

THE ROLES OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN URBAN STRATEGY

Scope and Scales of Community

Communities consist of groups of people who experience and acknowledge significant links, expectations and responsibilities towards each other. They do not need to be neighbours, but they do need to share neighbourly feelings which may be based on shared spaces, realms of interaction or fields of interest. Local communities are those that are defined by the physical possibilities of regular and direct personal contact. Their success depends largely upon how far this coexistence develops into sustainable community life and organization. This chapter considers how different measures can help achieve this and suggests principles for effective integrated local community planning. It is organised into the following sections:

- Social, Economic and Organisational Characteristics of Local Communities
- The Physical Forms of Communities
- Spatial Justice
- Planning Places
- Community Participation
- Conclusion: The Durability of Local Communities of Place and Contact

Social, Economic and Organisational Characteristics of Local Communities

Contact and cooperation

The opportunities for contact and cooperation offered by local communities of place have never lost their attractions and are now rapidly regaining their roles and importance. Current trends are redressing the balance between city centres and local neighbourhoods, triggered by a wide range of decentralising pressures. As well as positive ones offered by new communications technologies, negative ones of mounting problems of access to large centres are being posed by problems of congestion and pollution, and both are being compounded by the impacts of mutating pandemics increasing people's experience of the benefits of working from home. Existing concentration of jobs, services and high-density accommodation in and around central areas was already being challenged by the worldwide growth of importance of secondary centres, raising the prospect of a more even balance between city centres and local neighbourhoods (Roberts, 2014). Roberts provides examples drawn from all five continents of the ways that these re-asserted attractions of neighbourliness and local collaboration are influencing the shape and organisation of both long established and newly developing urban communities. The survival value of such capacities for local, face to face cooperation has roots extending over 10,000 years to early Neolithic farming villages (Mumford, 1961; Childe, 1976). Its later continuation in the collaborative life of medieval market towns, out of which the modern European city evolved, has been well explored by Peter

Kropotkin (1939) ⁱ. In India, too, Mahatma Gandhi and his followers recognised thousands of years of village cooperation as the constructive core of Hindu culture and proposed its revitalisation in a contemporary model of inclusive village democracy or satyagrahi, under the leadership of village councils or Panchayatsⁱⁱ. Recent developments in economic theory reflect this recognition of the significance of the spirit of local cooperation for successful modern life. *Associational Economics*, developed by Cooke and Morgan (1998) ¹, draws on the example of the successful network economies of Emilia Romagna and Tuscany in northern Italy, Baden-Württemberg in Western Germany and the Basque region of northern Spain to show how shared community support for numerous small enterprises can support local funding and training facilities. By fostering flexibility this productive dynamism promoted survival and prosperity in times when a volatile global market threatened both prices and consumption systems elsewhere (Barlow & Clarke, 2004). The equally historic system of Balinese water management, discussed later in this chapter, continues to operate well, both maintaining in local hands the complex pattern of irrigation canals and water distribution and reinforcing the bonds of social solidarity that underlie Balinese community life (Lansing, 1996; Suarja & Thyssen, 2003).

Another significant example of collaboration geared to transformation is the micro credit network of *The Grameen Bank*. Over the last fifty years, this initiative has built a multi-layered, multi-billion-dollar organisation with over four million members (Bornstein, 1997; Yunus, 1998). Mohamed Yunus, the Grameen founder, explains that the system was designed to replace ‘financial collateral’ of centrally controlled traditional banking by the ‘social collateral’ of established community life in order to promote collaboration amongst ‘the poorest of the poor’ (particularly landless peasant women) in Bangladesh, which is one of the world’s poorest, most heavily populated and environmentally threatened countries (Yunus, 1998). Although these successes remain exceptions in a world still dominated by economic competition, they do indicate that collaboration can make, and is already making, increasingly significant contributions to balance capital competition and promote distributational justice and cooperative efficiency in communities worldwide.

Mix and Meeting

Opportunities for both purposeful and casual contact is greatly enhanced in places where people can undertake a wide range of activities amicably and enjoyably. They need to offer spaces suitable for exchange of both goods and ideas. The roles that thoughtful planning can play in fostering their development has been well described by both Randolph Hester (2008) and Jan Geyl (2011). Christopher Alexander (1979) has also demonstrated that they may also result from the winnowing processes of evolution, reflecting the influences of numerous previous users. A good example of a community enriched by such processes is Brisbane’s West End, described in Box 1.

BOX 1, BRISBANE'S WEST END

Enclosed within the sweeping arc of the Brisbane River, this peninsula has always been a destination as well as a zone in transition. With the arrival of European settlers two hundred years ago, its traditional role of camping ground was expanded to become the reception area where successive waves of newly arrived migrants found spaces to live and establish their cultural anchors of churches and places for sociable meeting and eating, while remaining an important cultural foothold for the indigenous community.

These enduring roles as a melting pot of cultures has successively integrated waves of Anglo, Celtic, Balkan, Russian, Greek, Vietnamese, Taiwanese, New Zealand and Chinese arrivals as well preserving an essential foothold for Murri people - each signalling its continued presence by the cultural anchors of prominent buildings and spaces, including churches, meeting halls and parks to create a composite living culture, providing both visual variety and places of nurture, prospect and refuge for their communities. Former residents, who may have long since left their original place of arrival in West End for new homes in the middle and outer suburbs, still value the old inner suburb and return weekly to refresh cultural and historic associations.

The housing stock, too, has developed in response to its role as one of the city's reception areas. More than half of all dwellings remain rented (well above the city average) a fifth of them in public ownership, with an impressively high level of Indigenous housing including a number of hostels owned and run by the Aboriginal Housing Corporation (Brisbane City Council, 2022)

Powerful gentrifying pressures of the past four decades have challenged these melting pot roles. Triggered by the post Expo '88 redevelopment of South Brisbane, a steadily rising tide of high-rise residential redevelopment has replaced the old riverside industrial and warehousing areas. Australian and international investors have acquired key sites for accelerating residential and commercial redevelopment (Heywood, 2018).

As well as these developments of high density, high rise residential apartment blocks, largely accommodating one, two and three person households, this progressive redevelopment is taking other forms, encouraged by the adjacent growth of the state's major cultural complex: these include the development of living and work spaces of a 'creative class' of designers, innovators and digital professionals, including the scientific and technical practitioners who now make up more than 20% of the area's employed residents. Next are the inner-city entertainment and recreation venues forming the city's main focus of youth culture. Finally, there are clusters of 'Third Places' – neither homes nor workplaces, but social spaces where people gather for company, entertainment and discussion.

The area's active community groups are voicing a number of policy proposals and campaigning for a review of the decade-old Neighbourhood Plan which has prompted erosion of these continuing and evolving roles by encouraging concentration on massive high density, high rise residential redevelopment. Community proposals for planning reform include:

- 'Inclusionary Zoning' for up to 20% affordable and social housing in new schemes
- Requirement for developers to donate 15%-20% of the space of all large new residential developments to Council or community groups for public open space
- Accompanying provision for open space, transport, community facilities and drainage infrastructure

- Specific population and residential density caps related to the area's capacity for habitable and sustainable living
- Designation of key Character Conservation Areas,
- Corridor Studies including tree planting along major streets.

Another of West End's distinctive characteristics is its history of influential political representation- including in the last two decades a Commonwealth Prime Minister, a Deputy State Premier and a Brisbane City Lord Mayor. Current representation by Greens Party activists in each of the City Council, State and Federal Parliaments (Australian Broadcasting Commission, 2022) maintains this tradition of political activism and ensures that the community is well able to find spokespeople to proclaim and defend its cultural character in similar ways to both Toronto's Annex and New York's Greenwich Village with Jane Jacobs and London's Covent Garden with its university academics and students. The roles of melting pot, cultural, arts and creative industry focus and inner-city refuge, though threatened, still endure.

END OF BOX

Physical Patterns

Worldwide, the spaces and places where people live, meet and make the contacts that help to mould their everyday lives share many recognizable social and physical characteristics. These normally include a central focus, containing spaces for shared activities and exchange, with shops or stalls lining one or more central streets, some form of school, a religious focus or shrine, and, in many cases, access to public or community transport. A local centre, connected to surrounding residential areas by networks of streets or pathways, is normally also linked by road to other neighbouring communities of similar or greater scale. People's lives in these communities are influenced by their density, structure, grain, permeability, mix and meeting points, discussed below. These help to shape people's everyday lives and influence the future evolution of neighbourhood's form and character, and thus can provide significant levers in planning to shape and improve localities.

Settlement Structure and Activities

The physical structure of localities directly affects many aspects of daily life: how much contact we have with neighbours; whether we walk, cycle, bus or drive a car to work, play or school; and whether we shop locally or travel to a large supermarket chain store. Factors of grain, mix, permeability, and meeting places influence these choices (Lynch, 1986). *Grain* is the term that has come to be used for the scale of the basic building blocks which go to make up settlements. Fine grain consists of short streets with many intersections, many small local parks and play areas, and a tendency for many buildings to be at the human scale. Pedestrian movements are then spread fairly evenly throughout whole districts, encouraging a mix of small shops and other uses. Coarse grain, on the other hand, results from large scale elements, whether in terms of height, bulk or basic floor plan, such as big apartments blocks and major shopping centres. Jane Jacobs (1961) memorably castigated the ambitious coarse-grained open space plans in many major America cities. She contrasted the sociable virtues of small local open spaces with the array of large

public spaces, proudly created in many great American cities, which generated 'border vacuums' and provided such extensive areas so remote from the protective scrutiny of 'eyes on the street', that she catalogued them as 'Rapists Parks, Perverts Parks, Mugging Parks, and Misdemeanour Open Spaces'.

Mixed uses, by contrast, can thrive where there is a fine grain of physical form encouraging both access and custom, whereas, rigid and doctrinaire segregation of activities separating residential, commercial, home office and craft production discourage the development of a lively street life and frustrate the natural evolution of new activities within communities. Members of the 'Creative Class' identified by Richard Florida (2004) both seek and need the variety and opportunity which mixed uses and supportive development control can provide to help people meet easily and casually and exchange ideas that can develop and compare new approaches and products.

Permeability is another useful phrase that captures the convenient movement characteristics of fine-grained communities, where people experience a sense of easy flow along choices of routes, to reach a variety of interesting destinations. Lanes and arcades are good examples, while walled and gated communities destroy informal contact. It is not difficult to frame planning regulations that will enhance permeability in new developments and prevent the development of coarse-grained new suburbs, which would encourage physical and social exclusion. For instance, a rule that new developments will only receive planning permission if all their dwellings are within 50 metres of a freely traversed public right of way would encourage permeability and effectively prevent the establishment of disruptive walled estates. If permeability offers the pathways, *meeting places* can provide the magnetic attractors. Many roles and methods can be combined to help develop these focus points round which communities can build a strong sense of the image and ownership of their localities. Small portions of streets may be closed to traffic or pavements widened to create little squares, pocket parks or play areas. New public spaces can occupy, for instance, one corner of a significant road intersection. Excessive and redundant road surfaces (which may become increasingly common with the automation of transport) can be re-purposed for community gardens, rest and play. *Landmarks*, not necessarily large or dominating features, can be designated. Often it is their cultural significance rather than their bulk which creates a sense of place and legibility for residents and regular users, as with the celebrated small statue of the little mermaid which sits on a rock in Copenhagen's harbour, or the little bronze statues of deer and other native animals that are placed at intervals along the pavements of the main street linking Portland's city centre to the State University campus. Collectively, these characteristics of grain, permeability, mix of uses, landmarks and meeting points, do much to endow localities with the spatial qualities that can endear them to, or estrange them from, their residents. All of them, however, are much influenced by the over-riding factor of density

Density

Dominant among the influences impacting community life is this density of development, long recognised as a powerful factor in shaping the servicing, sociability and health of local communities. The celebrated dictum, ascribed to the 18th century English compiler of the first Dictionary of the English Language, Dr Samuel Johnson, that “*It is density, Sir, that creates convenience!*” now applies not only to the convenience of residents in their access to facilities and provisions, but also to the convenience of local and state governments, responsible for providing essential services. However, as in most aspects of human life, there is a ‘Goldilocks’ median level where intensity of residential development is sufficient to promote social interaction and economic provision of services, but not so great as to endanger basic personal needs for sunlight, play, exercise space and contact with nature. Too low a density may result in the anonymous and space-consuming urban sprawl of the outer suburbs of many contemporary cities of North America and Australia, while too much may infringe basic human needs for healthy living and family life.

In traditional rural village communities, densities tend to have evolved to a sociable and serviceable mean level of around 20 dwellings to the hectare as populations cluster to conserve productive land and resources and promote convenience and security. In the affluent low-density suburbs of such contemporary major cities and metropolises, as Houston, Perth and Los Angeles, by contrast, densities may fall to an average of half this level, while elsewhere in such crowded inner cities of both developing and developed nations, as Kolkata, New York, Mumbai, Sao Paulo, Singapore and Wuhan, they may vary upward by ten times to as much as two to three hundred dwellings – or up to one thousand people- per hectare. This is the same size as a standard football field, which is a small space for a thousand people, even when they are stacked in high rise towers.

Actual densities thus vary widely between and within different cultures. In the intensively developed traditional networks of courtyard dwellings of one and two storey neighbourhoods of the Suks, Kasbahs and Bustees of North Africa and Southern Asia, this may produce averages around 100 dwellings to the hectare, while in the quarter acre blocks of many New World suburbs, urban sprawl and large private gardens produce one tenth of that with only 10 dwellings to the hectare (Newman and Kenworthy, 1989). Population densities vary accordingly. For instance, Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, accommodated its 2008 population of approximately 12 million on roughly 1,400 sq kms, at an *average* density of 85 persons to the hectare. This is eight times that of Brisbane City, a typical low density New World city, which spreads over a similar area to accommodate only one tenth the population - currently 1.3 million people - at an average density of approximately 10 persons to the hectare (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022). However, this is not purely a distinction between more and less developed communities. It is interesting to note that New York City’s overall density of 26,429 persons per square mile is 103 persons per hectare, which is about 20% higher than that of Dhaka. In

Manhattan, with its dense packed and often high-rise development, average densities rise to over 260 persons to the hectare, three times the Dhaka average and 26 times the Brisbane one. For comparison, the density in San Francisco, the next most intensively developed city in the USA, is about 65 persons per hectare, less than two thirds that of New York.

High densities proposed for new developments often raise concerns among local communities and existing residents and families. Corporate, community and individual interests may clash. Established authorities, governments and developers may favour radically increased densities to promote civic income, assist convenient provision of common services and support maximum commercial profits and yield from property taxes. Households and families adjacent to such proposed developments, by contrast, may express strong concerns about diminished amenity, over-burdened local facilities and social and physical infrastructure including roads, schools and public and community open spaces. In market economies, households often express their consumer preference by seeking dwellings in lower density middle and outer suburbs where there is more generous provision of public, personal and family space, privacy and resulting amenity. In extreme cases like that of Pruitt Igoe's deck access residential slab blocks, unpopular developments may actually have to be blown up (Newman, 1973).

These are clearly issues where policy, land values and technological innovations can all exert major influences. Basic human needs are involved, including access to private and public open space for young children to exercise, daylighting standards for dwellings, and appropriate scale of communities to promote access to primary schools, local shops, and public transport. Communities' attitudes towards high rise development, solar access, traffic generation and choice of form of transport, whether active, private or public will also be significant. Choices are available (Adams, 2009). Studies undertaken for Melbourne City (discussed further in Chapter 9, *Place, Space and Community Design*) suggest that considerable increases in densities can be achieved by selectively concentrating medium rise development of 6-8 storeys along radial corridors enjoying good access to public transport, in similar patterns to those which have evolved over the last century in many European cities, including Milan, Barcelona and Paris.

In considering appropriate residential densities, account also needs to be taken of the scale of future housing demand, based on projected population trends. For several decades, throughout the developed world, households will continue to age and shrink as baby boomer generations are succeeded by ones with smaller families. The United Nations Department of Economics and Social Research's 2022 update of *World Population Prospects* already forecasts that this trend will lead to an overall decline in world population as early as 2080 (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division, 2022), due to greater access to means of birth control and increased opportunities for equal education for women. In Australia, for instance, more than half of all households already consist of two or fewer people, and this proportion is steadily increasing. As a result, there is scope in

new schemes to increase the proportion of small dwellings, including attached and medium rise apartments, though this should not be interpreted as a justification for increasing acceptable building heights of new blocks of units.

Community Organisation

Differing types of social and economic collaboration have developed varying styles of community organisation. The collaborative spirit of early Owenite model settlements in the USA (Bestor, 1970) has re-emerged in more practical forms in initiatives including the many community development corporations (CDCs) now active in the United States, especially in New York, dedicated to providing affordable housing and job creation (Wolf-Powers, 2014). By 2021, there were nearly 5,000 of these CDCs, promoting community life and prosperity, especially among disadvantaged black communities. Since they first emerged in the mid 1960s as part of Robert Kennedy's and Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programme, they have been responsible for over half a million units of affordable housing and nearly a quarter of a million private sector jobs. In 2010, across the nation, they were developing 86,000 units of affordable housing and nearly nine million square feet of commercial and industrial space per year (Case Western University, 2021). In New York City, Wolf-Powers (2014) shows how local groups and organisations had enlisted the support of the City Council to reclaim and run rental housing previously abandoned by landlords in the economic downturn and crises of the late 60s and early 70s. The city's Association for Neighbourhood and Housing Development (ANHD) estimates that over the preceding three decades the 94 members of the Association had rehabilitated and developed no less than 100,000 dwelling units, frequently with the assistance of the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development in establishing ownership title. By 2012, they were still acting as property managers for 35,000 households (ANHD, 2012).

Amitai Etzioni (2006) a leading advocate for the Communitarian Movement in the United States, widens the ambit of community activism to propose a structural shift in social responsibility from central government to such local communities. He cites the performance of an increasing range of service roles by community organisations as effective means to balance the centralising tendencies of statism in contemporary society. He instances the 'charitable choice', introduced under the 1996 Welfare Reform Act, as a significant example of how religious and other local organisations can expand their social activities to create new centres of local power to balance the centralising roles of national governments, by encouraging states to provide funds for the provision of social services by religious and other charitable groups rather than delivering those services themselves.

Across the Atlantic, Britain's turn-of-the-century experiment with 'Third Way' politics, discussed further in Chapter 10, *Community Governance and Participation*, encouraged the development of social and not-for-profit enterprises to take over some of the country's traditional service roles. It adapted the philosophy, developing across the Atlantic, of governments 'not rowing but steering', to advocate delegation

of responsibility for major social programmes to voluntary organisations such as Housing Trusts and Community Action agencies, similar to the ideas discussed above of Amitai Etzioni (2006). Advocated by academics like Anthony Giddens (1994) and activists like the Reverend Andrew Mawson (Andrew Mawson Partnerships, 2022), these ideas were enthusiastically taken up by New Labour's policymakers in the first decade of this century, and rapidly entered the mainstream of shared political doctrine. Mawson is a United Reformed minister who took over the derelict East End parish of Bromley-by-Bow in London in the late 1980s and set about a process of community development involving social entrepreneurship, assisting communities and individuals to help themselves to renew their own lives and those of their communities. He founded the United Kingdom Community Action Network to promote the concept and support new initiatives around the country, later including the Lea Valley Regeneration scheme redeveloping that area after the 2012 London Olympic games (Andrew Mawson Partnerships, 2022). This approach built on earlier Fabian and Syndicalist ideas already being applied in the many thousands of housing associations then providing over a million dwellings under the umbrella of the National Housing Corporation (now 'Homes England'). Such approaches involve collaboration between government, voluntary and private sectors at a number of scales, both local and regional. The intention of *Homes England* is to encourage maximum local ownership and participation in such schemes. However, recent informed criticism (Wainwright, 2022) suggests that such Third Way initiatives themselves require careful scrutiny and accountability measures to ensure that they do not become absorbed into market activities to abandon their original stated social objectives (in this case affordable housing) in order to achieve large scale commercial profits that run counter to these declared intentions.

Community organisation is also a major theme in many developing nations. In India the *panchayati raj* system, long advocated by the Gandhian movement, was formally integrated into Indian National legislation under the 1992 seventy-third amendment to its constitution, giving constitutional recognition and status to a three-tiered system with *panchayati* with appropriate planning and implementation powers at the village, block and district levels, with members being selected for five-year terms in elections supervised by state election commissions (Mitra, 2001).

In the Indonesian island of Bali, the comprehensive framework of subaks has been developed over a thousand years to manage water supply and irrigation. Over 1500 local groups, each with an average of 200 members, administer areas of a little under one square kilometre each. In all 1500 subaks are responsible for 90 000 hectares of irrigated land. Suarja and Thyssen (2003) report that all members of the local water-consuming communities are members of the 'general assembly', which appoints a board to decide distribution of water rights and responsibilities as well as taking on other roles in local agricultural administration. It is significant that although this system grew out of the traditional culture of the island, membership is open to all water users, whichever religion they practise or whenever they acquired their water rights. As open-edged communities, the subaks provide a highly relevant model for the contemporary world where community membership is often subject to rapid change.

Spatial Justice.

Many long-established cities throughout the developed world, already experiencing major problems resulting from the decay of long-standing concentrations of densely packed and economically declining inner areas, are now being confronted by the special difficulties and needs of many new international migrants. Notable examples occur in New York's Harlem and Brooklyn, California's San Diego, London's Brixton and Tower Hamlets, Glasgow's Easterhouse, Manchester's Droylesden and Cheetham Hill, Liverpool's inner ring of relative deprivation in suburbs such as Toxteth and Walton and Sydney's Cabramatta (Yates, 2010). Although such cities often enjoy remarkable resources of social capital and community spirit expressed in the irrepressible music of New York's creative jazz scene, Detroit's 'Motown' bands and the silver and brass bands and choirs of the old Yorkshire and Lancashire mill towns of the United Kingdom, the life chances of many of their occupants have often been impacted by poor opportunities for education, healthy living or well-paid work. In New York, for instance, the concentration of poorly maintained, low quality housing in Harlem resulted in the crises of the 1970s and 80s discussed earlier in this chapter, while among the 'rustbelt' communities of the country's north east, places such as Detroit were severely affected by the rapid contraction of the United States' automobile industry, and are now experiencing high rates of unemployment and increased competition for jobs. Nevertheless, inclusive community organisation and planning can provide effective paths and steps to rectify such problems, as is demonstrated by the work of New York's Community Development Corporations, and enlightened administrations in Cleveland (Wolff-Powers, 2014; Brown, 2015).

Problems of Planned Communities

Planned communities may face their own problems, often produced by insensitive interventions. Some of the most notorious of these result from the toxic confluence of two unhealthy streams of the mid twentieth century: the assumption of some administrators that disadvantaged and less competitive individuals and families should be conveniently concentrated in areas where they would not offend the sensibilities of more successful neighbours; and the authoritarian design principles of modernist architects, which often favoured construction of rows and clumps of high rise dwelling blocks of public housing in places like Tower Hamlets in East London, Manchester's notorious Oldham and Rochdale Roads, Liverpool's Scotland Road, Glasgow's eastern satellite of Easterhouse and the infamous Pruitt Igoe development of St Louis (Jephcott, 1971; Newman, 1973; Heywood, 1974; Gray, 1976). There are countless others.

More insidious problems, reflecting well intentioned aims of amenity, resulted in carefully shaped swathes of more traditional public housing, which, though decent and carefully designed, were often socially segregated, physically isolated, sometimes sterile, and lacking in social mix and activation. They frequently gave rise to feelings of alienation and despondency, often summarised in the generalised phrase 'New Town Blues'. English examples include Manchester's Wythenshawe,

Liverpool's Kirby and numerous council estates scattered throughout their middle suburbs by London County Council and Birmingham City Council. In Australia, Brisbane's 'Housing Commission' suburb of Inala and much of Sydney's western suburbs of Airds, Bidwill and Villawood are physical reminders of such problems. United States' experience, more focussed on private sector development, was generally more successful, led by the 9 Levittowns, each housing several tens of thousands of people on city fringes in a string of 'edge city' developments down the United States east coast from New Jersey to Virginia (Delafons, 1969, 2003; World Atlas, 2022).

Nevertheless, in extreme cases of public housing, such places of planned segregation may deteriorate to form 'sink estates', where groups of people including single parent families, immigrants, long term unemployed and ex-prisoners, who are unwanted as neighbours by economically and socially more successful groups, are concentrated in socially isolating public housing estates, the fate of which is sealed when they are subjected to sensationalized labelling and given unsavoury reputations by the mass media. They provide eloquent reasons to pursue the very different policies of social mix and correspondingly diverse land uses.

Spatial inequity and the workings of the Free Market

Unequal and unsuitable housing cannot be blamed solely on administrators and architects. An unconstrained free market system itself can have dire consequences for the social and physical organization of cities. These were accurately, if uncritically, understood, explored and forecast, a century ago by the theorists of the Chicago School of Urban Sociology (Burgess, 1925). They recognized that as the city's population and economy grew and central business districts expanded, the original occupants of the inner suburbs, often consisting of families of workers employed in the manufacturing activities that were then mainly located in the inner city, would be forced to seek cheaper new accommodation on the urban fringes and to commute daily back to their work places. This resulted in rippling re-development of a ring-like sequence of 'invasion and succession' driven by spasmodic but continuing escalation in the land values of central and inner areas (Burgess, 1925). This process of property acquisition, construction, demolition and reconstruction would create a constantly changing and unstable 'Zone in Transition', where short term rental housing would be mixed with derelict buildings and provident land assembly could prepare the ground for the next phase of expansion of the central city. Later, the pattern would be repeated as further waves of displaced working families and recent arrivals to the city would be driven to relocate in new outer rings of low-cost housing on the expanding city fringes.

The difficulties arising from these theories of the emerging form of such major commercial and industrial cities was that their authors and many amongst their readership assumed that 'is' implied 'ought'- and accordingly set about advocating urban policies that promoted this pattern of successive waves of rippling redevelopment, blighting and replacement. These assumptions led to failures to

evaluate, mitigate and optimise -in short to plan- better urban forms and social outcomes. After a hundred years, some of these dysfunctional processes still survive, and are demonstrated in the case study of Brisbane's West End in Box 2.1, included earlier in this chapter. However, such policies of constantly increasing densities are increasingly coming into collision with the decentralising effects of contemporary communications and transport technology, with their inherent tendencies to disperse population and stimulate the evolution of new and more stable 'polynucleated' patterns, as identified by Hall (2002, 2014) Roberts (2014) and Heywood (1998). These trends are promoting polycentric metropolitan regions, raising the prospects for improved spatial justice for the residents of the inner city.

The strategies of social justice

In matters of social justice, global influences are exerting equally strong, but more negative, influences on local communities. For instance, in cities such as San Diego, Mexico City, Mumbai, Bangkok, Sao Paulo and Shenzhen, the international division of labour continues to recruit new concentrations of workers to manufacture industrial components and consumer goods to serve the global economy. Accommodation varies from sterile and crowded caravan parks to squalid favelas and bustees. Organizations such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the Japan International Cooperation Agency play their part in mitigating these problems with support for targeted infrastructure investment programs to improve living conditions in many rapidly expanding cities, as described later in Chapter 9, *Places, Spaces and Community Design* in Box 9.1, *Placemaking in Kolkata*. The dedicated action of voluntary organizations such as the *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation*, *Care*, *Human Rights Watch*, *Oxfam* and *World Vision* can assist in tackling the negative effects of global trends and free market-based profit maximisation, through activities such as fair trade campaigns and squatter upgrading schemes.

Meanwhile, the global economy accelerates the decline of old manufacturing areas in such long established 'rustbelt' communities as Baltimore, Buffalo, and Detroit in the USA, Bradford, Manchester and Sheffield in the UK, and Lille and the old Moselle industrial towns in France. Although this division of labour has its origins in global trends, its local effects can be mitigated by community planning initiatives. For instance, in recovering 'rustbelt regions' of the First World, the successes of cities like Cleveland and Pittsburgh in the USA and Manchester and Leeds in the UK in reorganising to meet these challenges, going back in some cases to the 1980s, indicates that solutions are possible (Brown, 2015; Wikipedia, 2022).

In developing countries, technology transfer is another commonly advocated strategy, encouraging the establishment of foreign owned enterprises in the hope that the development of local skills will stimulate economic development. This has had mixed results, clearly achieving some successes, on balance, with Chinese investments in Africa and with western technological partnerships in the 'Young Tiger' economies of eastern and southern Asia such as Thailand, Taiwan and South Korea, and is now being pursued in parts of Vietnam and Indonesia and with

Chinese investment in Pakistan and Myanmar. The World Bank and World Trade Organisation actively encourage such trends with their championing of Direct Foreign Investment (DFI). However, there are well justified concerns about the long-term effects of such arrangements alienating local ownership, generating economic dependency, exerting undue political influence and even resulting in such military interventions as the allied 2004 invasion of Iraq (Heywood 2006). Worldwide, more collaborative arrangements, based on national government agencies and local enterprises entering into partnership arrangements with international partners appear to offer more secure and productive long-term outcomes. In Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea, government agencies and private enterprises have formed many such carefully shaped international trading arrangements and partnerships. Spatial injustices involving the international division of labour are also entrenched in the mechanisms of world debt regulated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) (Monbiot, 2003). The increasing support for debt redemption (on the basis that the debtor nations have already many times repaid their original loans) could cause a significant improvement in economic justice within the global community. Debt redemption could offer a level playing field; fair trade would provide even-handed rules; and continued local ownership and control of enterprises could ensure a majority of local players in the home team.

Refugee Camps, Reception Areas, Bidonvilles and Shanty Towns

For refugees driven to international migration to escape from such life-threatening conflicts as those of Afghanistan, Congo, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan and Syria, or in search of more secure livelihoods, the immediate experiences may be ones of acute spatial inequality in their new countries of adoption. Caravan parks, Bidonvillesⁱⁱⁱ, shanty towns, sink estates, and crowded rental accommodation in physically decaying and crowded terrace housing within declining industrial settlements are their most likely first homes in their arrival locations. They frequently experience cramped detention, punitive living conditions and poor quality of life relative to others in their host countries, with the most acute problems being stated as isolation, alienation and low absolute standards of shelter and services (Dantas, 2022). Prominent examples of places of first settlement are the migrant areas in San Diego, Miami and Mexican border communities in the USA, the older areas of declining industrial towns such as Oldham, Burnley and Bradford in the United Kingdom; parts of Lille, Marseilles, and the old Moselle Valley industrial towns in France; shanty towns on the fringes of Madrid and Milan and Australia's Cabramatta in the western suburbs of Sydney (Lucassen, 2005; Reuters, 2009a & b). Despite policies of dispersion in the United Kingdom, immigrant communities have become concentrated in such old industrial towns where feelings of alienation have given rise to occasional outbreaks of violence. As early as 2001, demonstrations involving Pakistani and other Muslim communities in inner Liverpool resulted in repeated battles with police riot squads over periods of up to a week. Better integration of such refugees into their new communities to achieve mutual understanding and benefits remains a prime task and opportunity for community planning.

The housing and integration difficulties faced by newcomers are sometimes compounded by the existing senses of exclusion and disadvantage already felt by long-standing members of the host community, who may themselves lack satisfactory and socially desirable housing. Throughout Western Europe, many migrants are drawn to seek cheap accommodation in such pioneer industrial communities, with palpable disadvantages of strained services and insufficient jobs. Massive post-war clearance and high-rise re-housing programs intended as solutions to the problems of these older industrial areas had already been found wanting (Heywood, 1974; Hall, 2002). Not only were they economically infeasible, socially insensitive and culturally destructive, but also environmentally wasteful, in an age increasingly concerned with sustainability. The polar opposite policy of leaving the solution to market forces did even less to help current residents or future seekers of affordable housing: it merely continued the cycle of invasion and succession discussed above to produce constant social and family stress.

In the Netherlands, public housing provision to help integrate immigrants from Surinam and Sumatra from the 1960s and 1970s onwards has been, on balance, more purposive and successful, based on the traditionally active role of Dutch local government in providing affordable housing and the country's long-standing tradition of accommodating newcomers and refugees (Hall, 2014). Responsibility for providing public housing for legal migrants was accepted by housing authorities such as the city of Amsterdam, where many were located in the large planned suburb of Bijlmermeer. Largely composed of 11 storey blocks served by aerial corridors, this new south eastern suburb was very similar in form to the demolished slab blocks of Pruitt Igoe, though having an even larger population, which originally approached 50,000 residents. Because the housing was not attractive to local people it came to be largely occupied by recently arrived immigrants (Tower Renewal Partnership, 2008; OMA, 2022). Soon, familiar problems akin to those of Britain's 'sink estates' started to emerge with instances of crime and drug taking, leading on to labelling and stigma. This developed to the extent that by the mid nineteen eighties, the City Council was considering mass demolition, along the lines of the St Louis housing authorities in Pruitt Igoe.

However, Amsterdam's system of active local community councils in each of the major divisions of the city meant that local views were clearly formulated and expressed, and they favoured physically and socially re-shaping the district rather than mass clearance. Surveys indicated that about one quarter of residents wanted to preserve the estates in their original modernist design; a further quarter wanted to leave the district altogether; and the remaining half supported progressive remodelling to more mixed forms and tenures (Tower Renewal Partnership, 2008) This policy of selective redevelopment, originally adopted in 1992, involved three elements: first, progressive demolition of about a quarter of the original slab blocks; second, quadrupling the amount of single-family housing to constitute over a third of the total housing stock; and finally, sale of a fifth of all dwellings to private buyers. While Netherlands as a nation still has major problems of mutual distrust between

Christian and Muslim communities, the combination of physical and social aspects of community planning in Bijlmermeer must be counted an overall success. Many people in both communities want to join hands across the barriers of race and religion, and the renovated Bijlmermeer is a good example of this community spirit at work (Tower Renewal Partnership, 2008).

Many English local governments are also trying their best to meet migrant housing requirements fairly on the combined basis of level of need and time already spent on waiting lists. However, this is made more difficult by much reduced available stocks of social housing, following twenty years of continuous enforced sale of public housing to current occupiers and new purchasers. The figure of 2% of all council housing being occupied by recently arrived immigrants suggests a cautious but fair-minded approach, but the widespread resentment of other local residents against any provision of this sort highlights the difficulties involved in inclusive community building (Rutter and Latorre, 2009). Community-run social enterprises can go some way to overcome these objections. However, the most effective solution to these problems of meeting the housing needs of recently arrived migrants remains the Social Market Housing policies of the German government, maintained by parties of different political complexions throughout the last seven decades, discussed in Chapter 7 *Homes and Communities*.

Sink Estates and Transit Zones.

The spatial disadvantages of the high density, and often high rise, inner city public housing estates, associated with St Louis's Pruitt Igoe, parts of inner Philadelphia, London's Thamesmead, Glasgow's Easterhouse, Melbourne's Housing Commission tower blocks in Kensington and Amsterdam's original Bijlmermeer development, often seem to invite dramatic and revolutionary solutions such as demolition by explosion. Nevertheless, this is seldom necessary or justified. The mixed and collaborative solutions applied in the United States since the 1960s by Community Development Corporations and Housing Associations in collaboration with city councils in New York, Cleveland and elsewhere and over the past thirty years in Amsterdam's Bijlmermeer constitute more sensible community planning methods (Western Case University, 2022; Tower Renewal Partnership, 2008). The first step required to solve the problems of poverty and disadvantage that fester in such areas, is to create no more single-class, single-minded designs that treat people as units of space consumption, when they should be seen as future members of interactive communities. Social housing needs to be a responsive policy rather than a statistically-based construction program. Affordable social housing can be integrated with the normal processes of physical development of a mixed economy, both by subsidised and regulated market providers and by social enterprise providers such as housing associations and publicly sponsored housing companies (discussed in more detail in Chapter 7, *Homes & Communities*). Next, the often well-intentioned mistakes of the mid twentieth century can frequently be reclaimed by selective conversion of suitable public housing blocks to community or individual ownership.

Appropriate buyers and renters include community housing associations and student accommodation bodies, as well as such renters as one and two person households of young people, empty nesters and childless couples. Clear legal and financial controls, along the lines of New York's Community Development Corporations (CDCs) can ensure that the communities that emerge from these inclusive policies enjoy both the security and responsibilities of ownership.

It is clear that such solutions require the kind of 'joined up', cumulative and inclusive approaches of purposeful and responsive community planning. These will involve community consultation and engagement as in Manchester's Northmoor (Northmoor Community Association, 2021), coherent combinations of social and physical activation as in Bijlmermeer (Tower Renewal Partnership, 2008); implementation involving cooperation between public, private and social enterprises as in the Lea Valley and Stratford Olympic Legacy schemes in East London (Maccreanor Lavington, 2022); and the inventiveness of innovative community organisations, like New York City's and Cleveland's CDCs (Wolf-Powers, 2014, Case Western University, 2021). Despite obstacles, complexities and shortcomings, such processes are being developed and successfully applied in many local communities throughout the world.

Planning Places

Place making, like home making, requires careful collaboration, active listening, and confident participation. In communities, as in families, roles need to be identified and organized, personal space shaped and equipped, communal access planned and provided and methods of participation negotiated.

The organization and distribution of activities

Place making demands not only providing fair and convenient access to shelter, work, play, learning, health and transport, but also to such rapidly expanding activities as communal child care and retirement living, which are being increasingly emphasised in current political debate. Social inclusion, to provide full scope for individuals and families to express their preferences and personalities as active social beings, is among the most important of the goals of community planning and deciding how new facilities can best be co-located and integrated should involve consultation on issues including convenience, scale and access. For instance, primary schools need to be small enough for all their students to live within walking or cycling distance, but large enough to justify such necessary facilities as a library, playing fields and varied learning spaces. Similar principles will apply in different ways to clinics and health centres, shops and parks, causing the task of place making to involve challenging sequences of progressive problem solving (Alexander 1964).

Central Place concepts developed over the last one hundred and fifty years, are used to guide decisions about how services can best be distributed and located, to promote convenient co-location and access to activities such as shopping,

education, health and transport (Hall, 1985). Long established theories of central place hierarchies are currently evolving to encompass more multi-centred forms of settlement, the scale and characteristics of which are discussed later in Chapters 8, *Facets of Community* and 9, *Place, Space and Community Design*. They suggest the adoption of more flexible patterns of service distribution and delivery from more dispersed systems of central places, which will be more readily accessible to those who need them throughout the growing urban fields and metropolitan regions of this millennium of high mobility. The extent of these fields will vary according to their purposes, from the global scale distribution of electronic information of the world-wide web to the very local organization of children's care and play. Within these most local of communities, good inter-agency communication and collaboration is needed to improve the capacity of their co-located schools, clinics, play spaces, local government offices, shops and active community and public transport systems to combine to foster secure, convenient and sociable community life.

The shaping of space

When consulted, local communities often indicate particular concern for issues of urban design, and community planning presents invaluable opportunities to shape the scale, density and appearance of places to reflect these preferences (Menzies, Rogan & Heywood, 1997). Firmly based starting points can be derived from human dimensions of average height of about 1.75 metres and eye level at about 1.65 metres. On this basis, Kevin Lynch (1961, 1983) has developed a most useful vocabulary of factors, based on people's stated perceptions of urban space, which is discussed in more detail in Chapter 9, *Place, Space and Community Design*. Consulting different samples of city dwellers, Lynch identified, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, the elements of *districts, nodes, landmarks, paths* and *edges*, to which might be added the *seams* which link neighbouring communities. Christopher Alexander (1977, 1979) has taken this approach a stage further to develop a *pattern language* of 253 models of ideal features, to provide a well-stocked palette from which communities can choose patterns to meet their own local needs and preferences, discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, *Ways and Means*. Such vocabularies and patterns can provide valuable tools for basing design in people's own perceptions and experiences. Alexander (2002) has continued to develop his thinking to distil 15 principles of good design, including such matters as *Levels of Scale, Roughness* and *Repeated Alternation* (see also Chapter 9, *Places, Spaces and Community Design*). People's reactions to existing deficiencies, strengths and preferences can be identified, recorded and used to indicate appropriate kinds of design models and patterns to guide future development. In these ways, design schemes can be developed to reflect and express user objectives across a wide array of activities, while also creating the most imaginative possible new solutions. Randolph Hester (2010) takes this a stage deeper by seeking out people's senses of 'sacred places' in the local environment and then identifying the underlying 'sacred structure', which will assist new developments to

adopt a scale, form and role that will assist their fitting into a pattern that will be treasured by local people and visitors alike. The local primary school, or riverside wharf area, for instance, can play invaluable roles in establishing, maintaining and supporting community life, as well as providing a convenient location for after hours and weekend community activities.

Place Making

Spaces for meeting and mutual support can provide communities with places for focus and opportunities for empowerment. People can meet in shared spaces and buildings to which they have guaranteed rights of access, such as local parks, schools, church halls, licensed premises and meeting rooms over local shops or within cafes or milk bars. Existing communities will often have developed a wealth of such places, and their continuing viability can be supported by reduced local property taxes. Opportunities to support community life through more casual and informal meeting can be provided by small local spaces (Jacobs, 1963), incorporating Lynch's 'loose fit' (1983), Alexander's 'roughness' (2002) and Hester's 'sacred places' (2010). Such incidental open spaces have often evolved naturally in established communities, linked to cultural associations. In New Zealand, for instance, traditional Māori *Marae*, protected from development by the New Zealand Planning Act, provide ideal meeting places as well as spaces for traditional ceremonies (New Zealand, Government 1991). Similar spaces can be designated elsewhere in both existing and new communities and linked to cultural and community associations. In such ways, culture and communication can be empowered to help maintain and enhance community life.

Access

Local communities need convenient daily access to regularly recurring activities of children's play and weekly access to opportunities for both adolescent sport and adult recreation and self-expression. Such opportunities help to promote neighbourly feelings; lacking it, isolated individuals may become mere spectators of life being enacted on impersonal screens. Daily access to work places is also essential to the economic life of modern trading cities. Five different forms of access are available to local communities to bridge such gaps:

- *active movement* of walking and cycling
- *recently introduced personal transport of electric scooters and bicycles*
- *community transport* involving communal provision
- *public transport* of mass transit, by bus, train or ferry
- *Private transport*, normally involving the use of individual motor vehicles

Capacities for *active movement* of walking, cycling and running is deeply enshrined within our genes. It has great survival value in terms of health, awareness and personal security, and still predominates at the local scale in most communities, bringing many advantages to individuals and groups (Solnit, 2000). A well-walked neighbourhood is far safer than one mainly traversed in a private car at 30 to 40 mph

(40 to 60 kph), while possibly conducting a phone conversation or half listening to music or a radio program. Pedestrian movement plans can take account of natural topography and drainage. Foot and cycle paths can lead past schools and shops to link to creek corridors that can in turn flow down to suburban and city centres and up to nature reserves and forest parks. These open space networks can then extend onwards and outwards to wilderness areas in the regional hinterland, forming part of a connected system that can encourage individuals and families to combine essential daily movements with health-giving exercise and promote invaluable community awareness and oversight.

The personal mobility afforded by *electric scooters* is, by contrast, dependent on the shared use of channels originally designed for other purposes. Under different administrations, these may include footpaths, cycleways, bus lanes, and in some cases, the sharing of roads with cars. Their advantages include convenience, speed, compact form and ease of use offering the potential for convenient movement around congested cores and radically reduction of demands on peak hour road space. All of this would improve the permeability offered by central areas to workers, residents and visitors. However, many state and local governments, in return for collection of generous operator licensing charges, are permitting their use, without requiring the training, licensing, safe operation or parking requirements necessary for scooter riders' own safety and that of other users of movement channels. As a result of this under-regulation, they are often resented by other travellers, especially cyclists, who are moving at lower speeds and constrained by more regulations. Rules differ among different members of the EU, and among States in the USA and Australia. The resulting problems are well summarised by Hayes (2022), describing the situation in the USA:

It can all become confusing as electric scooter laws differ from state to state.

They don't require riders to pass an e-scooter specific DMV test; people can get away with riding them without particular knowledge of motorised scooter laws.

As a result, they are frequently a danger both to themselves and other users of the channels on which they are travelling. Consequently, they present a classic case of the importance of two principles of community planning:

- the need for state governments to make and enforce prudential regulations for new and existing roles and uses that impact on the wellbeing of others; and
- the need for governments to subject new technologies to scrutiny and controls before allowing commercial organisations to introduce them for general use.

Community Transport is another field of considerable undeveloped potential. One form, car-pooling for the journey to work, is already widely practiced in many parts of the USA; Cervero (2009) has shown that it frequently combines well with the transit orientated developments discussed below. Making financial contributions to the fuel costs of those providing the vehicles, people can car pool/ride share into a convenient rail or bus way station, where public transport can then take them to

within walking distances of their workplaces. Such arrangements can ultimately encourage commuters to get rid of their cars or not to acquire them at all.

Other types of community transport can involve different forms of sharing. At the moment a typical outer suburban community may be separately served by a school bus, hospital and day care collection vehicles, and shopping buses provided by partnerships between local government and shopping centers, and yet still contain many isolated individuals and households. A system of community transport convened by local government and operated by a local community transport group can combine many of these functions, using vehicles purchased and maintained by the council, but managed and driven by suitably qualified people drawn from the local community. Local councils may also fund 'Council Cab' schemes which allow otherwise housebound elderly people to take taxis to shops and community services either free or for a nominal charge for each visit, thus alleviating the worst effects of the isolation of the elderly and the disabled.

At the other end of the age scale, 'walking buses' can make use of rosters of parents to collect and take groups of children to their local school, combining healthy exercise and sociable contact with the developmental of children's capacities for observation and conversation. Such community induction into active transport can also establish good habits to help reduce their later carbon footprints as adults.

Good public transport is often the tipping point between an isolated and alienated location and a vigorous and confident community, enabling people to join in sociable life, instead of staying at home watching shadows moving around a screen. The profit and loss account of public transport should therefore not be calculated solely in terms of the costs of fleet maintenance and ticket revenue: equally important are its contributions to community vitality and safety. Regular and convenient public and community transport, whether by bus, trams, trains or ferries, can have wide ranging beneficial effects. People may be encouraged to move around the city and suburban streets at many times of the day and evening, to enjoy increased social contact through being able to visit friends and establish informal relationships with others. Commercial prosperity may be promoted, with shops enjoying an expanded clientele and employers an enlarged labour pool. The personal autonomy of both the young and old and those disqualified from driving by health may be transformed.

Supporting nets of local cycle and footpaths can be designed and built to focus on rail and bus way stations to form nodes in the communications net and bringing bustling activity to district centres with their shops, clinics, council services and proximity to local primary schools. All members of the community may be helped to become more equal participants in an active society.

Private transport cannot, and should not, be overlooked. From the days of five thousand years ago when the invention of the wheel made possible the introduction of buffalo and horse drawn vehicles and chariots and more recently, cars and SUVs, such private carriages have become the emblems of personal power and independence. The car has come to be seen as a symbol of a free society enabling people to move freely and expand their range of choices across a wide range of

jobs, schools, play spaces, entertainment opportunities and living locations. There are many positive aspects of car ownership and use. Its strengths are choice and flexibility. Cars and their drivers and passengers can bring life and vitality to local strip shopping centres if parking provisions are made nearby. The social advantages of a private vehicle for maintaining family contact at weekends and during holiday times are enormous. Many mountain and beach resorts are most easily accessed by car.

However, its failings include intensifying consumption and disruption of scarce urban space and resources and creation of increasing levels of pollution and conflict. The use of the private motor car becomes an apt expression of J. S. Mill's dictum that 'the boundary of one man's freedom is that of his fellows' (Mill, 1859, 1983). Private transport thus requires careful planning, including evaluation of options, weighing of unintended consequences and consideration of alternative provisions. Whether we are commuters in London and New York, residents of outer suburbs in California, or increasingly affluent Beijing knowledge workers, we cannot all continue to drive 10 cubic metres of steel or extruded plastic at an average vehicle occupancy of 1.3 persons or less to the same places at the same time along the same congested roads, emitting on average of more than a kilogram of carbon dioxide every 80 kilometres of our journey (My Climate 2022). Given continued increases of metropolitan populations and mounting levels of atmospheric carbon, these problems demand immediate attention. Because unregulated journeys to work in city centres are unsustainable for reasons of space, pollution and resource consumption, they need to be managed by prudent planning policies and parking controls. London and Singapore have achieved success with combinations of excellent public transport of both buses and surface level and underground trains, and the imposition of congestion charges on peak hour traffic. In cities such as Vienna, Rome, and Padua, key central areas have recently been closed to daytime traffic and parking, while for over a thousand years nature has ordained the same outcome in the canal-based elegance of Venice. Worldwide, parking controls are being applied with increasing effect. Although private vehicles have become an integral part of human life, this does not mean that they should be given free rein to dominate city life at all times of the day and in all places, irrespective of their effects upon others^{iv}. Looking at the streets of a local community in a typical metropolitan suburb in the developed world over the span of a day, an interesting pattern of movement emerges. As dawn light returns, active movements predominate. Early morning joggers and walkers can be seen maintaining personal fitness and exercising pet dogs. Soon, they are joined by early commuters, as they emerge from their homes to walk to bus stops or cycle to local railway stations. Later again, driver-only cars begin to fill the streets on their way to resume their daily battles with congestion on their journeys to work. Then mothers and carers gather children together to escort them to school. By mid-morning, activity is much reduced, with occasional cars taking housewives and carers to shops, gymnasiums and part time jobs. From late

afternoon onwards, the morning rush hour pattern is reversed with return journeys to home again choking the streets until intensity declines between 6 and 7 pm. By the time dinner is finished and children are settled to homework, movement is reduced to a steady flow of couples and groups, some walking to bus stops and others driving through the now calm streets to social occasions and entertainment attractions. Outside the 90 minute morning and afternoon rush hours, the streets function quite well as both meeting places and channels of movement.

The inherent manageability of this pattern of access has been enhanced by urban development policies favouring ‘transit-orientated development’ (often known simply as ‘TOD’) which integrates transport and land use, concentrating new housing around public transport nodes, linked to hinterlands of about 5-10 minutes walking distance, or a radius of approximately 500 – 1000 metres (Cervero, 2009). Within this walking radius, commercial buildings and residential apartment blocks may rise to as much as 6- 8 storeys (or 16 to 24 metres) in height. TODs of this sort can achieve densities of 200-300 persons per hectare, producing populations as high as 50,000 people in their compact core within 500-600 metres of the local transport station, capable of supporting a good array of commercial, health, educational and recreational and cultural facilities. Such approaches suggest that prudent diversion of journeys to and from work onto public and community transit combined with the mounting shift towards electric vehicles with their greatly reduced carbon output, could allow people to continue to enjoy the benefits of personal ownership of prized individual vehicles for social, recreational and shopping purposes. Metropolitan areas such as Portland, Toronto, Vancouver and Melbourne (Adams, 2009) provide good examples of this approach, often associated with innovations in community engagement and governance that are discussed in the next section.

Community Participation and Governance

Community governance involves far more than the familiar representation of local wards and constituencies by elected councillors. Equally important is the participation by individuals and voluntary organizations in the management of community activities, outlined in Table 2.2, below. In the most successful and self-sustaining communities, many of these activities are being performed simultaneously and collaboratively by different sets of participants– volunteers and voluntary organizations, as well as delegated bodies and representative governments - all capable, at their best, of working together to support each others’ contributions (Putnam 1993, 2000; Etzioni 2006).

Table 2.1: Forms of Local Community Governance

Source	Personal participation	Voluntary organizations	Delegated management	Representative government
Individual	Individuals’	Membership of	Membership	Membership of

	personal energies & rights to apply them in free associations, e.g. community service, street gardens, city farms, low carbon networks, urban social movements	<i>Councils of Social Service & environmental action, conservation and resource management groups. Participation in community centres</i>	of school committees, and community space & conservation management groups	political parties and support groups
Organised Group	Workers and Housing Cooperatives, management & maintenance of local systems, e.g. urban farms, open space & natural habitats, community festivals, street parties, vacation camps and holiday schemes.	Churches & charities; e.g. housing, community care, welfare & health services, sport, play & sheltered workshop activities, community festivals, social support activities, e.g. home visiting 'Meals on Wheels' groups, lay groups, sporting associations, bulk buying & recycling networks	Management boards of public & community enterprises, e.g. voluntary school committees, community housing trusts & child care centres,	Accountability provisions for management of non-government organisations (NGOs), and neighbourhood association committees, elected School Boards in USA & Canada.
Community interaction and Life	Communication, self expression and sharing: community farms and gardens, choirs, dance clubs, yoga groups,	Resource conservation, community gardens, urban agriculture & active transport initiatives of bodies like <i>Transition Towns</i> .	Community stakeholding & membership of local plan preparation and administration teams.	Peak body Community Councils and coalitions representing local activist, functional and voluntary groups.

	community theatres, etc.			
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Personal Participation

The basis of participation lies in the rights of individuals to control their own minds, bodies, energies and actions, as defined in the United Nations *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (United Nations 1948). This extends from the most local levels of community activity – walking buses, street gardens and community festivals - to the internationally significant campaigns and urban movements of the last quarter of the twentieth century that generated the energy to reform city life and government in many countries throughout the world. These contributed powerfully to transforming or replacing such authoritarian regimes as 1970s Spain (Castells, 1983; Vila, 2014) and 1980s Poland and East Germany. It was such pooling of individual energies that powered the passing of power of the Polish Gdansk shipyards to workers control and later the phasing out of communism throughout the country’s entire system of government starting with the workers movement ‘Solidarity’ in the early 1980s (Dobbs et al 1983). Later results were even more significant in the tides of individual energy resulting in the 1989 destruction of the Berlin Wall and the later abandonment of the Soviet regime itself in Russia. It must be acknowledged that such individual freedoms and rights to personal choice are now being threatened by the resurgent tide of repressive government, at its most blatant in the campaigns by the People’s Republic of China in Xingjian and Tibet and by Russia in its neighbouring countries of Eastern Europe, including Ukraine, where it is currently confronted by the heroic defiance and defence of its people’s rights to individual and national independence (Schlein, 2022). Such recurrent outrages provide renewed reminders that the rights of citizens to participation in governance, if not energetically exercised, may be rapidly usurped by self-promoting populists and military dictators.

Groups & Voluntary Organizations

In more peaceful expressions of this spirit of local participation, groups such as Bali’s Water Subaks have for centuries worked together to manage open space, common areas and shared resource systems (Suarja and Thyssen, 2003). Such bodies often grow to become highly significant at broader national and global scales, as have both the Grameen Bank, starting in Bangladesh and the Mondragon Cooperative Corporation, starting from its base in the Basque region of Northern Spain and rapidly spreading from its original roles in finance and production to make transformative contributions to the conduct and governance of education, housing and community life. Such creative energy is also expressed in the community choirs, theatres, dance groups, rambler’s associations, cultural organizations and book clubs which create the social capital to sustain community life through collaboration rather than coercion. In so doing they have also helped to shape events, such as the local emergence of Gay and Lesbian communities into the mainstreams of life in

western democracies of the last twenty years, symbolised by occasions such as Sydney's annual Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, as well as the 'Black Lives Matter' and 'Me Too' movements of recent times.

Individual voluntary organizations of this sort may follow a life cycle from birth, through maturity to decline, but overall their influence is indestructible. It reappears in new forms and organizations that span, for instance, from local street gardens to the international environmental networks that aim to transform community life in developed countries and to support the rights of communities as far afield as the island states of the South Pacific and Indian Oceans, threatened by sea level rises triggered by global warming. They have potentially significant roles to play in both local and global governance (Monbiot, 2003).

Churches and charities are also often involved. In the United States, 'Charitable Choice' (Etzioni, 2004:167) recognises their roles by advocating devolution of major responsibilities in the administration of welfare to such organizations. Devolution of powers and funds to voluntary agencies is also a major theme in 'Third Way' and 'Fourth Way' politics discussed earlier in this chapter. As voluntary organisations develop and take on formal structures, they often evolve into social enterprises such as Housing Associations and managers of major social assets in education, income and health including the Salvation Army and the United Way. Such organizations are involved in daily events at scales ranging from the provision of morning breakfasts to boarding house residents to regular local clean up days and systematic recycling programs.

Networks may grow very quickly. *Transition Towns*, for instance, spreading from its origin in the small English seaside town of Totnes in 2005, grew in less than five years to a *Transition Network* which is now involved in Transition Hubs in nearly 300 cities and towns in 16 countries in five continents, all aiming to create initiatives to help communities make transitions from fossil fuel dependency and mass consumption to living within sustainable limits (Transition Network, 2022). After the collapse of the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Change Conference, and the very partial successes of the 2016 Paris Climate Change Agreement, such voluntary organizations re-doubled their efforts to provide global ecological leadership by voluntary action, as many governments turned their attention away from global environmental management (Avaaz Organization, 2010, 2022).

Delegated Management Bodies

Much of the governance most directly affecting our daily lives is controlled by indirectly elected or nominated bodies such as transport and water boards, catchment committees and national parks and broadcasting corporations. They often do very good jobs, as for instance do the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), Transport for London (TfL), the Dutch *Rijkdienst voor der IJsselmeerpolders*, the United States Public Broadcasting Service and British and Australian Broadcasting Corporations. Labelling them as QANGOS (Quasi Autonomous National Governmental Organizations) has sometimes served to imply stereotyped roles, but,

in fact, the combination of very high levels of professional expertise, constant public scrutiny and transparency and a prominent public service ethic of responsibility has tended to produce consistently high levels of good public service. Meanwhile more systematically and explicitly accountable representative democratic government functions have been experiencing recurrent crises of confidence in countries such as Brazil, France, Thailand, the United Kingdom, the USA and Zimbabwe.

Official Representation

There is a widening gap between the small scale of local communities, grounded in the relatively intimate life of daily personal contact (see Table 2.1 above), and corresponding electoral units, which are generally being enlarged in response to the expanding scale of city regions. In Toronto, for instance, the 1996 electoral reform increased the most local level of city administration to a scale of 2.3 million people, which has since grown to 2.8 million; the city's 44 wards thus now have an average population of over 60,000 people each. In Brisbane, a population of more than 1.3 million is similarly divided into 26 wards forming the most local level of representation of around 50,000 people each (Demographia, 1997; City of Toronto, 2010; City of Brisbane, 2022) This rapid escalation of scale, which is removing people further and further from direct contact with their elected representatives, is increasing the importance of the participation by individuals and voluntary organizations in both long standing and newly emerging roles of local governance. In the USA and Canada, elected School Boards provide a special case of such representative governance, often credited with providing a fertile training ground for larger and wider forms of government.

Despite problems of distance, motivation, commercial co-option and the challenges of populism, representative democracy remains the prevailing system of government for more than half of the world's population, even if precariously so. As Winston Churchill is credited with commenting 'The only thing that can be said in its favour is that all known alternatives are worse'. This should not prevent us from seeking to tackle its evident current failures including venality; undue influence by commercial interests, such as media magnates; populist pandering to electorates' baser instincts; and avoidance of major long-term issues. Measures to tackle these problems are discussed in Chapter 10, *Community Governance and Participation*. Some reforms speak for themselves. Electorates should be small enough to allow genuine communication and representation. Safeguards are needed to forestall collusive arrangements between media owners and political party establishments. Factional interests should be prevented from taking priority over more widely felt and important public concerns. Grass roots links with local groups and community participation should be enshrined and nurtured as effective means of balancing dangerous and potentially corrupting influences.

There are some practicable ways to maintain and improve communication and representativeness:

- Local Ward Community Boards may be elected at the same time as local government councillors, as has been mandated in New Zealand, since 1993 (Local Government New Zealand, 2022). This could do much to bring life back to the grass roots, which elsewhere in much local democracy are currently withering.
- Systematic support of Neighbourhood Associations along the model successfully adopted for the past thirty years in Portland Oregon (discussed in more detail in Chapter 10 *Community Governance & Participation*) has equal potential to transform the relations between local governments and local communities, by accurately reflecting and balancing the different and complementary roles of participatory and representative democracy.
- Community governance and planning can benefit greatly from recognizing the potentialities of informal and participatory arrangements and devolution of powers, roles and funds to local groups, in line with the so-called *Principle of Subsidiarity* (which states that all government powers should subside to the lowest possible level at which they can be effectively performed). The field of governance is much wider, deeper and more fertile than simply electing a preferred government at intervals of three to five years.

Conclusion: The Durability of Local Communities of Place and Contact

Despite the universal impact of electronic communications and the Internet, the importance of local community life has never been greater. The local community remains the place where children acquire their values and attitudes, learn how to socialize, develop skills of living and thinking; negotiate conflicts; and establish positive or negative attitudes towards personal responsibility and social life. Added to these, new roles in health and safety are also emerging, emphasised by the challenges of climate change and its associated recurrent disasters of fire and flood and by the impacts of mutating pandemics which have shifted the focus of new urban activity from crowded single centres to multiple and more local ones, as people become accustomed to the advantages of working from home and communities recognise the dangers posed to personal convenience and public health by continuing mass concentrations of work and travel. Meanwhile, local communities also remain the places where people can learn to manage the 'shock of the new' in times like these of unusually rapid rates of change. In an increasingly systematised world, the local community provides both the nursery for healthy development and the stage where the personal, creative and playful characteristics of individuals can and should be enacted in the everyday performances and rewards of community life.

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END NOTES

ⁱ Kropotkin went on to develop the theme into an advocacy of collaborative local governance in his *Fields, Factories and Workshops of Tomorrow* (1974). Earlier, in Renaissance Europe, Sir Thomas More in his *Utopia* (1516, 1965) had advocated a society in which local groups cooperated in work and recreation, with collaborative involvement in such enjoyable communal activities as cooking, eating and discussion. The example of Robert Owen's large model industrial community of New Lanark (1799-1821) involving 1,600 workers organized on cooperative principles, was taken to further levels of mutual aid in Fourier's proposals for *Phalansteries*, or collaborative communities of shared production, advocated in his 1829 *New Industrial and Societal World*. The organizational basis of Ebenezer Howard's Garden Cities were deeply imbued with these cooperative principles of community associations enjoying common ownership of the entire array of community land and dwellings, and making inclusive social provision for all citizens of whatever condition, specifically the blind, the deaf, the orphaned, the inebriate and the impoverished (Fishman, 1982: 114-116).

ⁱⁱ This is still proving very influential in the widespread resistance currently being mounted by local communities throughout India to the policies of concentrated investment and mass urbanisation of current Prime Minister, Narendra Modi (Azad, 2020).

ⁱⁱⁱ The Webster's Dictionary definition of 'Bidonville' is *a shantytown on the outskirts of a city, characterized by squalor and extreme poverty, as in France and formerly Algeria or Tunisia*.

^{iv}A celebrated 'Mr Magoo' cartoon of the nineteen sixties depicts the bumbling 'Everyman' character of Mr Magoo, emerging from his front door as an amiable and

smiling *Mr. Walker*, patting his dog on the head, greeting passing neighbourhood children and walking to his car, where he is transformed into a snarling, fierce and long-fanged *Mr Wheeler* who drives out of his garage and spreads death, destruction and dangerous fumes throughout the city!