began initiatives intended to offset what they believed would be the considerable negative implications for local people, such as possible police persecution of local people – particularly local youth, restriction of movement and living in fear of the consequences of their homes becoming temporary missile silos.

An example of these initiatives was an NYPP designed information pack disseminated amongst Newham’s youth workers, who in turn disseminated such to Newham’s youth. This information was to be relayed to the local non-white and/or non-British youths, whom they believed would be disproportionately affected by Olympic security and policing. The pack contained information for young people explaining how they could expect their routines to be impinged and a ‘Safe Passage Card’ containing dates and destinations of ‘appointments’ at youth centres printed on. The NYPP believed that young people were inevitably going to be stopped and searched more frequently as a result of Olympic securitisation. This card was to provide the young person with what was hoped to be acceptable reasons to present to inquiring police for walking on Newham’s streets during Games time.

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Another example of reaction to the impending Olympic securitisation was the Newham Monitoring Project's (NMP) 'Community Legal Observer' initiative.¹⁷⁷ NMP recruited some 150 local people from a diversity of backgrounds and trained them to enable them to function as 'Community Legal Observer's' (CLO's). These CLO's would form teams that would monitor the police during Games time. These teams were intended to document the impact the police were having during the Games and indeed question the legality of certain policing tactics during this period. The CLO's were trained at a series of events led by NMP staff at their offices near Upton Park. This training taught the volunteers how to document and record the Olympic policing to come, which they were then to report upon to a centralised control room located in a back-office manned by NMP staff at their home base. This was intended to form a 'real time' picture of Olympic securitisation. The CLO's were to form the dual role of disseminating to the community 'Bust Cards'¹⁷⁸ which provided the recipient with an indication of their rights when stopped and confronted by the police.

Clearly, Newham's securitisation was the cause for much consternation amongst local people. Arguably they had good reason for this apprehension. In 2006 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), who have the statutory responsibility for the inspection of Police forces, identified Newham as 'failing', in policing terms, with regards:

¹⁷⁷ See: <http://www.nmp.org.uk/2012/05/volunteer-to-become-nmp-community-legal.html> for more information.

¹⁷⁸ Interestingly, as was flagged up during one of the training events the targeting of who the most applicable recipient of these 'Bust Cards' would be would require the CLO's to adopt the same stereotyping that the MPS were accused of using for 'Stop and Search'.

. . . the fact that every category of Newham's performance sits within the bottom quartile of its MSBCU {Most Similar Basic Command Unit} group, recent declines in performance in all categories except one {robbery reduction} and its under-performance over the past three years, indicates a pressing need to review and significantly improve upon many fundamental BCU processes.

(HMIC, 2006, p. 1)

This chapter has illustrated that the widely publicised security measures attached to 2012 Olympic-delivery as pre-requisite for Games. These were perceived by many locals to be intended to restrict movement, prohibit access and relegate quotidian Newham life firmly into an inconsequential category for the duration of Olympic-delivery and Olympic Games. What this chapter has indicated is that little attention was given to the political and social implications of Olympic-delivery, which is emblematic of the politics of bread and circuses and building a city for a visiting class as explored by Eisinger (2000). This exemplification of some Olympic-related security outcomes indicates that the Olympic Games not only brought a 'Mega-Event' circus to Newham, it brought connotations of place ownership that intimated the borough belonged to an entirely different demographic compared to those who currently occupied it. This desirable demographic was specifically being sought to visit Newham for the event and then to populate the locale post-Games through an Olympic-themed dissemination of a particular set of norms and values that appeared an ill-fit to pre-Olympic Newham. The implications of this claim will now be considered.

Chapter 11. BIG GAME HUNTING: BAITING THE HOOKS

As previous chapters have illustrated, Olympic-delivery was a meticulous construction that had a divisive impact upon some sections of the Newham community. Olympic-delivery outcomes were underpinned by the widespread belief, portrayed by politicians and Olympic deliverers in the media and at community-consultation events, that all delivery measures were necessary precursors to successful Olympic-delivery, ‘*Olympic identity*’, the Olympic Games and their ‘*legacy*’. One aspect of Olympic ‘*legacy*’ that was widely touted was the inevitability of East London’s regeneration. This regeneration – never actually defined – ran in parallel to the delivery of the Olympic Games and is explored here in relation to the physical and symbolic implications of this urban modification. What follows is an analysis of some of the delivery-period outcomes of Newham’s Olympic-related gentrification. This explores some processes of Newham’s modification and whom the outcomes of such attracted impacted and repelled and what the consequences of this may prove to be.

11.1 – A Brave New World: Newham’s Urban Safari

Olympic-delivery Newham was a place of transition with the Olympic Games being utilised as a catalyst to make the borough more appealing to live, shop and work within and consequently, to attract to a new wave of migratory residents. This appraisal, which has been illustrated in earlier chapters, fits with neighbourhood modification models that can be categorised by the term gentrification. In a review of gentrification

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literature Slater, Curran and Lees purported that this schema related to all aspects of the ‘production of space for – and consumption by – a more affluent and very different incoming population’ (2004, p. 1145). Gentrification is deeply rooted in the social dynamics and economic trends of an area and its signifiers and effects are heavily influenced by the nature of economic restructuring and the goals of those charged with urban regeneration (van Weesep, 1984, p. 80). Previous studies of which have incorporated a plethora of topics such as policing strategies and the role of retail within this milieu (Atkinson, 2003; Atkinson and Bridge, 2005; Smith, 2002; Zukin, 1995), which are considered here within the Newham context.

This research contends that Newham’s primary Olympic outcome can be considered a means of redressing the ‘Rent Gap’¹⁷⁹ of a deprived but potentially valuable location that lay within an easy commute of *The City*. The Olympic healing of ‘London’s Gash’ ensured that the area would, during Olympic-delivery and beyond, yield higher returns from its land in the form of rents, property values and as result it has, and will continue to attract new residents to the area. This was intended to help alleviate the plethora of social issues that signified this borough as one of the most deprived in Britain. This consideration rested upon the assumption that benefits would ‘trickle-down’ to the lower and working-classes in a manner similar to the housing market; however, there is a body of research that indicates these anticipated benefits are often completely captured by the middle and upper-classes (Holcomb and Beauregard, 1981, p. 3).

¹⁷⁹ The term ‘Rent Gap’ refers to the shortfall between the actual economic return taken from an area of land given its present land use (capitalised ground rent) and the potential return it would yield if it were put to its optimal, highest and best use (potential ground rent). As a rent gap increases, it creates lucrative opportunities for developers, investors, home-buyers and local governments to orchestrate a shift in land use – for instance, from working-class residential to middle or upper-class residential or high-end commercial (Smith, 1979; Lees, Slater and Wyly, 2008, p.52).

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In accord with Holcomb and Beauregard (1981) the outcomes of some pre-*'legacy'* adventurous forays of independent urbanites within Newham have indicated the folly of such assumptions. These were exemplified in this research most notably in the form of BV (of *ExCeLland*) wherein urban-regeneration did not appear to result in a *'trickling-down'* of benefits to the lower or working-classes. Rather, they appeared to facilitate the social exclusion of disadvantaged groups at the hands of an incoming affluent demographic that were increasingly uncomfortable in their new surroundings. In this locale the rhythms of post-gentrification life resonated to the beat of inequality, disparity, division and distrust; paradoxes of poverty and affluence uncomfortably co-existed in the same urban location. This was the direct result of social mixing that facilitated a life of incredible, inescapable contrast. For example, on one side of Wesley Avenue (the road that separated the private and social housing of the estate) sat a two bedroom flat for sale for £425,000.¹⁸⁰ On the other a ecstatic young black girl aged 18 could be found crouched on the curbside proudly recounting to the researcher how she had managed to get a job serving food on the Olympic Park for £8.25 an hour for the few weeks of the Olympic Games. She stated that this wage was more than double what she could get for the day-to-day job delivering fast-food in the locality. Furthermore, a little way down the street was a 4 bedroom flat for rent at £555 per week;¹⁸¹ the view from the bedroom window was of a small, dilapidated flat on the opposite side of the road. This one bedroom flat housed 15 recent migrants seeking work from Nigeria.

¹⁸⁰Examples are available at:

http://www.nestoria.co.uk/britannia-village/flat/sale#dyn:/coord_51.506799,0.025438,51.504128,0.017971/flat/sale/sortby-price_highlow

¹⁸¹ Examples are available at:

http://homes.trovit.co.uk/index.php/cod.ad/type.2/what_d.house%20britannia%20village/id.71691h1yxTt/pos.1/pop.0/

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In Bourdieu's (1986) '*species of capital*' model *economic capital* is considered the most efficient form of *capital* because of its ease of conversion into appropriate forms of *cultural* or *symbolic capital* (Calhoun *et al.*, 1993, p. 5). Quite obviously the private residents maintained economic dominance in BV. This *economic capital* was converted in BV through both its literal and symbolic representations; these permitted access to specific social groupings, which afforded those permitted access a degree of *social capital*. In this regard *social capital* refers to the sum of actual and potential resources that are mobilised through such networks, which emphasises the relationality of this form of *capital*. It appears that if we take BV as indicative of life in a post-Olympic gentrified Newham this once inclusive borough may well become populated with a variety of securitised gated communities that segregate themselves from the conceptual *other*, i.e. those lacking the *capital* to succeed within the re-ordered areas of Newham, which will alter the fabric of the borough accordingly, as will now be explored.

11.2 – Newham's Urban Emperors and Stepford Wives

To move away from predictions of future outcomes and apply the lessons learned from BV to the wider context of Newham's Olympic-delivery it appeared that Games-related modification introduced a proliferation of indicators of change that demanded a certain level of *economic capital* to obtain access to (or at least feel at home within).

These included the Westfield Stratford City shopping mall and the Olympic Village,¹⁸² long advertised as a post-Olympic living space, both of which may be considered

¹⁸² The Olympic Village is, at time of writing, to be converted into 2,818 homes for 6,000 people. Triathlon homes will take over ownership of 1,379 homes with 675 of which intended for social rent. The remaining 1,439 homes will be available to rent or buy on the private market. For more see Meredith (2012).

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exemplars of gentrification. These were symbolic and physical creations that generated and validated specific norms and values of *social capital* and attracted only those with the requisite *habitus* who were pre-disposed to succeed and feel comfortable within. This process was understood as a core aspect of middle-classes cultural reproduction that was established and maintained through the ownership of *economic capital* (Allan, 1989; Butler and Robson, 2001; Wilmott, 1987).

Newham's Olympically themed renewal is therefore considered a means to attract those well-endowed with *economic capital*; such groups have been described as transnational elites (Friedmann and Wolff, 1982), stateless persons (Wallerstein, 1993), cosmopolites (Hannerz, 1992) or 'rich ignorant pricks that look down on everyone that's not like them' (James, Black Newham resident, 17, private interview 2012). Often written about as post-place *flaneurs* such residents believe they live in a world of culture (King, 1993, p. 152) and seek new and emerging 'trendy' places to occupy that satiate and validate their pursuit of 'trendy' living. One model of this demographic was outlined in the work of human geographer Brian Berry (1985) who listed the following common denominators that often indicated inclusion into such classifications, which he referred to as an '*Urban Gentry*':

- *Childless Households.*
- *Unmarried Adults.*
- *Higher Education Levels.*

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Newham's Olympic-related re-ordering aspirations resonated with the notion that young, usually professional, middle-class people have, since the late 1970s, been more inclined to postpone marriage and children and increasingly explore independent urban living more than previous generations (Lipton, 1976; Smith, 1979). Arguably, in this regard Newham's Olympic-related regeneration was emblematic of the regeneration of other post-industrial settings, wherein white-collar service sector workers and an associated consumption culture have guided urban developments (Ley, 1996). This was perhaps best signified by the Westfield Stratford City shopping centre that included specific types of designer shops, high-end restaurants and a casino. The injection of such, amongst others social cues informed perceptions of expectation of inclusion and exclusion in modified Newham that were increasingly based upon class and wealth. Interestingly, Westfield Stratford City was awarded planning permission some 2 years before London was awarded the Olympic Games but has, as with so many other examples, become inseparable to the 2012 Games and became synonymous with the Olympic-*'legacy'*-related narrative. Accordingly, Westfield Stratford City became a key signifier of Olympic-related regeneration discourse and in doing so became a key facet of activity that has to be analysed as part and parcel of the reproduction and transformation of the Olympic-delivery schema (Harvey, 1989, p. 355). What follows addresses the Westfield milieu in greater detail and indicates what this shopping mall represents in the Newham context.

11.3 – Westfield Stratford City: The Shiny House on the Hill?

Upon opening Westfield Stratford City was the largest urban shopping centre in the European Union in terms of size. Boasting 300 stores, restaurants and entertainment facilities the mall was positioned next to Olympic Park. For Newham's Mayor, Sir Robin Wales Westfield's opening represented much more than a shiny new shopping complex as he elucidated at its grand unveiling in September 2011:

Westfield represents more than just bricks, mortar, fabulous shops and restaurants, it has been instrumental in helping us transform the lives of our residents by providing them with employment and jobs that they can turn into fulfilling and rewarding careers . . . Shoppers, tourists and visitors will also bring economic benefits to Newham and will leave a lasting legacy long after the Olympics has rolled out of town.

(Sir Robin Wales, 2011¹⁸³)

This thesis has documented various instances of Sir Robin Wales's public oration. It is crucial to bear in mind that Sir Robin, like many others examined in this study, was engaged within specific role-related, highly political interplay and all that that entailed. Accordingly his actions may have had the bipartite intended outcome of appealing to voters in addition to him eliciting a personal satisfaction for creating jobs within his borough. In this regard the statistics he quotes may provide 'a kind of continuous

¹⁸³ For more see:

<http://www.newham.gov.uk/News/2011/September/WestfieldStratfordCityNewhamslastinglegacy.htm?Printable=true>

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justification for existing' (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 240), which were validation of his Mayoralty.

Evaluations of Westfield experienced at community events throughout this research habitually relied upon the malls creation of employment opportunities for local people. Westfield's own official statistics indicated that this shopping complex created 25,000 construction jobs during its building and 18,000 permanent jobs upon opening, of which 10,000 of these positions were in retail.¹⁸⁴ According to Workplace,¹⁸⁵ a Newham job brokerage scheme set up in 2007 to help local people into employment, 1,050 Newham residents attained work within Westfield in 2011. That said such figures did not differentiate between full and part-time or temporary positions within their figures. These statistics indicated best-case scenarios of Newham employment ratios of approximately 1/18 if one optimistically assumed that all Newham residents were employed on permanent contracts – 1,050 new jobs did not seem quite so impressive when considered in this context.

However, this research argues that the primary impact of Westfield should not be measured in terms of employment figures. Rather, the impact of this shopping complex should be considered in relation to what it represents in relation to the levels of *hysteresis* that it created within Newham's communities during Olympic-delivery. Accordingly, Westfield was analysed here in relation to its role within the physical and symbolic segregation of Newham. In this regard, Westfield offered an opportunity to contextualise the reordering of Newham's local communities and the segregation between the

¹⁸⁴ More data is available at:

http://uk.westfield.com/stratfordcityleasing/assets/stratfordcityleasing/news/press-toolkit/Westfield_Stratford_City_Fact_Sheet_May_2011.pdf

¹⁸⁵ For more information see:

<http://www.newham.gov.uk/News/2011/September/WestfieldStratfordCityNewhamslastinglegacy.htm?Printable=true>

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demographics. It was emblematic of the means that permeated Newham throughout Olympic-delivery and succinctly represented the intended outcomes of Olympic regeneration – to attract a more desirable, i.e. bourgeoisie, demographic to visit and populate post-Olympic Newham. This was exemplified by the following case study.

Craig: A Branded Life

Craig was 29 years-old, white and English, he was the subject of an article from a London newspaper which presented him as an ideal Westfield customer (see Appendix A – Figure 28). This article was expanded upon some time afterwards during a private interview with the researcher. Craig lived with his wife Clair and their three-year-old son in Upminster, Essex. They had chosen to live in this location because it provided them with access to the space and seclusion of Essex, access to good school networks and it was close enough for Craig to commute easily to The City where he worked as an IT support team leader for a large American Bank. Craig had a number of opinions regarding the 2012 Games that he considered representative of many people ‘like him’, i.e. young affluent, educated family men. The Olympics would, according to Craig, have a significant impact upon the ‘local areas’, including Newham, which when considered minus the beneficial Olympic lens were described as a ‘bit rough’ and ‘not the sort of place I’d want to go to’. This perception began to change during Olympic-delivery as Craig elucidated ‘now they’ve got Westfield it’s changed a lot of people’s minds about the area. Now we do go there for dinner and the casino after work on a Friday, instead of going to Liverpool Street or another of the usual places’. Moreover, ‘Me and the missus

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{sic} go there at the weekend to do a bit of shopping and have a day out, it's really nice. It's a bit more convenient than going into central (London) and a bit more up to date than Bluewater (an Essex shopping Mall). When pressed on whether he would venture away from Westfield to explore the surrounding areas Craig replied with an emphatic 'no' and laughed 'why would I want to do that?' before adding 'I do go to Upton Park a bit (West Ham United's home ground located in Newham) to watch the football but I'm a Man U (Manchester United) fan so I don't go often, that's enough for me there's nothing else'. Craig's final perspective, arguably one that bears considerable weight to the prospects of Newham's post-Olympic legacy, in relation to attracting young families to move to the area post-Games was telling: 'I wouldn't want to live there, Essex is an easy commute to London and it's such a nicer area to live in, I will keep going to Westfield and I will go and watch the Olympics, but I like it where we are {living in Essex}'.

(Private interview, July 2012)

The above interview indicated that perceptions of 'Newham' were beginning to evolve during Olympic-delivery as a result of a Westfield-inspired regeneration of the borough. Arguably, Westfield was indicative of a broader change of perceptions of Newham that may expand to include larger swathes of the borough in the post-Olympic years. However, during Olympic-delivery the rest of Newham was not quite so amenable to accomplishing the aim of keeping Hugo Boss-loving Craig and his like comfortable and content. Consequently, access to Westfield and the Olympic Park had to be carefully choreographed to enable this demographic to avoid the areas that may be deemed a 'bit rough'. The physical segregation that enabled Craig *et al* to differentiate between

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Olympic Newham and traditional Newham took the shape of what could best be termed ‘corporate kettling’.¹⁸⁶ This restricted and guided the movement of affluent Newham visitors directing them towards the key landmarks of consumption that lay between public transport entry and exit points, namely Westfield itself and the Olympic Park. This was highlighted by Westfield’s prediction that 70% of Olympic visitors would pass through its doors.¹⁸⁷ To put this into context, the Olympic planners estimated that 10 million people would visit during the Games, suggesting that 7 million would be subject to this ‘corporate kettling’ during the Olympic Games alone.

These acts ensured that those entering the locale could easily enter and leave the area without setting foot within ‘old’ Newham, with plenty of private parking spaces provided in the bowels of the complex (for some 5,000 vehicles¹⁸⁸). Additionally, if one were to use public transport the entry and exit points of *Stratfordland*’s public rail hub were redesigned to encourage travellers to emerge within the confines of Westfield, rather than enter *Stratfordland* itself. However, if one did inadvertently use the traditional entry / exit point the old *Stratfordland* was masked from view by the creation of a visual and symbolic concealing that suggested there was nothing worth seeing in that direction. The measures employed to mark ‘old’ Newham as a no-go area and some implications of these are now explored.

¹⁸⁶ Kettling is a tactic used by the police for controlling large crowds during demonstrations and protests. The success of which depends upon the restricting or preventing movement. Corporate kettling is defined here, as a more suggestive, sub-conscious form of this tactic where people, unless armed with other knowledge would assume that there was only direction to follow around Stratfordland. The term ‘Corporate Kettling’ was conceptualised by Professor Richard Giulianotti and outlined to the researcher in the vicinity of the Olympic Park during in 2012 and is attributed here accordingly.

¹⁸⁷ For more see:

http://uk.westfield.com/stratfordcityleasing/assets/stratfordcityleasing/news/press-toolkit/Westfield_Stratford_City_Fact_Sheet_May_2011.pdf

¹⁸⁸ These parking spaces were not available for public use during the Olympic Games period (June – September 2012). See: <http://uk.westfield.com/stratfordcity/getting-here/car-park-closures> for more information.

11.4 – Fences and Walls: Concealing Ugly Newham

Newham was home to much that could not be considered beautiful and hence needed to be masked from lines of Olympic sight. In *Stratfordland* there was a particularly dated shopping centre that was shielded by a purpose-built 250m-titanium sculpture named *The Shoal*, after its likeness to a shoal of fish (see Appendix A – Figure 29). In 2009 Newham council held a competition¹⁸⁹ to ‘solve the problem’ of masking a 1970s shopping centre that would blot the Olympic landscape. This ‘public realm intervention’ competition was won by London based Architecture, Urban Design and Landscape practise Studio Egret West. This ‘beatification’ was, according to the designers, intended to ‘turn a negative into a positive’. Newham Mayor Sir Robin Wales commented that Newham was undergoing unprecedented transformation and the Shoal was a significant part of the £13.5m public realm project to ‘improve’ Stratford for residents, businesses and, importantly, to offer a unique visitor experience.¹⁹⁰ Those outside looking in were not the only ones that appreciated this transformation and there were local residents that also appreciated the ‘improvements’. There can be little doubt that narratives of gentrification that vilify areas and damage culture have been overwhelmingly critical (Atkinson, 2003). However, in the Olympic-delivery Newham context, especially when considering the lack of holistic identity within the borough, it was not surprising to find some local positive perspectives of these outcomes. Indeed, such views became increasingly more apparent as the Games approached. These were exemplified by the following case study.

¹⁸⁹ More information is available at: http://www.e-architect.co.uk/london/the_shoal_stratford.htm

¹⁹⁰ For more see: http://www.e-architect.co.uk/london/the_shoal_stratford.htm

Jasmine: A Pro-Olympic Local?

Jasmine was 38. She was a white Austrian Muslim who had moved to Newham in 2003, she was married and had 5 children. Jasmine stated that she was pro-Olympic; 'I like what is happening in the area, they have invested lots in the shop fronts and on fixing the pavements. It is making the area more attractive. I try to keep informed with what is going on in the community but I have never been consulted and never had any chance to have a say in how I would like the Olympics to change this area but they have done a nice job so far. For Jasmine the only real concern relating to the 2012 Games and the concomitant regeneration was its implications upon local traffic levels, 'it used to take me 15 minutes to get to work, now it takes 40 minutes on a good day. That is going to be a nightmare during the Olympics I think I'm going to have to take time off, all the road closures and them digging up the roads is really causing problems, it's been like that for ages now'.

(Private interview, February 2012)

For some, Westfield, and the social cues it represented, were welcome modifications to the Newham landscape as the perspectives above both indicated. However, for others these instilled and reinforced fear and exclusion from all things 'Olympic'. Olympic-delivery regeneration modified large swathes of the Newham landscape, most notably in *Stratfordland*. This physical regeneration concomitantly delivered a symbolic reordering of the location, which became increasingly manifest as

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the Games approached. What follows demonstrates that although individuals were not *physically* restrained from these locales, the results of Olympic-delivery re-ordering ensured that some considered Newham's regenerated locales *foreign* and thus no-go areas that were not for them.

'Tasha: An Un-stereotypical Stereotype

'Tasha was a black Dutch-born Newham resident who had lived in the borough for 15 years. She recently divorced her Nigerian husband for domestic violence after enduring 14 years of abuse. She recounted stories of being kicked down the stairs whilst pregnant and the like with the comfort of someone discussing what they had watched on television.

She had three children, the eldest being a boy of 11 who was into 'gangsta rap' music and hanging around on the streets with his peers. 'Tasha recollected a discussion she had had with him stating that he needed to change his attitude because, like it or not, he was an identity fit for the negative Newham male stereotype. She stated that all the kids that were brought up around her area {ExCeLland} fitted the same stereotype, coming as they did from single parent families that were either on benefits or in low-paid work. 'Tasha believed there was no hope for most of the kids that grew up that way and did not feel that any of the Olympic-delivery outcomes would filter down to them; rather benefit would be for the rich. When asked whether she had been to Westfield she laughed arguing: 'How could I take three kids there when I knew I couldn't buy them anything? It was my daughters' birthday last month and she wanted an iPod touch, at Westfield they

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cost £150 but I got one locally for a lot less {Implying that she had not bought one from a shop} Westfield's isn't for people like us, I mean look at us'.

(Fieldwork notes, February 2012)

This account builds upon the securitisation issues addressed earlier by providing insights into the unsettled nature of life during Olympic-delivery where society was under constant re-negotiation. Perceptions of such uncertainty became manifest by blasé attitudes to life, the Olympics and the 'legacy'. Unsurprisingly, these tactics alienated those that comprised the communities intended to be hidden from the view of Olympic visitors, kept away from Olympic locales or otherwise vilified. An exceedingly common thread that linked the perceptions of those that lived within *Stratfordland* and those that lived within *ExCeLland* and indeed throughout Newham was that *Stratfordland* had taken on a new resonance. For some long-term Newham residents the outcome of this new resonance meant that it was no longer accessible; they felt they did not fit there, and as a consequence had little desire to adapt and avoided *Stratfordland* and other regenerated areas. On many levels, they felt excluded from this newly created, re-ordered Newham space.

The above speaks to notions of heightened social inequality and inadequacy that have been exemplified by Olympic-delivery. This example resonates with the work of urban sociologist Mike Davis who commented in his study of Los Angeles that the dispossessed often become trapped in new forms of spatial apartheid where they become trapped within their own areas, the objects of remote surveillance and repressive controls (1990). This perspective resonated with Suttles (1972) conceptualisation that individuals

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within a city collectively assign a 'cognitive map' or a classification of people and places accumulated through the historic and social ranking of space. This correlation between the worth of the individual in relation to the accessibility of place was furthered by Sampson (2009) who purported that in symbiotic differentiation to Tasha's perceptions that Westfield is inaccessible to her, her version of accessible Newham may be perceived inaccessible to those that are comfortable within Westfield. This cognitive accessibility schema has wider consequences which became more prevalent as 'Tasha defined her concerns over her parenting relationship with her son:

Considering her son would inevitably be stereotyped as a black 'hoodie' that was in a gang and listened to gangsta music 'Tasha also realised that the boy came from what many would call a broken home with a history of violence. She had thus warned him that the perception would limit him in life. 'Tasha reasoned that such worry if acted upon might discourage him to be a different way that would in turn make him liable to either stay at home and withdraw and have no friends as all his friends were, in her opinion 'the same'. She also worried that if that happened he would become a 'victim' because he was different and not conforming to the masculine codes of the street. 'Tasha main concern was that if her son continued the way he did he would likely become involved with gangs and get in trouble with the police. At the same time, if he changed he would be victimised by the local community; it was a Catch 22 situation and she knew it.

When asked to describe how such concerns impacted upon her life and others like her she recounted many examples that could be inferred to create what might best be called the prison of – Newham – parenthood. These prisons of parenthood consisted of

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single parent families wherein the children witness domestic violence, which, according to numerous sources encountered within this research, was emblematic of Newham life at the lowest end. These parents had little by the way of social structure to their lives and were unable to afford the childcare or access the advice that would enable them to enter meaningful paid employment. This 'trap' ensured that these parents had a choice of bringing their children up and being there for them or working and letting them fend for themselves. Instances of both were visibly apparent.

When asked whether 'Tasha intended to seek Olympic-related employment she commented that it was so difficult to get her state benefits started because of the various complexities of the processes. She dreaded having to go through this. She stated that the benefits did not begin until a month after signing on which effectively would mean that she would have no income for a month. Furthermore, 'Tasha stated that because the only Olympic jobs that were available for people like her were temporary contracts that would end after the Olympic Games, coming off benefits for such opportunities was not an intelligent move.

(Fieldwork notes, March 2012)

'Tasha's perspectives regarding the short-sighted 'benefit' of temporary Olympic employment was indicative of research conducted by Marrs (2003) that explored the validity of such short-term employment benefits as beneficial Olympic hosting outcomes. The views illustrated above indicate the perceptions of one Newham resident and clearly does not speak for all. However, her view was indicative of a certain demographic who represented a particular type of Newham life. If one sought to contrast this lifestyle to

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Newham's urban renewal, it would be readily apparent within even the most cursory comparison between Westfield *et al* and the average Newham high street.

11.5 – Viva Las Newham: An Adults Playground?

The differentiation between the old and the new in terms of shopping within Newham (Appendix A – Figure 30 indicates the view that one encounters when entering Westfield) illustrated that the most fundamental components of everyday life were deeply laden with meaning in this particular place at this particular time. The photograph (to be found in Appendix A – Figure 30) illustrated the high-end retail outlets that proliferated Westfield. It indicates that John Lewis – a high-end department store lay to the left and Waitrose, another high-end (grocery) store was in the immediate vicinity. Dominating the skyline behind these is Aspers Casino, which catered to well-heeled clientele that sought to gamble after eating and drinking in one of the many restaurants or bars in the mall. A contrast to the typical Newham high street and the generic Newham populace has been provided in photographic form in Appendix A (Figures 31-33). This demonstrated a fundamental dichotomy that illustrated the juxtaposition of everyday life during Olympic-delivery. A particularly good indicator of this dichotomy was to be found within the realm of gambling and the contrast of Aspers casino to Newham's proliferation of betting shops.¹⁹¹

¹⁹¹ Betting shops were considered problematic within Newham with Labour Councillor Neil Wilson proposing a crackdown in June, 2012 on the number of betting shops in the borough stating that Newham's streets were 'blighted by the prevalence of bookmakers' York (2012). This Newham blight, according to Shadow Minister for Public Health Diane Abbott MP for Hackney North and Stoke Newington, was the result of bookmakers targeting poor, deprived areas and exploiting those within. Abbott exemplified this statement in 2012 by illustrating that there were three times more betting shops in Newham than there were in the more prosperous borough of Richmond. For more information see: <http://www.dianeabbott.org.uk/news/speeches/news.aspx?p=102784>

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That said Newham was changing and it had succeeded in attracting affluent residents to the locale as a result of regeneration both before and during Olympic-delivery. These residents, as exemplified by BV, brought with them affluence, attitudes and expectations that did not necessarily sit easily within 'old' Newham. For example, this new wave of immigrant had particular demands for shopping, entertainment, security and transportation links. These demands often became manifest through differentiation to the perceptible *other* and by a reluctance to engage in Newham life outside of their comfort zones. An example of such is indicated in the following case study.

Blair, Vicky and the Patter of Tiny Feet . . . Leaving Newham

Blair was a 27-year-old white Scotsman who was married to Vic a white 26-year-old East Londoner. Blair was a Lawyer working from a Fleet Street Law firm and Vic worked throughout London as a freelance decorator. In 2009 they were looking to buy their first property and move from their rented accommodation in Vauxhall, located within the London borough of Lambeth. Their preference was to stay in Vauxhall but they eventually moved to a two-bedroom flat in ExCeLland because they 'got more for their money and it was just as quick to get to work from there'. When they decided to move to ExCeLland Blair recollected that many friends questioned why they would move to such a location that had a reputation for being 'unsafe' and 'full of foreigners'. Vic's family were particularly opposed to the whole idea because she had been brought up in East Ham until she was 10 when her family chose to move from the area to Essex because of

One unintended Olympic hosting outcome may therefore be inferred to be that bookmakers in certain parts of Newham would become less frequent as their residents and users become more affluent, which may be symbolic of the true Olympic legacy and the associated re-ordering of the area (See Appendix A – Figures 31 – 34 for further illustrations and explanation).

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the area 'getting run down and full of immigrants'. They thought it was ironic that the family had moved away from East London for Vic's benefit only to see her move back of her own accord some years later. However, undeterred the young couple bought their flat and moved in late July 2009.

The couple's perceptions of living in the area were formed from the perspective of using their flat as a hub from which to travel outside their local environs. They realised that they rarely spent time in ExCeLland other than in their flat. That said, they commented that when walking home from the DLR station they walked past one road that had on one side nice homes and on the other the run down homes that 'were council'. The couple were quick to articulate that they would 'hate to live there and have to look out their windows at homes that people didn't take care of, the people living there are just Chavy¹⁹² basically'. Their life in ExCeLland was one of seclusion and isolation from the local community with Blair citing the only interaction they had beyond their gated flat was when attending the local gym. Those that they shared their block of flats with were 'people like us, young professionals from outside the local area'. The couple liked to socialise and when they did they would select specific areas that they felt comfortable within, such as 'Canary Wharf, central London and the O2 (in the borough of Greenwich across the Thames from Newham)'. However, the young couples perspective of the area changed in 2011 when Vic fell pregnant and they began to re-evaluate their home and their locale.

In mid-July 2012 whilst searching for a 'child-appropriate' property Blair commented that the Olympics had changed Newham for the better. He proselytised that

¹⁹² The term CHAV is a term of denigration that stands for Council Housed And Violent. For a full account of the term and its connotations see the publication *CHAVS: The Demonization of the Working Class* (Jones, 2011).

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he wished the Games had occurred sooner and that he and Vic had had the opportunity to enjoy Westfield more when they were childfree. For him the place (i.e. Newham) had become 'more attractive' as a result of the Olympic regeneration. He reasoned 'I like Westfield because it's convenient and gives the area a bit more prestige, Stratford is not just a shit-hole anymore. All the talk about various Olympic legacies are not necessarily going to help the area but one thing that will definitely benefit all is the improved transport links'. However, these modifications had not, in his opinion, fixed the fundamental problems of the area from the perspective of young families. He wanted a 'cleaner and safer area' to bring up his daughter where English was the predominant language heard and where the schools were much better (i.e. not prone to gang violence and bullying). For these reasons the couple had decided that Newham was not a place where they wanted to bring up their daughter and began to plan to move. This time they sought a move further east – to Essex. Blair added that the Olympic-related modifications of Newham, although 'nice', did not 'take precedence over fundamental parenting considerations. Suburban life is much more appealing'. In this regard Vic's life had now truly come full circle as they repeated the flight of her parents from East London to Essex for the sake of their child.

(Private interview, July 2012)

The findings discussed here are indicative of Berry's (1985) '*residential choice theory*', which presumes that couples and families evaluate prospective locales in relation to a number of key criteria such as quality and price of housing and services within the local area. This theory suggests that the introduction of children necessitates a re-

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evaluation of the criterion, which inevitably prioritises safety and education to a higher degree than those without children. This re-evaluation often results in moving from recently gentrified areas to locales with a more established and more highly regarded education systems (Berry, 1985). As research suggests a school's proximity to social disadvantage has a direct correlation to lower school performance and provides barriers to their improvement (Woods and Levacic, 2002; Levacic and Woods, 2002; Clark, Dyson and Millward, 1999), a fact that ensured Blair and Vic were not willing to risk their child's education for the other benefits of Newham life.

The above interview was suggestive of Berry's (1985) consideration that childlessness is a particularly important factor in relation to the continued occupancy of post-gentrified areas that tend to have low-quality schools. Once the occupiers of gentrified areas do settle and have children they tend to move away from gentrified areas in search of better schools, as was validated by the comments of the community centre manager of BV. This assumption was also in congruence with the findings of Robson and Butler (2001) whose gentrification-related research in the inner London borough of Lambeth demonstrated that middle-class families with children left the area at or around secondary-school transfer age and, accordingly, they could not find a single child from a middle-class family in a Lambeth secondary school due to their perceived poor standards of education. In this regard building a city as an entertainment venue is a very different undertaking than building a city to accommodate residential interests (Eisinger 2000, p. 317).

Gentrification permeated Olympic-delivery discourse via the interchangeable epithets of renewal, revitalisation and regeneration (Wyly and Hammel, 2005, p. 36). The

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outcomes were primarily orientated toward the ‘*Urban Gentry*’ (Berry, 1985) or indeed the ‘*Creative Classes*’ (Florida, 2002) rather than the needs of Newham’s pre-Olympic populace. In accordance with Florida’s assertion this chapter indicated that Newham’s regeneration will continue to be orientated towards the ‘creative class’ rather than the ‘conservative middle classes’, such as Blair and Vic or Craig and his ‘missus’ who have young families and prefer life in the suburbs (Florida, 2002; Ley, 1980; 1994; 1996). This ‘creative class’ are best signified by young childless couples, gays, bohemians, academics, scientists, artists, entrepreneurs and students amongst others who are seen as fundamental to economic growth in the regenerated contemporary city (Lees, Slater and Wyly, 2008, p. xix). Perhaps most crucially for Newham, Florida’s hypothesis rests upon the divisive model that this ‘creative class’ seeks diversity to validate its choice, however the outcome of their introduction dilutes the very diversity and creativity that attracted them to the location in the first place by raising the cost of living and pushing the, oft economically impoverished, perpetrators of diversity elsewhere (Cole, 1987; Ley, 2003). Therefore, it may be considered the fate of Newham’s long-term regeneration and its transformation into a place where people and families truly want to ‘live, work and stay’ depends upon the widespread improvement of its state schools. The implications of which would truly be an Olympic ‘*legacy*’ for all.

CONCLUSION: EXTINGUISHING THE OLYMPIC TORCH

This research advocated that Olympic-delivery would be best explored during its evolution via ethnographic method. It argues that Olympic-delivery is best considered separately to other forms of the Olympic milieu thus allowing for a critical analysis of its processes, development, implications and outcomes to be ascertained without taking into account the often-eclipsing properties of both the event itself or its promised ‘*legacy*’. This segregation facilitates a separation between those implicated by Olympic delivery through choice and circumstance to occur, and enables the rhetoric and reality to be contrasted as it unfurled. Consequently, the specific focus of this research was the seven-year Olympic-delivery window between 2005 and 2012 wherein London became *The Olympic City*.¹⁹³

London’s *Olympic City* categorisation manifested itself in myriad ways that have, and will continue to, inform Olympic-related academic analysis for years to come. The specific purpose of this research was to examine, in real-time, the ‘emergent fissures’ (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2006) of the 2012 Games by illuminating the experiential aspects of its delivery. In this regard, and in accordance with some of Silk’s (2011) multitude of suggestions for insightful 2012 analysis, this research got ‘under the skin’ of London 2012. This methodology facilitated a consideration of Olympic-related passivity and activity, consumption and production, engagement and escapology, by exploring the Olympic-delivery milieu from a bottom-up ethnographic perspective.

Research focus was placed upon the contestations, ambiguities and contradictions of Olympic-delivery; as such it provided a reversal of the spectacle (Kellner, 2008). This

¹⁹³ This was a title London shared with Beijing between 2005 and 2008 and then Rio from 2009 until 2012.

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thesis explored the London 2012 Olympic Games in relation to its impact upon those who were directly implicated by its delivery, either through choice or circumstance, namely those that comprised the local communities. These were the agents that experienced Olympic-delivery, first-hand, and had a direct stake in its implications, processes and outcomes. It was through their experiences that the realities of 2012 Olympic-delivery became manifest. This was their stories, rehashed and reformed in suitably academic prose.¹⁹⁴

Olympic-delivery was considered a facilitator and producer of a type of identity that was diverse, fluid and psycho-social. The outcomes of this trilogy of issues became manifest throughout the Olympic-delivery period in a diversity of localised perceptions that included such variances as:

- ‘The Olympic Games is the worst thing to happen to East London since the Blitz’ (AM Community worker, March, 2009).
- ‘The Olympics, it made no difference to my life’ (Jermaine, *ExCeLland* resident, July, 2012).
- ‘I can’t wait for the Olympics, I love athletics’ (Jill, decanted *Stratfordland* resident, May, 2010).
- ‘It’s all so exciting, it’s a shame we had to move’ (Saul, decanted *Stratfordland* resident, June, 2012).

¹⁹⁴ This prose was supported by a series of photographs provided in Appendix A. These snap shots of Newham life were included in accord with Les Back’s assertions that often words often fail to do justice to the vivid nature of everyday life. As Back stated quotation is not portraiture and if the sociological task is to bring writing to life then photos can be used as a valuable tool to add depth to research (2007, pp.17-18). These photographs illustrated the dichotomy of Newham life during Olympic-delivery and provided a pictorial illustration of the themes discussed throughout this thesis. They point to the uneasy fit between many of Newham residents’ habitus and the rapid evolution of the Newham setting during its Olympic-delivery, which facilitated hysteresis within this context and at this particular time and were included to endow the reader with a degree of closeness to the milieu that was could not be offered solely in textual form.

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- ‘2012 is making such a difference to the area, it’s definitely a good thing’ (Achmed, *Dispersal Zone* resident, January, 2012).
- ‘I wish I hadn’t bothered protesting and done something useful, like read a good book’ (Maureen, *Stratfordland* resident, September, 2010).

These perceptions proved insightful and indicative of the complex interplay between identity, delivery and expectation. But this thesis was not simply about collating perceptions of Olympic hosting, or of delivery. This thesis crucially examined the impact that Olympic-delivery had upon the every-day lives of those that comprised the local communities by applying Bourdieu’s thinking tools to this milieu (Wacquant, 1989, p. 50). This involved recognising and understanding the processes and outcomes of Newham’s modification and how these informed perceptions of identity, action and behaviour therein. Consequently, everyday implications of Olympic-delivery were addressed through ethnography, which emphasised the evolution of perceptions, actions and experiences during Olympic-delivery. This research concluded that these perceptions, actions and experiences were, to a large extent, guided by and dependent upon the individuals’ position and place within society. The Olympic re-ordering of Newham occurred on the basis of the opportunities and constraints available and ‘accessible’ to the communities therein and some, as a consequence, were able to benefit more readily than others. This research demonstrated how those termed ‘locals’ came to know, define, order and re-order their locales, some of which evolved greatly in this period and some remained relatively unchanged.

The Evolution of Newham

This thesis considered that the transformative implications of hosting an urban Olympics, as opposed to the use of out-of-town appendages such as that seen at Sydney 2000 for example (Lenskyj, 2002; Owen, 2002), are only possible in the western world in impoverished urban areas that contain low levels of place-ownership and place-identity. The demographics and deprivation levels of the residents that populate these locations contribute to the belief that they are ideal recipients for Olympic regeneration, however the limitations of these residents work to prevent them from taking advantage of Olympic hosting opportunities because they simply do not have the ability to take advantage of the Olympic opportunities that are to be presented. Furthermore, to add insult to injury these areas and their residents were vilified and denigrated by Olympic media discourse throughout Olympic bidding and delivery. This infers that Olympic-related socio-economic enhancement can be evaluated via holistic considerations of the 2012 Olympic Games or before and after demographic comparisons of Olympic locales. These methods will generally discount the Olympic-delivery milieu thus promoting the likelihood of positive Olympic *'legacy'* evaluation that ignores the realities experienced by those that were intended to benefit from Olympic hosting – the local hosting community populace, as opposed to the geographical locale.

Consequently, the application of Auge's (1995) conceptualisation of the *'non-place'* to contemporary Newham proved useful. Auge argued that a *'non-place'* was a place of transience that lacked the significance necessary to be considered *'place'*. He argued that if a *'place'* can be defined as relational, historical, and concerned with

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identity, then a space that cannot be defined as such must be a '*non-place*' (Auge, 1995, pp. 77-78). As has been indicated Olympic-delivery Newham was not concerned with holistic identity nor did it have a holistic place-related history. In fact, one may have to go back before Newham's formation in 1965 to the pre-World War II industrial era to find the last time that this locale could be considered a '*place*' according to Auge's definitions of such (Willmott and Young, 1957), albeit still a poor and deprived conception of '*place*'. As Auge purports the '*non-place*' cannot integrate with '*places of memory*' that occurred within its boundaries previously and this was clearly the case with contemporary Newham and its industrial past. By the time of Olympic-delivery Newham's industrial holistic '*place*' identity had long become a relic of the past that had little or no resonance to contemporary Newham life (Hobbs, 1988).

To define Newham a '*non-place*' was to considered it a place of transit and transience, a stop on a journey elsewhere similar to an airport or a train station – just with a slightly longer wait (Auge, 1995, pp. 29-32). Newham with its high churn populous may be considered such a place; as the council mantra of Newham being 'a place to live, work and stay' was implicitly created to address. Auge's '*non-place*' describes environments where there is an excess of places, identities, relationships and histories but none of which are holistically supported or reinforced (Auge, 1995, pp. 36-37; Buchanan, 1999, p. 280), again Newham speaks to this definition of the '*non-place*' emphasised herein. Further evidence for this consideration can be found within the commercial ordering of Newham's streets (see photographs in Appendix A).

The composition of Newham perpetuated the '*non-place*' narrative that defined this locale as a diverse collection of identities, places, relationships and histories that

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prevented a holistic identity being formed. This diversity can be exemplified by walking along any number of Newham's high streets where Eastern European deli's neighbour fried chicken shops selling *Halal* meat and Kurdish cafes. The common language that unites such outlets and those that populate them is *English-Creole*, which perhaps best exemplified Newham as an English '*non-place*'. It is in this regard that Newham's character could be inferred as the product of its component parts (Mol, 2002, p. 39). It is through the uniformity of such that place-related identities, relations and histories are formed and asserted (Korpela, 1989; Johnston, Gregory and Smith, 1994). The absence of such identity-affirming uniformity leads to the consideration that such a place aspiring or claiming to be 'real', but failing to produce its 'own space', would be a strange entity (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 53) or lacking the qualities that Auge defines as distinguisher of '*place*'.

Accordingly, this research surmises that Newham was a liveable '*non-place*'. This categorisation appeared to have significant consequences for Olympic-delivery; the definition, when combined with poverty, crime and deprivation suggested it required widespread urban regeneration to remedy this 'strange entity' and the social maladies found within. Accordingly, 2012 Olympic deliverers chose to denigrate Newham (and other parts of East London) as '*London's Gash*' that needed healing. The characteristics of the '*non-place*' combined with the borough's statistical portfolio supported this hypothesis, which was followed by the indication that Olympic hosting would address the underlying social malady of this locale. However, the application of Auge's supposition was not sufficient to adequately consider the complexities of Olympic delivery and this theoretical underpinning needs to be challenged and enhanced before its application was

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considered satisfactory. In this regard Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' were utilised to address the following inconsistencies and enable conclusions from the ethnography to be permitted.

This conclusion raises some significant questions that transcend the Olympic sporting domain and focus upon its lasting impact upon its hosts such as; what are the wider implications of living in a '*non-place*' and why do these make ideal hosts for Olympicisation? Are the distinguishing features that made Newham a liveable '*non-place*' (as opposed to the airports, shopping malls and railway stations that Auge referred to in 1995) only possible through poverty and deprivation and are the alluring features of such lost through the introduction of wealth? Can there be such a thing as an appealing '*non-place*' for all social classes wherein place identity is definable only by the absence of holistic identity? Can there ever be a liveable '*non-place*' where it is possible to walk the streets alone at night without fear of vilification or crime and return to a home where there is no need for private security to segregate neighbours from each other? More to the point, do we all, in contemporary Western society live to some degree in a '*non-place*' and is the concept of a holistic '*community*' losing its relevance to contemporary urban culture? In these regards future research may seek to build further upon Auge's conceptualisations of '*non-place*' by asking similar questions and applying them to other contemporary urban contexts.

An Olympic Opiate Hangover: Considering post-Olympic Newham

This research suggests that a good starting point may be a consideration of Olympic ‘*legacy*’ in relation to the reality and longevity of perceptions that made Newham attractive to those described as post-place *flaneurs* (King, 1993), transnational elites (Friedmann and Wolff, 1982), stateless persons (Wallerstein, 1993) cosmopolites (Hannerz, 1992) and creative classes (Florida, 2005). Regardless of definition these metropolitan migrants appeared to actively seek the nuances of the ‘*non-place*’ to satiate their demand for vibrant, urban life. However, as we have seen the implications of this migration suggests that this influx, and all they bring with them, appears to threaten the characteristics they sought in the first place. The influx of this specific migrant populace has been directly correlated to increases in the costs of living of the locales they move into. This ultimately permits access only to a specific affluent populace and results in the economically less able perpetrators of diversity to relocate elsewhere out of financial necessity (Cole, 1987; Hughes, 1990; Smith, 1996; Ley, 2003).

The outcome of this reality leads to the ‘trendy’ place becoming a site of stale cultural monism that metropolitan migrants will in the future seek to escape. The Olympic-related Newham addition to this poverty-diversity-trendyness-reclamation-cultural monoism-untrendiness-poverty cycle would appear conducive to insightful future study. Additionally, future research may seek to explore the implications of the dichotomy of Newham’s Olympic regeneration that drastically modified some parts of the borough, whilst leaving others relatively unscathed. This future research may be

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conducted during the post-Olympic '*legacy*' context to consider whether a new strand of '*non-place*' is emerging and if so explore the wider implications of such.

These questions indicate that the evolution of Newham has a long way to go before meaningful evaluations of the impact of the 2012 Olympic Games can be accrued. However, from the evidence collated during Olympic-delivery this thesis argues that the chances of the Olympic Games being used to 'inspire a generation' in the race of life can be improved by the creation of a new model of Olympic delivery. In this regard a differential model need not necessarily be vastly different to succeed. For example, a lengthening of the Olympic delivery, time frame by nominating Olympic hosts perhaps a decade in advance, may enable local people's *habitus* (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) to evolve at a steadier rate. This small adjustment could have significant repercussions, which may become manifest in a plethora of way such as local people having the time to adjust to impending Olympic opportunities. For example, a longer 2012 Olympic-delivery window may have encouraged unskilled local people to become more inclined to enter education and training and still have time to compete for Olympic delivery employment. An extended delivery period would also permit the creation of additional organisations that would aim to specifically integrate local people into sustainable Olympic-related employment and provide greater opportunities for consultation and prescriptive community initiatives.

It might therefore be suggested that Olympic legacies should not take the form of land reclamation, employment and wealth injection or colonisation of urban areas, which as future research may indicate did little to address the sociological issues of Newham. Rather, it may be inferred that Olympic '*legacy*' should focus upon education and longer-

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term investment in deprived areas to help address the class-related sociological issues therein through a steady and patient modification of *habitus* as opposed to the current model that inspired *hysteresis* for many Newham residents (Hardy, 2008). This *hysteresis* was justified by the relatively tight time constraints of the Olympic Games and its ability to act as a mitigating spatial action. This Olympic-related *hysteresis* appeared to be celebrated by all throughout Olympic-delivery, except for the local communities who only partook once they resigned themselves that there would be no tangible Olympic benefits for them other than Olympic entertainment.

This point addresses one of the primary questions of this thesis – was there a differentiation between local and non-local perceptions of Olympic delivery and what were the implications of such? Ultimately this thesis argued that local people did experience Olympic-delivery differently than those throughout the rest of Britain. They had to live through Olympic-delivery disruption and those that endured this process were rewarded with mostly the same Olympic benefits as the rest of the country – 2012 Olympic sporting consumption enjoyed from afar. Whilst Olympic Newham were modified into entertainment venues reserved for those lucky enough to have an Olympic ticket other parts of the borough remained relatively untouched.

The unmistakable narrative that London's Olympic-delivery disseminated was one of divisive reclamation that used Olympic sport to facilitate 'alienation, ruling class ideology and commodification' (Giulianotti, 2004, p. 41). In this regard, the 2012 Olympic Games could be argued from a Marxist perspective to have become an opiate utilised to keep the masses in stupefied happiness (Brohm, 1978, p. 108) and reduce the potential for critical assessment of delivery realities. The processes followed during 2012

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Olympic-delivery and the power relations that were observed during the intercourse between Olympic deliverers and the local communities were emblematic of neo-Marxist conclusions that the ruling capitalist class owned and controlled the means of production and were prepared to 'negotiate' to maintain their hegemony in an oft one-sided intercourse that manufactured common consent without the impression of force and domination (Gramsci, 1971). Moreover, sport can be considered a vehicle to support and transmit ruling bourgeois ideologies on a huge scale via the mass media (Brohm, 1978, pp. 47-48). If this is accepted the question thus became one of whether the 2012 Olympics were successfully used to manufacture consent and 'class collaboration at every level?' (ibid, p. 108). The common consensus was that 2012 was fundamentally a great success that was enjoyed by all. What was there to object about?

A Tale of Two Cities

This research argues that for the parts of Newham modified by the 2012 Games, namely *Stratfordland* and parts of *ExCeLland*, Olympic-delivery was a tale of two imagined cities and two ways of living. One was a relic of the past – that of pre-bid Newham, which no longer existed. The other, a vision of the future – the idealistic post-Games utopian Newham that was to come, neither of which actually held resonance during Olympic implementation. These locations that could once be considered exemplars of a non-place were during Olympic-delivery better symbolised as '*differential space*' (Lefebvre, 1991) wherein everything, in what we might term the socio-political milieu, seemed up for grabs or at least re-negotiation. This '*differential place of*

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hysteresis' (Lefebvre, 1991; Bourdieu, 1984), was a place of negotiation within which agents explored their applicability to the post-Games utopia to come via ever-increasing social cues that differentiated pre-Games Newham to post-Games Newham.

For many that composed pre-bid *Stratfordland* this process was reminiscent of a sociological bleep test, whereby the agents kept running until they could no longer keep up with the ever-increasing demands of the test and succumbed to an inevitable relocation. Researching during this intermediate time involved exploring, understanding and defining the communities that were the *right* and *wrong fit* for both locales, which for many was the result of self-definition according to established *habitus*. The power relations involved in this place-identity defining process that were played out during Newham's Olympic-delivery structured – to a large degree – the human behaviour within. The position of agents that existed within was determined by the amount and value of the *capital* they possessed.

As a result of the 2012 Games and the potential benefits they brought to Newham there was certain fluidity to these *fields* that required a constant negotiation and renegotiation of position of the agents that clamoured for opportunity within. This issue was addressed herein in a variety of ways but is perhaps best exemplified by Olympic-related employment opportunities where local residents were unable to compete with a highly skilled, motivated and cheap *Eastern European* workforce. Consequently, Olympic-delivery became a space of conflict and competition as agents competed to gain a monopoly in the *species of capital* that was most effective in this field in this period.

Newham's Olympic Blueprint

Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical perspectives resonated deeply within this analysis. Bourdieu contended the answer to the question of what guides inclusion and exclusion lay within an agent's *habitus*. It has been described as a 'second sense', 'practical sense' or 'second nature' (Johnson, 1993) that equips social actors with a practical 'know-how' for societal engagement. Thought and action are constrained but not determined by *habitus* that provides a blueprint for perception and action. As Bourdieu attests people are not fools and will not act blindly according to *habitus*. Rather, they will act upon the basis of what they perceive as common sense, which for many Newham residents was a perception that Olympic benefit was not accessible for them.

Olympic-delivery instigated cross-border economic processes of flows of capital, labour, goods and services, raw materials and migrant workers. All of which caused *hysteresis* to occur within Newham. This 2012 Olympic delivery milieu was, for some, permeated by myriad Olympic-related upheavals and disillusionments, notably involving security implementation and the lack of employment opportunities for local people. The opiate-like properties of the impending 2012 Olympic Games (Brohm, 1978) shifted the focus away from delivery reality and towards the event and the post-Games '*legacy*' conceptualisation of utopia that was to come.

This actuality has implications for notions of social dominance because *habitus* is homologous to the objective structures of the world. As was evident within this thesis, inequality and the lack of ability to recognise or take advantage of Olympic benefits were prevalent for many pre-Olympic residents during Newham's Olympic-delivery. For some

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this inequality was invisible, for others it was mitigated by the transient Olympic milieu. This leads to the conclusion that Olympic-delivery is a specific schema that maintains the class-associated power relations of wider capitalistic society, wherein the dominated contribute to their own domination. The dispositions that inclined pre-bid Newham residents to such complicity were the effect of domination, lodged deeply inside their *habitus*. This perspective enabled a critical analysis of Olympic-delivery that was a re-configuration of the generic class struggle, packaged and sold in a way that resonated with both wider society and at the local level as a result of Olympic association.

The majority of those that consumed 2012 Olympic Games delivery did so by absenting themselves from the real, live experience by virtue of distance from London or not having the funds or opportunity to buy a ticket. Instead, they readily consumed this version of reality primarily through the broadcast media. In the opinions of these armchair Olympians, London's 2012 Olympic Games and its delivery was the 'Best Games Ever'. One fundamental question that may be asked at some future date of the millions who attended the Olympic Park is how many actually saw Newham? This researcher would estimate relatively few as most would have fallen in line with the efficient 'corporate kettling' that helped guide some 80% of Olympic visitors from station to Westfield Stratford City to Olympic Park and back again.

Education, Education, Education: A Taste Of Things To Come

Olympic-delivery had – temporarily – cleansed, created, isolated and commodified only around Newham's Olympic locales. In these areas it was Newham life,

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but not as the long-standing community knew it. This 2012 Olympic re-ordered Newham reality was particularly prominent in *Stratfordland* where Olympic-related urban regeneration sought to cleanse the locale by removing and masking pre-Olympic signifiers that demarked non-Olympic Newham. This had powerful connotations for those that considered these vilified spaces of everyday life home. This Olympic re-ordering of Newham instigated a new sense of place where access was dependent upon the ownership of particular characteristics and considerable amounts of the constituents of Bourdieu's '*species of capital*'.

Some theorists argue that whoever 'controls public space sets the program for representing society' (Zukin, 1998, p. 370). As urban geographer Don Mitchell purports public spaces can be crucial to the role of socio-spatial negotiation by providing groups and individuals with the geographical location where they can 'make their desires and needs known, to represent themselves to others and the state – even if through struggle – as legitimate claimants to public considerations' (2003, pp. 32-33). This thesis found that within Newham's Olympic locales the evolution of public space were proliferated by the primers for gentrification:

- The involuntary or voluntary displacement of renters, homeowners and local businesses, such as those within *Stratfordland*.
- Increased real estate values and increased tax revenue.
- The de-concentration of poverty.
- Changing the cultural fabric of the community.
- Changing leadership and power structure of community.

- An increased value put on the neighbourhood by outsiders.

(Kennedy and Leonard, 2001)

However, there remains a crucial component missing on the above list. This is University-led gentrification, which, it is predicted here, will play a significant role in the re-ordering of Newham's post-Olympic landscape.¹⁹⁵ It is hard to argue against increasing educational opportunities, however one primary question that can be asked in relation to Newham is whether university education is an opportunity that many Newham residents would be able to benefit from?

To follow Bourdieu is to accept that an individual's history is intrinsic to guiding life in a particular direction (although not determinate). This translates to the pessimistic conclusion that those who formed Newham's local communities, such as those living on the Carpenters Estate, could not attain significant Olympic '*legacy*' benefits because they lacked the pre-requisite know-how to succeed, or even to exist within this *field*.

Bourdieu's term '*doxa*' denotes this know how, which refers to what is taken for granted within a particular society. The doxa is 'what goes without saying because it comes without saying' (Bourdieu, 1977, pp.167-169) and helps to establish social limits and establish the sense of one's place within society, which was intrinsically linked to many pre-Olympic Newham residents perceptions that Olympic opportunities were 'not for us' (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 549). Olympic-delivery did – as expected – create many employment opportunities within the geographical confines of Newham. However, these opportunities

¹⁹⁵ In addition to the planned UCL campus on Carpenters Estate Birkbeck University of London will be opening a new campus in Stratfordland in the autumn of 2013 and the University of East London (UEL) also have a recently refurbished base there. (See: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/stratford/new-campus> for Birkbeck or <http://www.uel.ac.uk/campuses/stratford/> for UEL)

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proved inaccessible for much of the pre-bid community groups. Interestingly, many Newham residents were ambivalent to the entire Olympic process because they were pre-conditioned to either be pessimistic, able to get over disappointment quickly or to not consider themselves applicable for beneficial opportunities in the first place.

The conclusion that Newham's Olympic '*legacy*' would predominantly benefit a future populace, as opposed to the pre-Games residents, was not surprising if one considered the research of Garcia-Ramon and Albet (2000) who contested that the greatly lauded Barcelona 1992 Games were always orientated towards the needs of an upwardly mobile global audience catered for at the expense of locally specific social needs. This perspective was supported by Lenskyj's assertion that the Sydney 2000 Games produced much 'real world' evidence¹⁹⁶ that the Olympic Games exacerbate existing social problems that Olympic '*legacy*' does not alleviate (2002, pp. 227-231).

The Olympic Park may well follow that which occurred within BV and become a set of gated communities, wherein the residents reside until the education needs of their children provoke a return to suburbia. The transition toward an Olympic Newham *habitus* resonates more with those that dwell – or at least work – within The City than within the post-industrial landscape of pre-bid Newham. Interestingly, it is poverty that facilitated Newham's diversity and relatively low price of real estate in the location that makes it an appealing location for the child-free bourgeoisie. These properties are reminiscent of the precursors of many other gentrified urban locales (Jacobs, 1996; Lees, 2003).¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ Lenskyj defined the real world as Sydney's streets its low-income neighbourhoods, homeless refuges and its indigenous communities (2002, pp 227-228).

¹⁹⁷ Spitalfields, a 250 acre location that borders the London borough of Tower Hamlets and the City of London, is an example of the uneasy meshing of gentrification and diversity within East London. This was explored by Jane Jacobs (1996) whereby she commented that 'the co-presence of Bengali settlers, home-making gentrifiers and megascale developers activated an often conflictual politics of race and nation' (p.72).

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The findings of this thesis indicated that Newham's communities were happy being who they were and appeared to have little aspiration to change, much to Sir Robin Wales *et al's* chagrin. Some areas that represented pre-Olympic Newham, such as *Stratfordland*, had been reduced and re-ordered by 2012 Olympic-delivery but the larger schema of Newham life seemed to have changed very little. The poor would remain poor and the unemployed would remain unemployed. Newham's cycle would thus perpetuate itself. Some areas of post-Olympic Newham may welcome a more affluent future populace that may prove divisive and create future spaces of conflict but this is a reality for future studies to explore. In this regard post-Olympic Newham promises to prove a very interesting laboratory for sociological research, very interesting indeed.

EPILOGUE

Eventually, Newham's Olympic-delivery period ended. The Olympic structures and related infrastructures were completed. For the duration of this 17-day sporting event feelings of hysteresis took a back seat. The outcomes of the fear narratives that attempted to modify the behaviour of local people during the Games would be available for scrutiny from the day the Games began; this, however, is beyond the remit of this research. As the researcher stood at Stratford station, the same place he had stood all those years before behind him were the 68 'magical steps' that led to the Olympic Park and Westfield, dominated by a big screen indicating to all who looked upon it that the Olympics would begin in a few hours (see Appendix A – Figure 35).

Over to the left stood the tower blocks of the Carpenters Estate, now devoid of most of its residents, but with new occupants in the shape of television crews using the top floor flats to broadcast to the nation their 'Panasonic' backdrop of the Olympic Park. Conspicuously, each tower was now covered by Olympic inspired commercialism whose names, logos and celebrities covered their 23-stories and looming large over all those who walked by. The screening of Newham was evident all around. Elsewhere, John Morgan House, a 28-story office block, became a larger than life BMW advertisement and Coca-Cola covered over the previously glass walled bridge that linked Stratford and Westfield to the Olympic Park. Newham had in many senses become screened, and unless one knew where to look, to all intents and purposes it had become invisible (see Appendix A – Figure 36). With a final glance the researcher got back on the underground and left Olympic Stratfordland and Newham – Olympic-delivery was over and Games time was just beginning.

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