

LO: To understand that **local interest groups** play a key role in regeneration decision making and that there often **tensions** between those seeking change and preservation.

Local interest groups (Chambers of Commerce, local preservation societies, trade unions) play a key role in decision-making about regeneration; there are often tensions between groups that wish to preserve urban environments and those that seek change. (London Olympics 2012)

### **Local interest groups: Chambers of Commerce, local preservation societies and trade unions**

## The role of local interest groups

Regeneration planning and management involves a range of players, sometimes with differing interests and aims. Local interest groups play varying roles in regeneration policies as we have seen already in the Heathrow expansion, HS2 and fracking debates. There are often tensions between groups that wish to preserve places and those that seek change. They may be

Regeneration in the twenty-first century is about partnerships between the public and private sectors. Often public money from taxes is used as a **pump-priming** mechanism to 'lever in' private investment. In order for partnerships for regeneration to work they need to include as many **players** as possible:

- **Chambers of Commerce:** these organisations represent business and industry in a local area, and persuade local and national government to invest in infrastructure, education and skills training.
- **Trade unions:** their job is to represent workers in particular industries over issues like pay and conditions; their support is important to many companies that want good worker-manager relations.
- **Education:** schools, further and higher education establishments provide the skilled workers modern businesses need so they are key partners.
- **Local groups:** regeneration and development involves change, so local environmental groups, historical preservation societies and even wildlife groups need to be involved so that change does not lead to negative local consequences.

### **Pump-priming**

means using money from national and local government to make an area more attractive to investors by improving derelict sites, transport, power and water supply, so that private companies choose to invest.

**Players** are the decision makers and other groups who have an interest in a particular plan or issue; the people affected by the changing geography of a place.

LO: To understand that **local interest groups** play a key role in regeneration decision making and that there often **tensions** between those seeking change and preservation.

Local interest groups (Chambers of Commerce, local preservation societies, trade unions) play a key role in decision-making about regeneration; there are often tensions between groups that wish to preserve urban environments and those that seek change. (London Olympics 2012)

## Tensions

### Tensions created by the 2012 Olympic Games

Clays Lane Estate was a housing co-operative development built in 1977, creating a community for vulnerable single people in Newham, London. Unfortunately the site was designated for the Olympic

athletes' village and the 430 residents were forced to move. There was huge public opposition and even a public inquiry. Several small businesses were also evicted from the Olympic site, such as Forman's salmon smokery.

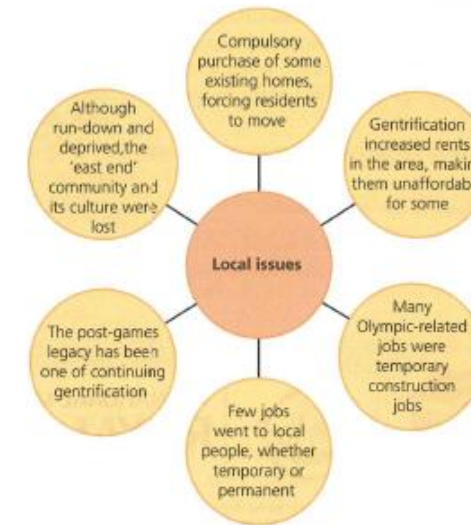


Figure 17 Local issues surrounding the 2012 London Olympics regeneration

The degree of **place attachment** is important in explaining engagement. It varies according to age, ethnicity, the length of time people have been residents in an area and by level of deprivation. A famous example of this is Coin Street in London. This is an area on the South Bank of the Thames, close to the London Eye. In the mid-1970s plans were made to redevelop what was by then a run-down, deprived, deindustrialised area. However, local residents strongly objected to the commercial development plans and launched a campaign to save the area, eventually buying the land themselves and setting up a community group, Coin Street Community Builders (CSCB). In 2016 CSCB still own and manage social, affordable housing in the area.

However, Coin Street was an established (if deprived) community. People are likely to feel much less attached to places if they have recently arrived (immigrants), are temporary residents (students) or are young and can't see a future for themselves in a place.

These changes should be positive, but they are not always viewed in that way. We saw how in the 1970s the residents of Coin Street resisted attempts to develop commercial, hotel and retail space in their area (page 35).

- In the 1980s the regeneration of London's Docklands by the London Docklands Development Corporation (a UDC) sparked protests by existing residents who felt the service sector jobs being created, and expensive apartment housing, was doing nothing to reduce poverty in the area.
- Around 25 years later residents in Newham, the site of the London 2012 Olympics, also felt that in some cases their needs were being ignored as the huge regeneration of the Olympic Park took place (Figure 17), e.g. protests by residents of the Clay Lane Housing Cooperative which was **compulsory purchased** in 2007 to make way for Olympic site developments.

...plans attempt to attract?

**Compulsory purchase** occurs when existing homes or businesses must be demolished to make way for new developments. Compensation is given, but the purchase cannot be prevented.

#### 4 Stakeholders in the local economy

The Olympic venues were sited on a former industrial estate, where 207 (mostly locally owned) companies employed 5000 people – all of whom were compensated to move. However, there were still objections (as Figure 6 shows). Most companies relocated within the local area, but many workers still faced a longer commute.

- ◆ Local borough councils had no say in the regeneration of the area, and there were tensions between the developments they wanted (affordable housing, work for local people) versus those approved by the LDDC. The Docklands regeneration was a **top-down** project, which ignored community groups who wanted social housing as part of a different vision for East London – and certainly did not want an airport (see Figure 3)!



Figure 3 A poster from the 1980s protesting against the construction of a new airport in London Docklands. That airport is now called London City Airport.