Community Planning in the North East Valley

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1.1 Outline

Traditionally planning has been at the dispensation of the powerful (Sandercock, 1998; Castells and Cusminsky, 1984). In practice, this means that the aspirations of local communities have been secondary if at all goals for planners. For many local communities, this has resulted in the impoverishment of their natural resources, and an unfair repartition of the resources and waste of the country (OC, 2006). In order to overcome this unfairness, it is important to know ways in which to empower communities and make them a protagonist in the planning of their territories. One possible way of doing this is through community planning.

Lately, more and more communities have started to take planning into their own hands in an effort to turn planning into a democratic process that addresses issues that really matter to the locals. Planning driven by communities is quite different to the planning which is driven by government agencies. It is bottom-up and process oriented, holistic and participative, whereas formal planning is top-down and result oriented, and public participation is sometimes undertaken only to comply with legal requirements (Innes and Booher, 2004).

As an outcome of the dichotomy between planning made by institutions and planning made by communities, a gap has been built that keeps community planning and formal planning disconnected.

This research will be looking at the process happening in North East Valley (NEV), a
mixed income, highly populated suburb in Dunedin where community planning has been
developed with the support of the North East Valley Project (The Project) and an active
and passionate community.

1.2 Rationale

There are two broad approaches to planning in both practice and theory: formal planning
and community driven planning. They both have a different view on the planning process
and therefore they have different focuses for identifying issues and developing solutions.
They both acknowledge the importance of public participation but approach the role of
public participation with a different perspective.

One of these approaches is used by governments and governmental agencies. This
planning activity has legal status as to be enforced (referred to here as formal planning).
While formal planning acknowledges the importance of public participation, the degree to
which it is incorporated in planning processes varies. Depending on which theory informs
the practice, this can place greater or lesser emphasis on public participation (Albrechts,
2002). Either way, even if they personally do not place importance on it, all practitioners
currently use public participation, since it is legally required (Innes and Booher, 2004).
Academic recognition of the importance of public participation in official planning is
well illustrated by Arnstein 1969: “Participation of the governed in their government is,
in theory, the cornerstone of democracy a revered idea that is vigorously applauded
by virtually everyone” (p. 216). However, public participation in official planning is
difficult to practice in both quantity and quality. Structural barriers (social segregation,
oppression, domination, marginalisation and exclusion of lower by upper income elites),
cultural barriers (lack of cultural codes to participate, lack of skills in understanding
how to manipulate the government and the political system, etc), barriers caused by
governmental style (distrust in result of “cosmetic” participation, frustration with the
government, etc.) and the use of inadequate and even counterproductive methods of
participation, are some of the causes that make public participation difficult in practice
(Albrechts, 2002; Innes and Booher, 2004).

At the same time, there is community driven planning, which works under different
paradigms, from different platforms of action, and using different concepts to approach
practical solutions (Inspiring, 2013). While acknowledging that not all problems can be solved from the community level of action (particularly the global ones), community planning addresses local situations with a sense of change and under the conviction that communities are the best players positioned to solve these kinds of issues (Inspiring, 2013).

All around the world, communities are taking local planning into their own hands, successfully developing programs Community Led Development, Asset Based Community Development, and in general developing actions focusing on community strengths and potential (Green, 2009; Hamdi, 2013; Inspiring, 2013).

Experiences of community driven planning in the literature suggest that this focus is very effective and successful in addressing and achieving community goals, and although objectives might not be 100% achieved, at least some members of the community experience an improvement in living conditions (Hamdi, 2013; Inspiring, 2013; Green, 2009).

There is a gap between official planning and community planning that is largely acknowledged by the literature (Albrechts, 2002; Innes and Booher, 2004). There is also recognition in the literature that deeper levels of public participation have better planning outcomes than what is achieved by traditional methods of public participation, like the ones used by most governmental institutions (Innes and Booher, 2004; Evans and Theobald, 2005).

The debate between the two broad planning approaches referred to above raises many questions about the subject. Does community driven planning need to pay more attention to the official planning process, or are they self-sufficient in solving local problems identified by communities themselves? Should official planning increase its efforts to bring the public closer to their activities and engage in greater public participation inside the official planning institutions? Should official planning entrust greater spaces for community planning, delegate functions and distribute power among communities in order to take advantage of the community dynamics and methodologies as a complement to official planning?

If we look to better support community planning, we also need to look for ways in which to generate sufficient capacity and resources to support and enable the community planning process. The discovery of new ways of supporting community planning, as well as ways in which official planning and community planning could better complement
each other would be a valuable contribution to the planning field. A closer relationship between community planning and official planning could generate more democratic decision-making in planning institutions and a better support for the development of community planning.

The North East Valley community, is a highly populated, multicultural, mixed income suburb in the city of Dunedin, that has had an on-going community planning process for almost 30 years, now facilitated by the North East Valley Community Project (The Project) in parallel to the formal planning done by the Dunedin City Council (DCC). This community driven planning has had good results, and these results are likely to be sustained in the future. Communication between The Project and the DCC on issues concerning planning practice is needed in order to match both processes. This communication is happening, but only to a certain extent and with limitations to the outcomes that can achieve.

For communities driving planning processes, capacity building is an important challenge to tackle. One way of doing this is through a community Asset Map. An Asset Map is a tool frequently used by the ABCD approach, which seeks to identify what communities already have that they can start building on, as opposed to Needs Maps which focus on what the community lacks. This tool can be useful for starting and/or sustaining community planning processes (Green, 2009).

In summary, there is a need to explore the relationship between official planning and community planning, and also a need to answer the questions of how to enhance community planning, not only from a governmental institution perspective but also from within the communities themselves.

This research will be looking to explore the links between the community planning that is taking place in NEV and the planning made by the DCC. In addition, this research explores how the planning outcomes could be improved by further integrating the two types of planning and how to better support the community planning that is taking place. Therefore, the general aim of this research is to explore the relationships between formal planning practice and community driven planning.

The research questions used for guiding the research were: How possible differences in the way that the DCC and the NEV Community Development Project visualise commu-
Community planning can impact the ability to undertake it? What are the barriers facing both the NEV community and the DCC in regard to successful community planning? How could Asset Mapping be a useful tool for community planning?

Particular objectives of this research are:

1. To explore the different values, approaches and relationships between DCC planning and community driven planning in NEV.

2. Examine and assess how asset mapping could contribute to building capacity for community-based planning.

1.3 North East Valley, an interesting community

Multiple ethnicities are clearly identifiable in NEV, with European being the most represented ethnicity in the Valley population. The median age of 24 indicates that a large number of students live in NEV. For more details about ethnicity, see table 1.1. (SNZ, 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total population</th>
<th>North East Valley</th>
<th>Forrester Park</th>
<th>Pine Hill</th>
<th>Opoho</th>
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<tr>
<td>4.641</td>
<td>804</td>
<td>2.337</td>
<td>1.209</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median age</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Personal Income</td>
<td>14000</td>
<td>27100</td>
<td>21400</td>
<td>29400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Households</td>
<td>1491</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European %</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Māori %</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific %</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian %</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid East, L. Am., Af %</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealander %</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
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The first descriptions of NEV tell of a dense forest with no single area of clear ground (Bathgate 1890, cited in Hendry 1976). During the second half of the 19th century, the area was divided into 10 acre lots, which were bought by people from the UK, some of whom came to settle right away, starting orchards, dairy farms, wool scouring, tanning, and fellmongery industries. Gradually the number of settlers increased. In 1877 the North East Valley borough was proclaimed, turning quickly into a District which was extended from the Botanical Gardens to the Upper Junction, including Pine Hill and Opoho. The
the population of the borough was approximately 3,500 in the 1880s. It had its own offices in the Valley Town Hall, and the Mayor was elected every year. At that time, the Valley was used as a stop-over point for swaggers, wagoners, drovers and seamen coming from Port Chalmers. Hotel businesses were established to host those stopping by from the port. At the beginning of 1900, several businesses were established, including a butchery, grocery store, cake shop, tea rooms, a draper, a boot repairer, and a fish shop. All of this occurred despite the fact that water service had not been laid, which occurred in 1910. In 1918, Ross Home was opened by the Presbyterian Support Society, with 28 elderly patients. The second school in Otago was opened in NEV in 1851, and the first State school in NEV was built in 1857 on part of what is the present North East Valley Normal School grounds. In 1950, NEV Intermediate School was opened, catering for several surrounding districts. Churches were first established in NEV in the 1880s, which have continued until today. The creek and bushes were a source of entertainment for children who used to catch lobsters, pick wild strawberries and blackberries, gooseberries, and even skate over the frozen dammed creek (Hendry, 1976).

The long history of NEV and its social and community institutions such as schools and a town hall and therefore political organisation, could have contributed to a strong sense of place. These factors could explain why the early neighbourhood organisation in NEV, was much more than other neighbourhoods in the city. During the first half of the 1980s, the North East Valley Community Project was started.

Probably the first indication of the existence of The Project is a picture of the Christmas parade organised by the NEV Normal School in 1985 stating the name of the car as ‘NEV Normal School Community Project’. This picture is currently posted on the office wall of the NEV Normal School’s principal Mr. John MacKenzie. The initial idea of the project was to open the school to the community, as a way of tackling the underlying reasons of school absence, which were thought to be economic and social disadvantages to families (Key Informant 10, executive committee member from NEV).

Later on, The Project took different names and forms, being one of the earliest, the North East Valley Community Programme Inc., was established with the purpose of offering recreational, social and educational activities with particular emphasis on benefiting the children of the community (Bannister, 1992a).
A grant from Community Organizations Grants Scheme (COGS) allowed the NEV Community Program to start circulating the Valley Newsletter in 1991, turning it into a communication bridge for community members and the NEV Community Programme (Bannister, 1992a). At the beginning, the newsletter was not issued on a regular basis, and was used only to advertise community activities such as classes (drama, soft toy making, modern dance), clubs (explorers club, bicycle skills), and also for engaging with the community about the Programme, encouraging people to become committee members and asking for feedback. There were times in which the lack of committee membership and support from the community caused problems (Bannister, 1992b), however, the NEV Community Programme kept moving forward and becoming stronger with the passing of time, gaining recognition and increased support among community members.

Most of the activities were held at the NEV Normal School facilities, with the participation of children from Opoho and Sacred Heart Schools. From October 1993 the newsletter changed its name to North-East Valley Community Newsletter and started being delivered monthly. That year a survey was undertaken to plan the adult programme and a planning day was held in October 1993 with the help of Jan Hudson from the Department of Internal Affairs. At this stage, the Programme was granted from Trust Bank Otago to support the hiring of a coordinator for the Programme. New Zealand Employment Service was also sponsoring the Programme (Ross, 1993).

In 1994, Māori language and culture classes were started (Ross, 1994), and a grant for $13,400 was received from NZ Lottery Grants towards salary and operational costs (NEV, 1994). Also in this year, the number of voluntary committee members jumped from three to eight, which gave the Programme much more stability and capability to organise new activities (Kerslake, 1994). In 1999, the Programme started to relate with the DCC in regard to NEV issues, a fact which was acknowledged in several North East Valley Community Newsletters that year (NEV, 1999a,b).

In 1999, a survey was undertaken by the NEV Community Programme to find out the main community members' interests for after school classes (NEV, 1999c). A proper community consultation process was undertaken in 2008, with the aim of getting to know “what life is like in NEV and what would it make it a better place to live” (NEV, 2008, :1). That was the beginning of what is now known as the North East Valley Community
Project (The Project), with the aim to “explore ways that education providers and the wider community might enhance outcomes across a broad range of areas for the children and families of North East Valley” (NEV, 2014a). In the consultation process, The Project has identified five key themes as important for the NEV community: education, housing, environment, social inclusion, and community initiatives. The basic principle of the functioning of the Project is to develop a community of care that works together to enhance the life and prospects of all its members.

In 2010, the name of the newsletter changed to its current, the ‘Valley Voice’ (NEV, 2010), and a new governance structure started to be used in order to develop more structured methods of operation of the programme which by this time was already called The NEV Community Development Project (The Project), which until that moment was functioning in a much more organic way (McKenzie, 2010).

1.3.1 Conclusion

The North East Valley community provides a useful example to explore how community planning works and interacts with the formal DCC planning. Since it is been ongoing for decades, this process has accumulated enough experience for informing this research about the values of community planning and its interfacing with formal planning, as well as the challenges facing both communities and formal planning institutions in order to better support this processes.

1.4 Organisation of the research

The following chapters of this research are organised for the reader to have an understanding of the research process and outcomes.

Chapter two is a literature review of the main subjects related to community planning, and sets the theoretical framework for the analysis of the results. The subjects of what is a community, what is community planning, public participation, governance, power and justice, were found to be important for the building of the theoretical framework of this research.

Chapter three explains and justifies the methodology used to undertake this research as well as the positionality of the researcher.
Chapter four shows and analyses, using the research results, how community planning is undertaken by The Project and by the DCC, in order to give the reader a better understanding of how community planning is actually tackled in practice.

Chapter five shows and analyses the values of community planning found by NEV community members and DCC staff. It also identifies the values of community planning when interfacing with formal planning.

Chapter six explains the challenges that face both the NEV community and the DCC to enhance and sustain the community planning process and its interface with formal planning.

Chapter seven talks about the experience of the Community Assets Mapping workshops undertaken for this research in order to answer to the second research objective, using it as an example of how the top-down approach to community planning differs from the bottom-up approach in the positionalities of the participants and therefore in the level of participants engagement and mobilisation.

Chapter eight draws on all the previous chapters to highlight the conclusions of the research.
Figure 1.1: Location of North East Valley. Source: Google Earth accessed on 15th of July, 2014.
2.1 Introduction

In order to find ways to better support community planning processes, we need to understand the theoretical context which shapes these processes, and which informs the different roles of various actors in the community planning process. In general, we can make a distinction between the way formal planning institutions and communities understand, define and approach community planning. The definition of formal planning institution in this context refers to state and local government agencies which undertake planning.

First in this chapter, there is an exploration of the different views and definitions that communities and formal planning institutions have about community planning. Second, the concept of community itself is explored, unveiling its different meanings and ways it is used. Third, public participation in planning is analysed, and linked to the theory which informs the practice. This is followed by the revision of the fourth concept explored in this literature review: power as a subjacent force that shapes relations in society. Governance is the fifth concept explored in this chapter, which is a key feature for community planning to happen and succeed. Finally, the concept of justice is discussed in its different perspectives (utilitarian, communitarian and feminist), looking for similarities to the values guiding a community planning process.
2.2 What is Community Planning?

Community planning is a concept described differently depending on who is undertaking the task. This is because community planning can be driven by formal institutions as well as by communities. In general terms, the diverse meanings of community planning take two definitive perspectives: the formal planning perspective and the community perspective. From the formal planning perspective, it is initiated by government, then opened for public participation in decision making on local matters (Cowell, 2004; Óg Gallagher, 2006). From the communities perspective, it is initiated by the communities themselves, where the participation of governmental institutions is not a requisite. This can be concluded from the approaches used by communities to undertake planning, such as Community Led Development and Asset Based Community Development.

Community Led Development (CDL):

“Provides a framework for acting on what matters locally in ways that empower local people to work collectively both with one another, and with other groups and organizations that have a stake or role in that place. A CDL approach encourages the mobilisation of local community action and effort. It can also be an effective lens for agencies, governments and communities tackling complex community issues...” (Inspiring, 2013, :18).

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD):

“Is a powerful approach focused on discovering and mobilizing the resources that are already present in the community. The ABCD point of view encourages people to recognize that their community is a glass half full of assets, not a glass half empty with needs. Community assets are resources that become valuable when they are brought together and made productive.” (Green, 2009, :12).

Both CLD and ABCD approaches place communities at the centre, as drivers of the process. Both encourage mobilisation of local people with one-another and with other groups and organisations, and focus on local interests and concerns. While ABCD focuses directly on the community assets, CLD is focused on mobilising people regarding their local goals.

Drawing on an example from Scotland, formal planning describes community planning as: any process through which a council comes together with other organisations to plan,
provide for, or promote the wellbeing of the communities they serve (óg Gallagher, 2006). This definition expressly sets the council as the driver and leader of the community planning process. In contrast, for Community Led Development and Asset Based Community Development, communities are the leader, driver and centre.

Moreover, definitions from formal planning aim to deliver better services to local people by using community planning (óg Gallagher, 2006), which is exactly what ABCD and CLD aim to change: people go from being users of services (passive consumers) to being active citizens, who have resources that can be used to solve their problems and achieve their goals (Inspiring, 2013; Green, 2009).

Consequently, community planning driven by government institutions has a positive effect in community empowerment terms, but only to a certain degree. Under this view, communities are receptors and service users. Their assets are overlooked, ignored or unknown. On the other hand, community planning driven by communities involves a deep level of community empowerment, and community members are considered central actors and owners of assets individually and collectively. As shown in table 2.1, there are clear differences between community planning conceived from the community perspective and from the formal planning perspective. The differences can be discussed in terms of the purpose, key drivers, the role of communities, expected outcomes, and where the focus is placed.

While the purpose of undertaking community planning for formal institutions is to improve the delivery of services (óg Gallagher, 2006) conversely, for communities it is to mobilise and empower citizens (Inspiring, 2013; Green, 2009). Whether community planning is driven by the formal institutions or by the communities themselves, the key driver will be the formal institutions and the communities respectively in each case. Under the formal institutions perspective, the role of communities in community planning is, as users of services, to inform institutions how to improve services focusing on their needs, getting better services as the outcome of the process (óg Gallagher, 2006; Gallent and Robinson, 2012). Under the communities perspective, the role of communities is to be the driver of the process, focusing on community assets in order to strengthen and mobilise communities as the outcome (Inspiring, 2013; Green, 2009).

There is a growing acceptance of the value of bridging local community plans with
Table 2.1: Differences in the conception of community planning when coming from institutions vs coming from communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Planning under the perspective of:</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>Improve services</td>
<td>Empower citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key drivers</strong></td>
<td>City council, planning institutions</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of community</strong></td>
<td>User of services</td>
<td>Leader of the process, holder of resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Better government services</td>
<td>Stronger and mobilised communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus on</strong></td>
<td>Needs</td>
<td>Community Assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Power</strong></td>
<td>Shared between institutions and communities</td>
<td>Held by communities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

broader formal plans (Gallent and Robinson, 2012; Owen et al., 2007). This connection between formal plans developed by institutions and community plans is generally ad hoc, resulting in a state of confusion. Owen et al. (2007) suggests that bridging community and formal planning should be undertaken using established procedures and processes instead, a big step forward compared to the ad hoc approach.

The most frequent examples of governmental efforts to promote community planning are in the UK (see Gallent and Robinson, 2012; McAlister, 2010; Skelcher, 2000; óg Gallagher, 2006; Owen et al., 2007). In 2010, the 'Localism Bill' was proposed. This Bill established a neighbourhood based planning process in which residents of a rural parish or urban neighbourhood agree that a plan produced by a mandated local group is reflective of local aspirations. Agreement is achieved through a referendum, and the local authority is legally bound to adopt it, as long as the plan respects overall national strategies (Gallent and Robinson, 2012), with clauses that place limitations on the outcomes the community can gain from the process. In other words, this Bill gives local communities the authority to plan their future, but keeping the central government in power to decide over matters they decide are of national importance.

However, the weight placed upon community planning in the UK is much less than that which is placed upon formal planning. Planning personnel from the UK government have suggested that community plans should not be considered as ‘planning documents’ per se, but as markers for community aspirations and needs, and as a useful way to inform programs and investments of service providers (Gallent and Robinson, 2012). This follows
What is Community Planning?

the same logic previously explained about how community planning is conceived from
the formal planning perspective, avoiding the sharing of power and keeping control over
decisions they consider as too important to be made by local communities.

Overall, community planning is a mechanism which enables communities to take a
powerful role in decision making on matters that directly affect them, either with or
without involvement of state institutions. The outcomes of community planning are also
different from the two perspectives: better services in the case of community planning
led by institutions, and stronger citizens and communities in the case of community led
planning.

The benefits of community planning are increasingly becoming recognised. For exam-
ple, it is recognised as one solution to the challenge of involving local people in decision
making (Óg Gallagher, 2006), having a positive impact at the individual and collective
level, and other benefits such as effectively addressing economic and social problems.

In the words of Hamdi (2013) when referring to an experience of community planning
of a new settlement for a displaced community in India: “When dwellers control the ma-
jor decision and are free to make their own contribution to the design, construction or
management of their housing, both the process and the environment produced stimulate
individual and social well-being” (Hamdi, 2013, :xi). This statement, made from the per-
spective of real life experience, shows how people getting involved in decision-making on
matters that have a direct impact on them can have a positive influence at an individual
and social level.

Furthermore, it sustains the notion that there is an increasing recognition by agency
leaders, researchers, and policy planners, that social and economic problems can only be
addressed effectively by involving a larger part of the whole community in finding and
articulating the mechanisms to solve these problems (Green, 2009). The involvement of a
larger part of the population through community planning, requires the analysis of ideas
related to governance, democracy, power and public participation. Before analysing these
concepts, it is imperative to analyse the concept of community. This is because different
perspectives regarding what constitutes community give us critical points to consider
when valuing community planning. Of importance in this context are considerations
which include: what a community can do; what a community should do; and to avoid
having a nave interpretation which can lead us to falsely identify communities.

2.3 Community

A community can be defined in geographical terms such as a neighbourhood (community of place), or in social terms such as a group of people who share concerns about something (community of interest). In general, definitions of community include both place and interest. Central to this concept are the people who form a community, the ties that bind them (socially and psychologically) and the geographically defined area where they live and feel connected (Phillips and Pittman, 2008).

Mention of the concept of community can be found in English literary tradition from the 19th century, where it is linked to a representation of the values of a pre-existing rural life, as opposed to the urban life, under both a conservative and a socialist view. According to Leonard (1975), the conservative view was held by the ruling class who based its rejection of cities on the fear of the industrial working class getting together and calling for a revolution. The socialist view, also rejected the idea of cities, but for different reasons: cities prevented decent normal life because of poor physical conditions (Leonard, 1975). In 1887, the German sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies defined community as a tight and cohesive social entity due to the presence of a ‘unity of will’ (Tonnies and Harris, 2001). Because of these divergent origins of the concept of community, the word can be used in a variety of ways and appeals to different audiences. This turns it into a code word for certain states of being desired by particular groups, and a powerful form of propaganda because of its ambiguous meaning. It is even argued that the concept of community is ideological and any attempt to formulate a scientific or descriptive meaning is misunderstanding the logic of the concept (Leonard, 1975).

In South Africa for example, the concept of community has been used by both the dominant class and the oppressed class during the apartheid period. First, it was used by the dominant class to provide a myth of coherence by which to bridge divisions amongst socio-economic classes. Then, it was used as a euphemistic replacement for terms such as ‘race’ and ‘ethic group’ when those terms were jettisoned in the discourse of the dominant class because of the inflammatory connotations attached to them. Finally, the concept of community was also used by black consciousness movements of the 1970s to
refer to socio-political groups like ‘black community’ or to describe residential entities such as townships, as a strategy for showing black people in similar terms for the white ruling class (Butchart and Seedat, 1990). In other terms, community means whatever the one saying it wants it to mean, always with the intention of bringing sympathy (or giving power) to the group of people to which it makes reference.

In the normative sense, which is commonly used in public discussions, communities are a good (and always desirable) way of organising people so that they feel safe and happy (McAlister, 2010). This normative definition risks simplifying the concept and misses a big part of what a community is all about. It is even argued that this normative definition can be used in a utilitarian way by policy makers. For example, applying the term community to a group of people who live in a particular place but who are not organised around a common interest and do not share psychological or social ties. In this way they are easier to handle and manipulate (Maginn, 2007).

In a more positive (descriptive) way, the concept of community implies a demarcation between those who belong and those who do not. This demarcation can be strongly established and maintained, turning the community into something like an exclusive social club, reinforcing social differences between the members and the non-members, and trying to attain group purity. Locality can be an important factor triggering this behaviour in a community, inscribing the exclusivity of the community in the landscape, for example when the well-advantaged seek protection from those against whom they define themselves (Herbert, 2006). It has been discussed how the myth of community (this is the normative meaning of community), operates perpetually in some societies like in the United States of America, to produce and legitimise racist and classist behaviour and policy (Sandercock, 1998).

It is also acknowledged that the existence of the notion of community embraces difference, values diversity and refutes homogeneity. These are the so-called “communities of resistance”, like the ideal of community some progressive African-American leaders raised in the 1990s, which actively and consciously rejected homogeneity and sought recognition of differences (Sandercock, 1998). For some authors, diversity is an inherent feature of communities and the idea of homogeneity within a community comes from not looking deep enough. For authors like Maginn (2007), diversity is the outcome of the constant
state of flux communities are going through, uniting and fracturing over space and time. Failure to see diversity within communities, when undertaking community participation, can lead to conflict and mistrust not only in the relations between community and institutional partners, but also among community members who take part in sub-communities (Maginn, 2007).

Within the literature, there is also an acknowledgment of the possibility of political influence as another attribute of community: as a collective social power. Heller (1989) adds this distinction because “organizing for social action is one of the few ways left for ordinary citizens in complex technological democracies to develop social structures that are responsive to their needs. The power of organized constituencies is leverage for social change, regardless of whether that leverage comes from localities or organized interest groups” (Heller, 1989, :4).

This literature gives us a clue on several questions regarding the issue of community. In summary, the concept of community is useful when undertaking planning with people in relation to a place, as a framework for public participation in relation to local issues, provided that the diversity inside a community is not being overlooked and the community is not being idealised. Critical thinking is important when using the concept of community, and special attention must be paid to how it is being used, by whom and for what purpose.

While there is ever growing direct mentions of community planning in academic literature from the formal planning perspective, community planning is often viewed as synonymous to public consultation. Therefore, it is suitable to consider what is said about public consultation in the academic literature.

### 2.4 Public Participation in Planning, from theory to practice

Formal planning within democracies, has long ago acknowledged the importance of public participation in the planning process. Depending on which theory informs practice, planning practitioners can place greater or lesser emphasis on public participation (Albrechts, 2002). At the end of the day, even when placing less emphasis, all practitioners must currently use public participation because it is legally required (Innes and Booher, 2004).
Arnstein’s (1969) ladder of citizen participation (figure 2.1), is still useful to explain how public participation is undertaken according to the different aims of the entity promoting the task. Tokenism, or “...the empty ritual of participation” (Arnstein, 1969, :216) is described 35 years later by Innes and Booher 2004 as“... rituals designed to satisfy legal requirements” (Innes and Booher, 2004, :419). Essentially, what defines the level and depth of public participation is the degree of power redistribution across the process. Lower levels of public participation stem from no real intention of power redistribution, and generate frustration in those on the side of the powerless (Arnstein, 1969). Furthermore, when participation is undertaken only to fulfil legal requirements and not with the aim of giving real consideration to the opinions of the citizens, this can generate distrust, polarisation, and discourages people from participating (Innes and Booher, 2004).

Figure 2.1: Ladder of citizen participation (Arnstein, 1969).

Although the importance of public participation has long ago been acknowledged by scholars and practitioners, the level of what should be undertaken is a contested issue when discussing this subject.

Critics of deeper public participation, like in a model of citizen-state partnerships, point out that this partnership places considerable demands on the individual and organisational capacity in state institutions. Furthermore, it is argued that more citizen-state partnerships and governance efforts will result in new governance bodies that will be detached from democratic processes and have a reduced role in public policy, leading to a
However, when public participation is undertaken with real intentions of power redistribution, that is, giving the participants a real chance to influence the decision-making process, the outcome is better decision-making, community strengthening, and even cost savings for institutions (Carnes et al., 1998; Hague, 2006). It is also claimed that conflict can be minimised and managed more productively by policy makers committing to full community participation. To facilitate this, a governance framework is needed to actively promote pluralistic and democratic decision-making (Maginn, 2007). But, can the traditional way of planning with its top-down modernist approach address the challenge of full public participation? Can traditional planning efficiently work under a governance framework towards pluralistic and democratic decision-making? Since traditional planning has been done to serve the ruling powers (Castells and Cusminsky, 1984; Sandercock, 1998), the answer is no, at least not comfortably. However, this is the very framework offered by the Communicative Planning Theory (CPT) (Maginn, 2007).

CPT emerged in response to challenges stemming from cultural diversity, a strengthening civil society, and philosophical critiques, emerging largely from post-modern deconstructive, anti-foundational and pluralistic tendencies (Sandercock, 1998). The core aim of CPT is democratisation of planning practice and the empowerment of discourse communities, including marginalised forms of reasoning and value systems which have traditionally been excluded from planning practice (McGuirk, 2001).

Communicative rationality, where CPT emanates from, places relativity onto knowledge as a social construction in relation to a specific social and cultural context, and stands opposed to instrumental rationality which creates knowledge ascribing value to it, and therefore removing value from other knowledge created under different social and cultural contexts (McGuirk, 2001).

It has been claimed that CPT could become the dominant paradigm in planning theory (Innes, 2013) and that is driving best practice in planning (McGuirk, 2001). However, CPT has been criticised by a broad spectrum of planning theorists. From the followers of instrumental rationality, criticism against CPT is centred around the contestation that deliberation and inclusion would be inefficient compared to a more standard top-down approach (Innes, 2013). On the other hand, CPT is also criticised from the post-modern
planning perspective for paying insufficient attention to the practical context of power in which planning is practised, taking the planning away from politics and power-laden interests that infiltrate its practice, rather than engaging with them (McGuirk, 2001). CPT is also criticised for being naive in terms of the positioning of power, knowledge and rationality that planners possess, and which underestimates alternative forms of knowing, reasoning and valuing (McGuirk, 2001).

Notwithstanding all the criticism, CPT provides a good theoretical framework for working with community planning, since it is an approach which is able to accept different kinds of knowledge coming from people with different cultural and social backgrounds, mostly from outside of academia, and based on personal or collective experience. These are the forms of knowledge that will probably be encountered when undertaking community planning, and they must be taken into account no matter how different or baseless they may seem to be. The only way of doing this, is by using a communicative rationale, which is the logic followed by CPT.

Cornwall 2008 raises some questions regarding public participation as to the purpose, participation, influence and whether it is simply superficial. His asking for ‘clarity through specificity’ is a call for unveiling the undercover meanings that public participation has for different actors (Cornwall, 2008, :281). The issue of participation raises questions of who is being excluded from the participation process and who is excluding themselves. These are crucial questions when evaluating the inclusiveness and legitimacy of a participation process (Cornwall, 2008). An example of this can be found in a participation process where only males with a certain level of income are invited to participate, and women, children, low income citizens are excluded and indigenous people exclude themselves because they do not believe in the state system, rather than a process where everybody who could be affected has a place at the discussion table, even those who do not share the same values and vision.

The reason why a participation process is being undertaken or what the process is really for, is related to the influence the participant’s voice is going to have at the end. If the aim of the process is only to validate a decision, the involvement of the public is not going to have a real influence because the decision has already been made. On the other hand, if the process has been undertaken to inform the decision makers on public
preferences, or to improve decisions by incorporating citizen’s local knowledge, or for other reasons such as to advance fairness and justice, the influence of public opinion will be tangible. (Innes and Booher, 2004).

In this discussion regarding public participation, some new terms have emerged, notably governance, democracy and power. These concepts appear within many discussions around subjects of public relevance, as planning certainly is. Subsequently, there is further need to examine in more detail these concepts and how they are related to formal and community planning.

### 2.5 Governance and Planning

Governance, governing and government, are not contrasting concepts but different pieces of the same puzzle. While government refers to the processes (financial, political and legal), sphere and internal organisation of the local authority, governance is how that local authority relates and interacts with the public. Governing is the way these two processes interact with each other (Evans and Theobald, 2005).

There is no generally agreed definition of governance (Evans and Theobald, 2005), but several descriptions can lead us to understand the concept. For Goss (2001): governance is crucially about politics, both formal and informal... [it describes] emerging forms of collective decision making at [the] local level, which lead to the development of different relationships, not simply between public agencies but between citizens and public agencies (p.11). The concept of governance is used in a normative way to describe processes where governmental institutions interact with actors from civil society about the policy process, in contrast with the traditional processes of government where institutions are relatively unconcerned about involving civil society actors (Evans and Theobald, 2005).

In an oversimplified explanation, governance is a local government scheme where decisions are made considering people’s opinions by establishing formal and informal communication channels between the local government and the people who live in the related territory. But more than anything, governance is an analytical concept, sometimes a shorthand term used to describe a particular set of changes in the way governments seek to govern, denoting a reshaping of the role of local government away from service delivery towards community empowerment (Newman, 2001).
To clarify further, Newman (2001) illustrates four models of governance: the Hierarchical Model, the Rational Goal Model, the Open Systems Model, and the Self Governance Model (figure 2.2). These models are situated within a framework with two axis: degree of innovation, and degree of decentralisation. The vertical axis represents the degree of power and policy centralisation, and the horizontal axis represents the degree of orientation towards change in the state structure. The Hierarchical Model is where the power is more concentrated and there are fewer changes which are made by altering legislation in a top-down fashion, without changing any hierarchy in the government structure. It is process-oriented, with value being placed on doing things properly. It is the more accountable and stable model. The Rational Goal Model is focused on the delivery of goals, which are achieved by spreading power across a wide range of agencies. Policies are still sorted vertically, but supported by temporal horizontal relationships. The accountability is linked to performance monitoring of local agencies, which are rewarded for the achievement of goals. The Open System Model is more decentralized and innovative. It is network oriented; the power is fluid and dispersed based on the interdependence of actors. In this model, decisions can be adjusted following the emergence of new information, and the system influences and is influenced by the environment. This model enables experimentation and innovation, being low in accountability and high in sustainability, socially speaking. The Self Governance Model is a long-term focused one, which fosters sustainability by the strengthening of interdependence and reciprocal relationships. This model acknowledges the role of civil society, not limiting the governance only to the actions of the state. The Self Governance Model encompasses democratic innovation like participative and direct democracy. Participative democracy is a democratic tradition based on the principle of popular sovereignty. It is the organisation of a collective decision for a life project which requires and fosters an open communicative community. This line of democracy is opposed to representative democracy where decisions are made by an elite group (Vergara Estevez, 2012). These governance models can help us to better imagine what governance is and how it relates to planning, participation and community issues.

For community driven planning to be interfacing successfully with formal planning, there is a need for a governance system which can allow flexibility in local governments to make decisions together with communities. From the models discussed above, the
Open System model and the Self Governance model are the ones more suitable for formal planning and community driven planning to work jointly. They both use strong interconnections with networks, being the Open System the more flexible but less accountable. The degree to which these systems are successful will depend on the level of citizen engagement and organisation. As can be expected from the description of these models, governance systems are not static. They are dynamic and can move across a gradient from one to another.

![Governance models](image)

**Figure 2.2:** Governance models. Adapted from Newman (2001).

It is contended in a large body of literature that collaborative or participatory forms of governance can be useful to ease conflict and encourage innovative decision making (Innes and Booher, 2004; Gallent and Robinson, 2012).

‘Governance’, ‘participatory democracy’ and ‘collaborative action’ are frequently put together because of the coherence that these concepts have with one-another. All of them play under the logic of post-modernist reasoning, where the perspectives of every person are equally valid and consensus is reached only by weighing up the arguments (Gallent and Robinson, 2012; Sandercock, 1998).

Both governance and collaborative action trigger the formation of networks that evolve and strengthen over time. The sharing of skills and knowledge within these networks makes them stronger and increases their capacity to influence decision making (Gallent and Robinson, 2012).

Such is the recognition of the advantages of moving forward in a governance system, that the UK has embraced a ‘Collaborative Governance’ scheme as means of deepening
and broadening institutional capacity to meet increasingly complex societal challenges (Gallent and Robinson, 2012).

Globalisation is putting a lot of pressure on cities to become globally connected and competitive. The intentions of regional governments to connect cities into the global flow of capital makes these governments fix their attention onto the global, losing sight of the local, disconnecting the people from their governments and disempowering them (Gonzalez, 2009) This is opposite to a governance scheme where local people get more involved and influential in their governments, drawing the attention to the local issues.

Since both government and governance are political direction within societies, which in turn have their own power and control struggles, these concepts are impossible to conceive without power analysis. Issues of power determine how governments shift to governance models over time. The following section discusses issues of power and its relation with the idea of governance.

### 2.6 Power

Given the very abstract but yet determinant and omnipresent nature of the concept, power is essentially hard to define and situate. It was first analysed under political theory during the 17th century, and under social science during the second half of the 20th century by authors like Hobbes 1968 and Lukes 1974 (seen on Clegg, 1989). Because of its importance in the way power is conceived today, it is impossible to avoid the influence of the author Michel Foucault on this matter, shifting the way to understand power from a causality perspective which relates power to hegemony, to a concept associated with practice and discourse (Danaher et al., 2000). This means that power is not only held by an elite. It is also present in the way people behave and verbally explain their relationships with the world.

Whenever there is a discussion about the status-quo and the possibility of change, the idea of power is going to come up. Whether talking about psychology, politics, history, medicine, education, society, planning or governance. Under Foucault’s analysis, modern power is disciplinary, centre-less, normalising: it is a moving substratum of force relations, in which the goal is the production of docile and useful bodies. The agents and victims of this modern power include social workers, teachers, doctors, social scientists, and ordinary
citizens who internalise the categories and values of the ruling power regime (Sandercock, 1998).

Power and geography seem to have a special relationship. According to Allen (2008), geography is at the core centre of most political disputes over land and territory. But for this author, power is not something that gets extended over short or long distances, or something that resides on a central point and radiates out from there. Instead, it is a relational effect of social interaction which works through mediated relations of simultaneous presence (Allen, 2008), or in other words, it works through people’s relations, and their relative power positioning which are established by experiences in particular places.

Another conception of power which also places emphasis on social relations and interactions, sees it as a relationship between the exerciser of power and others, through which he or she communicates intentions and meets with their pursuant, a relationship mediated by a large structure of agents and actions. This power gets institutionalised, only if the actions of many third agents support and execute the will of the powerful. When this institutionalised power is exercised to oppress and dominate, it becomes and creates social injustice (Young, 1990).

Government and governance are inevitably conducted under the social, economic and political context of a society in question, and therefore government, governance and society are ruled by the same forces. The outcome is that, if the power is highly concentrated in a society, it will also be highly concentrated in the governing system.

Under the classical Marxist understanding for example, the State is nothing but a committee that administrates the affairs of the bourgeoisie. Under this line of argument, government represents the ruling of a class (Evans and Theobald, 2005) and therefore a system for keeping the power immobilised and concentrated.

Thus, the shift from government to governance is not only a change in the way that decisions are made, but a change in power relations that can give greater access to power and resources to those historically excluded (Evans and Theobald, 2005).

As noted in the previous sections of this literature review, power is a central concept when talking about public participation. “Participation as a praxis is, after all, rarely a seamless process; rather, it constitutes a terrain of contestation, in which relations of power between different actors, each with their own ‘projects’, shape and reshape the
From the perspective of community psychology, lack of power can have very detrimental effects on the ways in which people confront life. Alienation is one of the strategies powerless people use to cope with this feeling, as a means to prevent the individual from suffering oppression. Rage and vandalism can also be the result of feeling of powerlessness. Additionally, these reactions prevent powerless people from working towards empowerment. Feelings of powerlessness act to preserve the status quo (Arcidiacono et al., 2007). This power dynamic can be seen as learned helplessness. Empowerment, or the correspondence between people’s goals and their ability to achieve them, on the other hand, promotes participation and increases political knowledge and self-perception of capabilities. Empowerment is therefore a valuable orientation for working with communities and a useful theoretical model for understanding the consequences of exerting control over decisions that affect the lives of people individually and within their communities (Zimmerman, 2000).

As mentioned in previous sections, the depth of public participation depends on the degree of power redistribution (see figure 2.1). Deeper levels of public participation are in fact methods of public empowerment. Community planning, whether undertaken by partnership, delegated power or citizen control, is within the top three levels of public participation according to Arnstein’s ladder. Community planning driven by communities is a method where citizens theoretically take control, and is undertaken with the very aim of citizen empowerment, creating a greatest degree of power redistribution.

Community planning can be an effective way of empowering communities, and when combined with a community asset approach, can empower even the least valued people from a community. “When people discover what they have, they find power. When people join together in new connections and relationships, they build power. When people become more productive together, they exercise their power to address problems and realize dreams” (Green, 2009, :10).

2.7 Justice

What exactly is justice? You could take for granted that everybody should know the answer, but the question is worthy of asking. This question gets more complex when
the effort to answer it involves trying to avoid the use of an ethnocentric view, and the restraint of individual freedom.

Basically, there are two streams of thinking about justice: the communitarian and the utilitarian. The communitarian stream aims for a set of universal values which are shared among a community to define an idea of ‘the common good’. This way of thinking about justice comes from the classical philosopher Plato, who devoted himself to discovering the ideals that would lead to a perfect (just) society. In his renowned work “The social contract”, Jean Jacques Rousseau supports this idea of a common concept of good which could be defined by people from a particular society through a democratic process (Vergara Estevez, 2012).

The utilitarian view of justice was created with the specific aim of overcoming the platonic social-contract based perfectionist view of justice, arguing that a communitarian definition of justice would violate the individual freedom of people who do not share those values. This stream of thinking was taken further by Adam Smith, who stated that involvement in market exchange is the way that individuals can pursue their interests and fulfil their individual notions of a good life (Alkon and Agyeman, 2011).

Both ideas, communitarian and utilitarian, were partially merged by John Rawls in the 1971 publication of ‘Theory of Justice’ which draws on the communitarian stream for his call to equal rights, and on the utilitarian stream for individual freedom. Rawls and Marx agree on the fact that social justice is not achievable by the establishment of particular normative values, but by the establishment of a better political process (Alkon and Agyeman, 2011). The idea of citizenship embodies the merging of both communitarian and utilitarian (also called liberal-individualistic) streams of thinking about justice. The concept of citizenship is linked with both liberal ideas of individual rights, and communitarian ideas of membership and attachment to a particular community (Kymlicka, 2002).

Feminist theories provide another way of thinking about justice, which differs quite significantly with the thinking traditions explained thus far. For feminist theorists, there are important aspects of the liberal-democratic conception of justice that are male biased (Kymlicka, 2002). While justice is considered an important virtue for a society, it is not the only one to pursue. Feminist theory has regarded ‘care’ as a humanitarian and less
authoritarian supplement to justice, a feeling of concern for the good of others and for community (Cudd and Andreasen, 2005). Feminist theorists argue that there are ‘blind spots’ in the justice perspective, which come into view when using the care perspective. Under this perspective, it is not personal autonomy and independence, but rather satisfactory interdependence which is the paramount value to achieve in a society. Equality, the number one feature of justice under the liberal-democratic conception, “...fractures society and places on every person the burden of standing on his own feet” (Cudd and Andreasen, 2005, :246).

Equal rights to formal goods like contracts, due process, opportunities, liberties like freedom of speech, free association and religious worship, are bricks with which justice is built under democratic-liberal theory and currently in all Western societies. These do not ensure people, who have and mutually respect such rights, will have any other relationships to one another than the minimal relationship needed to keep such a ‘civil society’ going. They may feel lonely and miserable, depressed and apathetic, while making use of all their rights, which are compatible with very great misery which is caused by social and moral impoverishment (Cudd and Andreasen, 2005). Equal rights and equal access among groups that are unequal, perpetuates inequality.

“This conception of morality as concerned with the activity of care centres moral development around the understanding of responsibility and relationships, just as the conception of morality as fairness ties moral development to the understanding of rights and rules” (Gilligan 1982, :19 cited in Kymlicka 2002, :400).

This is, perhaps, a more congruent way of thinking about justice and fairness in a society, with the ABCD and CLD approaches to community planning. Under both logics, there is a need for connection between people, a need for attachment. Mutual support and care are essential and integral factors for a community to thrive.

Social justice is another concept that can help us to understand the implications of community planning processes. For Young (1990), social justice is the elimination of institutionalised domination and oppression. This concept of justice is very different from the ‘distributive’ paradigm which refers to justice as the assessment of the ethical distribution of goods in society (Runciman, 1978). This paradigm, as Young affirms, sees people as subjects of consumption, even when considering the immaterial social goods
since the distributive paradigm considers them as static things instead of the function of social relations and processes. For Young, “The concept of social justice includes all aspects of institutional rules and relations insofar as they are subject to potential collective decision.” (Young, 1990, :16).

This concept of social justice relates to all institutional norms, and requires from them in order to be qualified as just, to have incorporated the voice of everyone who follows the institutional norms. “For a social condition to be just it must enable all to meet their needs and exercise their freedom; thus justice requires that all be able to express their needs.” (Young, 1990, :34). If community planning is considered as a deep level of public participation, a way to enable every member of a community to express their needs and aspirations, then community planning could help to achieve deeper levels of social justice.

Cities have been historically planned for the powerful (Sandercock, 1998; Harvey, 2009). The masses have been dispossessed of any right to the city whatsoever throughout the process of urbanisation. It is argued that cities arose through geographical and social concentrations of a surplus product extracted from the people and their territory under the control of an elite, and therefore, urbanisation has always been a class phenomenon (Harvey, 2009). The right to the city is the individual liberty to access urban resources and also the common right to change ourselves by changing the city, depending upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanisation (Harvey, 2009).

The use of public participation in planning, deep enough like community planning could be, could help citizens to exercise their rights to the city. Community planning, especially when undertaken by a powerless community, but also when allowing powerless community members to express themselves, could be a way to achieve the fulfilment of this right.

2.8 Conclusion

The concepts explored in this literature review, are ideas coming from social forces seeking change. These ideas are tensioned with the status quo, being practiced within a wide spectrum where issues of power, governance, participative democracy, public participation, and social justice are addressed in different ways and intensities. Community planning processes can help in achieving the task of addressing local people’s needs and gaining
their involvement when undertaking possible ways to fulfil their aspirations. Either driven by government institutions or by the communities themselves, community planning requires deep levels of democracy such as the ones offered by participatory democracy, and a more fair distribution of power. The empowerment of communities is an effective way of developing active citizens and mobilised communities, as opposed to service users, which is the outcome of top-down approaches to planning. Even though new schemes of governance can set some additional pressure on the State, this same pressure can be lightened when communities start undertaking their own solutions by identifying and using their community assets, like in a community led development or an asset based community development scheme. Community planning is also related to justice issues, since justice is highly related to the participation of every segment of society in decision-making.

Community planning is a focus which is becoming utilised more by government agencies. However, there is still a big gap to bridge between formal planning and community planning, in order to build for the latter, the right environment to make it happen, either from the formal planning scope as from the communities scope. There are several values in community planning that have not yet been taken into account by the government agencies. Whether communities are also short in valuing community planning, is something yet to be seen.

Therefore, there is a task for both government and community: for governments to develop governance schemes with the aim of achieving deeper levels of democracy, power distribution, social justice and public participation; and for communities to take a leading role in the planning of their territory.
3.1 Introduction

“Postmodern theory provides a critique of representation and the modern belief that theory mirrors reality, taking instead -perspectivist- and relativist positions that theories at best provide partial perspectives on their objects and all cognitive representations of the world are historically and linguistically mediated” Best 1991, (cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, :538). This research was conducted with a postmodernist perspective of knowledge, recognising and valuing other forms of wisdom, like local knowledge, as equally valuable as academic knowledge.

Since the general aim of this research is to explore the relationship between official planning practice and community driven planning, the most suitable research approach for this study is a qualitative one, with the goal being to gain knowledge and understanding about how community planning and asset mapping works together and its relationship with formal planning. This research does not seek prediction or generalisation, instead it looks for understanding a reality, which is occurring in several places and at multiple times, through a particularly close and interesting case. Through a deep understanding of a particular case we can learn lessons that can inform both theory and practice (Flyvbjerg, 2001).

Qualitative research is “...an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants,
and conducts the study in a natural setting” (Creswell, 1998, :15). A case study of community-driven planning in NEV is used to achieve a deeper understanding and to gain further analysis of community planning as a social phenomena. The approach, methods of data collection and analysis, and the ethics applied are further explained in the following sections.

3.2 Research Approach

A case study approach was used to illustrate the phenomenon of community planning based on an empirical and contemporary example. A case study is an exploration of a ‘bounded system’ or a case through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context (Creswell, 1998). One of the main advantages of the case study as a method is that it can ‘close in’ on real life situations and test views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice (Flyvbjerg, 2001).

According to Flyvbjerg (2006), case study research produces the kind of context-dependent knowledge necessary to allow people to develop towards an expert level. Proficient and expert performers’ behavior is based on intuition and judgment, drawing directly on their own experience to plan and act in a holistic and synchronic way. The more cases you have experienced, the more variation of answers you can extract from them and therefore the better you can understand and react to new cases. Case study is a research approach well suited to produce this concrete context-dependent knowledge, which is generated not with the aim of creating a general context-independent theory, but of gaining learning from the subject.

From a case study, both propositional and experiential knowledge can be increased, which can be in turn transferred to the reader, by providing a vicarious experience through a rich narrative which case study allows to unfold (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

3.2.1 North East Valley as a case study

The case used to inform this study is that of NEV and the planning undertaken by the NEV community. In this research, the case is instrumental since is used to illustrate the issue of community planning in general, from a particular experience. An instrumental case study is a type of case study where the case is examined mainly to provide insight
Research Approach

into an issue or to redraw a generalisation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). For this research, the case of community planning in the NEV community is used with a supportive role to facilitate and advance the understanding of community planning.

The case of NEV can also be considered an extreme case (Flyvbjerg, 2006), since it is a very special case given the long history of the NEV Project and the level of community involvement and organisation (see section 1.3). “Atypical or extreme cases often reveal more information because they activate more actors and more basic mechanisms in the situation studied” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, :229).

There are also practical reasons for choosing the NEV community planning as a case. I have lived in NEV since February 2013 and therefore the neighborhood is more familiar to me, which makes it easier to get a better understanding of processes and collaboration from community members.

The study was undertaken with the extensive support of The Valley Project. The approach of The Valley Project towards academy and research is aligned with the Participatory Action Research approach explained further in the next section, which takes away the hierarchy between researcher and researched and seeks results useful to the community. Initially, my idea was mainly to assess the relationship between formal planning and community planning, and to evaluate the functioning of The Project in terms of the achievement of its goals. Through several conversations with The Project staff members, we were able to negotiate a research focus and approach that would generate research results useful for The Project. The second objective of the research was set in place specifically to fulfill The Project’s expectations, and I committed myself to spending time doing voluntary work in NEV activities as part of the research and in exchange for the support. The time spent on doing voluntary work was also used as a mean to get on field information using participant observation, a method further explained in following sections. Therefore, the achievement of academic requirements was given equal weight to the achievement of useful results for the community.

Criticism over the case study approach often focuses on the difficulties for generating knowledge that is generalisable from a case study (Flyvbjerg, 2006). However, the aim of this research is not the generation of a theory or the production of information for its generalisation. A good design of the research in order to optimise understanding rather
Methodology

than generalisation, is a way to ensure the usefulness of the information generated from a case study (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Since the aim of this research is more related to the understanding of the community planning phenomenon and its relationship with the official planning, a case study approach is a suitable one. The case of community planning in NEV was specially selected because of the particular conditions that NEV offers which makes it an extreme case as said before.

3.2.2 Participatory Action Research

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is an umbrella term which refers to a variety of approaches to action-oriented research (Kindon et al., 2007). It is a form of inquiry initially defined by Lewin 1946 as “a way of generating knowledge about social systems while, at the same time, attempting to change it” (cited in Owen et al., 2007, :62). Although the origins of PAR can not be tracked back to a unique source, this approach was strengthened by social researchers in reaction to the unbearable life conditions as they observed people suffering from all around the world during the decade of the 1970s. These researchers struggled to find a place in the academy for their concerns. As a result, they started to reorient social theory and practice by looking for a way to converge popular thought and scientific knowledge, questioning the idea of science as truth, and appreciating it as a social construct subject to interpretation, revision and enrichment (Reason and Bradbury, 2001). In general terms, PAR is result of the researcher acting as member of the studied community at the same time as researching it. A key feature of this approach is that the research is carried out in collaboration with those experiencing the phenomenon under scrutiny. The result is the production of new knowledge that contributes both practical solutions to issues concerning the regarded community, and to general knowledge in the field of the study (Owen et al., 2007).

This approach challenges the traditional hierarchical relationship between research and action and between researcher and researched, seeking for the replacement of “an ‘extractive’ imperial model of social research with one in which the benefits of research accrue more directly to the communities involved” (Kindon et al., 2007, :1).

Other approaches to community based research

Another postmodernist approach to community based research is the ‘Community Engaged Research Method-
ology’, which differs from PAR because it sustains a clear distinction between the knowledge of the researcher (outsider) and the local knowledge of community members (insiders), while keeping respect for both forms of knowledge. This approach requires a long term (years rather than weeks) relationship between the academic institution and the community, and a mutually beneficial partnership. The advantage of this approach is that it offers independent perspectives since the researcher can maintain a degree of critical distance, which gives more credibility to the results which are useful to the community at the same time (Mulligan and Nadarajah, 2008). This approach could not be used on this research since the frame of relationship needed between the University of Otago and NEV does not exist at a level that enables this methodology. Nevertheless, this partnership can be developed and maybe this research can contribute to represent the first step in the development of it.

3.3 Methods for Data Collection

In order to have an array of information which would allow an analysis of results as comprehensive as possible, multiple sources of information were used for data collection. These sources differ in their relationship with a localised context, depth on the insight of the studied phenomenon, and the aspect of the studied phenomenon they can give more information about. Thus, all the used sources are complementary with each other. These are:

1. Literature review
2. Workshop focus groups and participative research
3. One-on-one interviews
4. Participant observation

3.3.1 Literature review

A literature review was undertaken to inform the study about the main concepts and themes related to community planning. These were drawn mainly from journal articles but also from books from the fields of planning, economy, public policy and administration, local government, community development, sociology, psychology, political philosophy, and feminist theory. The key themes explored on the literature review section are the
concept of community, community planning, public participation, governance, power, and justice. The literature review was useful to refine and connect concepts, and identify different perspectives, which were contrasted against what was found in the field research. These key themes formed the theoretical framework, which provided guidance for the analysis of the data collected in the field.

### 3.3.2 Workshop focus groups

A focus group is a method where people gather together to discuss a subject. The emphasis is on the interaction between participants. The focus group method was used because it allows to exploration of the ways in which participants collectively understand an issue and construct meanings of it (Liampittong, 2011). Two workshop/focus groups were held in the NEV community for this research. The workshops were designed with a double purpose: one, to be useful for the community as a pilot of an Asset Mapping workshop, and two, as a means of collecting field information about the level of knowledge and community members’ views about community planning, and their willingness to engage with the process in NEV.

The workshops were centered on social community assets and therefore focused on, firstly the identification of organisations, groups, institutions and associations in NEV, and secondly the identification of personal skills, knowledge, concerns and interests of participants. Social assets were chosen for the mapping since it is the most critical asset for a community to develop, capable of reversing a downward spiral of loss to an upward spiral of hope (Emery and Flora, 2006).

Participants were invited to attend to the workshops by an advertisement in the Valley Voice, a community newspaper distributed to the whole NEV neighborhood by The Project (see section 1.3). Additional advertisements in the e-magazine, which is distributed among the members of The Project, and posters posted along North Road (see appendix B), the main artery of NEV, were also methods used for advertisement of the workshops. Therefore, the sampling strategy for the workshops was convenience sampling (Jolley, 2014), because participants were volunteers from the public and the only prerequisite for participating was to show up at the workshop and be interested in helping to build an Asset Map to support the community planning process going on in NEV.
The kind of data generated by the workshops was participants’ self-assessed skills, knowledge, interests and concerns, as well as the groups, associations, organisations and institutions in NEV known by the participants. In addition, data was gathered about participants’ perceptions about community planning, community assets and asset mapping.

3.3.2.1 Data Analysis of workshops

A table which linked participants with their self assessed individual assets, was used to organise participants skills, knowledge, interest and concerns. The organisations, groups, associations and institutions recognised by participants as present in NEV, were listed regardless of who mentioned them. These results were gathered in a report which was delivered to the NEV Project together with comments and conclusions, with the aim of getting their thoughts about the workshops results.

3.3.3 On- on-one interviews

Interviews produce direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge (Patton, 2005), and are the most common and powerful way researchers use for trying to understand other people’s thinking (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Sixteen one-on-one interviews were undertaken in order to acquire information in relation to community planning in NEV, how the NEV Project works, how asset mapping could support a community planning process, and the relationship between NEV and DCC approaches to planning. Key informants were selected by a purposive sampling strategy (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000), using a deliberate effort to pick individuals who meet specific criteria, since people especially knowledgeable in community work, volunteer work, NEV, and planning, were the ones needed for this stage of the research. The key informants were staff members of the NEV Project, members of the executive committee from the NEV Project, former members of the NEV Project, DCC staff members who work in liaison with communities and specially with NEV, a volunteer manager, and community members from NEV. The interviews were semi-structured to allow flexibility and deeper discussion about issues as they came up in the conversation. A sample of the general questions asked in the interviews is listed on appendix C.
3.3.3.1 Data Analysis of interviews

The interviews were audio recorded and were transcribed into text. The transcriptions were then coded into themes which were determined according to the objectives of the research and other themes which came up during the conversations.

The identified themes are the following:

- What is community planning
- The benefits of community planning
- The value of bringing together community planning and City Council planning
- The relationship between the DCC and communities in terms of planning issues
- The barriers to community planning: from the communities, from the DCC and formal institutions
- The value of Asset Mapping for community planning
- Criticism against community planning in NEV
- Unexpected themes

The transcripts were formatted giving a color for each theme to be highlighted, and a number to each interviewee or informant. All the coded data was then assembled in subfiles for each theme, enabling the analysis of the frequency of themes mentioned in the interviews, and a deeper understanding of the meanings of the answers given by informants. This procedure, also called triangulation, helps to reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation and clarifying meanings by the identification of different ways to see the phenomenon (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The subjects explored in the literature review were also used to analyse these themes.

3.3.4 Participant observation

Participant observation is a postmodernist turn in social and cultural studies where the researcher chooses a participant role when observing the studied phenomenon, giving to the researcher a more realistic positionality, and becoming more trustful for the locals
Participant observation was undertaken throughout the research for ethical purposes to get a better understanding of the community processes, and to gain trust among the community members. The ethical purposes to undertake participant observation were to have a reciprocal relationship with the community and with the NEV Project. In other words, the purpose was not simply to get information from NEV for the sake of the research and the fulfillment of academic requirements, but also to provide the researcher’s skills and resources to the community in exchange for the opportunity to conduct research. A complementary set of information was gathered by using participant observation. In order to do so, the researcher took part in activities like community dinners, the Valley Club (an after-school support activity for children considered at-risk, where we helped them to practice reading, do homework and have fun), knitters group, executive meetings, the Annual General Meeting, folding guild days (folding the Valley Voice), distribution of balloons for celebrating the 30th anniversary of Kerry as the NEV Postie, the party celebration of the 30th anniversary of Kerry, meals on wheels; update, request and gather material for the welcome packs, among others. The direct participation in activities from the community gave the researcher a chance to correlate the discourse with the practice on the field, and to deepen and complement the observations made from the workshops and interviews.

The contribution by performing volunteer activities in The Project was very important for the understanding of the context of the NEV community. In addition, volunteering in the community provides numerous personal rewards. At least 100 hours were invested in volunteer activities with the NEV Project, which allowed the researcher to have a deeper understanding of the functioning of the community planning, level of organisation and engagement in NEV. This also allowed the researcher to gain trust among NEV staff members, executive committee members and community members, which made it easier to access information, select more suitable interviewees by receiving suggestions from community members, the Project staff and community workers, and in summary, the whole research gets facilitated.

Reflections from participant observation activities were recorded in a notebook in order to have them available for accessing when writing the results and discussion of this research.
Criticism over the participant observation focuses on the lack of scientific rigor of the knowledge generated by using this approach, since the researcher gets involved with the community which affects the impartiality of the analysis (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). This criticism can only be made under a modernist theoretical framework which is not used in this research, and therefore it is contested through the postmodernist theoretical positioning stated at the beginning of this chapter in section 3.1. Ultimately, “some loss of methodological sophistication is a price worth paying in most practical contexts of transformative social action.” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, :592).

3.3.4.1 Data Analysis of Participant Observation

“Analysis is an iterative and ongoing feature of Participatory Action Research’s cycle of action and critical reflection” (Kindon et al., 2007, :181). The reflections from the participant observation method were used in two ways: one, to continuously reshape and deepen the understanding of the researcher about the NEV Community, the functioning of The Project, and the relationship of The Project with the DCC. Two, the written notes were compiled on one document which was then coded into themes. The themes for the analysis of the notes from participant observation were guided by the literature review. These are: power, community, public participation, governance and justice.

3.4 Ethics

Undertaking research with human participants should always involve the review of ethical issues. Since this research involves human participants, ethics approval under the University of Otago’s standards for ethics on research was required. This involves a review and approval of the aim and methods of the research by the Human Ethics Committee from the Otago University, prior to beginning field work for primary data collection.

Participants in workshops and interviews were informed about the research project through information sheets (see appendix A) and a consent form was signed by each participant prior to the start of the workshops or interviews. The information sheets stated the aim of the research, the nature of the questions, that participation was voluntary and that participants had the option to withdraw from the research at any stage with no disadvantage for the participant, and that anonymity would be preserved. Consent forms
were signed to indicate that the participants were aware of their rights and choices, and they were asked to select between remaining anonymous or to give consent for the use of their name in the final report.

Interviews, workshops, and participant observation were undertaken always with the concern of ensuring comfort to the participants. This was done by the researcher having a respectful attitude towards participants’ beliefs and thoughts, and also by providing a suitable space for the circumstances to ensure the physical comfort of participants.

The participant observation approach was chosen also for ethical reasons, in order to share with the community some of the benefits they gave to the researcher when supporting the research by participating, and by doing so, allowing the researcher to gain knowledge and a university postgraduate degree.

Māori consultation was also undertaken on this research as part of the ethics procedure. A submission to the Ngāi Tahu Research Consultation Committee was made, in the context of the Memorandum of Understanding between Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu and the University of Otago. The aim of the consultation was to inform the Committee about the research and get suggestions on how to improve the (at that stage) research proposal. As an outcome of this consultation, the results of this research will be disseminated to Māori entities of the Otago region.

### 3.5 Reflection on Methodology

The researcher acknowledges her positionality towards community work, institutional planning and public participation. This is based on the researcher’s personal experience acquired through her work in Chile, which has frequently focused on creating citizenship and empowering local communities, especially Mapuche communities, when they are in conflict with private or public investments which will have negative impact in their territory. This work is done by making sure the communities know all their legal entitlements, effectively use the public participation tools offered by the formal planning system in Chile, and supporting the actions of communities to defend their territory. The main reason why the researcher is interested in studying this subject, is because the community planning approach can be complementary to the work the researcher has done in Chile.

By clarifying her positionality towards communities, public participation and formal
planning, the researcher acknowledges the possibility of a bias in the interpretation of
the results and the drawing of conclusions. However, this acknowledgment also warns the
researcher to take great care on not replacing the informants’ views and beliefs with her
own. Since we all have positionalities, bias can also be expected to be present with inform-
ants and the reader of the thesis. The bias on interpretation of results was technically
addressed by the triangulation process, acknowledging similarities as well as differences
on informants’ views, and informants’ positionalities were also considered when useful and
possible. In order to minimise biased interpretation, the researcher’s assumptions as well
as informants’ assumptions were constantly sought.

Time constraints were a limitation of this research. Because of this, there was some
people who were not interviewed, and that would have given interesting and useful infor-
mation. There are subjects that are not reviewed in depth, and that are quite important
for community planning, such as the reasons why people do not get engaged with The
Project, or the economic outcomes of community planning. These subjects are available
for other research projects.

3.6 Conclusion

Overall, this methodology was designed to acquire and interpret a wide range of informa-
tion, in order to get an understanding of how community planning is viewed and practiced
by the DCC, The Project, and community members of NEV, and to generate and record
reflections on how to improve the relationship between community planning and formal
planning. Sixteen interviews, two workshops and more than 100 hours of participant ob-
servation was conducted, and the resulting information was clustered into themes which
are related to the research questions, and then summarised in order to concisely present
and discuss the results.
The practice of community planning

4.1 Introduction

The first research question guiding this study is: how do different views about community planning impact upon the ability to do it? In order to answer this question, we first need to have a clear understanding of how both The Project and DCC work in practice, so we can interpret and analyse the opinions and thoughts of key informants in a more informed way. In this chapter, there is a description of how community planning actually works in NEV based on interviews, participant observation, and the review of documents like The Project’s constitution. This is followed by a description of how DCC undertakes efforts to incorporate community planning into its own formal planning processes, including how DCC tackles its specific relation with NEV community planning. This will be the basis for the following chapters where we will analyse the views and values of community planning and its relationship with formal planning.

4.2 How Community Planning works in North East Valley

There has been community planning going on in NEV for almost three decades. This is now done mainly through The Project. As mentioned in the introduction chapter, The Project was started by NEV Normal School with the aim of opening the school to the community, in an effort to extend the educational mission to the wider community, and in this
The practice of community planning

way benefiting the community’s children. Later on, the other educational institutions in NEV like Sacred Heart school, DNI school, Montessori Kindergarten, Johnathan Rhodes Kindergarten, and Islington Street Kindergarten, joined up with the Project and started working together to create a better community where children could be supported and cared for. Currently these six educational institutions constitute the Education Council of The Project which aims to address the root causes of child disengagement in learning (NEV, 2014a).

“It takes a village to raise a child” is an African proverb used by The Project which explains from an educational point of view, the desire to focus on the NEV community as a whole, and start work in areas in relation to other issues of concern for community members, like housing, environment, social inclusion, and connection with other community initiatives. These issues are seen by The Project as root causes for disengagement with learning. The way these issues are tackled by The Project is clearly displayed in the Community Plan which is further explained in coming sections.

4.2.1 The structure of The Project

Currently, The Project is an incorporated society with 144 members who either live or work in NEV. It is possible to be a member of The Project if you do not live or work in NEV, but in that case it is at the executive committee’s discretion to accept or reject your application. As an incorporated society, The Project is ruled by a constitution which was submitted to the New Zealand Companies Office in 2011. The constitution of The Project states its objectives, which are:

1. Enhancing the life of the community, particularly promoting the wellbeing of local children and their families /whānau.

2. Supporting local organisations and community members to promote, coordinate and collaborate activities in education, health and care, environment, community action and promotion, as well as establish new charitable activities when deemed appropriate by the community.

3. Provision of a process to identify local needs, establish priorities, evaluate resources, facilitate activities and publicise them under the auspice of the Society (The Project).
The constitution of The Project also sets the roles of the executive committee members, which are:

- One business representative from the local business community.
- One communication representative with involvement in the production of The Valley Voice and local publicity.
- One health representative from the local health sector.
- One education representative representing the local primary schools.
- One education representative representing the local early childhood services.
- One to three community representatives, representing local community initiatives.
- One representative from the Board of Trustees of NEV Normal School.

The executive committee holds monthly meetings open to the public at the Community Rooms. The meetings often last more than two hours and each agenda item is discussed for no more than 5 minutes since there is always a lot to talk about, including Te Reo classes, a report on finances, the community workers report, the implementation progress of the Community Plan, ad hoc upcoming activities, etc. Monthly meetings of the executive committee are very time constrained and frequently there is no opportunity to address issues in detail. Although the meetings of the executive committee are open to the public, it is rare to have a community member present who does not belong to the committee.

Besides the monthly meetings, Annual General Meetings (AGM) are held, where the executive committee reports back to the community on the activities and finances over the last year, and the executive committee members are either replaced or re-appointed to their roles. Although executive committee members are supposed to be voted on the Annual General Meetings, this is not what actually happens. There is usually no more than one candidate for each role in the executive committee, and sometimes there is not even one. Most of the executive committee roles tend to be re-appointed, and it is very hard to find new people to replace the members stepping down. While the AGM is advertised through the Valley Voice beginning from several months in advance, attendance at the AGM, although it has increased over time, is not substantial in relation to the number of people who live in NEV.
4.2.2 The Community Plan

The NEV Community Plan was developed through different consultation ventures throughout The Project history but mainly during the year 2008, acknowledging the need to get a bottom-up direction for The Project with the aim of taking it one step further on the community development process. The themes that emerged from the 2008 consultation were reinforced in subsequent and ongoing consultation, and now constitute the framework which guides the work of The Project. The vision of The Project set out in the plan is “a strongly connected, healthy, sustainable community, with places, spaces and activities that enable belonging and connectedness. No matter who we are or where we are from, together we have a voice, make action and create hope” (Project Strategic Plan 2013).

The five key themes which emerged during the consultation process are: education, housing, environment, social inclusion and community initiatives and they are translated into six areas of community outcomes: social inclusion, education/lifelong learning, cultural and ethnic development, environment, economic development and administrative/resourcing. Each area of community outcomes has in turn areas of work and actions, with a total of 54 actions to fulfil during the period of 2012 to 2015. Table 4.1 shows a summary of the Community Plan, highlighting the community outcomes and its areas of work. The activities of each work area are not detailed here for lengthiness reasons.

4.2.2.1 Implementation of the Community Plan

The level of implementation is unequal among community outcomes. The outcome number 5: housing, for example, is being implemented very vigorously by community workers and volunteers from the community. Named as the ‘Cosy homes’ initiative, community outcome number 5 is being implemented through an insulation scheme working in NEV where community volunteers have been trained in knowledge and skills on how to insulate, so they are doing the insulation work and teaching other community members how to do it. They are also promoting the scheme. The Project is working with other agencies to complement their scheme with resources from outside the community. For Key Informant 11 (ex-executive committee member from NEV), this initiative is an example of how The Project encourages people who are in need, to come on board and become part of the solution.
Table 4.1: North East Valley Community Plan outcomes and work areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Outcome</th>
<th>Work Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Social Inclusion</td>
<td>1.1 Fostering community connection and Participation. 1.2 There is support for individuals and organisations already in the Valley. 1.3 Ensuring Valley residents are well informed about the activities and groups operating in the Valley. 1.4 There is good co-ordination of external services working in the Valley.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Education</td>
<td>2.1 Improvement of educational outcomes for Valley children. 2.2 Support for families in their role of raising children. 2.3 Access education opportunities that are not school / ECE based. 2.4 Youth in the Valley are resilient, capable and enterprising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cultural and Ethnic Development</td>
<td>3.1 Meeting Māori aspirations (of both mana whenua and Nga Maata Waka). 3.2 Revitalisation of Te Reo. 3.3 Support people from overseas or new to the Valley to settle in. 3.4 Appreciate and strengthen the arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Environment</td>
<td>4.1 Enhance the North East Valley environment and protect the natural ecosystem. 4.2 Improve the physical appearance of the Valley and availability of local amenities. 4.3 Improve the safety of those living and working in the Valley. 4.4 Develop a visual aesthetic that reflects the culture of the Valley.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Housing</td>
<td>5.1 Make the Valley a desirable place to live.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Economic</td>
<td>6.1 Ensure economic opportunities are available to all members of our community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Administrative/ Resourcing</td>
<td>7.1 Provide a structure for CLD. 7.2 Utilise appropriate staff capacity and skill to support and further CLD. 7.3 Develop and maintain the Community Rooms. 7.4 Ensure the Community Vans are available and used.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the cosy homes is a really good example of that, there is a group that goes out and help with putting up carpets or window films, and the expectation is, now that you know how to do it, come and help us in another home, and they go yes!, because that home had a bit of help, they are really happy to go and share what they have learned.

This is also an example of how a community outcome, with only one work area and two actions, is being implemented very successfully and at the same time is being used to build capacity within the community.

Community outcome number 1: social inclusion, is being implemented also very successfully by holding events like community dinners, operating the Community Rooms as a centre to host and coordinate activities, the employment of community workers to action Project initiatives, providing the Valley Voice to every household and maintaining a
website to inform about activities and groups operating in NEV, among other actions.

Community outcome number 2: education, is being implemented by activities like the Valley Club, an after-school activity for children considered at risk where they get academic and emotional support, lifelong learning activities for adults, transporting NEV children to activities outside the Valley, among others. Youth related activities are also being implemented, like the Youth Drop-in centre, with supervised fun activities for people between 7 and 13.

Community outcome 3: cultural and ethnic development, is being implemented by the work areas of revitalisation of Te Reo, and the NEW meetings for helping the new people in NEV to settle in. As for the first work area of this community outcome: meeting Māori aspirations, this is arguably being achieved since there is not much participation of Māori people in The Project, and there is no executive committee member representing Māori people for the period 2014-2015. The event that brings more attention to Māori people is Matariki Hangi. This was noted by Key Informant 12 (ex-executive committee member from NEV): “I guess you can get to know more Māori people for Matariki hangi” and Key Informant 10 (executive committee member of NEV): “So we don’t have enough of those things going on (like Matariki Hangi), and we fight, I’m always fighting with the other members of the executive and the Project about the unbalance there”. Although Māori people do participate in Matariki Hangi celebration, the participation is very focused on the event and they do not get involved in the strategic planning for NEV.

Other community outcomes, on the other hand, are not being implemented at all, like community outcome 4: environment. There is no environment representative on the executive committee, which means the environment outcome is lacking in leadership within The Project. However, there are activities taking place within the community which promote environmental protection, although not lead by The Project. The Community Garden and TV473 are two environment related activities going on in NEV, and although they do connect with The Project in terms of using The Project’s resources, they do not work within the organisational structure of The Project. This might be the reason why The Project does not prioritise work in the environment community outcome. The relationship among these activities and The Project is explained further in following sections.
Community outcome 6: economic, is another outcome that currently does not have an appointed representative at the executive committee and therefore lack of leadership for the implementation within The Project. The level of implementation of the outcomes is, in the researcher’s opinion, related to the number and commitment of people interested in the subject, either executive committee members or community members/volunteers. Implementation of parts of the plan which lack of support from the executive committee or community people, compete with the implementation of spontaneous ideas brought by community members which are not part of the Community Plan (such as the celebration of the 30th anniversary of Kerry the Postie). While the existence of the Community Plan guides the actions of The Project, not everything is guided by it, and not all of the plan is being implemented.

This is when a review of the plan becomes relevant, since some themes that might have been important when consultation was originally undertaken, might not be important anymore, or do not have enough support from the community to be developed. The plan is set out to be reviewed during 2014, but this has not happened to date.

The fact that the level of implementation of the plan depends on the level of commitment from community members is a signal that the Community Plan is really community-led.

4.2.3 Infrastructure, staff and funding

Most of The Project’s activities are held at the Community Rooms on 248 North Road, which were built on NEV Normal School grounds and redeveloped in 2011 with funding from the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA). The DIA granted funding to The Project as one of five pilot schemes of community development in New Zealand. These five pilot projects of community development are part of the community-led development initiative from the DIA. This is a policy advice area, where DIA gives support and advice to communities who have already identified issues they want to address and are currently able to undertake a community-led development process (DIA, 2014). Besides the redevelopment of the Community Rooms, this money is being used to hire staff and implement the Community Plan 2012-2015. Currently, The Project is in the 3rd out of 4 years of implementation of the Community Plan, and in the 4th out of a 5 year term for the
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expenditure of the funding (around half a million NZ dollars). After the fifth year, The Project will have to fund itself or apply for new funding.

The Project has three paid staff: one person in charge of the writing, editing and distributing The Valley Voice, a community outreach and volunteer manager, and a community development coordinator. They are in charge of the office of The Project, and take care of the Community Rooms, administrative issues, attend to community members who come to the Rooms, take note of people’s ideas, concerns, coordinate the implementation of activities for the Community Plan, organise events, and in general they undertake all of the day-to-day work involved with being the visible face of a community development project. Work which has many challenges because of, on one hand, the responsibility of making progress on the implementation of the Community Plan, and on the other hand, the responsibility of answering people’s unexpected requests and ideas, which often do not relate to the accomplishment of the plan. An example of this is the celebration of the 30th anniversary of Kerry the Postman (see figure 4.1, source: NEV 2014a) an idea which came from a community member and required a considerable amount of energy and time to be accomplished. This initiative is further explained in coming sections.

Figure 4.1: Kerry Wheeler in the celebration of his 30 years of service to North East Valley as Postie, and some of the hundreds of balloons written on with congratulations which were posted on people’s letterboxes that day.
4.2.4 Participation, inclusion and representation in The Project

As noted in the literature review chapter, participation, inclusion and representation are important aspects to pay attention to, when talking about community. A community can be defined by who is left out and who is a part of it. There is diversity within a community which is frequently overlooked because of the tendency to see communities as a homogeneous body. Despite the fact that community planning can be a way of empowering communities and community members, there still can be power issues within a community, and the powerful members of the community can have a voice so strong that it stops others from speaking or even from listening to weak voices. This is why it is important to analyse how these issues are addressed, if they are, in The Project and the NEV community.

The Governance structure of the project, sets the executive committee as the representation body for the community. Executive committee members are supposed to be voted at the AGM of The Project every year. As explained before, this is not exactly what happens. Lack of participation in the AGM (less than 1% of NEV people and flanks) makes it really hard for executive committee members to be really representative. This issue of representation is compensated by pursuing the objective 3 of The Project.

The third objective in The Project’s constitution is “Provision of a process to identify local needs, establish priorities, evaluate resources and publicise them under the auspice of (The Project)”.

This objective sets a divide between The Project and the community, and acknowledges the need to identify the community’s needs by a process. Which groups from within the community participate in the process, is an issue of inclusion. How many people take part in the process, is an issue of participation.

The way this objective is accomplished, is by looking for feedback from the community. This is done by the use of passive and active approaches which will be analysed in the following sections.

4.2.4.1 Passive approaches to getting community feedback

There are several passive means of getting community members’ feedback. One of them is through use of the Community Rooms, where The Project’s office is located, served
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by the community workers who are constantly attending community members who want to express their feelings, thoughts, aspirations and ideas about what they see and would like to see happening in NEV. For example, the idea of celebrating the 30th anniversary of Kerry the Postman for NEV, came from a community member who went to the Community Rooms and explained the idea to the community workers who loved it. So, they started to organise it and, since it was a surprise for Kerry, they could not advertise it openly. The way they spread the word and asked for volunteers to help was only by word of mouth. That way, balloons and invitations to the party were delivered to every household of NEV. The day of the anniversary, NEV was full of balloons with messages of congratulations for Kerry and the party was full of people from NEV, the post office and even the media. That is an example of how spontaneous ideas from the community have a chance to come to fruition because of the constant open channel of the community workers at the Community Rooms. It also demonstrates the capacity that is built in the NEV community when The Project resources and engaged community members work together. It really makes ideas happen.

The other is through The Valley Voice, the community newsletter through which community members can contribute and send feedback by email to The Project. This is not directly encouraged in The Valley Voice to write back, but the email address is on the front page and people seem to understand the newsletter as a two way channel, since feedback notes can be frequently found in the monthly publication. Because the feedback received by the Valley Voice is not necessarily posted, there might be a bias in the selection of what feedback to publish and what not to. For example, in the Valley Voice of June 2014, there is published feedback which states:

Hi Steve, this is just a quick note to say that The Project is doing a fantastic job, so well done to you and everyone who is involved. I really liked the warm fuzzies that were abounding when you helped Kerry the Postie to celebrate his 30 years on the job. He is a warm and friendly guy and definitely part of the Valley’s social glue and it was great to see this, as much as his Postie service is acknowledged and celebrated. It was a great few days in NEV! Lyn Howe.

This feedback shows how the Valley Voice is not only a channel for The Project to send information to NEV community members about the activities going on, but also a channel for NEV community members to communicate to The Project their thoughts and
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The third of the passive means of getting the community’s opinion is through the approachability of executive committee members, who are constantly seeking to listen to community members whenever the opportunity arises. For Key Informant 11 (ex-executive committee member from NEV):

> And as an exec member I had a responsibility to say the people “we want to hear what you want to see in the valley and Im able to tell about at the exec” so I think thats important, that we as the exec are visible, and I dont mean we are all the time being and exec member because we have other roles as well we all work, but being visible and available and approachable ...

This is supported by the experience of Key Informant 12 (ex-executive committee member from NEV) who stated:

> With the Te Reo classes that started this year, I had people who approached to me and said “we want Te Reo Māori in the valley”, and so from there things started and keep going.

### 4.2.4.2 Active approaches to getting community feedback

The active means of getting the community’s opinions stem from the events The Project organise with this objective in mind. Community dinners, pop-up shops and tea parties are the most frequent and successful of these events. Community dinners are organised at least once a year, and all community members are welcome to attend, whether they bring food to share or just want to enjoy the food and company. These occasions are used to inform and consult with attendants about The Project’s initiatives, and feedback is expressly sought.

**Community dinners.** From the experience of the researcher, community dinners are more successful than the Annual General Meeting in terms of the turnout. The last community dinner was held on the 8th of April 2014, and some 100 people attended. The researcher could observe how many people showed up to that event as compared to those who do not show up for meetings at the Community Rooms. It was also an occasion for presenting the work of artistic groups in the Valley, like the choir, the Indian dance group, and music performers. The community dinner was used by The Project to
invite attendees to use the Community Rooms for sharing ideas, and also to communicate about new things happening in The Project, such as this research. The occasion was used to consult about the Old Post Office Project \(^1\) and people’s availability to participate in the Asset Mapping workshop for this research. This information was communicated through an information sheet about the Old Post Office Project, which at the end had an extractable tab section with mention of the Asset Mapping part of the research, with the option of writing your name and contact details if people wished to participate. There was a box available all night for people to put their forms with opinions about the Old Post Office Project, and the information sheet had contact numbers and email addresses for people to communicate their opinions later on if they wished to do so.

Some people were shy and clearly new to the Valley, whilst other people knew most of the attendees and were quite comfortable. The older Valley members were very welcoming with the newer ones. There were people from all ages and ethnicities. There was a true feeling of community. Figure 4.2 shows the poster advertising the last community dinner held on the 30th of September (NEV, 2014a).

**Matariki Hangi** Matariki Hangi is a celebration in NEV which has been taking place since 2012, in which the NEV community gets together to celebrate. Matariki is the apparition of the Pleiades stars which marks the beginning of the Māori New Year. To celebrate this, a hangi is cooked for the whole community. Hangi is a traditional Māori method of cooking, where the food is cooked on hot stones under the ground. A pit is dug in the ground and a large fire is made in the pit where stones are heated. After heating the stones for some hours, the food is set over the hot stones in baskets, and covered with earth for several hours before lifting the hangi for serving. This has been done at the front yard of Dunedin North Intermediate School for at least the last two years. To lay a hangi requires a considerable amount of work (from gathering the stones and the wood to digging the pit, maintaining the fire, setting down the food, covering everything and then uncovering), the help of community members is needed during the whole process, and of course, for eating! The food was provided by the community garden and donated by local businesses.

\(^1\)The Old Post Office Project is the idea of turning the old post office building at the bottom of Baldwin street into a social enterprise. More information about this project on chapter 5.
This event is very important for NEV since it gets people together for the preparation before the hangi is put down, during, and after the uncovering. It requires special Māori knowledge about how to lay a hangi, and therefore this knowledge and its carrier gets valued by the community. The uncovering and eating is the part that gathers together more people, with more than 300 people taking part in the Matariki celebration in July this year. Besides the large number of people, perhaps what is more important is the opportunities for participation which are created. It is an event where Māori people and Pacific Islanders take leadership and strong participation in NEV. This event gives the NEV community the chance to get together, reflecting many ethnicities coexisting in the valley, and for Māori to participate, which is important as they usually do not take part in any other activity from The Project, except for Te Reo classes. For Key Informant 5 (ex-executive committee member from NEV): “What I loved about the hangi is that it is a real mix up, we got people from lots of different groups being involved”. The celebration of Matariki hangi gives The Project the chance to improve the participation of community
The practice of community planning members, by improving the representation of Māori people and Pacific Islanders, whom together are around 10% of the NEV population (see 1.1). For Key Informant 12 (executive committee member from NEV): “I guess you can get to know more Māori people from the Matariki hangi and things like that. It would be good to connect more with Māori families through doing more events like that”.

Tea parties. The tea parties are another avenue that The Project has for actively seeking feedback from the community. Invitations are put in letter boxes inviting people to participate and pointing out the date and time the party is going to be. Then on that day, the tea party is set up by people from The Project with tea and biscuits provided to the people who attend, and conversation is made about what residents would like to see in the Valley, what are their concerns, what they enjoy, etc. People have the chance to get to know new people and to talk about what kind of future they would like for NEV. Around 10 tea parties were held in different sectors of NEV, primarily focused on retired people, since it was perceived they were not participating in the community as often as people from other age groups. The fact that tea parties were focused on retired people was positive for this segment of the population to overcome mobility barriers to participation.

4.2.4.3 Reflections on participation and The Project

While the active approaches for getting feedback means participation from a wide range of community members, passive approaches attract only the most proactive people from amongst the community. Active approaches provide the chance to people who are more shy, less knowledgeable on community work, or simply newer to NEV, to begin participating in The Project.

Active approaches also seem to attract people from other ethnicities, whereas passive approaches attract mostly people from the European ethnic group. This was observed by the researcher during the two last community dinners in NEV, where participation of people from India, Pacific Islanders and Māori people was observed, whilst the people who showed up at the Community Rooms were usually European, unless it was going to be a special activity like Te Reo classes.

Matariki hangi is an activity that encourages participation of Māori people and Pacific
Islanders, which is valued by community members and positive for the representation of the diversity of people and cultures coexisting in NEV. Despite this, there is still a lack of participation from the community, especially from ethnicities other than European. This is acknowledged by Key Informant 10 who stated:

...this is the area where we don’t do very well with the project. Because at most of the activities the people who turn up are white middle-class. The one thing that happens through the year that captures the other people is Matariki (...).

The passive means seem to be the ground to start new initiatives from outside of the Community Plan, and the active means are better directed by The Project. This is because passive means are constantly open, which gives people the chance to pop in at any time and share ideas as they occur to them. This keeps people engaged with The Project since they can connect with it at any time, unlike the active means which happens only a few times per year.

Both approaches are complementary, and although one serves to accomplish initiatives from the Community Plan (the active approaches), the other serves the purpose of keeping people engaged and provides opportunities for constant feedback (passive means). Both approaches contribute to build social capital for NEV.

Social capital is also called the social glue, and reflects the connections among people and organisations to make things happen, and is considered the critical resource of a community (Emery and Flora, 2006). Community dinners and the Matariki hangi contribute greatly to building those connections within NEV, and to building community cohesion, since it requires community members to work together and get to know each other. The relationships between people and place is important for individual and community identity (Convery, 2012). People getting together, cooking and sharing food, singing and playing music, in summary having a good time together, in places within NEV, gives them good memories which ties them emotionally and psychologically to those places and the people who they met, individual and collective memories which strengthen the identity of NEV as a community. Especially the Matariki hangi celebration, where people can recognise the place where the pit was dug every time they walk past Dunedin North Intermediate School, and remember what a great time they had together with the rest of the community. These kinds of activities truly contribute to the building of a sense of place.
4.2.5 Other activities in North East Valley

There are other groups and activities running in NEV outside of The Project. Some of them are connected with The Project and use their infrastructure and resources, and might be even perceived to be part of The Project, like the Community Garden and TV473 (Transition Valley 473). These groups are autonomous in their working but use the Valley Voice to advertise their activities and the backyard of the NEV School to grow vegetables, so they are connected with The Project but the decisions they make do not go through the executive committee, and are not reported at the AGM of The Project. It is important for The Project to keep the connection with these and other groups. Some other groups run completely separate from The Project and do not use any of The Project’s resources. Nevertheless, most of the activities going on in NEV are either coming from or connected with The Project, and it is the only organisation which seeks to represent the NEV community as a whole.

It is hard to track down all the initiatives that are going on in NEV either inside or outside The Project. However, no matter how participative and active people can be in NEV, there are always going to be things that cannot be done by the community, and need to be done by external agencies like DCC. Following, there is a brief description of how DCC answers to communities undertaking planning.

4.3 Dunedin City Council approach to community planning

In order to have the DCC working alongside NEV planning, NEV community and the DCC need to work together on some issues. To do so, NEV needs to approach the DCC, and the DCC needs to have a way of answering to NEV proposals. The main way the DCC has to connect community planning with the formal planning undertaken in DCC, is through the approach called Place-Based Planning.

4.3.1 Place-Based Planning

Place Based Planning is an approach initiated by DCC three years ago by the ex-Chief Executive, Paul Orders. He came from Wales where he learned how to work with com-
munities in a Place Based Planning approach. The idea of this approach is to link the formal planning institutions with the communities, so plans can be specifically designed for each place in line with the wishes and needs of the communities. Of course this is not achievable without changing the current structure of the planning system, but efforts are made to at least partially incorporate the communities aspirations into the city planning process.

This approach is not stated in any DCC document as a statutory way of undertaking planning, however, it is used by several DCC departments, and it was mentioned in most of the interviews with DCC staff members. In practice, the Place-Based Planning approach is undertaken whenever a DCC staff member wants to use it or is pressured by some other DCC staff member to do it. There are opposing opinions about whether the Place-Based Planning approach is stable or not within DCC. For Key Informant 9 (DCC councillor):

We are doing some Place-based thinking, but I don’t think we are doing Place-Based Planning, and I wouldn’t say is embedded in the culture of this organisation, there is a long way to go before its embedded.

Key Informant 3 (DCC staff member liaison with NEV) holds a similar point of view: “So I think if a new administration came in, Place-Based Planning might disappear. The value of it has not yet been proven to the standards needed”. Key Informant 7 (DCC staff member of city planning team) on the other hand is much more optimistic, stating: “I think we’ll continue moving more and more towards it”. These opinions show us that the commitment to the Place-Based approach is variable and it will depend on the political will of coming administrations, and the perseverance of staff members of the DCC to keep using this approach.

The Place-Based Planning approach is used quite intensely by the Urban Design team, who have used it successfully in two particular examples: the Warehouse Precinct Revitalisation Plan (WPRP), and the South Dunedin Retail Centre Revitalisation Plan (SDRP).

The WPRP was designed in 2011 and implemented during the years 2012 and 2013 in the area between Queens Gardens and Police Street (the Warehouse Precinct). The aim of the plan was to support the revitalisation of the area, initiated by business and residential investments, and ensure this historic area becomes the vibrant and successful part of the central city that it once was (DCC, 2014).
In turn, the SDRP was designed in 2010 and implemented in 2011/2012, aiming to re-establish the economic role of the South Dunedin retail centre as a retail destination for the city, and to restore the social role of the centre as a place that provides opportunities for residents. The design of the plan was based on the South Dunedin Business Association’s submission to the Draft Community Plan 2009/2010 - 2018/2019, and also included the concerns of many other people (mainly landowners and the business community) who voiced their wishes to keep the area as a vibrant and successful centre from both economic and social perspectives (DCC, 2014).

Both plans were undertaken because of community requirements, and on both occasions it was the business people and landowners who initiated the idea. According to Key Informant 7, who is a staff member of the City Development Team, in the case of the SDRP, business people of the area approached DCC Councillors asking for the renovation plan, and in the case of the WPRP, business people and land owners started the renovation themselves (DCC, 2014) and then approached DCC staff members seeking support.

Both experiences of Place Based Planning are considered successful by Key Informant 7, who stated:

...the success we had in the warehouse precinct, I think is not only around what the Council can provide, so we’ve put investment in the area, but sometimes is about connecting and coordinating other people in the area.

This experience has elements which can be linked to community planning processes. Nevertheless, there are some elements which belong to community planning but are not present in these examples, such as inclusion. The main participants in both processes were the business people and the land owners, which means the more advantaged people were given privilege in deciding the future of the areas, and the less advantaged people, while also was given the chance to participate, were less encouraged to do so.

When looking at the consultation and engagement information of the SDRP which is posted on DCC web page, it can be noted that some of the consultation events were open to the wider public, and some were focused only on businesses and landowners, like mailing the concept design which was done only to businesses and landowners. In the case of the WPRP, when looking at the information on DCC web page about the consultation process,
it also seems to have an emphasis on consulting with the more advantaged members of the community, such as retailers and businesses operators, stakeholder groups and property interests.

Both processes might be representative, but only of a segment of the communities of the areas, and less inclusive of the disadvantaged members of the communities. Here, the issue of how community is defined becomes relevant. Because this community, or the group of people who share values and feel connected, might be only comprised of business people and landowners, and the disadvantaged people, although they live in the area, do not feel like they belong to that community. It would be really unfortunate if those people were excluded from being part of the community by the more advantaged members. However, there is not enough information from this research to draw concrete conclusions regarding this.

These examples show that DCC Place-Based Planning approach is a mix of bottom-up and top-down, since it is initiated due to a desire from community members who ask DCC to take over. Again this approach to community planning shows qualitative differences with the community-led (bottom-up) approach, which focuses on building social capital, identifying and cultivating the social assets within the community, to then decide afterwards on issues related to the design of places on the basis of representative and participative decisions. The Place Based Planning approach from DCC on the other hand, makes decisions about place design on the basis of the representation of only a segment of the community, which is the more advantaged one, and focuses more on the design of the place rather than in building social capital. The outcome of this approach is an improvement of the physical aspect of the neighbourhood, but not of the quality of the social assets. There might be a strengthening of some networks within the vicinity but this is mainly between the people who were more encouraged to participate (and who are probably already connected), mostly business and land owners. There is no certainty of progressing towards the building of community including the less advantaged people of the neighbourhood.
4.3.2 Community Development team

The Community Development team provides free advice, support, resources and workshops for non-profit groups on project development, management issues, planning and funding. It is formed by seven staff members who undertake the roles of manager, community advisors, arts and events coordinator, among others. This team also administers a range of community funding schemes and works in partnership with other agencies on projects that promote community development (DCC, 2014). The two community advisors roles are to give support to community organisations in terms of advice and advocacy. The advice can be about funding, community capacity, and how to better approach other DCC departments to undertake community initiatives. The community advisors also advocate for the communities within other DCC departments, so that community aspirations can be better understood and DCC planning can align with communities aspirations. They are in especially close communication with two communities from Dunedin: Brockville and South Dunedin. The level of communication the Community Development team has with communities is determined by the communities requirements. They hold regular meetings with other DCC departments which are working in South Dunedin or Brockville, so that they can coordinate their work with each other and also with the communities, and hopefully align it with community aspirations.

The Community Development team’s work is guided by the Dunedin Social Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2023. The aim of this strategy is to set out pathways for DCC to take a leadership role in improving the social wellbeing of Dunedin’s residents. The Social Wellbeing Strategy has ‘Stronger Communities’ as one of its pathways of implementation. This is undertaken by the provision of information, advice, facilitation, partnership or funding (DCC, 2013). This actions tends to support community strengthening, but not to build community strengthening. In other words, in order to be implemented, the ‘Stronger Communities’ pathway of the Social Wellbeing Strategy, requires a community which is already built and strong enough to ask DCC to support their process.
4.3.3 Social Wellbeing Strategy and Economic Development Strategy

The Community Development team and the Economic Development team are both similar in some regards. While the Community Development team’s work is guided by the Social Wellbeing Strategy, the Economic Development team’s work is guided by the Economic Development Strategy. The first one liaises between DCC and communities, and the second one liaises between DCC and businesses. Although the Social Wellbeing Strategy includes economic issues (such as employment opportunities and affordable housing) and economic indicators (such as total employment and population with low income), it is not connected with the Economic Development Strategy, as if the economic issues at a community level were not connected with the economic issues at a city level. In addition, both strategies were formulated in a very different way.

The Social Wellbeing Strategy was built on the Council-led Your City Our Future community engagement process, which was a community-wide consultation held in 2010/2011, from this process other strategies emerged such as the Arts and Culture Strategy, the Dunedin City Integrated Transport Strategy 2013, and the Spatial Plan. The Economic Development Strategy, however, was only consulted on with what is called key economic partners within Dunedin which is made up of DCC, Otago Chamber of Commerce, Otago Southland Employers’ Association, Otago Polytechnic, University of Otago, and Ngāi Tāhū. It seems as though, to DCC, economics is not something to be consulted with the wide community, but only to big players such as the so-called key economic partners, although economy is an important factor in the well-being of all communities. There is no Place-Based Approach for the economic strategy in Dunedin, and there is no liaison with communities for the implementation of the Economic Development Strategy.

It seems that when there are big players interested, the small players, those who do not have enough power to sit at the table with the big ones, are simply left out. This imbalance was noted by Key Informant 7 (DCC staff) who stated:

There is a thing like ‘economic development is something that big players do’, and community development is something that ‘we’ll give you a few grants but we don’t actually see it as inherently productive’, and I think that’s the danger of the signal that that sends. That’s not an official DCC position, its my position. (...) It’s
always trying to look what that big thing is going to be, whereas there is actually a
lot of evidence around the world that focusing not on that one big player or one big
industry, you can actually have more and better gains from supporting the grass
roots stuff and having a focus on local employment.

It might be because DCC does not trust communities to participate in something
considered as important as the Economic Development Strategy of the city, or because
the big players’ in Dunedin’s economy do not want to share the power of shaping the
economic strategy for the city. Whatever the reason is, the fact remains that community
planning for DCC does not include economic development. If the Economic Development
Strategy was inclusive of communities, there is a good chance that the strategy would
take a turn in favour of the smaller players and that is probably out of the big players
interest. There is a clear imbalance here, where the elite are empowered and the majority
of people are not empowered on economic issues at a district level. This approach also
shows no attention to the uneven economic development across communities.

It would be less concerning if DCC would develop an economic strategy without the
participation of any sector of the city, rather than with the participation of only the
most empowered sector of the city. By doing this, it is giving extra power to the already
empowered elite, and leaving the majority of the population without having a say about
how they want economics being guided in their city. This is completely contradicts the
community planning bottom-up (community driven) approach, which places economics
as a part of the community issues to be planned in a community-wide representative and
participative way.

Coincidentally or consequently perhaps, NEV community has had a low performance
on the implementation of its Community Plan in regarding to the economic work areas.
It is logical to think that the economic work areas of the NEV Community Plan would
have a better performance if the District’s Strategy of Economic Development had con-
sidered local communities in its making, and was responsive to the economic development
challenges and opportunities in Dunedin communities.
4.3.4 DCC liaison with NEV

The method of liaison the DCC has with NEV is quite different from the one it has with other communities around Dunedin. It is not a member of the Community Development Team, but a member of the Transportation Department who does the liaising between DCC and NEV. This person was appointed for this role because she was a member of The Project’s executive committee from 2009 to 2011 and she is still a member of The Project and of the NEV community. The DCC-NEV liaison person holds monthly meetings with the community development coordinator from The Project, where they update each other about the latest progress on the implementation of the Community Plan, and the implementation of any programmed activity from DCC in NEV. The DCC - NEV liaison person describes her role in the following way:

> We have many departments within DCC working with the NEV community, and my role is to liaise with those departments and make sure each of them understands what the others are doing to create links and run our own DCC work processes more smoothly. The other side of that is, that I know the NEV Community and the Project organisation very well, so I can also facilitate for them, so I’m like a little door I guess.

The DCC-NEV liaison role, since it does not belong to the Community Development Team, does not report to the Community Development Team manager like the community advisor does or to the Transportation Department. In fact, she does not report back to anybody about that part of her role. This role was created only three years ago, whereas community advisors have existed in DCC for more than ten years. It could be said that this role was created as an ad-hoc answer to the active behaviour of NEV, but is not ad-hoc anymore since it is now the avenue in which DCC uses to liaise with NEV. The fact that this liaison person works for the Transportation Department makes it difficult for her to dedicate time to community work. She describes the situation this way:

> (My role is) similar, yes, (to the role of) Michael with Brockville and Paul with South Dunedin. They are employed by the Community Development Unit, so they have very specific aims and goals within their roles. My work role is in transportation and I was asked to take on the NEV role because I have been part of the Project Executive Committee and I knew what was happening, but I haven’t been given any responsibilities or role description, there is a role description but it
doesn’t fit in with my work, so I do it as a clip-on to my work. I spend 10% or 15% of my time doing the Valley thing, and I always feel like oh, I’m spending all my time on that Place-Based Planning and I shouldn’t really, because my work is with the transportation. So it’s difficult.

It is quite ironic that the liaison of DCC with perhaps the more active and organised community of the city is done in this way, or perhaps the fact that NEV is organised and active is interpreted by the DCC as showing they do not need much support from DCC. Either way, this relationship could be improved and better outcomes could result for both the DCC and the NEV community.

4.3.5 Reflections on the way DCC tackles community planning

In summary, the three ways DCC tackles community planning (Place-Based Planning, Community Development team, NEV liaison role), have been developed as times goes by, the oldest one being the Community Advisors scheme, and the newest one the liaison role between NEV and DCC. There has been little analysis within DCC on how these approaches are working, if they should work together, what can one learn from the other, what is not working and what can be improved. The approaches seem to be quite disconnected from one another, when so much enrichment could come from having those three roles better connected. About this, Key Informant 3 stated:

We haven’t had enough discussion internally at DCC about what we seek to achieve with Place-Based Planning. So we have been given the instruction to go and help the communities Paul and Michael and Me, but then we don’t come together and say how are you doing, what do we do. There is one regular meeting for South Dunedin where we all come together and contribute but as in the executive meetings from The Project, it seems to be no decisions made on that, is just looking at it as it unfolds I think.

The DCC strategy for tackling community planning is neither ad-hoc, nor a standardised one. It looks like DCC started with a strategy a long time ago, and instead of developing it, it has only added new strategies which work alongside the original strategy of the Community Development Team. An evaluation of the three strategies could be a good way of improving DCC strategy to support and promote community planning processes in Dunedin. Although the three strategies have positive outcomes, there are
criticisms towards them. There is also a considerable amount of knowledge about how to work with communities within the Community Development team and also in other people who work with communities like the liaison person between DCC and NEV, and the City Development team. This knowledge, plus the criticisms provide the perfect fuel for the improvement of DCC strategy on how to tackle community planning, whether it would be by choosing only one strategy to interface with all communities, keeping the three, or designing a new one.

4.4 Conclusions

Community planning is relatively new to people, both from communities and for the DCC. It is not embedded in the DCC’s organisational culture, or in the mindset of most of community members. Nevertheless, it is being undertaken by the DCC and NEV, both with positive outcomes.

There are clear differences between the way the DCC undertakes community planning, which is in a more top-down approach, and the way NEV undertakes community planning, in a bottom-up approach (see chapter 2). Concurrent with the literature, community driven planning was found to be more inclusive and representative than DCC driven community planning. Both the DCC and NEV share issues of community engagement and participation. The NEV Project is constantly tackling this issue by having social activities to bind and strengthen the community.

NEV community planning is holistic. The Project put under consultation every initiative that it raises in order to make sure what they are doing is the will of the community. The Community Plan with every community outcome and work area, comes from community consultation, intending it to be as representative as possible. The DCC on the other hand, when undertaking community planning with the Place Based Planning approach, only consults on certain issues, and it targets consultation with emphasis on a restricted community sector.

The DCC’s community planning uses the already existing social assets in the communities, and does not allocate resources specifically to community building. NEV community planning has a whole section of its Community Plan dedicated to community building and strengthening, and is one of the work areas with better implementation and recognition
from community members. Notwithstanding the differences, there is great potential in both approaches to community planning, and even greatest in bringing both approaches together. This can be better noticed when looking at the value that people from the NEV community and DCC see in community planning. The next chapter focuses on these and other subjects such as the challenges to successful community planning, coming from both the NEV community and DCC.
Chapter 5

The views and benefits of community planning

5.1 Introduction

Based on the previous chapter, we now have a better sense of how community planning works whether undertaken by a community like the NEV, or by a formal planning institution, like the DCC. The differences in the way community planning is done by both NEV and the DCC, demonstrates the contrasts in the way community planning is conceived by both entities. Despite these differences, both NEV and the DCC perceive community planning as positive, although for different reasons. In this chapter, the reasons and the underlying views and benefits associated with community planning will be explored.

5.2 The views on community planning

The diversity of views on community planning discussed in the literature review were also evident in the field research. For NEV community members, community planning is always seen to be community driven, or in other words a bottom-up process. In all of the interviews and discussions with community members there was no mention of community planning initiated by the DCC or any other formal planning institution. For DCC members on the other hand, community planning was mostly mentioned in relation to DCC activities, and only sometimes mentioned independently from the DCC. In other
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words, DCC thinks of community planning as more of a top-down approach. The way in which staff members from DCC see community planning happening is mostly when community members have their input on DCC budget decision making, when communities communicate their priorities to the DCC, and when the DCC uses the recently adopted Place Based Planning approach.

For Key Informant 15 (DCC staff):

In terms of a DCC view, we have the planning department so they have the district plan and that's about the physical or spatial areas of the city and how that spaces out. There is a little bit of community planning in there, it could be argued that planning for a space is looking at what the community wants.

This is a reference to the Place Based Planning approach, which is considered community planning by some of the DCC staff. For Key Informant 4 from the NEV community on the other hand, community planning needs to be community driven in order to be considered as such:

What a community wants and can do themselves, (...) with organised groups and elements but still with community members driving it.

DCC staff members who work directly with communities like Community Advisors or the liaison person between the DCC and NEV are conscious of these two views on community planning. Key informant 3 (DCC staff) stated directly:

I'm in a position to see two sides of community planning, the community side and the Council side. From the community I think the idea is to have participation from members of the community, so as a community you identify what is needed and the next steps that you want to take as a community to look after your members. From the council side, community planning is my role, to create coordination across departments but there is also a route between the community and Council and that is my role, to facilitate communication.

In this quote, Key Informant 3 recognises the coexistence of both the community bottom-up approach and the DCC approach which the informant refers to as “her/his role” in the DCC. This indicates that the approach the DCC is taking towards community planning is through the liaison with communities, and this liaison is always placing the DCC as an open and friendly partner, but also as a partner overwhelmingly more powerful.
than the communities, since it has a much bigger budget than communities and at the end of the day, is the one with the last word when making decisions at a statutory level.

Two Key Informants mentioned holistic approaches as a characteristic of community planning: one from the DCC and one from the community. Future and process oriented were characteristics mentioned by community members/workers, inclusive was mentioned as a characteristic of community planning by a DIA staff member, and representative was mentioned also by DIA staff and by a community member. Participative is a characteristic that can be inferred from all interviews, since all Key Informants talked about community planning as involving wide participation of community members.

It is worth mentioning that all of the DCC staff members interviewed had experience in community planning either through their work at the DCC, or by being part of a community and having experienced community work themselves. The fact that all DCC staff that were interviewed were involved in community planning is a limitation of this research. A request was made for interviewing DCC staff from the City Planning department, and the only person who showed willingness to be interviewed for this research was Key Informant 7. Perhaps different perspectives on community planning would have emerged from a DCC staff member who has no experience in community planning.

Other definitions of community planning given by Key Informants are:

It can be very formal or informal, quite elaborate or not. Planning would be future orientated of course, looking at what’s coming up, and where we want to go (Key Informant 8, community worker). It’s about seeking local solutions to local issues (...) communities working together for the greater good (Key Informant 16, DIA staff). A community deciding what sort of future it wants and figuring out how to get there (Key Informant 15, DCC staff from Community Development team).

Based upon this, a summarised definition of the informants’ notion of what community planning is: the process of a community figuring out the steps they need to take in order to get to the future that they want. This process is characterised by being holistic, inclusive, representative, participative at a local level, future and process oriented, and it has both formal and informal elements and stages. It can be done with or without the involvement of formal planning institutions.

Therefore, from now on when talking about community planning, we will be talking
about community driven planning, and not about the formal approach to community planning which differs from the first one in several qualities as discussed above and in the previous chapter.

## 5.3 Valuing community planning

The range of benefits related to community planning can be identified as coming from three different levels or stages of participation in a community planning process: getting people together, people developing ideas together, and people acting together as a community. The boundaries between these levels can be considered to be blurred, and all of the stages can be happening at the same time. Nevertheless, the visualisation of the three stages can help us to understand the type of values that emerge in relation to the level of community engagement and consciousness.

### 5.3.1 First stage of community engagement: getting people together

The first stage of engagement that people can have with a community planning process like the one in NEV, is simply getting people together. This is encouraged by The Project through the community dinners, tea parties, Matariki Hangi, christmas parties, etc., which are all activities where people only need to attend without getting engaged in a deeper way. This by itself can have a positive impact on the community, and Key Informants talked about it in the interviews in different ways. Some of the benefits of community planning simply come from bringing people together.

#### 5.3.1.1 People look after each other

For Key Informant 7 (DCC staff), community planning: “Ensures that people are involved in the community (...) they are looking after each other”. This is a result of people knowing each other. When people know each other, they naturally tend to care about each other and look after each other, and this was perceived by Key Informants. This is valued by community members, especially because it provides safety for children, who are able to walk by themselves in NEV, either to school, parks, friend’s houses, etc. This is
better explained by Key Informant 5 (ex-executive committee member from NEV) who expressed it in the following way:

My kids, they go everywhere by themselves, my daughter when she was 7 she used to walk everywhere by herself, we used to work where she was going to be and she knew people in case if anything happens she could knock on a door. So she is very confident and happy now.

If you do not know someone, there is no way you can care about that person in a practical way, simply because you might not even know that person exists. If you do know that person, there are more possibilities for you to care about her or him. If you care about someone, you will probably care also about their children. This is one of the ways in which care is perceived and appreciated in the NEV community. This benefit comes from the very basic level of community engagement and planning, and is directly related with the original aim of The Project, which is to create a good place for children. Just by getting people to know each other, this aim can be accomplished.

This was also noted by Jane Jacobs in her book ‘The Death and Life of Great American Cities’, where she explains how streets are safer when more people are occupying them. If people feel safe on the street, they are going to use it more, and that makes it even more safe. It is a reinforcing positive cycle. From a starting point, this is possible if people know each other, because you trust more in someone you know than in someone you don’t. In the words of Jacobs:

“In settlements that are smaller and simpler than big cities, controls on acceptable public behavior, if not a crime, seem to operate with greater or lesser success through a web of reputation, gossip, approval, disapproval and sanctions, all of which are powerful if people know each other” (Jacobs, 1961, :35).

What Jacobs talks about here, is a communitarian conception of justice, where there is a set of values shared in a community which define an idea of a ‘common good’ (Vergara Estevez 2012, see chapter 2). As also noted in the literature review, the feminist approach to justice is very aligned with the values of community planning, where not personal autonomy but satisfactory interdependence is the paramount value to achieve in a society (Cudd and Andreasen 2005, see chapter 2). The ‘care’ approach to justice, is clearly identifiable from the benefits of community planning.
5.3.1.2 People become visible and connected

The availability of activities for everybody, such as community dinners, playgroups, the knitting group, the choir, etc., gives people who do not have everyday connections the chance to meet and engage in community activities. The Project undertakes these kinds of events and activities with the explicit intention of engaging people who do not have large social networks such as newcomers, mothers of young children, and elderly people. This is clearly expressed by Key Informant 5:

People see you and you exist. That’s what you want, a connection, and you never know what that connection can mean to some people. If you have a job or go to school, you get connections automatically with people, but for a lot of stay at home parents, they don’t.

Key informant 11 (ex-executive committee member from NEV, and health practitioner) said it this way:

Health is not only about physical health, it is also about mental health and well-being, and that is so important. So come to our community and feel welcome here, someone has connected with me, and that is a huge thing, and if that means holding community dinners or play groups, we can do that.

This is another benefit of people knowing each other, it provides the opportunities for people to become connected with others by knowing the people who are already connected to the rest of the community, and people who are in the same search for social connection, which improves mental health and it gives people better chances to give and receive help in case that is needed.

Actually, since August 2014 there is a new group at NEV called ‘NEW’, and it was created by The Project specifically to help new people in the Valley (and specially immigrants) to get connected with other people in the same situation, introducing them also to The Project, so they can know what can they count on (the community assets), now that they live in NEV. This can be of great help for people feeling homesick, unprotected or simply lonely.

The complex linkages between people’s well-being and residential location are summarised in the concept of ‘sense of place’. “A key determinant of sense of place is the
degree to which people feel included and accepted within the institutional fabric of neigh-
bourhood and community.” (McCreanor et al., 2006, :198) All the activities The Project undertakes for the implementation of the community outcome ‘Social Inclusion’ (see table 4.1) contribute to the building of sense of place in people who live in NEV and therefore also contribute to the well-being of NEV community members.

5.3.1.3 Decreases vandalism and crime

Because community planning results in people looking after each other, there is a perception among some Key Informants that community planning decreases crime and vandalism. For Key Informant 10 (executive committee member from NEV):

If I help those people, they don’t have to know that I helped them, I can do it through you, and then when I see those people I look with kindness on them and when they see me, they might wonder maybe that’s the person, this is a good community to live in so then they are not going to break into my car or house, they are going to teach respect to their kids because people in this community looked after them.

Also because people feel more attached to the place, community planning tends to decrease vandalism. This was the opinion of Key Informant 7 (DCC staff):

You are less likely to see things get vandalised if people have had their stake and are doing it themselves.

Besides people getting to know each other, the community identity as owners of the neighbourhood is a cause of people taking action when they are witnessing a crime or an unfair situation, and these reactions can decrease crime and vandalism. A feeling of ownership with the place makes people take action when needed by someone on the streets, knowing they will be backed by others in their enterprise of rescuing someone (Jacobs, 1961). This phenomenon is encouraged by community planning at an early stage by having events like the community dinners and Matariki Hangi, developing a sense of community in participants.

In summary, there are benefits coming from community planning even from the first stage of people’s engagement when they just get together. These are: people get to know
The views and benefits of community planning each other and starting to look after each other, people become visible and connected which increases the sense of place, and these benefits in turn generate a decrease in vandalism and crime.

5.3.2 Second stage of community engagement: people developing ideas together

The second stage of community engagement is when people start developing ideas together. This is when the community starts mobilising its members to actually become community assets, and people suggest ideas to be discussed and undertaken by the community as a group. This stage also mobilises other resources within the community, and relies on people’s connections or the social capital of the community. This level of community engagement brings empowerment to the people who take part in it, power that can be increased when interacting with other people from the community who will debate and support the idea. Numerous benefits which comes from this stage of community involvement, were mentioned by Key Informants, such as sparking of ideas, empowerment of community members, better support for people in need, identification and mobilisation of the community’s capacity, and places within the community look better.

5.3.2.1 Community planning sparks ideas

Key informant 5 thinks that:

"It is beneficial for the whole city when you spark ideas, and that is what I think a community thing is about, you can start creating a sort of energy."

This is probably because people recognise better chances for their ideas to come to fruition, since there is a support network and community infrastructure to help members to achieve this. According to Marcela Parra, collective work enhances creativity.

Collective work is fruitful for the creation of new ideas because failure and success are socialised, and since ideas are collective they don’t compromise the individuals’ self-esteem, which in turn makes people less inhibited about sharing their ideas. Creativity implies dialectic thinking, which happens when people take two different ideas and talk about them, transforming it into one new idea which reunites the
first two. Community planning is lots of people who bring lots of ideas and experiences together, so this dialectic process of creativity can be magnified. (Marcela Parra, PhD Candidate on Creativity, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, personal communication, 2014).

This can be seen from the example of the celebration for Kerry the NEV Postie on his 30th anniversary of working in NEV. This idea came from, as said in the previous chapter, a community member who went to the Community Rooms looking for support to pursue it. The idea was to celebrate as a community, which means everybody in NEV celebrating Kerry on the same day. If this NEV community member would not have had the support of The Project, the idea would probably not have come true, since there is no way a single member of the community would have connected and coordinated so many people without advertising it because it was a surprise for Kerry. If the idea failed, it would have been the community’s failure, not the individual. Failure and success are shared when communities undertake ideas together. If the idea succeeds, it encourages community members to keep being creative and bring new ideas. If it fails, the weight of failure is lighter since it is carried by the whole community.

This example shows that the support of an organised community makes people dare to have creative ideas, and go to for it. It opens the possibilities for the kind of ideas that can be pursued, it makes it possible to achieve goals that can not be achieved individually. And once people acknowledge this, it definitely sparks new ideas in people’s mind.

An other example of this, is the Old Post Office project. This project involves turning the old post office building at the bottom of Baldwin Street, into a social enterprise for the NEV community. The aim of this project is “to build a viable and sustainable business within the Old Post Office property that is owned and operated by the community for the benefit of residents from NEV and surrounding areas” (Doering, 2014, :1). This idea has been developed by The Project in consultation with the NEV community for around one year. If there was no community project going on, this idea would have been no more than a volatile wish on the mind of some community members, instead of an idea which has kept the community mobilised for one year.
5.3.2.2 Empowerment of community members

Community planning gives people the chance to take a stand. The Project encourages people to participate by using different avenues, such as the Valley Voice, consultations undertaken during community events etc (see chapter 4). As a NEV community member, there is the permanent chance to take a stand, whether regarding one’s own idea, somebody else’s idea or an idea already ongoing. When people shift from being passive to being an active member of the community, people become empowered. “When people join together in new connections and relationships they build power.” (Green, 2009, :10)

This is acknowledged by Key Informant 5 (ex-executive committee member from NEV) who stated: “We need to spend time on our advocacy group for our community. And taking a stake because that is the power that you have”. The perception of Key Informant 5 is backed by what was found in the literature: the deeper the participation, the greater the power redistribution (see chapter 2). Members of a community are not equal in their roles, motivations, responsibilities and resources. These differences will shape the way community members will be empowered. The more committed to the community someone is, the more empowered that person will be through the process of community planning (Heller, 1989). The more meaningful your participation is, the more you are capable to influence decisions, and consequently your power grows.

5.3.2.3 People in need get better supported

It was frequently mentioned by Key Informants that since community planning gets people together and creates connections among community members, this makes it easier for the community to identify which of its members are in more need. Once they are identified, the community can use its resources to help them. This was described by Key Informant 10 (executive committee member from NEV) in the following way:

We are very lucky here, we had a family who turned up from the North Island, a mother and three daughters, they have been kicked out of their home by the stepfather, and all they had was what they had in their car, some blankets, clothes and personal items. I rang our local Salvation Army and they organised beds, a fridge, television, food, some furniture, some clothing and things they needed, all in 24 hours, that is what community is about. And we have these stories all the time.
This help is more effective than the help that people can receive from agencies because it is more specific to the needs, and it is not mediated by bureaucracy. The result is positive in more than one way: people in need get helped by community members which makes them feel respect for their community, and community members have the chance to help which is self-rewarding. Key informant 9 (DCC councillor) also noticed this and stated:

I see how much more supportive or supported people who are in need are in that community, because of that work, than they would be if they were simply relying on agencies targeting individual issues or needs that they were facing...

However, this support does not necessarily come with empowerment of the most in need members of the community. As acknowledged by Heller (1989): “it is important not to raise unrealistic expectations by implying that equality in power can be achieved, when in reality, there are boundaries to the amount of power favoured groups are likely to give up to others.” (p.10). This is related to the benefit of community planning described in the previous section. Community members can be empowered, but only if they take a stand. In order to promote the empowerment of powerless community members, it is important that communities, when using their capacity to do things by themselves, do not just move the decision making and the delivering of services from the City Council to the Community Rooms, but also change the relationships, social structures, and modes of operation characteristic of the government agencies and the wider society (Heller, 1989).

5.3.2.4 The community can identify and mobilise its capacity

According to Key Informant 9 (DCC councillor), the process of sharing ideas and undertaking work together naturally brings cohesiveness to the community:

Anything that brings a community together in discussion and turns shared ideas into shared visions and shared dreams and finds commonalities has got to be a positive thing for the cohesiveness and strength of that community. (...) It reinforces the community because it is building those links. It also means that you have stronger economies, because you are building those connections. Everything is a positive reinforcing cycle so you end up with an increase in wellbeing which spirals up because of those increasing links.

“Spiralling up represents a process by which assets gained increases the likelihood that other assets will also be gained” (Gutierrez Montes 2005 cited in Emery and Flora 2006,
This means that if social assets are increased, other assets will increase as well. The result is the increase in capacity and the mobilisation of that capacity for undertaking community work. When community planning is driven by communities, most (if not all) of the planned activities are undertaken by the community itself. In order to do that, the community needs to build capacity and identify the assets with which the community can count on, to do what was planned. If a community does something by itself, it means that that community has identified and mobilised its capacity and assets. This gives communities independence and power to do greater things in the future, and therefore more capability to achieve the future they want.

This is not to say that communities can take the role of the state in all social welfare matters. State and government agencies have the irreplaceable role of guaranteeing for all citizens the fulfilment of their basic human rights. When communities identify and mobilise their capacity, they can have better use of the resources they have, and better use of the resources given by the state, which will be needed as long as inequalities exist.

5.3.2.5 Places look better

There is a perception that places with a strong sense of community tend to look better from an aesthetic point of view. For Key Informant 7 (DCC staff):

I think you do notice that communities where people are more engaged tend to be the communities that I think look better from an amenity point of view, and it doesn’t necessarily mean that they are wealthy communities, they can be poor communities or more wealthy communities, and it tends to be places you have a good feeling about the way people are working together in those areas.

In NEV, this can be seen in the development of the arts. For example, the Art Tardis project is a mobile art gallery launched in June 2014 which is placed on the footpath on a street in NEV and is frequently relocated, aiming to bring contemporary art out of the conventional gallery space and into the community (NEV, 2014b). There are other art related initiatives in the valley like art exhibitions, murals, and even tree clothing with handmade knitting (see figure 5.1). All this would not happen if people from NEV who are interested in arts would not get together to think about what they could do to make NEV look better. They are currently organised in the group called Northern Artery, which
consists of around 40 people from NEV. Among its members are visual artists, musicians, theatre practitioners, film-makers and writers, who get together to make the arts more visible and raise the profiles of the arts practitioners who live in NEV, Opoho and Pine Hill areas (NEV, 2014a).

**Figure 5.1:** Cabbage trees on North Road, dressed with knitting handmade by the knitters group from NEV. Source: the researcher’s files.

In summary, the second stage of community planning, when people develop ideas together, it brings new benefits to the community. This is the stage where empowerment can start to be noticed in some members of the community, and the level of empowerment will be determined by the commitment and resources of the participating community member.

### 5.3.3 Third stage of community engagement: people thinking and acting together as a community

The third stage of community engagement is when people think and act together as a community. This level of engagement comes when people have realised the existence of the community as a whole, and have a consciousness of being part of something bigger that does not belong to one person but to everybody at the same time, even the ones that are not actively engaged. This brings a level of empowerment which goes beyond the summation of individual powers. It mobilises individual powers and put them together in a synergistic way, making them grow by not just adding them but multiplying them.
Some of the values that come from this stage are: better use of public space, better representation of the community, building of citizenship, and better economic outcomes.

5.3.3.1 Better use of space

Whether it is public or private space, open areas are better used and looked after in an active community. People tend to be more collaborative rather than competitive with places they can use as a community if there is a community planning process happening. Key informant 7 (DCC staff) exemplified it this way:

We had a workshop with lots of businesses and people in the area, and it was really interesting when we talked to them and people were saying what their ideas were, they were very much like ‘we would take down the fence between these two parking areas and we’ll put some steps between those two so people can move around the area better’, whereas businesses always see that as a threat ‘this is my parking!’ and the community says ‘we could better use this area if we can get between those spaces’.

This means that a community which thinks on itself as such, will also think on how to get the best out of a place for the community as a whole, not only for private purposes. However, this view is not universally held and conflicts over the use of space still materialise. Key informant 14 (DCC staff) provides the following example:

There is a community perception about reserves. That they back onto a reserve however no-one else is allowed to use it, we bought a house knowing about the reserve but we are the only ones allowed to utilise it. Being realistic, if you have a reserve e.g. Chinkford Park, the community thinks they own it, the council think they own it and the people who back onto it know they own it. Its a complicated thing to try and change it, especially if it involves new development or there is a noise associated with it.

The behavior of people backing to a reserve illustrated in this example, shows one of the challenges communities face when leading planning or community building processes: institutional learning. Most people are used to positioning themselves as consumers/customers rather than citizens/community members, and this positioning shrinks the possibilities of action, which for a consumer or customer are mainly two: complain and ask, where as for a community member the possibilities include to be part of the solution.
The experience of the researcher, however, indicates that communities with active groups will gather together in public spaces within the area, giving more use to physical assets like parks and green areas. This is true for the ‘Sunday kick around’ group, which meets every Sunday for playing social football in different green areas of NEV such as Chingford Park, DNI School ground, and the NEV Cricket Club ground. Making use of the physical assets of the community keeps them in the community’s hands. Other examples in NEV include the Community Rooms and the Community Garden, both currently using land that was previously empty and without use, but now is used for growing healthy food and community relationships. This makes the community’s physical assets grow, and keeps the spiraling-up process for other community assets.

5.3.3.2 The community gets a unified and representative voice

Community planning implies that the community builds a unified opinion based on a dialectic process undertaken by community members who participate. There might be some community members who do not agree with the opinion that the community has formed, but the decision is made at a community level, choosing among alternatives presented by community members. So the voice of the community is the opinion built dialectically by community members, and it does not represent one community member’s opinion but the one that the community has decided to hold as a group. This is valuable for the community because the community voice is stronger than any individual voice a community member can raise, and it represents not the interests of one individual community member but the agreed interests of all the community members who participated in the dialog. The community’s interests can be better defended outside the community when interacting with central or local government agencies, moving the community up in the ladder of citizen participation (see chapter 2).

For Key Informant 5 (ex-executive committee member from NEV): “A community voice is very important. We need to spend time on our advocacy group for our community”. Key informant 16 (DIA staff) warns: “I’ve been doing this for a lot of years and I would love a dollar for every time somebody has said to me ‘I’m speaking on behalf of the community’, when there is no basis for it, it’s the loudest voice that always gets heard”. A community voice prevents this from happening.
However, this ‘community voice’ is built only by the community members who participated when forming the opinion or making the decision. This means that the effectiveness of the ‘community voice’ in representing the community’s thinking, depends on the level of participation of community members. Decreased participation will lead to a weaker and less representative ‘community voice’, which can be easily contradicted and overridden. Increased community participation will lead to a stronger and more representative ‘community voice’, powerful enough to face any other voice. It is a challenge for communities to have a representative voice, since the more powerful members of the community will have more opportunity to influence what that voice is going to say, particularly when only a few are actively engaged.

5.3.3.3 Community planning is a school of citizenship

Voluntary associations like The Project, provide the kind of opportunities that allow people to learn civic virtues like the relevance of active participation in public life, trustworthiness and reciprocity (Evans and Theobald, 2005). The NEV Project was started 30 years ago as a way to open the doors of the NEV Normal School to the community, which resulted, among other things, in the extension of the educative mission of the school to the broader community, with impacts not only on children but also on adults and young people. The teaching extended outside the school walls is now not only about mandatory subjects, but also about citizenship and how to be an active member of a community. This teaching process is undertaken outside of academic education, by community members, inside and outside schools through community activities. Key informant 11 (ex-executive committee member from NEV) explains it this way:

I think is really important for the young people in the community to see adult people going to meetings and doing community work, modelling that behaviour in our community, it is very important they know there is more in life than just to go to work and earning money, you need to get a job and work hard but there is more to life than that.

Key informant 9 (DCC councillor) acknowledged that she learned how important community work is from seeing her parents doing it when she was a kid:

I come from a small rural community and my parents do quite a lot of community development work up there, so I have seen it as an advocacy and I have seen how
strong it can be and I see how much more supported people who are in need in that community are because of that work.

A community planning process is similar to a social and emotional learning process. This is defined as a process for helping people to develop the fundamental skills for life effectiveness such as: recognising and managing our emotions, developing caring and concern for others, establishing positive relationships, making responsible decisions and handling challenging situations constructively and ethically (Humphrey, 2013). The process of social and emotional learning works by, firstly, creating a safe, caring and participatory environment where then the skills of self-awareness, social-awareness, self-management, relationship skills and responsible decision-making are explicitly encouraged. This is very similar to what happens in a community planning process, where community members who participate, need to develop these skills in order to be a constructive member. The environment where community planning is developed and which was observed in NEV, coincides with that described for a social and emotional learning process if we consider the values previously mentioned.

In addition to learning these skills, community planning teaches people, no matter the age, that society works better if people work together, that by working with your neighbours you can do more than what you would do just by yourself, that by expressing your thoughts you enrich other people’s thinking, and the same happens to you when you listen to someone else’s thoughts, and that there is reward in doing things for the good of others.

If people learn this at an early stage, they will be likely to reproduce it along their lives. Key Informant 2 (Manager of Volunteering Otago) thinks that among reasons why people volunteer is the fact that

Some people were just brought up that way, that is their culture, it is what they do, and then other people have never been introduced to volunteering, they don’t know that side of things and they don’t understand it.

The perception that activated community members turn into active citizens was explicitly stated by Key Informant 3 (DCC staff and ex-executive committee member from NEV): “…once members of the communities are activated, they are actually more active citizens”. This is beneficial for the community as well as for the whole city, since more
citizen conscience means more people willing to take responsibility in the future of the city, the country, and even the world. This perception is coherent with the view of communitarian theorists on the concept of justice, who state that community is necessary to engage people with the actions, duties and rights associated with citizenship (Yarwood, 2013). “Many of the most successful forms of active citizenship have occurred where there is already strong social capital or community” (Yarwood, 2013, :161).

5.3.3.4 Better economic outcomes

Trustling communities have a measurable economic advantage (Evans and Theobald, 2005). Community planning includes business representatives working together as community members seeking for the greater good rather than just individual profit. This brings a better economic outcome since it benefits the community as a whole and more businesses can thrive which means more jobs and more options for community members as consumers. For Key Informant 7 (DCC staff):

It leads to a whole better social outcome for people, and better economic outcomes when you’ve got businesses working together, rather than competing with each other and complaining because that one parks in front of their building and that one parks in front of their building, when actually they could work together.

On the other hand, the regular way businesses work is competing, which often leads to an impoverishment of choices for the community and failure of the entrepreneur. Key Informant 7 also gives an example of this:

A funny example of it happened in Roslyn where two supermarkets set up. So one supermarket set up and then the second one sets up and then opposed the other one setting up, and then the first one didn’t get consent to set up and at the end the first one died and closed up and the people in the community were really upset because they lost their choice. They felt that the one that came in overtook with more money and kind of undermined the community.

Currently there is no representative for businesses in the executive committee of The Project and the economic work areas of the community planning in NEV seem to be lacking attention. The economic community outcome in the Community Plan is not being implemented with the same energy as other parts of the plan. Although it sounds
Valuing community planning

logical to have better economic outcomes from a community planning process, this is not necessarily happening, and is actually hard to achieve because of the business culture of competition. The fact that The Project’s performance in the implementation of the economic outcome of the plan is low, is actually consistent with the DCC approach to community development and economic development, with both completely separated. Perhaps if the community development area in the DCC was including economic development, the economic outcome of the NEV’s Community Plan would be better implemented. For more information about the divide between economic and community development in the DCC, see chapter 4.

Key informant 5 (ex-executive committee member of NEV) talked about how the DCC zoning was sometimes against the community plans, and the economic implications of it.

...things like the zoning, when they were doing the residential zoning they wanted to move things and we submitted comments on that, they wanted to expand the commercial zoning of the McDonalds area, but North Road used to be full of commerce but what happened, they were zoned residential.

Here, the Key Informant is talking about two commercial areas: one in North Road which has shrunk, and one in Great King Street which has expanded. The commercial area in North Road tends to have a lot of more local businesses than the commercial area in Great King Street. In the North Road commercial area there is a bank and a supermarket, and those are the only “big businesses”. The rest is the local butcher, local takeaways, local bars, cafes and restaurants, a local electric shop, a tattoo shop, and other small businesses. In the commercial area of Great King Street on the other hand, there are big trans-national businesses such as McDonald’s, Burger King, KFC, Pizza Hutt, Domino’s Pizza, and a few small local businesses as well. The fact that the commercial area with trans-national businesses was expanded and the commercial area with mostly local businesses was shrunk, is coherent with what was discussed earlier about how the Economic Development Strategy works only with ‘big players’ and does not integrate with the Social Wellbeing Strategy and the work done by the Community Development team. If DCC planning could ask communities what do they think is the best way to zone their neighbourhoods, there would probably be a more coherent zoning with the communities’ aspirations and plans including economics. This is an example of how NEV as a community could have a better economic outcome if businesses were working as part
of the community and using the community’s voice to represent NEV’s economic interests.

In summary, stage three of community engagement: when people deliberately think and act as community members, brings new benefits but this time, to the whole community, even to the less engaged members.

5.3.3.5 Conclusions

Community driven planning brings a number of benefits to the community, for individual members and for the community as a whole. The first stages benefit mainly the individual community members who are engaged, and further to the more committed members. The second stage of community planning empowers community members and the community as a whole, and this is even more noticeable at the third level of community planning, where the community acts and thinks of itself as such.

Community planning benefits not only the community but also the wider city and the local government. When the local government works aligned with the planning driven by the community, there are new benefits that come up. The following section will look into this.

5.3.4 The value of bringing together community planning and formal planning

Formal planning has been traditionally undertaken without the input of the communities (see chapters 1 and 2). The fact that there is community driven planning does not mean the formal planning will naturally and spontaneously consider it. As seen in the previous chapter, there are efforts made by the DCC for bringing both community driven and formal planning closer. Several benefits of considering community driven planning when doing formal planning were recognised by both Key Informants from the community and from the DCC. They include: assess effectiveness of agencies delivering services to the community, improvement of efficiency in local government, communities get more resilient, better perception of the DCC by communities, and projects get better supported and assisted.
5.3.4.1 Assess effectiveness of agencies interacting with communities

A community planning process makes it possible for a community to have clarity about their priorities and how to go forward to achieve those priorities. This means that the community can point out to agencies the way they are being effective or not in fulfilling their needs. For Key Informant 9 DCC councillor):

It really assess agencies and councils and authorities that are interfacing with that community to deliver effectively for that community, so if we are really clear about what the priorities of that group of people are, if they have articulated it very strongly, then our role (DCC) is pretty simple.

This was mentioned several times in different ways in the interviews undertaken for this research, particularly with DCC staff members. It was also found in literature that civic engagement matters equally on the demand side, and on the supply side. The demand side being the community expecting better government, and the supply side being the performance of a representative government, which is facilitated by the social infrastructure of civic communities and of officials and citizens (Evans and Theobald, 2005). However, there is no sign that the opinions of communities undertaking community planning are actually having an effect on the way that the DCC or other agencies deliver their services. As said by Heller (1989): “A political leader can escape accountability more easily when the ‘people’s mandate’ is not clear.” (p.7).

5.3.4.2 More efficiency in the DCC functioning

Integrating community planning and DCC planning implies the improvement of communication, but also provides a real and meaningful participation for the community. One benefit from this, is the efficient expenditure of money by the DCC, since sometimes the DCC can invest in things the community does not need or want. In words of Key Informant 3 (DCC staff and ex-executive committee member of NEV):

...if the Council creates effective mechanisms for work with the communities and actually bring the community in, when it was developing the work program for footpath maintenance, (...) streams, the roading, the water, parks and recreation, I think there will be a long term benefit for the council financially, the spend would
end up being less because you would have more of what the community wanted in the first place and what they think is suitable. DCC (...) needs inputs from the community and across the community to let it know whether is going in the right direction, and when communities and places activate they are good at saying we want this, we don’t want this. It’s useful to council.

More efficiency in the expenditure of money can also be achieved by avoiding duplication of efforts. This means that if there is an occasion when the DCC and NEV are both planning to undertake similar work (or even several DCC teams are), that improved communication should inform all of them about the plans of the other, in order to allow efforts to be co-ordinated and integrated together. This is one of the reasons DCC adopted the Place-Based Planning approach, and is explained by Key Informant 7 (DCC staff) in the following way:

If you look at it in dry terms a lot of it is about economy as well. You want to make sure you are not duplicating efforts. (...) is a lot more integrated thinking among different departments and a lot more integrated thinking between different levels of government. (...) in South Dunedin you have a number of different problems that Council was trying to deal with, so we have things like sea level rise, housing quality, reserves and where they should be, there is loss of jobs, cycle paths, there is a whole number of things that different parts of Council were dealing with separately, and some things could be better joined up.

This approach helps the DCC to co-ordinate departments with a Place-Based focus, so they can know who else is planning to do work in the area, and they can unite efforts and, for example, break the street once for all the work that different departments are going to undertake, instead of one department breaking and sealing the street, and then another department doing the same, and then another one, etc. The co-ordination between the DCC departments could then save money for the DCC and nuisance to the neighbourhood.

Sometimes more efficiency does not relate with money but with making the right decisions, the meaningful decisions for the community. According to Key Informant 9 (DCC Councillor), this can be achieved by the DCC making decisions which are more localised in a geographical area:

I think there is a lot of evidence to suggest that if we want to be enhancing our communities’ wellbeing with the constrained financial resources that we have,
focusing more in the wellbeing of geographical communities is a pretty cost effective
and effective way to do it.

Under Key Informant 9’s experience, more specific decisions for communities can be more
meaningful and successful, and this improves the efficiency of public agencies like the
DCC in the delivery of services.

5.3.4.3 Communities get more resilient

Resilience in communities is generally accepted as the ability to hold together and main-
tain their ability to function in the face of change and shocks from outside (Hopkins,
2008). Something that can help communities to be more resilient, is the connections with
other communities, which was seen by Key Informants as an outcome of further integra-
tion of community planning in NEV and the DCC planning. Since the DCC works not
only with NEV but also with other communities like Brockville and South Dunedin, it is
a good player to interconnect these communities between each other. This would bring
resilience to those communities since they could support each other in case of need. For
Key Informant 12 (ex-executive committee member of NEV):

... it would be quite beneficial to have those connections between communities,
to strengthen each community as a big one.

Key Informant 4 (community worker from The Project) sees in bringing together
community planning in NEV and DCC planning, the possibility to integrate the NEV
community to the rest of the city. She explains it like this: “the community is not
separate from the greater city, things have to line up.” ‘Line up’ means that NEV and
other communities in Dunedin are not going in different directions but in a similar or
congruent one. This increases the resilience of the community, since if something happens
and the community has to take care of an unexpected negative event, the rest of the
planning is going to keep in the same direction and so the community could take the work
where it was left before the event without great loss.

This is yet to be proved, since it needs a bad episode to really know if the community
is resilient or not. For now, there is the perception that bringing together community
planning and DCC planning would make communities more resilient. A strongly resilient
community is characterised by having equally well developed the social, economic and en-
vironmental capitals (Wilson, 2012). Therefore, communities like NEV, which are working
holistically in the development of their community assets are probably on track to become a strongly resilient community. However, according to this definition of resilience, the resilience that NEV might be achieving is a result of its own internal processes of community planning and not because of its interaction with the formal planning from the DCC.

For Key Informant 9 (DCC Councillour), when the DCC works on the strengthening of communities:

...my view is that is a more effective way of delivering services and it builds a much more resilient network and at the end you get stronger support networks, you get stronger manaaki \(^1\) through delivering in the stronger communities pathway than what you do when investing in lots of little initiatives that are trying to be citywide but are not quite reaching everybody.

Beyond definitions in literature, resilience is seen by Key Informants as an outcome of the strengthening of networks. This could be certainly achieved if the DCC was encouraging connections between communities, and supporting community planning processes.

### 5.3.4.4 Better perception of DCC by communities

If the DCC gives more consideration to the planning done in communities, this would be appreciated by the communities and they would have a good perception of the DCC. This has political gain for Councillors and Mayors. In the words of Key Informant 3(DCC staff and ex-executive committee member of NEV):

> From a political point of view, it allows the community to feel heard and responded to by the council which has to be good politically because those people when the time comes for election they are going to say ‘this Council has been good, they have let me put apple trees in the footpath’ and that kind of thing, so from the political point of view it has value.

However there is a risk in this. Communities are a good arena for politicians, and it is easy for them to get political gain from supporting a community in something they want to do. If integration of community planning with formal DCC planning is done mainly for political gain, it could end up with community members losing trust in their

\(^1\)Manaaki is a Māori concept which means look after, care for, show respect or kindess to.
processes, and also could generate political polarisation amongst the community. It is
good that community members can get interested in getting re-elected a politician who
has supported them, but it is not good that politicians support communities only to get
political gain.

This risk can be minimised by the setting of a standard way of pulling together formal
planning and community planning. This way, communities driving their own planning
would have a secure response from the local government and will not depend on political
will and political sympathy.

5.3.4.5 Projects get better supported and assisted

Projects from the community itself or from the DCC, will be better supported if they are
integrated. In the experience of Key Informant 7 (DCC staff from the Urban Development
team):

> We have seen it from first hand, that when you trust people and when you give
> them those opportunities, they are more likely to engage with the process and you
> are more likely to get a more sustainable outcome in the long term.

If the Community Plan is integrated to the DCC plan, the community is going to feel
that the DCC plan is their plan too, and therefore DCC projects, if coherent with the
integration of both plans, will be better supported by the community. The DCC, by
integrating the community driven planning with the formal planning, is giving support
to the projects of the community.

Key Informant 4, a community worker, acknowledges that NEV needs the DCC for
certain things to happen: “...in order to have things happening in a greater scale, we need
the backing from the DCC.” So, the integration of community planning and DCC planning
is seen as beneficial for both the community and the DCC, and by both community
members and DCC staff.

In summary, there are benefits in integrating community driven planning and formal
planning which are recognised by both DCC staff and NEV members. These benefits are
for both the DCC and the NEV community.
5.3.5 Conclusions

While community planning was found to be characterised by principles of being holistic, inclusive, representative, participative, future and process oriented, formal and informal, these principles are not all always present. It seems that the more advanced the community planning process is and the more engaged and empowered community members are, the more present are the principles characterising it. Even though NEV members and DCC staff have a similar idea of what community planning is, the DCC still has a more top-down approach to community planning since they tend to see it happening driven by the DCC. NEV community members and workers on the other hand, see it always as a community driven process. The difference in the outcome of these two approaches will be seen in chapter 7.

Community planning has beneficial outcomes from the beginning of the process. In the first stage of community planning, when people just get together, it has benefits that apply mainly to the engaged community members, and which contribute to the building of a sense of place, closely related to the well-being of community members. Subsequent stages of community planning have even greater benefits that are recognised by Key Informants, and as advanced the community planning process is, so is the empowerment of community members. Finally, the community is empowered as a whole.

The more advanced the stage of community planning is, the greater the benefits for the whole community, including members who are not engaged at a deeper level. Accordingly, it can be expected that the less advanced the process of community planning is, and the less engaged the community members are, the benefits will be more focused on the few. The third stage of community planning: when people act deliberately as a community, has benefits not only for the community as a whole, but also for wider society.

Community planning has benefits not only for the community but for the DCC and the wider city. By bringing together community planning and formal planning, both obtain benefits. The benefits of community planning found from the interviews are consistent with that which was found in the literature review as outcomes of public participation with real intentions of empowerment of participants: better decision making, stronger communities, and cost savings for planning agencies (Carnes et al., 1998; Hague, 2006). Therefore, community planning can be considered an effective way of public participation.
for the empowerment of communities, and a useful approach to transit towards governance.
Chapter 6

Challenges to community planning

6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the challenges facing both the NEV community and the DCC to undertake community planning. While the specific challenges are different for the DCC and NEV, at a conceptual level they are quite similar, and are greatly related to the organisational culture of each one. Several challenges are also related to the relative novelty of community planning for both NEV and the DCC in comparison with the longer history and experience with the formal way of planning. Viewing people as users of services rather than active citizens capable of taking responsibilities over their collective future, is a major challenge in undertaking community planning for both community members and the DCC.

The concept that best explains the challenges for both NEV community and the DCC, is institutional learning, which refers to the processes by which new ideas become established within governmental and other institutions or organisations (Evans and Theobald, 2005). Community planning, or the idea that communities can plan the steps to get to the future they want, is a new idea for both the NEV community and the DCC. Both need to establish this new idea into their institutional capitals in order to modify their behavior and work in a more suitable way with the principles of community planning.

Institutional capital is “the internal patterns of behaviour and ways of working, as well as the collective values, knowledge and relationships that exist within any organised group in society” (Evans and Theobald, 2005, :22). It includes monetary and human
resources, existing and working structures and networks within (local) government, as well as those organised interests and individuals outside of the government. It can be created, further developed or dismantled, and it has a value and efficiency higher than any single actor, organisation or individual (Evans and Theobald, 2005). This is also applicable to a community planning process, where the institutional capital of the community is represented by the way community members interact, the way they work together and the values they hold when doing it, how they organise themselves and their governance scheme.

Institutional capacity building, or the processes aiming to enhance and improve the institutional capital (Evans and Theobald, 2005), is also needed in order to make local government able to mobilise resources and respond flexibly to the new circumstances created and demanded by communities driving planning processes. This is also needed by NEV in order to enhance the capitals they already have, and keep building on them to improve the achievement of their expected outcomes.

Experiences around how to undertake community planning, for both the DCC and the NEV community, are being accumulated, but is there learning coming out of that experience? The DCC and the NEV community should be taking advantage of those experiences to start institutional learning and capacity building processes which will lead to the institutional capital capable to be flexible and embrace the challenges and opportunities that arise from effective and successful community planning. In this chapter, practical examples of the challenges facing both organisations will be discussed. These need to be addressed in order to move forward the community planning processes and the way that the DCC responds to them.

### 6.2 Challenges facing the community

In order to improve the performance of community planning in NEV, and accomplish the goals The Project has set itself, there are some challenges The Project needs to face from within their own work and organisation style. The more relevant ones are explained and analysed in the following sections. Here, issues seems to be centred on governance and how to develop the right organisational structure in order to represent the community including its diversity, and how to create processes of institutional learning and capacity
6.2.1 Internal governance challenges

Not a lot of people know what a community development project looks like, and not a lot of people have studied degrees to work in a community development project. This means that is not easy to find the ideal people for the role of community workers in a community development project like the NEV one. Once somebody gets the job, they need to figure out what the real implications of the job are, and understand the context of the particular community. This is something that takes a considerable amount of time to do. It is not a traditional and well defined (at least in people’s mind) job like a teacher or lawyer. Therefore, it is hard for the executive committee to decide what they want from the community workers and also explain with accuracy what the role of community worker should be, and for the worker, it is hard to interpret the abstract objectives provided by the executive committee. In addition, there is a blurred line between the role of the executive committee and the community workers. This blurriness generates tensions between the executive committee and the hired staff, which was noted during participant observation and was also mentioned in some interviews with key informants. For example, Key Informant 5 (ex executive committee member of NEV) says:

“...at preschool it was easy because we employed teachers and it was obvious what their role was. The community workers is an interesting job. It took us (the executive committee) a long time to think what we wanted. They have to have a certain amount of initiative to feed on what is actually happening in the community.”

The tension seems to be in the fact that committee members are the people in charge of giving strategic direction to the work which is being done in The Project, and the community workers are in charge of implementing that strategy and making it work. But since the community workers are the ones dealing with issues hands-on every day, they are able to respond to issues and adapt the strategy to make it work better. They are given a certain amount of freedom to make decisions, but the line dividing the decisions they can make and the decisions they can not, is not easy to define and varies from person to person.
In general terms, the executive committee members spend little time in the Community Rooms relative to the community workers. Monthly executive committee meetings give the community workers the opportunity to explain the happenings and challenges they have faced over the last month, but the agendas of the meetings are very tight and there is not enough time for the community workers to say everything they need to communicate, and is also not enough time for the committee to read reports and grasp everything that has happened during a month of community work and to discuss and reflect on the implications.

Based on personal observation, it seems to me that the community workers feel that they do not have all the attention they should from the executive committee, and the executive committee feels the community workers take on roles beyond their role description. This stops The Project from smoothly implementing initiatives related to the work areas or the objectives of the Community Plan. There is a need for better communication conduit between community workers and executive committee members, and perhaps the need for the committee to pay more attention to the reflections of the community workers. After all, they are the visible faces of The Project for community members since they are at the office every day and interact directly with community members.

In many ways, the challenges and differing views and perspectives between formal planning and community planning discussed previously, are present within community planning processes in NEV. There is a gap between the strategic direction given by the executive committee and the Community Plan, and the day to day decisions on how to implement the plan and deal with new initiatives brought by community members. This gap is similar to the top-down vs bottom-up division in planning, albeit where the top-down approach is informed by the long term Community Plan which was developed for strategic purposes, it is based on community aspirations expressed by community members. However, there is still a top-down decision process where the executive committee is the main decision making body. Thus, there is still this divide in the community planning process from the NEV community, but is not as strong and big as with the formal planning and community planning in general.

The Project should be aware of this gap and make efforts to minimise it, in order to have a strategic long-term direction, but also to give enough consideration to the day to
day decision making, which would result in a smoother implementation of the Community Plan and daily functioning of The Project. There is a need for capacity building here, with the aim of finding a governance arrangement flexible enough to respond to the needs of a community planning process. Having strategic planning is important for direction, but also implementing it in a way to keep building relationships among community members and using their creativity. This governance arrangement must provide mechanisms for improved trust, transparency, accountability and clear communication channels.

### 6.2.2 Create institutional learning

There is a feeling that communities in New Zealand do not have experience with community work. This was mentioned by two key informants: number 7 from the DCC, and number 1 from NEV. For Key Informant 7:

> I don’t think communities have experience in working together in our society, and it is something that worries me a bit, particularly after 1984 and the introduction of a more neoliberal approach in New Zealand. I think we have lost a lot of that capacity to work together as communities. I think that has driven us to be more selfish. I see it more and more every day. While there is bright spots of communities working together, it is often in spite of everything else going on.

This is related to what Key Informant 1 mentioned, about the lack of context for community work in New Zealand. Key Informant 1 is a NEV community member and a political activist living in NEV for more than 20 years. For him, New Zealanders have organised themselves traditionally in relation to the labour market, in much more meaningful relationships since it is related to the material resources that make people able to sustain themselves. In his words,

> ...what is your relationship with your neighbour? If you are talking about a society where people are farming, or commonly owning land, then there are important economic relationships ... So the idea that the community has all the resources it needs and it’s only a matter of putting them together and fostering these social connections, I think is misreading all that, the history of NZ particularly.

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1Key Informant 1 is member of the International Socialist Organisation, the Mana Movement, and delegated for the Printers Engineers and Manufacturers Union.
According to Key Informant 1, the ABCD and CLD approaches do not have a context in New Zealand communities since people are more linked into other relationships (labour market) and communities do not have all the assets it needs within it. This criticism to community planning is related to the criticism some post-modern planners have about Communicative Planning Theory, which argues that CPT pays insufficient attention to the practical context of power in which planning is practised, taking the planning away from politics and power laden interests that infiltrate its practice (McGuirk, 2001). Community planning and communicative planning are similar with respect of the use of communicative rationality and the use of a governance structure (see chapter 2). Consequently, they both raise similar criticisms about the way how both work with the structural forces that infiltrate and frame their processes. It is a challenge for communities to drive planning processes despite all structural conditions pointing in the opposite direction, and yet not to ignore but acknowledge and even try to reverse them. Here, the effectiveness of community planning in a context of national and global structures that disempower communities is questioned. The perception that issues of power and politics have been left out of the community planning process can also be reasons for some politically engaged people in NEV not to be engaged with The Project. Engagement issues will be reviewed in the next section.

This lack of experience is shown through some community member’s behaviour towards community planning, like the resistance to achieve consensus among community groups who have contrasting aspirations like sometimes elderly and young people have. For example, when deciding whether to put a skateboarding ramp or benches for sitting. This was mentioned by Key Informant 14 (DCC staff), who explained like this:

Sometimes you will never find the middle ground, and that gets extremely difficult especially when some people want to create a new development to benefit the wider community but the immediate community doesn’t want it. At least they are talking, sometimes yelling.

Another way communities show their lack of experience on community planning, is when they approach DCC with a negative attitude, like service users who want to complain about the provider, rather than as a partner for community planning. This was mentioned by Key Informant 7 (DCC staff member) in the following way:

If people come in with kind of a negative attitude towards Council ‘you haven’t
done this, we want this fixed, this is the problem’ it can be very demanding (...) it can be more difficult for the staff to find solutions. Some people will be more constructive in their relationships than others. I have noticed people who often get a lot more done because they understand processes and they also are constructive in the way they approach things.

It is beyond the scope of this research to find out whether community work is part of the culture in New Zealand, but there is a perception among at least these three key informants, that community work is not something people are used to doing. However, if community work is new to communities in New Zealand or in Dunedin, this shows there is a need for institutional learning processes, where community members can establish into their minds and cultures this new idea of planning together for the greater good. An institutional learning process will also be useful for people to learn how to use communicative rationality, which in simple terms is, conversation to make decisions, not in a confrontational way but in a consensual way, with the only aim of benefiting the community as a whole.

It is not easy or simple to learn from community planning initiatives since it is a process and a practice, and those processes and practices are part of the achievements, the outcomes are multi-layered, interconnected and are dynamic over time. This usually renders achievements and outcomes invisible to the eyes of community members unless there are active efforts to undertake evaluation or reflective learning (Inspiring, 2013).

6.2.3 Capacity building

Capacity building is the process through which the community can enhance and improve its assets. In the case of NEV, this involves social and economic assets or capitals. In particular, NEV needs to work on growing its social capital to allow for better participation in quantity and quality, and to deal with resourcing issues.

6.2.3.1 Building social capital

*Increase participation.* Although NEV is one of the communities which is frequently mentioned with high levels of participation in Dunedin, a small percentage of the community is involved in community activities within The Project. If we think about the
number of inhabitants in NEV (8,964 including Opoho and Pine Hill), and the number of
members of The Project (144 members), only 1.6% of NEV is a member of The Project.
Last AGM had an attendance of around 30 people, and last hangi gathered around 300
people. So there is more participation in events which require only a small and temporary
commitment, and less when it comes to long-term engagement. This lack of involvement
has consequences for The Project, since the people who are committed, have to spend a
great amount of energy on keeping The Project working for the whole community. It was
mentioned in several interviews how the work in The Project has “burned out” people’s
energy in the past. This endangers the continuity of The Project. Lower levels of partic-
ipation also results in less representation, which is negative for the achievement of The
Project’s objective of identifying local needs. If people don’t participate, their needs will
hardly be identified by The Project, and empowerment will not be even a possibility.

If The project could transfer some of those passive supporters who attended to the
hangi into active participants, it would be a great contribution to keep building the NEV
social assets. This is particularly important because the hangi has a high participation
of Māori and Pacific Islanders, from whom The Project lacks engagement with these
communities.

The reasons why most people do not participate in community activities are not known
with certainty, but key informants raise a number of potential factors. Key Informant 7
(DCC staff) thinks:

there is a lot of apathy among the community themselves and is often very hard
for community based groups to encourage people to participate. And sometimes I
wonder if that is because they think there is no point, they are too busy, they just
can’t be bothered, or whether they don’t come on board with something until they
are very certain that is going to happen and there is some money available to do
the work, or you prove that the Council will help. I think people sometimes feel it
is a bit fruitless.

For Key Informant 2 (Manager of Volunteering Otago) ², there are also other reasons:

Sometimes people don’t volunteer because they weren’t answered. What hap-
pens with our organisation, sometimes we have a lot of people interested in one role

²Key Informant 2 gave consent to reveal her identity.
and that organisation does not contact them back within a timely manner, so they lost the opportunity to engage volunteers.

Sometimes there are people participating but they step down after a while. For Key Informant 2:

One of the main reasons that stops people from volunteering is if they don’t feel that they or the work they do is valued, so they won’t continue to do it.

Key Informant 3 explained further the feeling of fruitless work when they were a member of the executive committee in The Project:

I would say (there is) a lack of clearly defined mechanisms for making sure things happen. So the meetings from my memory, would go on for hours, three and a half hours, four hours, and when you would left the meeting you wouldn’t feel you have moved forward, you would feel you have discussed again and have not come to a conclusion and moved forward.

All of these possible reasons why people do not participate or step down from participation, are a huge challenge for The Project to tackle, and more research on the clear identification of these reasons would be very useful for the continuity of the work The Project and other communities.

Diversify participation. NEV is a multicultural neighbourhood (for ethnicity details, see table 1.1). One area where The Project is not having the success they want, is the representation of particular groups in NEV, like Māori, Pacific Islanders, Asian, and young people from all ethnicities. Currently, there is no representation of these groups at the executive committee (except for one new member of the executive committee who is Asian), although before the last AGM there was one representative for Māori and one for youth, both of whom stepped down. The issue of lack of representation for some groups is recognised by Key Informant 10 (executive committee member of The Project) who describes it like this:

...this is the area where we don’t do very well with The Project. Because at most of the activities the people who turn up are white middle class. The one thing that happens through the year that captures the other people is Matariki...

There were several mentions in the interviews about how The Project is managed by white middle class people and this does not attract other groups of people like ethnic
minorities and young people. That is logical considering every person is going to have ideas according to their culture, age, and gender. The fact that most (and some years, all) of the executive committee members are white middle class people sets a tendency to develop an institutional culture and a structure of organisation that reinforces certain ways of doing things and making decisions. These in turn can create further barriers to participation of people who do not identify with that culture. Gender was never mentioned in the interviews as an issue within The Project, and during the participant observation period the researcher observed there is a fair representation of genders in The Project at all levels. Ethnicity and age however were mentioned by several interviewees because of representation issues. For Key Informant 3 (DCC staff and ex executive committee member from NEV):

... In the executive you don’t get much representation from a Māori perspective or Asian community, you don’t get representation from the unemployed community. So all of the people that the project is determining that it wants to help through the insulation scheme and all that actually has no representation in the executive, and I think that’s a really big weakness...

Although there are community outcomes set in the Community Plan of The Project which point to the inclusion of minority groups, such as social inclusion and cultural & ethnic development, there are no set roles at the executive committee for tackling these community aspirations. The roles used by the Māori and youth representatives during the last period were community roles in general. That is perhaps a reason, or at least an indicator of why there is a lack of participation from these groups. It seems that The Project is trying to help them, but is not clear if the intentions are to bring them on board at the executive committee level. Here, there is a dichotomy in The Project around its mission and approach: between addressing needs by service delivery or by building capacity. Without more diverse representation, The Project risks being labelled as a charity institution, where better off people (usually white middle class) helps the least advantaged from amongst their communities (Prochaska, 2007). This is still positive for people who need help, like the cases described by Key Informant 10 where he found people who needed help, made some phone calls and got furniture and stuff for them (see chapter 5). However, this is not empowering people, which is the goal of community planning.
Challenges facing the community

There is also the risk of getting over representation of some groups or some people, since the most outgoing person tends to overshadow the more shy ones. This was acknowledged by a community worker (Key Informant 4) who mentioned it as one difficulty of undertaking community planning. There are people who naturally and easily go out there and express their thoughts, with a strong voice which makes them sound like a shared view among several, but they might be actually representing only their own interests. Other people however find very difficult to express their thoughts, and they do not do it unless they are pushed to do it.

Over-affiliation was mentioned by one Key Informant as a factor to consider when undertaking community planning, since some people might feel rejected in advance just by knowing The Project is affiliated with certain institutions, like a church for example. Key Informant 5 (ex executive committee member from NEV) explained:

About the church, I’m very mindful with my choir that we don’t want to over affiliate with anybody because you don’t know who you are going to ostracise. We sang for Easter carrying of the cross but it’s really interesting because the songs I’ve choose are more secular. I’m aware of that myself, and I’m very careful that the people might think the choir belongs to a church because it does not.

An other potential reason for people to feel ostracised from The Project, is because of their affiliation with the Police. People who have criminal records might not feel comfortable taking part in a community project if they know the police can be there. Although the police have been participating with The Project for a long time, it might be a reason why some people don’t feel attracted to it. Most people that are apprehended for breaking the law are found undertaking property crime and theft, and this kind of law breaking is related to poverty (Walklate, 2013). Perhaps the only place Māori people are over-represented, is in jail. Although Māori people are 13% of the New Zealand population, 51% of the prison population in New Zealand are Māori (Marie, 2010). There is no agreement on the reasons why this happens, but this means there are probably Māori people in NEV who have been convicted, or Māori people who have relatives who have been convicted, and therefore people who might feel threatened by the police. The offending-prone age group in New Zealand is between 15 and 29 years old (Marie, 2010), so the fact that the police is frequently present in The Project might be scaring away young people from all ethnicities. If The Project wants to include participation from people in
poverty situation, young and Māori people, they should acknowledge that, if there is a police car parked at the Community Rooms (as the researcher frequently observed) and there is a note from the police in The Valley Voice every month, those people might feel afraid to take part in The Project.

In the Valley Voice of August 2014, the ‘Cop That!’ section introduced a new policeman working at NEV. The note was written by the policeman himself who stated: “For the past 14 years I have been a Tactical Options Trainer for the Southern area, which involved me training Police Staff in their appointments such as Asp baton, OC spray, Taser, Bushmaster and Glock firearms. Alongside this was instructing staff on the tactical aspects of how to conduct a High Risk vehicle stop or the systematic clearance of a building or structure. Together with these duties, I also spent 21 years on the Armed Offender Squad dealing with incidents of a serious nature involving offensive weapons and firearms offences.” (Thomson, 2014, :3). This note can be very threatening for somebody who has suffered an encounter with the police, whether is because of a committed or accusation of crime, or being on a protest, etc.

According to Key Informant 10 (executive committee member from NEV), during 2007, the police participation in The Project was started because of The Project’s initiative. A police woman who was doing community policing was called to work with The Project, to deal with the ‘naughty’ children of NEV. There is a Community Policing station in NEV, which is part of the community policing approach, initiated in reaction to the lack of public confidence in the police and the acknowledgement that police forces could not fight crime by themselves (Coquilhat, 2008).

The aim of community policing is, in general terms, to reduce insecurity and crime with the help of communities. The reduction of insecurity and crime is probably also a desire from part of the NEV community. However, the means the police use for doing this are not related to the structural reasons why crimes are committed. The partnership between the police and The Project could rather create a divide between the community members who perceive the police as an ally to protect their goods, and the community members who perceive the police as the force that imposes the same rules that have left them on the side of the powerless. In this sense, The Project is just reproducing the sense of marginalisation these people have felt, and is pushing them away from participation.
Challenges facing the community

This is not to say the police should be out of The Project, neither that the people who commit crimes are mainly Māori or young people, but there should be an awareness of the effect that the presence of the police in the quantity and quality currently done, has on the portion of the community who have had troubles with the law, and that is probably the section of NEV that The Project needs to empower the most.

6.2.3.2 Resourcing

Even though The Project has secured funding from the DIA (see chapter 4), this will be available only until the end of 2015. After that, they will have to look for new ways of financing. According to Key Informant 13 (DCC staff):

There is definitely a resource barrier of time, money and skill. The communities that are doing (community planning) now are the ones that have got funding to put someone in that role...

Before the funding of the DIA, The Project had frequently only one community worker, and it used to rely more on volunteers to get the job done. The situation of lack of monetary resources has found to be positive by some community members like Key Informant 10 (executive committee member of The Project) who stated:

There are different philosophies about that. My philosophy is that bringing a whole lot of money from the government into the project is negative. Because as soon as you have money, you have people vying for it. ‘we want some money for the arts’, ‘we want some money for education’, ‘we want some money for garden’...

According to this informant, large amounts of money brings conflicts into The Project and rivalries among groups who are vying for the financing. This, nevertheless, can be minimised by discussing and making the decision between all the interested groups, in other words by using a communicative rationality approach as described in chapter 2 of this research, or “a form of reasoning generated reflexively through intersubjective deliberation and argumentation” (McGuirk, 2001, :2). In the context of resource allocation, communicative rationality translates into horizontal decision making by all interested groups.

Key Informant 1 (NEV community member) found another problem with the funding from the DIA to The Project. He stated:
I think they (The Project) are operating within political constraints, and one of those is to avoid confrontational attitude to the rich. I think the source of the money has some implications.

The fact that the DIA is a government agency is seen by Key Informant 1 as an indicator of a political bias towards the political sector of the government, that influences how the money can be spent and how The Project positions itself politically. This might also be stopping some people with strong ideological views from participating in the project. The fact is that, with the DIA funding, The Project has renewed and upgraded the Community Rooms, bought two vans for community use and it has hired community workers, among other investments.

Without a large amount of money, The Project can still work, but relying much more on volunteers. This is the way The Project used to work according to Key Informant 10 (executive committee member from NEV):

We had no money and the first event that we ran was a Christmas party which was done here on a wet afternoon and there were hundreds of people here, we might have had a grant for $500, it was all done by volunteers, and other events started to happen as a result, it was fantastic.

There is a mystic that is lost when a community project gets large amounts of funding, and people notice that. This was acknowledged by Key Informant 5 who stated:

...what I have discovered with community stuff is that, if there is anything happening in a professional capacity, it never works, if some one comes because is their job to be there or some organisation decides to be associated, it’s got a different feeling.

In summary, abundant funding, has both negative and positive implications. Abundant funding allows The Project to undertake big investments which are planned to give continuity to the community work. Lack of funding forces The Project to rely more on volunteers, which has a positive impact on the relationships within the community. It is the challenge of The Project to find the balance between these two situations.
6.3 Challenges facing the DCC

In order to better support the community planning processes going on in Dunedin, the DCC needs to address some challenges which were mentioned in the interviews for this research. These challenges are related to the way that the DCC works and the mind set of DCC staff which configures the organisational culture of the Council. In other words, DCC challenges are related to its institutional capital.

6.3.1 Renew institutional capital

Budget constraints was one of the most often named barriers facing the DCC to support community planning processes more effectively. The DCC budget, according to key informants from the DCC, is shrinking. This is affecting the DCC’s ability to increase the support it is giving to communities currently undertaking planning within Dunedin, and to encourage the development of new community planning processes. Key Informant 3 (DCC staff) thinks that:

...is very difficult to work in a Council because you have finite budgets and the economic constraints means that the budget shrinks, they don’t grow and which means you will have to do more with less money...

For Key Informant 9 (DCC Councillor):

The main problem for us is resourcing. At the moment we simply don’t have the budgets to pay for a community co-ordinator to do that work in every community.

Key Informant 7 (DCC staff) also thinks this way, but adds an ingredient which places community planning in a hierarchical situation of priorities when the DCC is going to spend money:

The biggest constraint at the moment is just that there is not a lot of money in the Council for projects, so a lot of that is just more around core business, whereas a lot of the Place-Based Planning stuff tends to be around additional spends that people want, things that are over and above what the standard is that they want, so there is not money for that at the moment and it won’t be for the next few years because of the financial situation of the Council.

This raises the question of whether it is an issue of shrinking budget or an issue of community planning being below other priorities. It is probably both together.
According to key informants from the DCC, the budget constraints are stopping DCC from creating the institutional capacity building that would allow them to better support community planning processes. However, the lack of monetary resources could be counteredbalanced with the building on other institutional capitals such as the improvement of structures and networks within DCC and with organised communities. As said in the previous chapter, community planning could actually make DCC expenditure more efficient, if brought on board at the right time and in the right way. By renewing its institutional capital, the DCC could implement a new working structure that would allow it to respond flexibly to new circumstances, and mobilise resources needed to better support community planning processes going on in Dunedin, and especially the one in NEV. This links to the next challenge DCC faces to better support community planning processes: how to be flexible enough to allow the change needed to incorporate community planning into formal planning. This can be done by using an institutional learning process.

6.3.2 Start an institutional learning process

Similar to the NEV community, the experiences that the DCC has with community planning are quite new. Since DCC has not started an institutional learning process, the idea of community planning is not yet established into the DCC’s working structures. This naturally makes DCC staff place greater trust in the ‘old way’ of doing things, and distrust the possibility of doing things in a new way. Key Informant 3 (DCC staff) gave a perfect example of this:

We have in transportation a plan for re-surfacing our whole footpaths, and we have a man who looks after it, and he knows the plan for the next ten years, ‘we will do this street and then this street’, and the community, the Valley Project asked me ‘could we know when North Road is going to be done? Cause we would like to say what kind of surface we want, where we would like a crossing point or whatever’, and when I spoke to the man who is in charge, he couldn’t understand. He said ‘well, they can send letters asking when the work is going ahead’ and I said ‘no, they would like to be in a planning stage so they can say, instead of putting exactly the same thing back, can we change it here and here’, and Jim he just couldn’t understand. ‘It has always been done like this and why would you want to change it’ he said, he couldn’t compute it. He has a process for letting the community
know and he didn’t want to extend that process to say ‘well, actually we will ask you before we go so when we’ll do the curving channel’, because if you did that with one community then you will have to do it with another community and it would mean an extra amount of work for that process, a big extra amount of work.

The entrenched way of working DCC has, is contrasting with the community led planning process going on in NEV, which requires from DCC flexibility and the development of new ways of working. Although the DCC - NEV liaison role is an intent to add flexibility to the DCC working structures, it is an isolated effort within a sea of long histories of doing things the same way, far from governance structures of partnerships with local communities.

Even more, there is no concerted effort to draw learning from the experiences accumulated from the work the DCC - NEV liaison role or the Community Developers does. According to Key Informant 3:

I do the liaison role because I want to, and because I have been asked as well. Because I have been given the role, but without the support network to properly do it, like for instances I have no reporting process for my role, so whereas Paul and Michael (community advisers from the DCC Community Development team) report to Rebecca their team leader, ‘I’m doing X, Y and Z’, I don’t have anyone to report to, and I would like to collect all the information and present it in a way that it makes sense to our organisation the DCC. I would like a reporting structure and I have requested one but hasn’t come and doesn’t seem to be coming. (...) We haven’t had enough discussion internally at DCC about what we seek to achieve with Place-Based Planning. So we have given the instruction to go and help the communities Paul and Michael and me, but then we don’t come together and say ‘how are you doing, what do we do’. There is one regular meeting for South Dunedin where we all come together and contribute but there it seems to be no decisions made on that, is just looking at it as it unfolds I think.

An institutional learning process would help the DCC to find out where to change and what to change and how to renew the institutional capital in order to allow greater flexibility. Greater flexibility could be achieved by advancing towards a governance scheme like the ones described in chapter 2. Added flexibility would be more responsive to the demand for a shift in governance required by communities like NEV. After all, “to neglect
the wishes of the people for a change might, in the long run, have a negative effect even on our basic democratic institutions”. (Joas, 2001, cited on Evans and Theobald, 2005)

6.4 Conclusion

For the DCC, in order to shift to a governance model of more democratic decision making, it needs to create the learning which will allow the building of institutional capital capable to change structures and employ creative interventions. The DCC has a considerable amount of experience which should be used in an institutional learning process to improve the ways that the DCC can respond to communities who are undertaking planning processes, and establish the value of community planning (and DCC approaches such as Place-Based Planning) for the DCC, in a standard way among all DCC departments and teams.

The main learning that needs to be achieved by The Project is how to implement more effective ways of governance. The Project needs to minimise the gap between the formal top-down planning represented by the Community Plan and the executive committee as the main decision making body, and the informal bottom-up planning represented by the everyday decisions made by the community workers. The minimisation of this gap will make The Project run more smoothly, and therefore will improve the implementation of the Community Plan and the objectives of The Project.

The Project’s objective of providing a process to identify local needs and establish priorities based on them, is not fully achieved since there is a large portion of the NEV population who are not engaged, and therefore have not communicated their needs to The Project. To overcome this situation, an institutional learning process should help to find ways to establish the idea of community planning into the inactive sector of the community, and to build institutional capacity processes to keep strengthening the social capital in NEV.

A strong and dynamic local government with a culture of institutional knowledge, is the suitable ground for governance. Sustainable development can only be achieved with common capacity building efforts by civil society and local government. (Evans and Theobald, 2005).
Chapter 7

Asset Mapping

7.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to report the results and reflections related to the second objective of this research, which is: to examine and assess how Asset Mapping contributes to building capacity for community-based planning. As explained in chapter 3 (Methods), a participatory action research approach was used in this study, which in practice means that The Project participated as co-developer of this research, and the researcher took part in The Project activities as a member. In simple terms, the incorporation of the second objective of this research was because of the desire of The Project to explore this subject. Two workshops on Asset Mapping were undertaken in order to address this objective, each one with a different approach. The first one was done with a more top-down, result-oriented approach, and the second one with a more bottom-up and process oriented approach. The differences in the approaches came from the reflections of the community workers and the researcher after the first workshop, acknowledging the results were not the best for Asset Mapping in the context of a community driven planning process. The experience of both workshops can be used to illustrate the differences in the outcome of community planning when undertaken in a bottom-up vs a top-down approach, which can be noticed especially in how participants position themselves: as a service user versus as an active citizen. The reflections and learnings drawn from the experience of running these Asset Mapping workshops are summarised in the following sections.
7.2 What is an asset map

An Asset Map is a tool for communities to identify and mobilise the assets that a community already has that can contribute to solving problems and realising goals (Green, 2009). Asset mapping is intrinsically related with the ABCD approach which was originally coined by Jody Kretzmann and John McKnight of the ABCD Institute of Northwestern University in Chicago, USA, as an alternative to needs-based approaches to development (Martin et al., 2012). Community assets are all of the resources a community has: economic, physical, and social. Economic assets are the ways in which money flows in and out of the neighbourhood, physical assets are the infrastructure and natural resources, and social assets are people individually and in groups forming associations. From those, social assets are considered the most important since these are the kind of assets that open choices for connections among all the assets a community has (Green, 2009). That is the reason why social assets were chosen to be mapped in the workshops undertaken in NEV. The identification of the assets is just one step of the Asset Mapping, since the final objective is to mobilise the assets identified by the community for productive action (Green, 2009).

7.3 Two workshops

As explained in previous sections and in chapter 3, two Asset Mapping workshops were held in the NEV Community Rooms, both on different dates, and with different participants. The first one was held on Monday the 9th of June and the second was held on the Sunday the 15th of June. For details about the advertising methods, see section 3.3.2. The workshops objectives were to serve as a pilot model for future Asset Mapping in NEV as a general objective, and to identify the social assets from NEV that were known by the participants, including themselves, as a specific objective. The community social assets that were mapped in the workshops are institutions, associations, organisations, groups, and people with their skills, knowledge, passions, interests and concerns. Both workshops were led by the researcher.

In spite of the large amount of advertisement displayed for inviting people to participate in the Asset Mapping, there were only a total of 13 participants counting both
workshops attendance together. However, those 13 participants were able to identify 51 institutions, associations, organisations and groups working in NEV (see table 7.1) and more than one hundred self-assessed individual assets (see table 7.2). Both workshops were undertaken with different approaches: one with a more top-down and result-oriented approach, and the other with a more bottom-up and process-oriented approach. The result was differences in the way participants interacted with each other and positioned themselves (service users/consumers vs citizens/community members). The differences between both workshops are further discussed in the following sections.

Table 7.1: Institutions, organisations, association and groups identified in the two Social Asset Mapping workshops in North East Valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of Organisations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutions (20)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Otago students and staff, J.R. Kindergarten (named twice), Montessori @ the Gardens (named twice), Dunedin North Intermediate School (named twice), Dumpling King restaurant, Dunedin City Council Flats, Dunedin Botanic Gardens (named twice), Churches (named twice), North East Valley Normal School (NEVN), Hintons Fruit and Vegetable shop, Parks and Gardens, Islington Street Kindergarten, Salvation Army second hand store (named twice), Presbyterian Support Ross Home, Inch Bar, Community Hospice, Normalby Tavern, Local butcher, Pet Planet shop, Supermarket.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Groups (22)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knitters, Girl Guides, Opoho Play Centre, Valley Club homework support program, Opoho Scouts, Sunday soccer, Matariki, Olympic Tae Kwon Do, Archery, Running, Bowls, Cricket, Youth Grow Education /Garden Centre, Community garden (named 3 times), English conversation group based at NEVN School, Te Reo Wanaga o Aotearoa, Mill Shed Blokes/women, Kids music group, Qi gong, Singing NEV Easterly, Ukelele group, Play group NEV Baptist church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Associations/Organizations (9)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.3.1 First workshop: top-down and result-oriented

The first workshop was undertaken with a top-down approach, similar to what a formal planning institution would use. This approach was used because of my lack of experience in how to facilitate activities within a community driven planning process. The first workshop was undertaken in the same way an academic workshop is regularly done. Also, it was more focused on getting the desired results which was the identification of social
assets, rather than on the process of how to get them. This focus on the results rather than the process is another feature which is characteristic of the community planning efforts undertaken by formal planning institutions.

The workshops began with the distribution of ethics forms, which were signed and collected. Following this there was a short introduction explaining the context of the workshop as a part of this research, as well as an explanation of what a community Asset Map is. The next step was the identification by participants of the institutions, associations, organisations and groups functioning in NEV. The third part was the self-assessment of participants’ individual assets (skills, knowledge, interests and concerns). The fourth part was about finding connections between participants’ self-assessed assets.

**Results** Although a lot of assets were identified in the self-assessment, the participants were reluctant to assess their own assets, and no connections were found between participants’ assets. Some participants focused on complaining about public toilets and bus routes. Although the identification of needs and concerns can be part of an Asset Mapping process, it is not the centre. The positioning of these community members was more like service users/consumers rather than active community members and citizens, and therefore their participation in the workshop was less proactive and more contemplative. Engagement and mobilisation was not achieved.

This shows the expectations that people have when participating in a community planning process that does not explicitly force them to think on the process and their role in it. People are used to a top-down approach, where the participants’ role is to voice their needs and problems, but the responsibility of finding solutions belongs entirely to the public agencies. The focus on needs is the more common approach to community problem solving, with disadvantages of this approach being the emphasis on professional helpers rather than using the community’s capacity; fragmentation of development efforts; and the promotion of pessimistic leaders and negative truths’ about the community (Green, 2009).

This is not a surprise since people are treated as service customers/consumers in most government agencies. A clear example of this is the DCC’s first point of contact with people from Dunedin, which is called ‘Customer Services’, and people are referred to as customers many times on the DCC web page. To act as a customer means I can complain
about the service I’m getting, but I’m not responsible for making any difference. The best I can do as a customer, is complain to the company when the service is not as expected, with most people not even complaining.

A reflection from a participant from this workshop is:

It made me think about how there is so much potential in the Valley, but that it’s not clear how to motivate people. That I do have skills that could be used but nothing is in place for me to use them. I probably had never thought about my own skills within a community context.¹

Surprisingly enough, these people got out of their houses and took part in a workshop advertised as ‘community asset workshop’, not knowing exactly what they were attending, but still wanting to collaborate. They probably reacted the way they have learned to behave when participating in a regular consultation process. After this first workshop, it was clear to me that the approach used was wrong, and most people are not familiarised with concepts such as community asset and Asset Mapping. Additionally, people will position themselves as customers rather than citizens unless there is previous and explicit effort to clarify the suitable participants’ positioning for community work. Drawing on the experience of this workshop, a different approach was used for the second one, expecting to have different behaviour from participants by creating a better understanding of what community planning is, and therefore providing the environment for participants to position themselves as citizens and community members.

### 7.3.2 Second workshop: bottom-up and process-oriented

The approach taken in the second workshop was quite different. It was much more bottom-up since more flexibility and time was given to participants for expressing their thinking about community planning, and it was much more process-oriented since the energy was focused on growing participants’ interactions and understanding of the concepts and the process of Asset Mapping and community planning, rather than on the identification of the assets.

The workshop was held in the following way: a conversation was initiated by the facilitator and researcher about the concepts of community, community planning, community

¹This participant is a neighbour from NEV, New Zealander, student and mother of one child, with no previous engagement in The Project.
assets, Asset Mapping and how all of those relate to issues of power, democracy and governance. Time and flexibility was given for participants to intervene at any point to express their thoughts and experiences. Around half of the time was used on this conversation. Following this, the ethics forms were signed. The next step was the identification of institutions, associations, organisations and groups. Afterwards, the participant’s individual assets were self-assessed. Finally, connections among individual assets were sought and found. A community asset map can take different forms and can be done by using different methods. Fig 7.1 shows what the asset map undertaken in this research looked like during the workshops.

**Figure 7.1:** North East Valley Community Asset Map, resulting from the 2nd workshop

**Results** The result of this different approach was a rich conversation with the participants about their experiences with community work, participation and democracy, among other subjects. Participants were less reluctant to self-assess their individual assets and

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2Participants gave their consent for showing their names except for the one erased.
connections between participants were actually found. New ideas for community activities (like a chess club and a music club) came up and some participants even offered their time to realise them. In this workshop the participants positioned themselves as active community members and were much more pro-active in discussion and participation during the workshop. This workshop can be used as an example of how a bottom-up and process-oriented approach to community planning can model people’s reaction towards participation in a way that promotes positioning themselves as citizens capable of finding and contributing to solutions, rather than simply as consumers and customers.

A participant’s reaction to taking part in this Asset Mapping workshop is:

I think showing our skills, interests and knowledge is very useful. It is a way of communication, to know how we can help, and maybe is a good way of making life easier in communities where resources are scarcer. At the same time in places like NEV where there is people better off and not so good, this could start a real community life where we could help each other and share. Try to make a less individualistic life. This workshop could be done several times and then pass to a second stage of develop to organise peoples interests and skills and start something new or improve what is already happening in the community.3

One of the advantages of this approach to community planning is that it places the energy in the solutions, and mobilised community members are promoted as leaders, growing the community’s capacity to do more and better. Here, the responsibility of building a better future belongs not only to agencies but also to communities and their members. And when community members realise they share part of the responsibility for getting to the future they want, they become mobilised, and all the values identified in chapter 5 as coming from community planning, start to appear.

7.4 Asset Mapping: how to make it work

Asset Mapping can be a good tool for communities to mobilise their assets, but also requires a lot of energy and effort which does not necessarily correspond with the results. Here are some reflections and learning about the experience of undertaking community Asset Mapping workshops from this research.

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3This participant is a neighbour from NEV, immigrant from Chile, journalist mother of two children, with no previous engagement in The Project.
7.4.1 Suitable methods for the cultural context

When looking at the social assets identified by workshops’ participants in NEV, it can be observed there is a richness in social assets in this community which is acknowledged by the community members who attended to the workshops. However, all this richness is not necessarily being mobilised with community planning purposes, which is the final aim of Asset Mapping. The first step to mobilise the assets of a community, is to identify them (Green, 2009). This can be done by using different methods. The methods used in these workshops were drawn mainly from Green (2009) which is a Canadian publication. This was probably not the best methodology to use under a ‘kiwi’ context for identifying the individual assets people have to offer to their community. Key Informant 13 (DCC staff) thinks:

When you try to do one for skills and knowledge it’s not the kiwi way. We don’t like saying what we can and can’t do. So it’s a very difficult process to do. It is very difficult to get people to say I have knowledge on this this and this and I can link that knowledge with these other people. I don’t think the question is around what you can do, rather what do you know that others can do. As kiwis we can do that. That’s part of our culture.

The more culturally suitable the methods, the more detailed and accurate the assessment of individual social assets will be. It is worthy to check the cultural suitability of the methods before undertaking the Asset Mapping.

7.4.2 A clear objective

Asset Mapping is about generating connections between the community’s assets, and people as part of those assets. To achieve the connection, participants need to feel comfortable with what they are doing and why are they doing it. They need to feel that they can trust that the information they are giving will be used for the right purposes. In order to generate this trust and comfort, there must be a particular objective for undertaking the Asset Map, so that it is clear for participants what are they trying to accomplish. This could be to address a concern, realise an idea, etc. In the case of the workshops undertaken for this research, there was a lack of definition in this sense. The objective of the Asset Map was simply to add more assets to the ones The Project had already on inventory, including people, and perhaps find from among participants, new ideas which
could mobilise the identified assets. This is not an exciting objective for participants to be engaged with, and consequently there was no further mobilisation of participants and the Asset Mapping only got to the stage of inventory. This was noted by Key Informant 2 (Manager of Volunteering Otago) who commented about this:

It’s interesting that you did the Asset Mapping before the planning because you found out what the assets are but don’t know how to use it, maybe you need to plan what you want to happen and then do the Asset Mapping because once you know the assets that you need you can do the Asset Map and identify the gaps. So maybe reverse it, maybe that is why people aren’t getting on board because they don’t understand where are you going with it.

In the case of the workshops held for this research, there was a plan, which is the Community Plan, the guiding document that The Project uses for undertaking their work. However, only the people working directly with The Project, like the community workers or executive committee members and ex-members, and the very engaged community members, know about the Community Plan. Therefore most of the NEV neighbours are not familiar with it. In addition, there was no explicit link between the Community Plan and the Asset Mapping intended in the workshops, and so the result was that people could not see a defined objective for the Asset Map. Perhaps more important than the identification of the assets, is the identification of community members with the objective of the asset map. There will always be assets in a community, but without motivation to use them, it is the same as if there were none.

### 7.4.3 Having a conversation

Although NEV is regarded as one of the most mobilised communities in Dunedin, this does not mean that every community member has clarity about what a community asset is, what Asset Mapping is, and what community planning/led development is. This was clearly noticed from the workshops held in this research. As explained before, the first workshop had a short introduction about what an Asset Map is and the context of the workshop within this research. This introduction was not enough for the attendees to understand the real meaning of a community Asset Map, and the value of their participation in it. A good conversation is needed from participants to position themselves as
active community members and citizens rather than customers and service users, which is the way they are commonly treated when participating in public consultation processes.

In this conversation, it is very important to use adequate language, avoiding technical jargon. This was commented by Key Informant 15 (DCC staff, Community Development Team manager):

Yes, language. Ensuring the language that you use is accessible to everyone in the community so you take away the fancy words and tell them what you want to find out. Explaining it in simple terms so people want to participate. People don’t always know what Asset Mapping is.

7.4.4 The scale

For some people, an Asset Map should incorporate all of the people in a community. For Key Informant 15 (DCC staff) for example:

I think Asset Mapping is important and I think the key to success is everyone participating in it so that all members of the community offer their talents and their knowledge.

And Key Informant 13 (DCC staff) has similar thinking: “It’s about the number of people that are contributing.” However, considering the level of participation The Project has, and being one of the more engaged communities from Dunedin, it is not a realistic goal to achieve participation from all of the members of a community. Nonetheless, it is acknowledged that the number of participants in the workshops held for the purposes of this research was not ideal, and a larger number would have been better for a richer interaction. A full community Asset Map was a too big of a task to be undertaken in this research. That is the reason the workshops were thought of as a pilot model, to be used as an example and to draw lessons from it. For undertaking an Asset Mapping of the NEV in whole, there first needs to be a clear objective which will provoke more of the people in NEV to participate. Different scales can be used depending on the specific objective of the Asset Mapping, which needs to be very clear from the beginning of the process as discussed in previous sections. For example, a specific small-scale Asset Mapping can be undertaken for Baldwin Street, in order to find new possibilities for those neighbours to take advantage from living in the steepest street in the world, which would be a clear and well defined objective for the map.
A community asset map can be a very powerful tool for communities to mobilise their assets. There is, however, limitations to what can be achieved by community Asset Mapping, which needs to be acknowledged before undertaking the task. A clear, well defined, and even better, exciting objective needs to be the core of the Mapping, so community members can feel motivated to participate and get engaged with it. Normally, community members are not familiar with the concepts of community assets, Asset Mapping, community planning /development, and frequently they see themselves as service users. This is why a good conversation is needed, to make sure people understand what they are doing and why they are doing it, and that their role in Asset Mapping is as active citizens. The scale of the Asset Map has to be consistent with its specific objectives.

The approach used, when undertaking an Asset Mapping or community planning /development in general, models people’s reactions and behaviour towards the process. The example of these two workshops shows how a top-down approach will probably have a customer/service user positioning from participants, who will not be proactive in finding solutions. On the other hand, a bottom-up approach will have a different positioning from participants as active community members/citizens, who will be more willing to engage in finding and realising solutions to their problems. Finally, social assets are constantly changing in a community. That is why social Asset Mapping needs to be an ongoing process that can be, at times, undertaken with more energy, by holding Asset Mapping activities like the workshops done in this research.
### Table 7.2: Skills, knowledge, interests, passions and concerns identified in the two Social Asset Mapping workshops in North East Valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Interests</th>
<th>Passions</th>
<th>Concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TESOL, childcare, gardening, tutoring, technology, computing, math, blogging, Sales, organising in general, networking, cooking, fund raising, planning, writing, presenting, languages, teaching, working with children, working with volunteers, organising events, community outreach, advocacy for children, mentoring, sewing, design, drawing, policy development, community liaison, coordinating, making jam, administration, Microsoft Office Suite, Journalism, History, Demographics, Cooking, Welding, Capoeira, Music, Football, Chess, Smoking fish and mussels, Local knowledge (Dunedin), Sports, Sustainable living, Physics, DCC systems, Global systems, Transport, mode shift infrastructure</td>
<td>Education, basic geology, calculus, French language, local community groups, funding community processes, sustainable tourism development, collaborative planning, Italian culture, NZ curriculum, ESOL curriculum, Ministry of Education (MOE) documents, MOE resources, NEV Community, environment, Community Led Development, quality management, arts in NZ, Trade Me, administration, Microsoft Office Suite, Journalism, History, Demographics, Cooking, Welding, Capoeira, Music, Football, Chess, Smoking fish and mussels, Local knowledge (Dunedin), Sports, Sustainable living, Physics, DCC systems, Global systems, Transport, mode shift infrastructure</td>
<td>Vegetarian cooking, other languages, film, books, reading, history, science, technology, education, writing, exploration, music, talks, shops, politics, sustainable life styles, running, photography, creativity, local identity soccer, softball, cultures, artprintmaking, art, community, hard work, parenting, business, co-housing aqua jogging, sewing, gardening, painting, cooking, knitting, dance (Zumba), youth initiatives, community orchards, developing a chess club, developing a music club, football, cricket, cycling, global systems, drawing</td>
<td>Science, language, food, free outdoor, recreation, biking, bocia (ball game), travelling, cooking, running, writing, photography community growth, children education, wellbeing, supporting new migrants to become part of the community, facebook, walking, eating, script writing, animals, nature, archery, fishing, tramping</td>
<td>Safety for kids (on bikes, etc.), Road safety, Safety for cyclists, Safety for youth, Youth development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.1 Introduction

There are two different views about what is community planning which coexist in the planning arena today. For communities, community planning (frequently called community development), is a process of empowerment, where community members figure out the future that they want and undertake the steps to get there. For formal planning institutions, community planning is an opportunity for greater public participation, always in a context driven by formal planning institution. It is important to know if the differences in the views really matter when reviewing the outcomes, if there are more effective ways community planning and formal planning can relate and interact, and what tools can communities use to improve their processes of community planning. These concerns have inspired the research questions, and key findings and recommendations will be discussed in the following sections.

Research question 1: How do differences in the way the DCC and The Project visualise community planning, impact the outcomes

First of all, there needs to be acknowledged the existence of two ways to visualise and interpret community planning. First, there is a top-down and outcome-oriented approach, characterised by DCC staff. An other from a bottom-up and process oriented approach, characterised by community members and workers from NEV. These differences in approaches result in differences in the outcomes. As seen in chapter 7, a
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A top-down approach will not change the positionality of participants when taking part in a community planning activity. The result of this is that community participants are viewed and encouraged to act like consumers /customers. A bottom-up and process-oriented approach will make sure participants are positioning themselves as community members and citizens, which lead to a different outcome of community members engaged and mobilised, and the community identifying and mobilising its capacity.

Therefore, the differences in the views of community planning influences the way it is undertaken, how success is determined and the emphasis placed on the characteristics of community planning: holistic, inclusive, representative, participative at a local level, future and process oriented, with formal and informal elements. Additionally, differences in the view of what community planning is, will have implications in the benefits that can be achieved by the process. Because of all these characteristics, community driven planning has a whole set of perceived benefits that formally driven community planning does not have, such as: people look after each other, people become visible and connected, decreases vandalism and crime, sparks ideas, empower community members, people in need get supported, identification and mobilisation of the community’s capacity, places look better, better use of space, a unified and representative voice of the community, school if citizenship, and better economic outcomes.

Research question 2: What are the barriers facing both NEV community and DCC in regard to successful community planning? The barriers to successful community planning are related to the novelty of the idea and practice of community planning and all the difficulties arising from it. This means they both DCC and NEV need to start a process to establish the idea of community planning into their institutional capitals (or the internal patterns of behaviour and ways of working, Evans and Theobald 2005, see chapter 6). Through institutional learning, people from the DCC and NEV will develop a better idea of what community planning is, what are the benefits and why is it good to be engaged with a community planning process.

Other challenges for NEV are to develop a suitable governance scheme, and to keep building its capacity from a social and economic perspective. There is a need for finding a governance arrangement flexible enough to respond to the needs of a community planning
Flexible governance should be able to implement a strategic plan for the community while at the same time to support spontaneous ideas from community members. A new governance arrangement would also need to acknowledge the lack of representation from ethnic minorities in the executive level of The Project, and make efforts to overcome this issue.

Capacity building processes need to be ongoing for NEV. There is a need to have better participation and representation of NEV people in general, and less represented groups in particular, in The Project at a higher level. These groups are Māori, immigrants and young people. As found in chapter 4, active approaches to getting the community’s feedback tend to attract a greater diversity of people.

There is also a need for The Project to secure funding after DIA’s is finished. This among others, is the goal of projects like the Old Post Office Initiative.

DCC’s challenges, besides to create institutional learning, is to renew its institutional capital. This is, a restructuring of some of the ways the DCC works in order to have a more suitable answer to community planning when communities are demanding it. An institutional learning process should help with finding the ways in which the DCC should restructure its institutional capital, in order to have a standard but flexible way to answer to the communities’ demand for real integration of community planning and DCC formal planning.

**Research question 3: How could Asset Mapping be a useful tool for community planning?** The Asset Mapping workshops held for this research in the NEV Community Rooms, showed that an Asset Map can be a great tool for communities to identify their assets, but there are limitations. For an Asset Map to be useful, there is a need to identify a reason for people to be mobilised. People’s skills, knowledge, interests and concerns, are minimized if individuals are not able to mobilise them. A clear and appealing objective must be the centre of the Asset Mapping. This will also determine the scale of the Asset Mapping, which depends on who the objective of the Asset Map is directed towards: the neighbours of a street, a group with special interests, or the whole community.

Most of the time, a re-positioning of participants will be needed, in order to have active community members instead of passive consumers or service users, which dominates. This
re-positioning can be achieved by having a conversation about the values of community planning and how it relates to issues of power, democracy, justice, public participation and governance.

8.2 Community planning and subjects in the literature

This research shows the ways that community planning relates in practice with issues of power, justice, participation and governance. If we look at Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation (see figure 2.1), we can comfortably place community planning on the top of it, as a way of citizen control, at the top degree of citizen power. The NEV community is, if not on, close to this stage, since they share characteristics of the examples given by Arnstein as community power. The NEV community governs The Project, and is in full charge of it. The Project is getting funding directly from the DIA with no intermediaries. Although Arnstein (1969) describes the ‘citizen control’ stage as where “the have-not citizens obtain the majority of decision-making seats, or full managerial power” (p.217), it also acknowledges that neither the have-nots nor the powerholders are homogeneous blocs.

While the NEV community has been gradually empowered by the community planning they have been undertaking for almost 30 years, this empowerment does not reach the whole community equally. As found in the literature as well as in the fieldwork, the more engaged the community members are, the more empowerment they will get.

The idea of community managed by The Project to identify the community members, is one that rejects homogeneity and embraces diversity in an explicit and active way.

Drawing on Sandercock (1998), NEV can also be thought of as a ‘community of resistance’ (see chapter 2), which seeks the incorporation of the new people from the neighbourhood into the community, and especially of immigrants and ethnic minorities by active means. However, as acknowledged by Heller (1989), the power, in order to be meaningful, can not be given. It must be taken. The only people who apparently have been left out of the community, are the people who have troubles with the law enforcement. This can be inferred from the constant presence of the police in The Project, which is probably
discouraging some people to participate with it.

Notwithstanding the efforts of The Project to reach ethnic minorities and the have-nots from within NEV, there is no certainty that the effort aims to the empowerment, or just to the delivery of better services for them. The governance body of The Project is still formed almost exclusively of white middle class people. However, if someone from a minority group would want to be part of the project at a decision making level, it certainly could. Minorities have not realised this possibility, or they don’t feel appealed to do it. This issue was not explored with depth in this study, and can be further developed in future researches.

There are big challenges that need to be tackled by both formal planning institutions and communities to move forward existing community planning processes. To develop suitable governance arrangements is one of them. This is only achievable by, first, having an institutional learning process in order to level out the views about what community planning is and its benefits. Second, particularly in formal planning institutions, there is a need for the renovation of the institutional structures, in order to make it capable of responding to the requirements of a community planning process in a meaningful way. The renovation of the institutional structures together with the institutional learning process, should have the outcome of a governance arrangement more suitable for the process, both for The Project and for the DCC.

Community planning is a way of advancing in justice. This is because it is a school of citizenship, and a good power redistribution system. Even more, community planning has moved NEV beyond the liberal-democratic definition of justice, where this is achieved by the fulfilment of rules individually. The aim of the community planning in NEV is more aligned with the ethics of care developed by feminist theorists, placing the emphasis on the achievement of ‘satisfactory interdependence’ by developing a feeling of concern for the good of others and for the good of the community (Cudd and Andreasen, 2005).

8.3 Recommendations for The Project

The North East Valley Community Development Project Inc., is doing a great job at keeping a community planning process that started 30 years ago, alive and growing. There are two areas identified as weaknesses of The Project in this research. One is the governance
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arrangement, which is allowing the existence of a gap between the strategic planning (implementation of the Community Plan and the role of the executive committee), and the everyday planning or the contingency planning (implementation of new ideas coming from community members and the role of the community workers). The recommendation is to develop a governance arrangement capable of providing improved trust mechanisms (transparency and accountability are very important for this), and clear communication channels between the community workers and the executive committee.

The second weakness of The Project identified in this research, is related to community engagement. Most of the people who are engaged with The Project at a decision making level, are white middle class people. These are probably the people who don’t really need to be empowered. As discussed in previous chapters, the more engaged a community member is in the process of community planning, the more empowered they will be. In order to empower the people who really are powerless in NEV, there is a need to encourage greater levels of participation in The Project.

8.4 Recommendations for the DCC

The DCC is making efforts to bring community planning and formal planning closer together. The Project is getting support from the DCC for the implementation of community planning, but the support seems to be only on matters which do not require expenditures or big changes in the decision-making processes. The entrenched way of working in DCC makes it difficult for communities to find easy ways of getting the DCC’s support in some matters, and when decisions have been made the same way for decades in the DCC, it is very hard for communities to change it if they need to, in the context of a community planning process. The DCC has a number of staff experienced in working with communities and interfacing the formal planning with the communities’ planning. The recommendation for the DCC is to use the experience and knowledge from its own staff, and start an institutional learning process, where the DCC as a whole can build new institutional capital, in order to figure out a more suitable governance arrangement for the challenges community planning sets on the city council. Of course this would be better achieved with the participation of experienced communities in community planning such as NEV.
A governance arrangement capable of facilitating the interface of community planning with formal planning, would increase the DCC’s efficiency in the expenditure of its budget, and would better support the community planning processes, allowing the expression of all the benefits that comes with it.

8.5 Concluding comments

Community planning has important benefits for the community undertaking it, for the local government, and for the city as a whole. In these days when people seem to be more individualistic and careless about others, community planning provides a good way of getting people’s engagement in positive and creative ideas. Further integration of community planning and formal planning would grow people’s trust and interest in democracy and the local government, because they would see how their participation has a real effect in decision-making. Unfortunately not all communities are ready to undertake the task of planning their future. However, it is not too difficult to achieve the state of readiness in a community for starting a community planning process. As seen in chapter 5, community planning starts with people getting together and starting to know each other. This first stage of community planning has a number of benefits which are not achievable by using other means. Successive stages of community planning have benefits more related to structural societal aspects and over a bigger ratio of population.

The DCC approaches to community planning are an example of the willingness to advance towards a more democratic and community based decision making process. However, there is a lot the DCC can learn from the way community planning is undertaken by communities like NEV. Holistic, inclusive, process oriented, are some of the characteristics of the community planning undertaken by NEV that are absent in the DCC approaches to community planning (see chapter 4). When community planning is undertaken without all of its characteristics, it does not provide all of the benefits shown on chapter 5. The community planning undertaken by NEV is by no means perfect, but is a good example of how much an engaged community can achieve. Mainly because of the principles they have set to themselves: embrace and value diversity, work holistically in all subjects identified by the community as important, and constantly strengthen and grow the social links between community members. NEV is a perfectible and useful model to promote
new community planning processes and strengthen the ones already in place.

It would be very interesting to develop further research on subjects like the impact of community planning on decreasing crime, the economic outcomes of community planning, how community planning processes contribute to the building of a sense of place, and the reasons for people to be engaged or not with a community planning process. These themes are only surfacely touched by this research, and a deeper look into them could give us interesting clues for finding new ways to enhance the quality of life in communities from New Zealand and the world.


DIA (2014). Department of internal affairs. on line: Community led development.  


Appendix A

Ethics forms
Community Planning in the North East Valley, a thesis research for completing the Masters of Planning program

INFORMATION SHEET FOR INTERVIEWS
PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

The aim of this project is to explore the relationship between official planning practice and community driven planning. Particular objectives of this research are:

1. To explore the different values, approaches and relationships between DCC planning and community planning in NEV community.

2. Examine and assess how asset mapping contributes to building capacity for community-based planning.

This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for Alejandra Parra Masters degree in Planning.

What Types of Participants are being sought?

We are looking for participants who have the following characteristics:

- Have worked on a community organization and have some experience in community planning or community led development.

OR

- Have worked in the DCC and have some experience on how the DCC works with communities doing community planning.

These participants were contacted through their organizations (DCC or other) specifically because of their experience on community planning.
What will Participants be asked to do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to:

- Participate in a one on one interview about your experience with community planning.
- This interview should last around ½ hour.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself.

What Data or Information will be collected and what use will be made of it?

The information collected will be the opinions of participants on the community planning process in the North East Valley such as: their views of the planning process, the degree and rationale for their involvement and their willingness to further support this process. Workshops and interviews will be recorded with a digital recorder with the purpose of transcribing to allow for organization and analysis of the information collected.

What is the purpose of collecting this data?

The purpose of collecting this information is to create an asset map of the North East Valley Community, and to propose ways to improve the community planning process, and to explore the relationship between the DCC and the community planning processes in the NEV. The results of this research will be used to inform a thesis for the fulfilment of the Masters of Planning program from the University of Otago, and also will be given back to the community and the DCC in a report showing the findings and suggestions for the improvement of the community planning process.

Who will have access to the data collected?

The people who will have access to the raw data collected will be the research supervisor (Dr. Sean Connelly), and the student researcher (Alejandra Parra). No commercial use will be given to this information.

What happen to the data collected?

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned above will be able to gain access to it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for at least 5 years in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants may be destroyed at the completion of the research even though the data derived from the research will be kept for much longer or possibly indefinitely.

The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity if you wish so.
Anonymity of Information.

On the Consent Form you will be given options regarding your anonymity. Please be aware that should you wish we will make every attempt to preserve your anonymity. However, with your consent, there are some cases where it would be preferable to attribute contributions made to individual participants. It is absolutely up to you which of these options you prefer.

What kind of questions will be asked to you?

This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes issues related to community planning, community asset mapping and the relationship between the DCC and the community planning processes in the NEV. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. Consequently, although the Department of Geography is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used. Examples of the types of questions that will be asked include:

- What has been your involvement in the planning process in the NEV?
- What resources or skills exist in the community that can help advance NEV projects?
- What other examples of community planning do you know? How do they work?

In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s).

Withdraw from participation.

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself.

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Student Researcher Alejandra Parra or Supervisor Sean Connelly
Department of Geography Department of Geography
University Telephone Number: 479-4218 University Telephone Number: 479-8771
Email Address: paral084@studen.otago.ac.nz Email Address: swc@geography.otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the Department stated above. However, if you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph. 03 479-8256). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
CONSENT FORM FOR
INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;

2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;

3. Personal identifying information [video-tapes/audio-tapes etc.] will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;

4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes issues related to community planning, community asset mapping and the relationship between the planning in the DCC and the community planning in the NEV. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. Consequently, although the Department of Geography is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used. In the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

5. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity if I wish so.

6. Do you give consent to relate your contributions with your identity in the final report?  
   - YES  
   - NO

I agree to take part in this project.

............................................................................. .............................................
(Signature of participant) (Date)

.............................................................................
(Printed Name)
Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

The aim of this project is to explore the relationship between official planning practice and community driven planning. Particular objectives of this research are:

1. To explore the different values, approaches and relationships between DCC planning and community planning in NEV community.

2. Examine and assess how asset mapping contributes to building capacity for community-based planning.

This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for Alejandra Parra Masters degree in Planning.

What Types of Participants are being sought?

We are looking for participants who have the following characteristics:

– Live in the North East Valley
– Wish to be of any help to the North East Valley Community
– Are aged 18 or more.

This participants were contacted by using the members database of the NEV project and by public advertisements like posters and The Valley Voice newspaper.
What will Participants be asked to do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to:

- Actively participate in a workshop about community asset mapping which is going to last around 1 hour 30 minutes.
- Answer a questionnaire about your personal skills, interests and ideas that can be useful to the community.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself.

What Data or Information will be collected and what use will be made of it?

The information collected will be the opinions of participants on the community planning process in the North East Valley such as: their views of the planning process, the degree and rationale for their involvement and their willingness to further support this process. Workshops will be audio and video taped with the purpose of better retain the opinions for later sistematization and organization of the information collected.

What is the purpose of collecting this data?

The purpose of collecting this information is to create an asset map of the North East Valley Community, and to propose ways to improve the community planning process that is being developed in the NEV. The results of this research will be used to inform a thesis for the fulfillment of the Masters of Planning program from the University of Otago, and also will be given back to the community in a report showing the findings and suggestions for the improvement of the community planning process.

Who will have access to the data collected?

The people who will have access to the raw data collected will be the research supervisor (Dr. Sean Connelly), and the student researcher (Alejandra Parra). No commercial use will be given to this information.

What happen to the data collected?

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned above will be able to gain access to it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for at least 5 years in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants may be destroyed at the completion of the research even though the data derived from the research will be kept for much longer or possibly indefinitely.

The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity if you wish so.
**Anonymity of information.**

On the Consent Form you will be given options regarding your anonymity. Please be aware that should you wish we will make every attempt to preserve your anonymity. However, with your consent, there are some cases where it would be preferable to attribute contributions made to individual participants. It is absolutely up to you which of these options you prefer.

**What kind of questions will be asked to you?**

This project involves both an open-questioning technique and a questionnaire. The general line of questioning includes issues related to community planning, community asset mapping and personal skills and interests of members of the NEV community. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked in the workshops have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the workshop develops. Consequently, although the Department of Geography is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used. The questionnaire you will be asked to answer contains questions about your level of involvement with the NEV community, your links with other people and organizations, your concerns and ideas for the NEV, and what skills and resources do you have that can be useful for the NEV community. In the workshops there will be individual work as well as discussion work in groups of 5 to 10. First, people will be asked individually about their skills, interests and ideas for the NEV, and then in groups they will be asked to articulate from their personal answers to a collective level of discussion in order to advance toward new ideas and opportunities to develop in the NEV.

In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s).

**Withdraw from participation.**

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself.

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

*Student Researcher Alejandra Parra*  
Department of Geography  
University Telephone Number: 47904218  
Email Address: paral084@studen.otago.ac.nz

*Supervisor Sean Connelly*  
Department of Geography  
University Telephone Number: 47908771  
Email Address: swc@geography.otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the Department stated above. However, if you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph. 03 479-8256). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
CONSENT FORM FOR
WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;

2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;

3. Personal identifying information [video-tapes/audio-tapes etc.] will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;

4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes issues related to community planning, community asset mapping and personal skills and interests of members of the NEV community. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the workshop develops. Consequently, although the Department of Geography is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used. In the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

5. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity if I wish so.

6. Do you give consent to relate your contributions with your identity in the final report?
   - YES
   - NO

I agree to take part in this project.

................................................................. .............................................................
  (Signature of participant)  (Date)

.................................................................
  (Printed Name)
Appendix B

Poster advertising the workshops
Social Asset Mapping Workshops

Are your skills being used in a meaningful way? Do you have dreams for North East Valley and flanks?

Help us to discover the treasures and potential in NEV community by building our social asset map!

Monday 9th of June, 4:30 - 5:30
Sunday 15th of June, 12:00 - 1:00
Community Rooms
262 North Road

Food will be provided!

If you can't make it to a workshop, you can still contribute by filling a form available at the community rooms and online http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VQ968LH

RSVP and enquiries to 4738614

These workshops are part of a research study called "Social Asset Mapping and Community Planning in North East Valley" which aim to examine how community asset mapping contributes to community planning. Contact details: Alejandra Parra. 02040110970. paral084@student.otago.ac.nz This project has been reviewed and approved by the Department of Geography, University of Otago.
Questions for interviews with key informants:

In general, the questions for the interviews with key informants were roughly the following:

1. What is your name and involvement/role with community planning?

2. What would you say is community planning?

3. What is the value of community planning?

4. What are the barriers for community planning to happen?

5. What is the relationship of the DCC with the community planning in NEV?

6. What would be the value of bringing together community planning and DCC planning?