

Swimming against the tide: a study of a neighbourhood looking to rediscover its 'reason for being' – a case study of South Bank, Teesside



RESEARCH TEAM

Northumbria University:

Dr Paul Greenhalgh

Gill Davidson

David McGuinness



Durham University:

Professor Fred Robinson

Paul Braidford

Overview of presentation

- Wider ongoing research project
- Case study of South Bank, Teesside – viability of neighbourhood (place) + prospects for residents (equity)
- Academic context – Shrinking Cities, Policy Exchange, Typologies of deprived neighbourhoods (Robson et al, TERU)
- Characteristics of ‘isolate/stagnant’ neighbourhoods
- Competing neighbourhoods in city-regions - funding
- Reflections on future for places lost their rational for being – crucially people that are left behind
- Limitations study/opportunities for future study

Original research aim of project

‘To establish the baseline position and design a robust strategy for a 25 year longitudinal assessment of the impact of the delivery of a large scale regeneration project: the Greater Eston Regeneration Master Plan’

Methodology

- **Extensive review/analysis of secondary data (reports, evaluations, papers, datasets, etc)**
- **Interviews with 25 stakeholders (e.g. R&C Council, HCA, RSLs, community projects and organisations, schools, police and religious leaders)**
- **In depth interviews with over 20 local residents – investigate the best way of engaging community in longitudinal evaluation (been consulted to death)**
- **Attended local meetings & events (e.g. South Bank Housing Renewal Steering Group, Police consultative meeting, Neighbourhood Forum, Summer Fete)**

Context for area

- Teesside comprises a polycentric structure of distinct towns (Stockton-on-Tees (191k), Middlesbrough (137k), Redcar, etc)
- Recent governance purposes added in Hartlepool & Darlington (Tees Valley – 650,000 people)
- South Bank neighbourhood just over 5k people once thriving area, self-contained (shops & market) – fuzzy boundaries
- No one we spoke to identified with Redcar & Cleveland – South Bank, near Middlesbrough or Teesside
- During 60s + 70s industrial decline and erosion of jobs, mainly steel industry (British Steel) + ship building (Smiths Dock)
- Early as 1962, Eston Urban District Council expressed concern about '**disturbing**' pockets of unemployment in South Bank and nearby Grangetown.

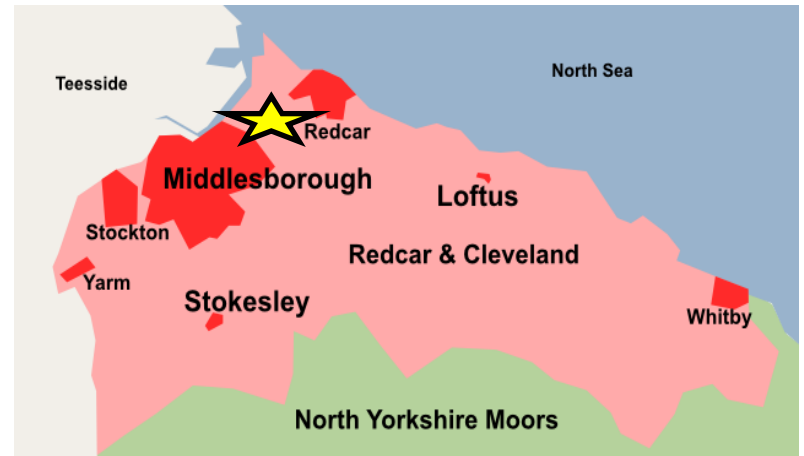
South Bank in Teesside

Teesside

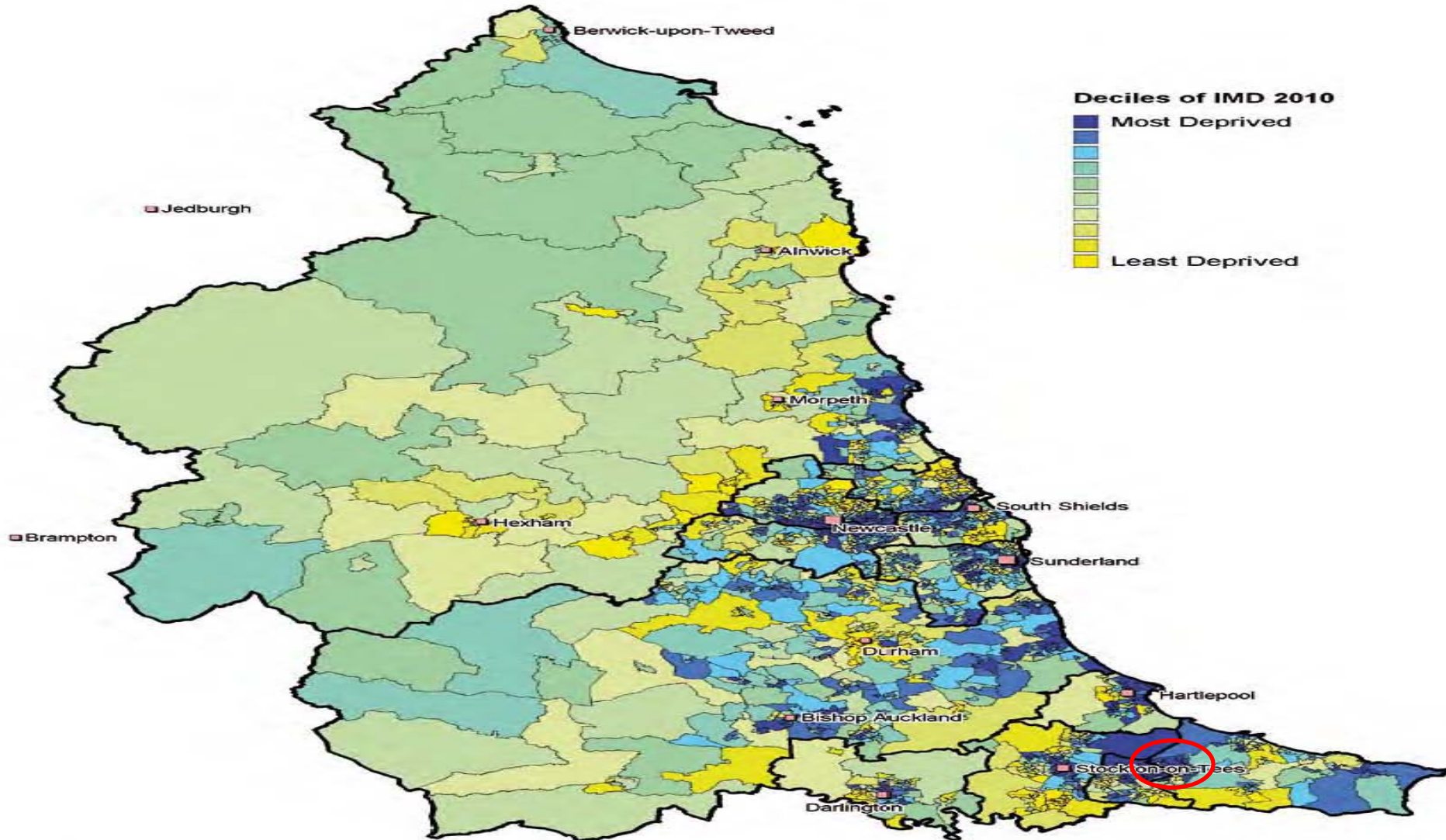
South Bank



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2010.
Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO.



Indices of deprivation, 2010



South Bank, Teesside – study area



SOUTH BANK BASELINE - positives

- Educational achievement improving (but still low)
- Good schools
- **New facilities**
- **Active community organisations and projects**
- Sporting success (boxing and football)
- Plans for new housing and shops (Tesco)
- **Strength of community:**
 - 'Neighbourliness'
 - Family networks
 - Community spirit
- Sense of belonging to the area
- Hope for the future – resilient people

SOUTH BANK BASELINE - negatives

- Falling population
- Poverty
- High unemployment
- Poor health
- Low housing demand
- Housing demolitions
- Frustration with lack of regeneration progress
- Private landlords and problem tenants
- Fly tipping and littering
- Crime rates above UK average
- Anti-social behaviour issues
- Few shops or services
- Stigma

Academic context - Shrinking Cities

- Couch and Cocks (2011) shrinking cities, densely populated urban areas, minimum population of 10,000 residents, faced population losses for more than 2 years and are undergoing significant economic transformations & exhibit some of the symptoms of structural crisis
- Wider sub-region - since 1970, the population of Middlesbrough has fallen by 17,300 (11%), Redcar & Cleveland by 9,000 (6%) (2008 Tees Valley JSU)
- Population in Redcar and Cleveland – 2001 (139,000) projections for the local authority suggest in 2016 population will be in the region of 126,500 (9% decline)
- Marked and continual decline in the population of South Bank over the last decade. In 2001 the population was 6,352; by 2008 it was 5,286, a reduction of **16.8%**

Policy Exchange (2008) – Cities Unlimited

‘Towns that were once in the right place at the right time, may now well be in the wrong place at the wrong time, severely restricting their ability to attract jobs.’

(Policy Exchange, 2008, p62)

- Basic premise some parts of the country (particularly North) are unviable and we should stop trying to resuscitate them (e.g. Sunderland)
- Better to transfer people to more economically viable parts of the country (SE and London) – historically people migrate for work
- Give residents help to move rather than pump regeneration money into areas which have lost their rationale for being
- At the time David Cameron described the report as ‘nonsense’ – since in government have looked at making it easier for council tenants to move areas (swap homes)

Communities on life support...

'..... if we are honest about the constraints and realistic about the opportunities then we can make progress. We need to accept above all that we cannot guarantee to regenerate every town and every city in Britain that has fallen behind.'

(Policy Exchange, 2008, p5)

Managed decline – palliative care



*“If the people of South Bank could hear me say this they would kill me – **but there is almost no need for South Bank now**, the industry has moved on. South Bank has to shrink further and stabilize and then hopefully over a period of time (its) reputation may begin to change”.*

(Stakeholder interview, 2010)

Robson et al (2009) for CLG

- Robson et al (2009) believe that a key element in better understanding the roles that deprived neighbourhoods play is **residential mobility**, or the **flux of people** into and out of deprived neighbourhoods. They observed that deprived neighbourhoods are not identical; they differ in their social composition and the **functional roles** that they play in the housing market

Typology of deprived neighbourhoods (adapted from Robson et al, 2009)

Type	IN-movers ↓	OUT-movers ↑	Context
Transit	Less deprived areas	Less deprived areas	Often first step on ladder after parental home
Escalator	Equally or more deprived	Less deprived areas	Onwards and upwards progress on ladder (resident often older than transit)
Gentrifier	Less deprived areas	Similarly or more deprived areas	Improver or Gentrifier (could involve displacement of existing residents)
Isolate	Equally or more deprived	Equally or more deprived	Entrapment of poor households unable to break out of deprived areas ACTION:INTENSE INTERVENTION

Stagnant housing market

- Low housing demand is the biggest problem in South Bank, especially for the ‘street houses’, small and mostly without gardens. In 2000, terraced housing prices had fallen to an all-time low of £3k
- Interview with stakeholders suggest nobody has purchased a house in South Bank in the last 3-5 years to actually live in it
- Only real purchase buy to let – speculative punt, absent landlords
- Robson et al (2009:7) Isolates have a disproportionate percentage of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) with a large proportion of social renters
- Those claiming benefits become more segregated and increasingly concentrated in certain neighbourhoods during the years of economic growth (Schmuecker and Viitanen, 2011).



Typology of deprived areas (adapted from TERU 2010)

	Cluster Name	Characteristics	What works
1	Former industrial/coalfield: rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older demographic • Longer travel to work and services • High level benefit dependency • Less in flux or lacking access to resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing local jobs • Increasing connectivity with job market • Innovative outreach and local learning
2	Most deprived: predominantly social housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of access to resources • Higher crime levels • High level benefit dependency • Younger demographic • Less in flux 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term holistic tackling multiple disadvantage • Investment in housing • Tackle stigma • Intensive community outreach and lifelong learning • Tackle health issues
3	Lesser deprived areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older demographic • Longer travel to work and services • Less in flux • Crime less of an issue • Less dependency on benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in housing stock • Increase availability of local jobs • Increase links with wider jobs base • Local learning offer
4	Transitory inner urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In flux • Prime age demographic • Distance to work and services less of an issue • Lack of access to resources less of an issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote area as 'up and coming' • Engage with diverse ethnic communities • Maximise connections and locational advantages

Summary of analysis of typologies

- Applying the TERU (2010) typology of deprived areas to South Bank, it is apparent that the area exhibits many characteristics of a Cluster 1 'former industrial/coalfield areas', (urban periphery/rather than rural)
- Also display many of the symptoms **multiple deprivation** associated with Cluster 2 'Most deprived' areas. South Bank has an older demographic, high levels of benefit dependency and crime, but does benefit from relatively good access to services, resources and proximity to some employment opportunities.
- This analysis suggests that **ideally** South Bank needs an integrated programme of interventions in both labour market/job opportunities/skills/training and tackling of multiple deprivation. **Investment in housing may not necessarily be what is needed to change the fortunes of the area.**
- In terms of the Robson (2009) typology , South Bank - **isolate**, with the potential to perform as an **escalator**, depending on the outcome of new housing developments that are planned for area (optimistic)



Economic Transition – symbolism of steel plant



Global shift in steel manufacture
Former Corus plant mothballed in March 2010 –
recently (2011) had reprieve bought SSI (Thai)

Crime and anti-social behaviour



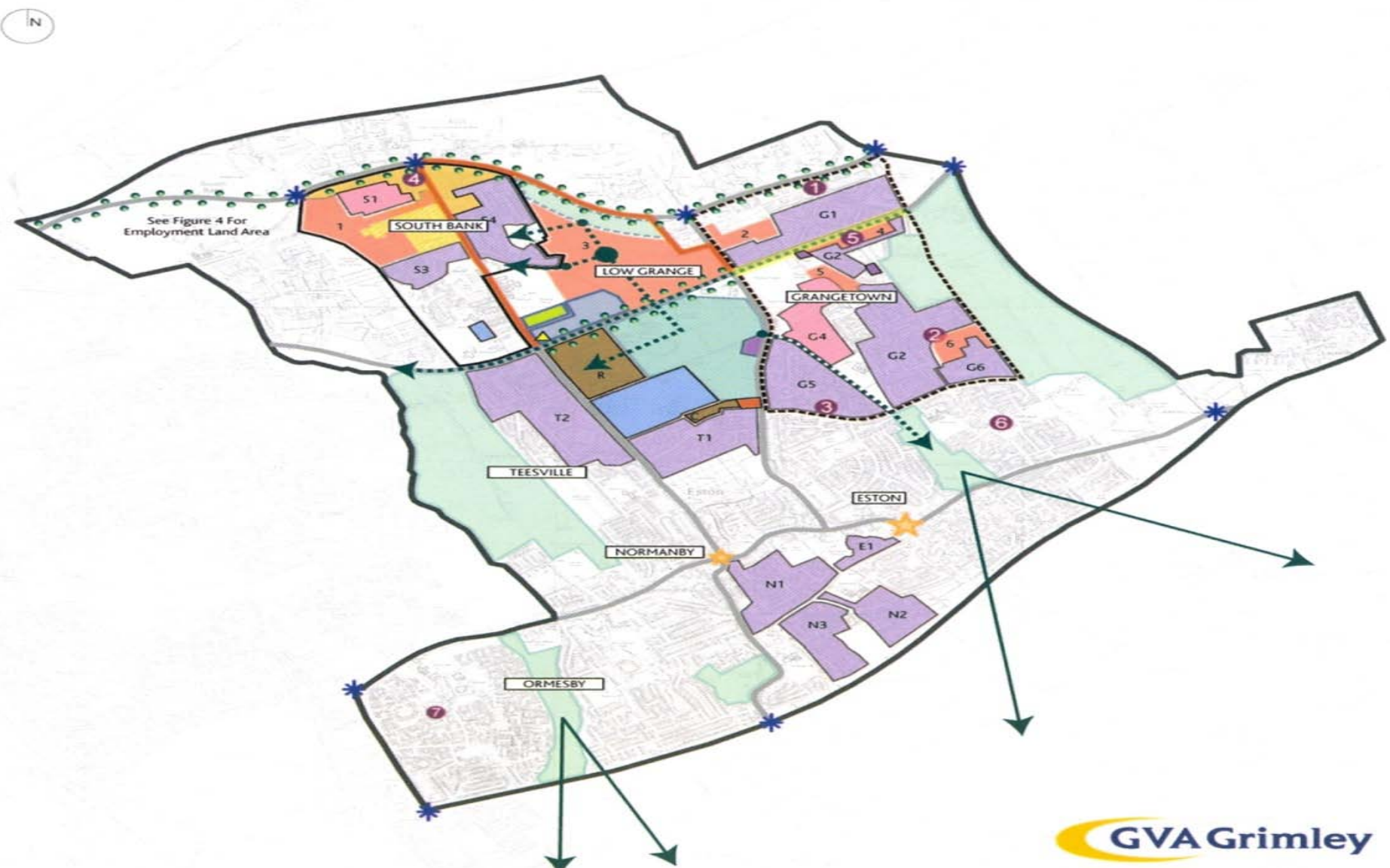
Golden Boy Green - main community facility
gutted in arson attack 2 years ago

Negative stigma

- Atkinson and Kintrea (2001) state that concentration of deprivation in neighbourhoods intensifies disadvantage for individuals living in those neighbourhoods for most outcomes, but most notably through the **perceived reputation of the area**
- Feeling from interviewees – even in heyday South Bank viewed as a **‘hard area’** but in mid to late 90s reputation turned ‘nasty and malicious’
- Major issues with car crime, drugs, organised crime and anti-social behaviour – lawless area , stigma became toxic
- *“There is a stigma; when people ask me where I live and I say South Bank, they are shocked, the usual response is ‘it’s rough (a)round there and there’s (sic) loads of rogues’”.*

(Resident interview, 2010)

Part of wider Masterplan – Great Eston



South Bank to Low Grange

- Some good services, new health centre, school, library & sports centre
- All public sector funding – minimal private sector investment
- Southern fringe of South Bank neighbourhood – close to Low Grange development site



The (ongoing) regeneration of South Bank

- Over the past 10 years, a series of plans for the area's future have been developed:
- a Housing Renewal Plan (Nathaniel Litchfield and Partners, 2004)
- Sustainable Communities Plan (2005)
- Greater Eston Strategic Master Plan (GVA Grimley, 2008)
- Currently, HCA asked DTZ to conduct a full economic appraisal for South Bank (being finalised)
- All plans sought to identify solutions to the problem of housing market failure in South Bank.
- Considerable amount of community consultation activity around the formulation of these plans – little happened

Early 20th century housing designated 'retain and monitor',



Impact of plans on community

“There have been lots of big promises over the last 10 years, which haven’t been fulfilled – why promise something you can’t deliver?”

(Resident interview, 2010)

‘Strategies and plans were put in place with the best intentions with the money that was available, but with hindsight it has been death by a thousand cuts for the community in South Bank.’

(Stakeholder interview, 2010)

- Overriding sense of uncertainty and a feeling that it is a community that has been in limbo for a decade or more

Viability of competing regeneration areas

- Key factor from stakeholder interviews, in times of limited funding need to take strategic view of potential regeneration sites (further research opportunity)

Distance to **Middlesbrough Town Centre:**

- Gresham – (approx 0.5 mile)
- Grove Hill – (approx 1.5 miles)
- Middlehaven – (approx 1.5 miles)
- **South Bank** – (approx 3 miles)
(distance to Redcar – approx 4.5 miles)

Last chance? New gateway into area – Normanby Road



Eco homes



- A small 'eco-homes' development is planned in the heart of South Bank as new gateway to area
- An 'eco' housing development' is one which meets the Code for Sustainable Homes: 4 units will be built to the highest level (Code 6) the remainder will meet Code 4.
- Comprising **15 new homes**, to be built by the Gentoo Housing Group, on a site formerly occupied by street housing & **refurbishment of 11** terraced houses Three of the new homes will be for outright sale, 11 will be for social rent and 12 for shared equity ownership
- Also improve transport links, cycleways, walkable community
- Critique – wood and glass, difficult to secure and vulnerable in area which has major problem with arson

Will there be a South Bank Tomorrow?



Conclusions

- **Still an uncertain future – will regeneration go ahead? Eco-housing only definite, Masterplan developed before economic downturn**
- **Ageing population – managed decline – does younger generation have same passion for area (further study)**
- **‘Isolates’ – do they have a future, if not what happens to people trapped in these neighbourhoods?**
- **Are there ‘better options’ for limited funding in wider Tees Valley - closer to labour market opportunities, better transport links, studentification (close to university)**
- **Can negative stigma be overcome or do you need a fresh start? Cruddas Park/Riverside Dean, South Bank/Low Grange**
- **Interested to hear from anyone who has similar case study data from neighbourhoods in UK or further afield**

Bibliography

- Atkinson, R. and Kintrea, K. (2001) Disentangling area effects: evidence from deprived and non-deprived neighbourhoods. *Urban Studies*, 38(12), 2777-2298
- Policy Exchange (2008) *Cities Unlimited*. London. Policy Exchange, available at:<http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/publications/publication.cgi?id=79> (accessed 30 March 2011)
- Robson, B., Lymperopoulou, K. and Rae, A. (2009) *A typology of the functional roles of deprived neighbourhoods*; London: Department of Communities and Local Government
- TERU (2010) *Developing a typology of deprived areas in the North East*. Newcastle upon Tyne. NERIP
- Schmuecker, K. and Viitanen, J. (2011) *Richer Yet Poorer: Economic inequality and polarisation in the North of England*, Newcastle: IPPR North

For full bibliography, please refer to paper.

Further information

- Dave McGuinness david.mcguinness@northumbria.ac.uk
- Paul Greenhalgh paul.greenhalgh@northumbria.ac.uk

Sustainable Cities Research Institute (SCRI)

Northumbria University

Wynne Jones Building

Newcastle, NE1 8ST

