

shrink smart

Governance of Shrinkage  
Within a European Context



Work package 5

## The Governance of Urban Shrinkage in the Liverpool City-Region, United Kingdom

Research report

Comparable research report

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## 1 - Introduction

This report details the results of research undertaken in the Liverpool City Region (LCR), UK, for Work Package 5 (WP5) of the Shrink Smart project. The report continues the narrative of research undertaken for the fourth work package in Liverpool, which charted the causes and consequences of shrinkage in the city and wider conurbation. The fifth work package is concerned with the governance of shrinkage, and explores how local and national governing bodies responded to population loss in areas and the problems this caused. Further, it seeks to also establish how governance arrangements are in turn shaped by shrinkage and the institutional and policy responses to it.

At its core, WP5 is seeking to investigate the choices made by city administrations and national governments in responding to shrinkage. And there are many choices to be made. Chief among these is whether to accept shrinkage, and plan an area's land use, housing and public services accordingly, or to battle against shrinkage, and develop strategies which seek a return of residents.

The WP4 report highlighted the impacts of shrinkage in a number of policy areas. These included patterns of segregation and social cohesion, business and employment, social infrastructure and education, housing, technical infrastructure, land use and environmental quality and municipal finances and budget. In order to allow a sufficient depth of conclusions, the research undertaken in the LCR has focused specifically on the governance of housing renewal. As indicated in the WP4 report for Liverpool, shrinkage can have a significant impact upon housing in a locality, primarily through leaving an oversupply, resulting in higher than normal levels of vacant properties. However, as is the case with other areas of policy, the governance of housing is very complex, involving agencies based at different spatial scales of operation and with different objectives. The research presented in this report has therefore concentrated specifically on two case study neighbourhoods within the City Region, allowing a greater depth of study and illustrating how the governance of housing renewal can vary considerably even at the local scale.

Our research approach was primarily qualitative. The method relied heavily on the gathering and analysis of published and semi-published documentary evidence, mainly from local sources. These were supplemented by a series of semi-structured interviews with key actors from each locality.

The first part of the report explains the background to urban change and housing regeneration in the UK. This is followed by some reflections on the general experience of housing regeneration policy and governance in the Liverpool City Region. Next, data on population changes, household and housing trends in the LCR are presented and discussed. Sections 5 and 6 then present the two neighbourhood case studies which have been the focus of the research. Firstly, section 5 gives a description of activities in the Tranmere and Rock Ferry area of the City-Region. These two neighbourhoods are located in the eastern part of Wirral Metropolitan Borough near to the Mersey Estuary. They have been the subject of a series of housing renewal programmes over an extended period of time and this is reflected in our study period: 1990 to 2010. Secondly, section 6 is concerned with the case of Kensington in Liverpool. Over the past decade Kensington has experienced a very intensive period of housing renewal, involving a number of programmes and agencies. The study period in this case is 2002 to 2010.

Section 7 provides a discussion and analyses the results of research undertaken in the two case study areas. The chapter considers the policy outcomes and achievements, whether there was a lack of capacity for housing renewal, the cases dependence upon external resources, the unity and stability of the governance arrangements and the 'mode of governance'. Finally, section 8 offers some overall conclusions.

## 2 – Background: Urban Change and Housing Regeneration in the UK

The origins of British housing renewal can be traced back to the late 19th century. Slum clearance was the main form of intervention, with waves of activity at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in the 1930s and over a long period from the mid-1950s until the early 1970s. During these period most of the cities affected were expanding. Urban shrinkage was relatively unknown and the main catalyst for action was that of sanitary conditions. However, after publication of the 1971 Census, policy makers became aware of the scale of population loss that was beginning to affect a number of British cities. Concern about this issue, combined with concerns over the cost of slum clearance and a number of other factors led to a change of policy. From the mid-1970s until the end of the 1980s there was a concentration on housing refurbishment and area improvement. Substantial grants were available to home owners to bring their properties up to modern standards. At the same time local authorities had funds for local environmental improvements. The driving force behind these policies was always the aim of improving the quality of the housing stock and the residential environment. Policies were coordinated on an area basis through General Improvement Areas (GIA) and Housing Action Areas (HAA).

However, following the 1989 Local Government and Housing Act grants in support of this policy became means tested for the first time. GIA and HAA were replaced a new and broader concept: Renewal Areas (RA). These were to be larger and incorporate a more comprehensive, holistic approach to area regeneration, bringing a range of social, economic and environmental considerations into the decision-making process and through the co-ordination of a number of private and public sector actions into an integrated programme of area renewal.

As a consequence of the emerging loss of population combined with the effects of the high levels of housing output achieved in the previous decades, by the 1970s many British cities were experiencing a crude housing surplus for the first time in their histories. In consequence of this surplus the least popular dwellings were no longer being occupied. Invariably this tended to be poorly maintained social housing, particularly high-rise housing, especially if it was in remove or stigmatised locations.

The late 1980s and much of the 1990s also saw attention being paid to the renovation of run-down social housing estates. Remedial action, undertaken under the Estate Action programme or, in a few cases, through housing action trusts (HATs), often saw widespread demolition of unpopular housing, especially multi-storey apartments, and the installation of new management regimes, combined with tenure change and the insertion of pockets of new private housing. Vigorous implementation of these policies saw considerable improvement in the quality of the social housing stock and its management, with consequent dramatic falls in vacancy rates.

A more holistic approach also became absorbed into John Major's national Conservative Government's (1992-97) regeneration policy that included the Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Fund (SRB). Here the approach was both competitive and highly flexible, so that bid for support could be structured around local needs and objectives. Neither the objectives, area, timespan, partners of policy content were predetermined by central government: any well conceived local programme had the possibility of funding.

With the election of the 'New' Labour Government in 1997 there emerged a new emphasis on tackling social exclusion. The New Deal for Communities (NDC) was set up in 1998, with the aim of tackling multiple deprivation in the most deprived neighbourhoods by providing the resources to tackle problems in an intensive and co-ordinated way. The target was to achieve convergence between these neighbourhoods and the rest of the country. Thirty-nine partnerships were identified, many of which were experiencing population decline as well as severe social deprivation. Some £2 billion of central government funding was allocated to the problem. Policies were aimed at five key themes: creating jobs; reducing crime; improving educational attainment; improving health; and tackling problems with housing and the physical environment. The key, and novel, characteristics of the policy were said to be a (ten-year) long-term commitment to deliver real change; community involvement and partnership with key agencies; and 'joined-up thinking'.

Overlapping with the NDC, in 2001 the Government published a national strategy – *A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal* – led by the overarching principle that within ten to twenty

years no-one should be seriously disadvantaged by where they live (Social Exclusion Unit, 2001). The idea was to combine the activities of relevant agencies in a 'joined-up' holistic approach to solving the inter-related problems of unemployment, crime, low educational attainment, poor health, and housing and the local physical environment. New 'local strategic partnerships' (LSPs) were to bring together all the major agencies concerned with regeneration – including local authorities, housing providers, public utilities, development and community organisations – to formulate agreed strategies and oversee their implementation. Thus, under the Labour Government, housing regeneration became firmly placed within a much broader regeneration policy context.

This linking of housing with wider regeneration objectives is clearly reflected by one of the most controversial programmes of the Government's regeneration agenda. A problem of 'housing market failure' was emerging in some inner urban areas, with low demand and in extreme cases, abandonment of private housing (Mumford and Power, 1999). In response the Government established the Housing Market Renewal (HMR) programme, designed to bring housing demand and supply into better balance (through the demolition of obsolete stock, construction of new housing and improvement of the retained stock) in order to stabilise dwelling prices in a local area. This problem is so far unique to Britain, particularly England.

In 2002 the Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Pathfinder programme was launched, which was designed to renew housing markets in twenty-five local authority areas across the midlands and north of England. Housing market weakness in such areas was seen as being reflected in the presence of "neighbourhoods with high vacancy rates, high population turnover, low demand for social rented housing, low sales values and in extreme cases, housing abandonment and failure of the market for owner occupation" (Communities and Local Government, 2007: 3).

The HMR initiative can be seen as part of an implicit national spatial agenda for England which was articulated through the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan (ODPM, 2003) with its proposals for growth areas in the South of England and housing market renewal in the north and midlands. To some extent this agenda can be seen as being one of the latest reactions to the longstanding trends of economic and population growth in the south of England and relative decline in the north – tendencies that have preoccupied Governments in the UK since the 1930s (Hennessy 2006) and been the focus of successive waves of regional and urban policy and initiatives that have sought to address this issue with mixed success.

The perception of obsolete and derelict housing and badly-functioning housing markets in the north and midlands which the HMR programme sought to draw-upon as a justification for its objectives can be situated within this broader context. Though extensive research into housing markets was conducted in order to provide an evidence base for HMR and other programmes during the later 1990s and early 2000s (Nevin, 2001; Cole and Nevin, 2004), the rationale for the HMR programme was also bolstered through the media and political processes by the circulation of images of abandoned and derelict (usually terraced) housing.

When in 2004 the Government encouraged a grouping of northern development agencies to collaborate together in an initiative entitled the 'Northern Way' (Northern Way Steering Group, 2004; Northern Way Steering Group, 2005) in order to boost the productivity of the northern regions to the English average, one of the key issues to emerge was the issue of housing and its relationship with regional competitiveness. In fact one of the first policy pronouncements of the Northern Way Steering group was to call for the demolition of up to 400,000 houses in the north of England as part of a wider interregional growth agenda, on the basis that the northern regions needed to offer a larger diversity of housing stock in order to maintain and enhance their attractiveness and competitiveness. The HMR programme therefore reflects an intermingling of the urban competitiveness/renaissance and neighbourhood focussed concerns of the UK regeneration agenda under the Labour government (Couch, Sykes and Borstinghaus, 2011, p).

In February 2003 the Government made available £500 million to support the actions of the nine HMR 'Pathfinders' until March 2006 and further funding was made available for the April 2006 to March 2008 period. The programmes have pursued a range of approaches in seeking to revive housing markets and 'reconnect pathfinder areas with neighbouring functioning housing markets" (DCLG 2007: 4). These have included the refurbishment of housing stock to improve its condition, building new properties in partnership with social housing providers and/or private developers, addressing

issues of neighbourhood management, and demolition of properties. The latter element of the HMR programmes has proved to be the most controversial, and whilst overall it is reported that local residents have supported places for “neighbourhood remodelling”, in a number of places, including East Lancashire and Merseyside, there has been strong resistance to clearance proposals from some local residents and heritage groups (Allen, 2008). However, these views must be balanced against the strong support policy makers claim to have found in many communities affected and the participation of those communities in decision making processes.

An emerging body of academic writing on the HMR programme has offered a critical interpretation of its goals and speculated on its possible effects on the places and communities affected (Cameron, 2003; Nevin, 2004; Cameron 2006; Townsend, 2006; Allen 2008; Ferrari and Lee, 2010; Webb, 2010). Cameron has discussed the role of HMR in contributing to wider economic objectives in English regions, and sees notions of “rising aspirations” (2006:14) as underpinning the programmes. Housing ‘offer’ is seen as a factor in aiding regional economic growth and competitiveness. Others have seen the HMR programme as being a ‘revanchist’ exercise designed to ‘retake’ areas of cities and urbanised areas for the more affluent, who in recent decades have rediscovered the attractions of living in an urban environment (Cameron, 2003; Allen, 2008).

On the other hand, writing with specific reference to the Newheartlands, the Audit Commission reported in 2008 that:

“It has maintained a focus on community cohesion and supporting residents through change, and its actions are having a significant impact in its intervention areas. Its plans fit well with existing strategies, and support regional approaches to create balanced housing markets, deliver affordable housing and create sustainable communities. Particular improvements have been made in attracting private sector funding and developing an overall approach to value for money. This is recognised by the score for efficiency and effectiveness having improved from performing adequately to performing well.” (Audit Commission, 2008, p. 5)

Originally conceived in 2003 as a 15 year programme, the Coalition Government decided in October 2010 to bring the programme to a close. The BBC reported that ‘the government is to end a controversial housing regeneration programme in England four years earlier than planned’ quoting the Housing Minister Grant Shapps as saying ambiguously: “I have visited Pathfinder schemes on many occasions, and some were very good and some had some problems” (BBC News Online, 27.10.2010).

Housing renovation policy in England has developed from its origins in which public sector intervention was needed to tackle insanitary private (rented) housing, initially through slum clearance and later through housing improvement. Local authorities were subsidised to build an affordable mass housing stock. The role of the state was clearly perceived in terms of maintaining public health but also that of maintaining the nation’s housing stock. Gradually, though the 1960s and 1970s state subsidies housebuilding decreased while those towards low-income households increased. With the introduction of means tested grants in 1989 it is clear that the role of the state had moved away from responsibility for the nation’s housing stock to one of supporting individual households ability to compete in an increasingly privatised housing market.

Nevertheless, when the effects of population decline were first seen in the social housing sector and after a period of inertia, the state did respond vigorously to secure the value and utility of ‘its own’ housing stock, although part of the solution was often to transfer the stock to independent housing associations or private owners.

However by the late 1990s it was clear that housing was seen by the state as a ‘commodity’ to be provided predominately through private market systems with state intervention only to support those households who struggled to find ‘affordable’ housing. By this time over 80% of the stock was in the private sector and over 90% of completions were for private developers.

But this system fell into crisis around the millennium when the problem of housing surplus in a number of northern English cities experiencing population decline led to low demand and abandonment of private housing in the least popular inner urban areas. Afraid of a more widespread contagion of falling property values, the state intervened with ‘Housing Market Renewal’ to bring supply and demand into a better balance: not to tackle population shrinkage; not to improve public health; not to



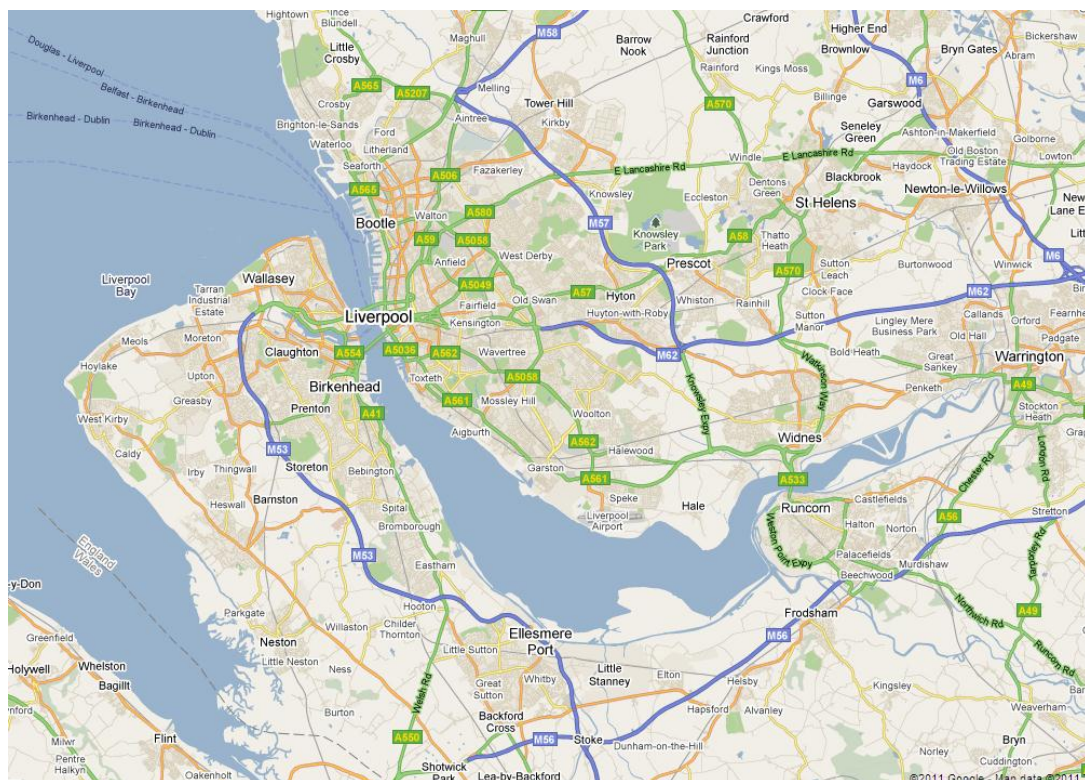
improve housing conditions; not to enhance the nation's housing stock; but to tackle the failure of the private housing market.

### 3 – Shrinkage in the Liverpool City Region [Merseyside]

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides background data about shrinkage in the Liverpool City Region (LCR), and its impact upon housing. The LCR is the broader conurbation within which the two focused case studies (discussed in chapters 5 and 6) are located. However, the policy literature does not define specific boundaries to the LCR. Instead, the edges of the region gradually fade. Therefore, in order to be able to analyse specific comparable indicators, for the purposes of this report the LCR is defined as the local authorities of Liverpool, Wirral, Sefton, St Helens and Knowsley (ie. the former County of Merseyside). Some readers will be aware that the current definition of the LCR used by policymakers also includes the Borough of Halton, but this area is excluded from our data. Figure 1 shows the city-regional context.

Figure 1. Liverpool City Region.



A series of indicators are presented for the area, which give an understanding of the population and housing trends in recent decades. This then provides a background to the analysis of governance in the city-region.

#### 3.2 Population and housing trends.

Table 1 presents the context of recent population trends. The LCR has been a shrinking city region, experiencing population decline for many years and has been the subject of more economic transformation, urban change and urban policy initiatives than almost any other British city. This history and the causes of change have been well documented elsewhere and will not be repeated here (Couch, 2003; Munck, 2003; Belchem, 2007). Although population decline has been a feature of the city region for more than seven decades it can be seen that the rate of decline is slackening, with even the core city approaching stability in the most recent years. Table 2 shows trends in the number

of households. Despite continuing population decline it will be noted that since 1981 the number of households within the core city (Liverpool) has increased, principally due to declining household size as discussed in WP4. This significantly complicates the relationship between shrinkage (population decline) and housing need.

**Table 1. Population trends**

	1971	1981	% change 71-81	1991	% change 81-91	2001	% change 91-01	2009	% change 01-09
Liverpool	610114	517000	-15.3	475600	-8.0	441900	-7.1	442300	0.1
Merseyside	1656545	1522000	-8.1	1438000	-5.5	1367800	-4.9	1350600	-1.3
UK	55610000	56348000	1.3	57801000	2.6	59113500	2.3	61792000	4.5

Source: Census data; NOMIS; Annual Abstract of Statistics

Note: All figures are mid-year population estimates, apart from the 1971 Liverpool figure.

**Table 2. Households**

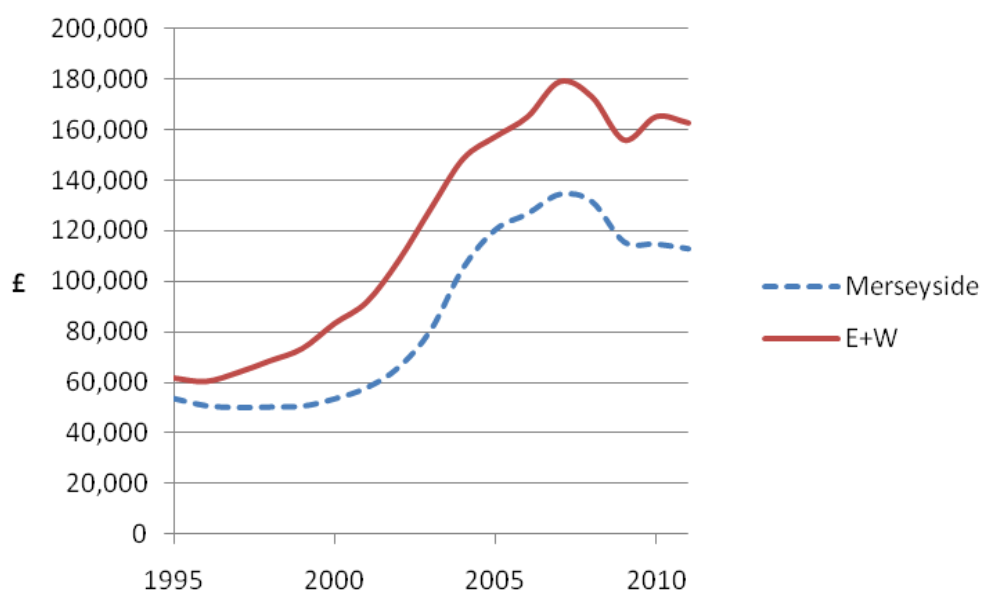
	1971	1981	1991	2001
Liverpool	194465	181228	184813	187865
Merseyside	528440	529912	554109	571311
UK	18746000	20095000	22563818	24479439

Source: Census data

Note: 1971 and 81 UK figures are estimates, calculated by dividing the total UK population over the average household size of the UK.

But around 75% of the housing stock in the area is provided by the private sector, to buy or rent, through the market. Therefore it is not housing need but housing demand (the willingness and ability to pay for a quantity of housing) that is the critical factor in the relationship between population size and the consumption of housing. Average dwelling prices provide an indication of the state of the housing market in any given area.

**Figure 2. House prices in England & Wales and Merseyside – 1995 to 2011.**



Source: Land Registry House Price Index

It can be seen that since 1995 the growth in dwelling prices in Merseyside has lagged behind national trends suggesting a more sluggish housing market locally that is more likely to lead to a surplus of supply over demand and a higher proportion of vacant properties. Despite the steady increase over the past 15 years, prices in Merseyside have actually fallen in relation to the national average. The particularly wide gap around 2000 – 2003 illustrates why the Government felt compelled to act on what they perceived as ‘housing market failure’ in the inner areas of Merseyside at that time (see discussion below).

Table 3 gives an indication of trends in housing vacancy in the core city. It can be seen that the proportion of vacant dwellings gradually increased through the 1980s and 1990s peaking at just under 8.00% across the city in the early 2000s. This trend provides further evidence of the widening gap between housing demand and supply in the city and the reasons for Government intervention.

**Table 3. Housing vacancy in Liverpool.**

	Vacant dwellings	% vacant
1980	8,507	4.23%
1985	9,692	4.79%
1990	13,285	6.54%
1995	15,672	7.68%
2000	16,381	7.99%
2002	15,445	7.48%
2003	16,217	7.83%
2004	15,061	7.23%
2005	14,085	6.73%
2006	14,209	6.76%
2007	14,099	6.65%
2008	13,855	6.49%
2009	12,392	5.76%

Source: calculated from: DCLG Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA) data.

Thus the area has experienced substantial population loss over the past three decades, and this has resulted in an emerging housing surplus. However, it must be understood that there is not a direct relationship between population change and the number of dwellings. This relationship is mediated through household formation and the workings of the housing market. Whilst a combination of housing market dynamics and public policy managed to keep a surprisingly good balance between housing supply and demand over much of the period, it became clear that by the millennium there was an emerging surplus that was not responding to market corrections at that time. Hence it was felt that government intervention was necessary.

It must also be remembered that this surplus was not evenly distributed across the housing stock. The 2001 census shows four wards in Liverpool with vacancy rates of over 10%: Granby, Kensington, Smithdown and Speke. The first three of these are inner urban wards characterised by a stock of older terraced housing, mainly in private ownership (although there was also a significant number of housing association properties in the area). Speke is a peripheral social housing estate and suffering some of the worst multiple deprivation in the country. Thus the problem is spatially concentrated. It is the policy responses to these problems of inner urban housing surplus that we will explore as case studies in order to investigate our two key research questions: how local and national governing bodies responded to population loss in areas and the (housing) problems this caused; how governance arrangements are in turn shaped by shrinkage and the institutional and (housing renewal) policy responses to it.

## 4. Housing Regeneration in the Liverpool City Region: Governance and Policy

### 4.1. Clearance and replacement.

There is an impression that there was a time when the City Council was in much greater control of the governance of urban renewal than is the case today. From the mid-1950s through to the early 1970s the national political imperative in housing policy was to tackle the acute housing shortage and modernising the existing stock. In line with national policy Liverpool City Council was engaged in a massive programme of modernising the housing stock. This was achieved through demolishing the high-density 19th century slum housing and replacing it with modern, medium density, mainly flatted accommodation in the inner urban areas and lower density overspill estates at the periphery to accommodate the remaining population. This replacement usually took place on a one for one basis, taking only limited account of changing social trends and migration patterns and thus, in the long run, exacerbating the surplus that was to become problematic in later decades. The scale of change was impressive, by 1965 some 17,000 dwellings had been cleared and a further 32,500 scheduled for future demolition. This was conceived as a grand co-ordinated plan for urban renewal. However:

“although the planning department conceives of renewal in comprehensive terms, although its district plans propose the replacement of facilities other than housing....the corporation’s [City Council’s] policy is in fact a housing programme coupled with hopes and prayers for ancillary development” (Muchnick, 1970, p80, quoted in Gibson and Langstaff, 1983).

Nevertheless, the policy was broadly successful in its own terms, but it became clear towards the end of the programme that its effects had gone beyond achieving ‘decongestion’ that was one of its original aims, to triggering a spiral of depopulation and disurbanisation that would have severe adverse social implications.

“In 1965 the average net density envisaged was for 140 persons per acre<sup>1</sup> rising to peaks of 200 ppa around district centres and transport nodes. But whereas it had been anticipated that the population of the inner areas would fall from 266,000 to 156,000 by 1985 (an average reduction of 5,000 per annum) the actual rate of decline was probably twice that figure. In consequence there was less need for such high densities. Furthermore, by 1970 both national and local politicians had turned against high-rise housing and a more humane scale of housing was being proposed. (Liverpool City Planning Department, 1970, p2)

There are a number of points to note about local governance in this period. Firstly, it is clear that the policy of slum clearance provided one of the main initial stimuli for population decline. Secondly, the spiral of causation whereby the higher than expected rate of population decline led to a reaction in housing policy that further reduced the density of replacement housing, led to further falls in the population. Thirdly, it is clear that the system of governance had less control over policy outcomes and side effects than might have been thought. Finally, whilst the City Council was in a powerful position to determine policy locally, with only limited influence from housing market pressures and other agencies, the nature of policy in all local authorities was heavily influenced by national government housing subsidies. Between the mid 1950s and the end of the 1960s central government subsidies to local authorities were strongly biased in favour of slum clearance and replacement rather than housing improvement and biased towards high-rise accommodation, usually built using industrialised methods with large scale long-term building contracts. For a time this put some major private housebuilding contractors in a powerful position with regard to housing design and quality.

### 4.2. Housing refurbishment and area improvement.

Nationally concerns emerged about the wisdom of continuing with such vigorous clearance programmes and the Housing Act 1969 permitted local authorities to designate General Improvement Areas (GIAs) within which housing renovation and local environmental improvements would be combined as an alternative to slum clearance and rebuilding. Initially Liverpool City Council

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<sup>1</sup> One acre is approximately 0.4 hectares.

designated two GIAs, at Kensington Fields and Granby, although many more designations followed over the next decade.

The governance of GIAs was very different from that in clearance areas. Clearance area policy could be dictated by central and local government on a top-down basis. Implementation was carried out through large-scale contracts with national housebuilding firms and the local population were informed rather than consulted about their housing futures. In the GIAs policy needed to be devised much closer to the action, on a dwelling by dwelling and street by street basis. This often meant opening a management office in the locality, a plurality of small scale building and engineering contracts and, most importantly, a process of community consultation and participation in the decision making. Thus, the population decline that influenced the shift in policy from clearance to area improvement indirectly stimulated a more localised, participative form of local governance. This approach continued for many years. Both Labour and Conservative governments supported area improvement throughout the 1970s and 1980s and local community participation became an accepted dimension in the governance of neighbourhood renewal. This new policy approach also had the effect of dramatically slowing the rate of population loss from the inner urban areas.

New and Expanded Towns had been developed in the 1950s and 1960s to help reduce densities in the conurbations and to accommodate overspill population. Liverpool was served by Runcorn and Skelmersdale new towns and expanded towns at Ellesmere Port, Widnes and Winsford. By the 1970s it was clear that far from assisting, these towns were competing with the conurbations for population and were becoming part of the cause of urban population decline rather than a cure of urban congestion. Gradually the policy was reversed. New Town programmes were suspended by national government and the conurbations, including Liverpool, pulled out of their expended-town agreements.

There were important changes in national policy. In 1980 the Conservative Government introduced the 'right to buy' – the right of social housing tenants to purchase their properties. Much of the more attractive council housing stock in the more popular locations thus moved to the owner occupied sector. This in turn left local authorities with a smaller and less attractive stock with which to accommodate a residual population who could not compete in the housing market. Some of this stock became stigmatised, in turn leading to population flight and rising vacancy rates in the worst affected locations.

Through the 1980s public sector housing construction declined sharply to almost nothing. Subsidies switched from construction (supply side) to housing benefit (demand side subsidies). New dwellings were provided by the market in locations that reflected patterns of demand – frequently at the periphery of the conurbations and beyond. However, at the same time an emerging national policy concern for urban regeneration led to the setting up of urban development corporations, such as the Merseyside Development Corporation, and other initiatives, which did gradually stimulate a modest return of some private housing investment to urban areas: notably in Liverpool, the former south docks area.

#### **4.3. A broader approach to neighbourhood renewal.**

When in 1989 the government introduced Renewal Areas, Liverpool was slow to take up this new approach. However a RA was eventually established in the multi-ethnic Granby district in 1996. Following detailed consultation with the local people proposals were agreed for local economic development, housing renewal and environmental improvements, all to be developed within a framework of community involvement.

There were also a number of SRB programmes in Liverpool. Typical was the North Liverpool Partnership covering the Breckfield, Everton and Vauxhall districts. With the aim of tackling the area's social deprivation, the partnership won £21.9 million from central government for a six year programme of economic development, social development, housing and environmental improvements. Other funds were levered into the area and the total investment achieved over the six years was in the order of £138 million (Couch, 2003, p. 171). Similarly, the Speke/Garston Partnership was awarded £22 million to tackle social, housing and environmental issues in that area. This was

complemented by an interesting joint venture between the City Council and the government's national regeneration agency, English Partnerships, known as the Speke/Garston Development Corporation, to develop the economic potential of the area (see Couch & Cocks, 2011).

Whilst the rescue of the private inner urban neighbourhoods was relatively successful for a time, the problems of social housing estates were increasing. There were a number of factors. Rising affluence generally was leading to falling demand for social housing as those who could, increasingly chose to move out of social housing into the owner occupied sector – often to cheap new housing being built on the periphery of the conurbation. Secondly, poor quality housing management and low standards of maintenance was being blamed for a decline in the physical quality of many social housing estates and a spiral of decline: rising voids, increasing vandalism and antisocial behaviour, and rapidly declining resident populations. In some cases peripheral social housing estates had been developed adjoining new industrial estates established in the 1950s and 1960s through regional development policies, by the 1980s and 1990s employment in such areas was often in decline, thereby exacerbating the problems of out-migration. There was a crisis in social housing. Following a period of experimentation, the Government established a programme of 'Estate Action' during the early 1990s. The problems were considerable. Out of 48,000 council owned dwellings in Liverpool, 3,400 were classed as unfit whilst a further 32,000 were identified as requiring renovation (Liverpool City Council, 1996, p. 12). The aims of the policy were to bring as many social dwellings as possible back into good condition and occupation. This frequently involved substantial remodelling of dwellings and the estate layout as well as changes in housing management and even tenure in some cases.

Many of Liverpool's council housing estates benefitted from this programme. Although the programme had been devised by central government, Liverpool City Council had considerable freedom to devise solutions in collaboration with local communities that were appropriate to specific local physical and social situations. Netherley was one large estate that saw considerable changes under this programme. The estate had been built in the 1970s as a high-density, multi-storey deck-access, flatted council estate. From the beginning its remoteness, on the periphery of the city and poor design made it unpopular with residents. In 1981 the housing vacancy rate in Netherley ward was 18% but in 2001, after extensive estate remodelling and judicious demolitions, the vacancy rate had fallen to only 1.1% - amongst the lowest of any ward in the city. The principle change had been to replace the unpopular flats with single family houses (See Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Netherley: before and after remodelling.**



In addition to the Estate Action programme, in order to deal with one specific and very severe problem: that of multi-storey flats, the City Council reached an agreement with central government to establish a Housing Action Trust (HAT) to address the problems of the city's tower blocks.

“Operating between 1993 and 2005 Liverpool HAT, a central government agency, acquired, with the agreement of tenants and the City Council, some 67 of the city's tower blocks (5,337

flats). Working closely with tenants, half of whom were over 60 in 1993, the LHAT refurbished 13 blocks and demolished the remainder to be replaced by 1,536 low rise dwellings. This was not so much bottom-up community activism, but a more altruistic state machine choosing to work with the community. A High Rise Tenants Group (HRTG) was established, with seats on the main LHAT Board, and a high level of representation in local decision making. Tenants were supported and empowered by the LHAT through various capacity building measures, such as training in design and accounting procedures. Their story has been described by Catherine Simmons in *Any Other Business – The HRTG Story*, and shows that in the right circumstances there can be agreement and collaboration between the state and local communities” (Couch, 2008, p).

Another initiative of the City Council was the ‘Vacant Dwellings Initiative’, whereby the council collaborated with local housing associations and private developers to tackle the problems of unpopular council housing estates. In a typical example, St Andrew’s Gardens, a former inner urban council estate comprising walk-up flats from the 1930s and maisonettes from the 1950s, was transformed through renovation and selective demolition and replacement to provide a mix of student accommodation, private and social housing (Couch, 2003, p147).

One part of the city that had experienced particular problems with housing management was the Speke area. Here the solution was rather different. The stock of nearly 5,000 council dwellings was transferred to a specially established new registered social landlord (housing association) known as South Liverpool Housing (SLH). SLH was charged with improving the condition and management of social housing in the area and funded with a grant of over £43 million from central government’s Estate Renewal Challenge Fund. Since the establishment of SLH in 2001 great progress has been made in improving the physical appearance of the estates, removing unpopular dwelling types, increasing tenure diversity and modernising the provision of social and commercial facilities.

By the mid 1990s central government was becoming concerned that the long-running trend of population decline in British cities was affecting urban employment, retailing and ancillary services and in consequence began calling for re-investment in city centres. The aim was to support sustainable development through enhancing the *vitality and viability* of town and city centres. This included increasing the by now very low levels of population living in the heart of the city. Echoing this philosophy, the *Liverpool City Centre Plan* published in 1993 stated that:

The Council will aim to reverse the trend of depopulation and promote the City Centre as a living environment and encourage new housing development on vacant sites within housing areas as well as mixed use developments elsewhere. [These] could introduce diversity, security and life into the office quarter, main retail area, London Road and Duke Street area, especially at night and weekends. (Liverpool City Council, 1993, p. 25)

The policy was implemented slowly at first as developers cautiously tested the market for living in the city. But by the 2000s the rate of residential development in the city centre was faster than in any other part of the city. ‘According to Liverpool City Council, between 1996 and 2005 more than 3,500 dwellings were built in the city centre. To this must be added over 3,000 dwellings under construction in July 2005 and more than 4,000 in anticipated schemes with planning permission’ (Couch *et al*, 2009).

A key question was whether this increase in housing provision in the city centre would have any adverse impact on the continuing decline of housing demand and population in the inner urban areas. In a study in 2009, it was concluded that:

“The central area market differs from the inner area housing market in a number of ways: in general it offers a different product aimed at a different type of households at a different price level and marketed in a different way. Only in the student housing market does there seem to be any strong connections between the two areas” (Couch *et al*, 2009, p.).

However, the student market is not inconsiderable in scale with over 10,000 student bedspaces being completed in the central areas in recent years. It is highly likely that this trend has made a significant contribution to declining housing demand and continuing population reductions in the traditional student neighbourhoods within the inner urban areas.



At the same time as encouraging investment in city centre housing and engaging in housing market renewal in the inner urban areas, both regional and local policies have been putting pressure on developers to concentrate investment. Firstly central government policy requires a minimum of 60% of all new housing development to take place on previously developed urban land [In the LCR the figure achieved is over 80%]. Secondly, the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) (GONW, 2008) called for employment and residential development to be concentrated in the core of the Liverpool and Manchester city regions and their adjacent areas, rather than the more rural areas to north and south. Thirdly, strong 'Green Belt' policies have been in force for many years, effectively prohibiting development on rural land adjoining urbanised conurbation. And fourthly, even within the urban areas of the city region both Liverpool City Council and Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council have (in line with the RSS) restricted housing development to the inner urban and central areas through 'supplementary planning documents'. Thus for at least a decade there have been strong and effective planning policies supporting reurbanisation.

The HMR programme in the LCR has been led by a coordinating body named Newheartlands. The four main goals of the programme in the area have been:

- To create the conditions for the revival of housing markets in the NewHeartlands area;
- To create attractive and sustainable urban neighbourhoods through the delivery of a more balanced mix of housing, with values and types to meet the needs of the existing population and which help attract new residents;
- To build sustainable communities, ensure community cohesion and safeguard investment through the provision of quality public services and through the development of supporting infrastructure; and
- To contribute to the competitiveness and prosperity of the wider LCR conurbation and the North West region.

(Newheartlands, 2004b, p. 6)

The Newheartlands Board consists of:

- An Independent Chair, with voting rights;
- Representatives from three partner local authorities and local strategic partnerships, also with voting rights; and
- Representatives from advisory/stakeholder organisations, without voting rights ( Newheartlands, 2004b, p. 11).

The local governance of HMR involves two basic layers. At the top are the Newheartlands organisation. The role of Newheartlands is to liaise with central government, coordinate the programme across the LCR, share best practice and collect and distribute indicators (Newheartlands officer, interview, 17/01/2011). However, the responsibility for the delivery of the programme is with teams located within the three local authorities (one team in each authority). These teams "develop and implement the specific interventions which make up the wider programme within the framework established by the overall strategy, aims and objectives for the Pathfinder." (Newheartlands, 2008, p. 23). Implementation at the neighbourhood level is through masterplans (drawn up by Design Working Groups on which local communities were represented) and Neighbourhood Renewal Assessments (NRA)<sup>2</sup>. In delivering the projects, the local teams work in partnership with chosen private developers and RSLs. In Kensington, Liverpool City Council have been the local delivery body.

The HMR initiative is closely monitored by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) (of the national government). The Newheartlands performance managing and monitoring framework "underpins and regulates all of its operations and processes and tracks performance against targets whilst identifying continuously opportunities for improvement." (Newheartlands, 2008, p. 24). Progress is reported to the Board regularly specifically against the inputs, outputs and spend agreed with CLG (more recently with the Homes and Communities Agency) through the Funding

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<sup>2</sup> Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment (NRA) is a methodology for systematically assessing local areas prior to regeneration or renewal. It comprises a series of logical steps which, when taken together, provide a thorough appraisal method for considering alternative courses of action for an area, including decisions concerning choices between housing clearance or refurbishment.

Agreement and Deeds of Variation. Local authorities undertake their own evaluations of individual projects, and the whole programme is also subject to an annual Audit Commission performance review.

In addition, the Newheartlands Business Plan 2008-11 states that:

“Our plans and proposals are supported by residents, local authority, housing association and developer partners, and regional agencies, and are aligned with the strategies and policies of organisations such as Merseytravel, Merseyside Police, Primary Care Trusts and the Sub-Regional Partnership. They also help to deliver the objectives of the Regional Economic Strategy, the Regional Spatial Strategy, Regional Housing Strategy, the City Region Development Programme and the City Region Housing Strategy.” (Newheartlands, 2008, p. 4)

In terms of future development in the city region, on the horizon are two proposals for developments that appear at first sight to conform with the reurbanisation strategy but it must be questioned whether they will actually have any benefits for the existing inner area communities or any positive impact in increasing inner area populations. These are the Liverpool Waters and Wirral Waters developments proposed by Peel Holdings – a private sector landowner.

“The Liverpool Waters and Wirral Waters schemes will comprise a total investment by Peel of £10 billion and will result in the regeneration of 650 acres of redundant docks in Liverpool and Birkenhead. It is envisaged that the total new building floor area created will be over 3 million square metres, with a mixture of commercial, retail, cultural and leisure development and the development of over 25,000 new homes. It is anticipated that both schemes together will create over 40,000 direct full time jobs (in addition to the many part-time and indirect construction roles), over an estimated 30 to 40 year development period”. (Liverpool Waters, 2011)

Whilst on the surface such investment looks very attractive, important questions need to be asked about the viability of this huge project and its impact on other parts of the city region, particularly the adjoining inner urban neighbourhood that are still today characterised by low housing demand and continuing population decline.

Thus, surveying the history of population decline and policy response in Liverpool it can be seen that population decline has never been evenly distributed across the city. Rarely has the issue facing policy makers been expressed as one of population decline. More usually policy has responded to perceived problems of social deprivation, social exclusion, and low housing demand or high housing vacancy, even though the underlying problem may in fact be the falling population. Policy responses have been patchy and essentially aimed at dealing with one problem at a time. This type of policy making is known in planning theory as ‘disjointed incrementalism’ and is legitimised by the argument that it is impossible to govern any city on a ‘rational comprehensive’ basis because the complexity of the problems and their interactions are simply too great to understand and resolve at any one time.

The following two chapters present research undertaken in the two case study neighbourhoods – Tranmere/Rock Ferry and Kensington. The cases will then be analysed and contrasted in Chapter 7, before Chapter 8 provides some overall conclusions.

## 5. Case study 1 – Tranmere and Rock Ferry

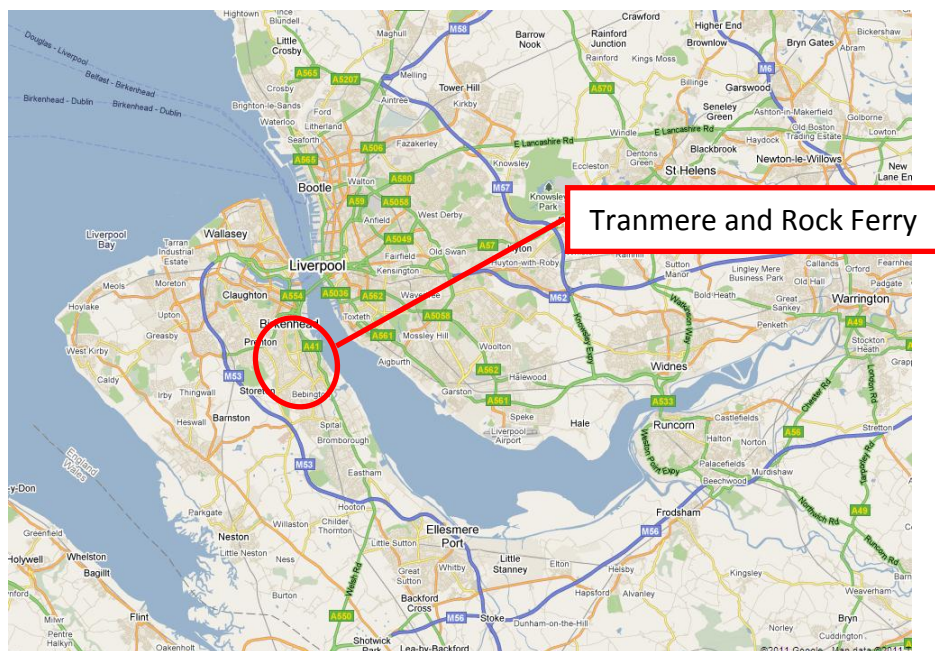
### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of research undertaken in the first of the two case study areas – Tranmere and Rock Ferry. Some basic background information and data is firstly provided about the locations. The governance arrangements and response to the housing problems caused by shrinkage are then presented in detail. Section 5.3 then analyses the governance arrangements and policy outcomes, and section 5.4 provides analysis from a ‘policy cycle’ perspective. Finally, some conclusions are drawn.

### 5.2 Background information and data

Tranmere and Rock Ferry are two adjacent areas on the eastern side of the Wirral (See Figure 4). Figure 6 shows the area and relevant boundaries in more detail.

Figure 4. Tranmere and Rock Ferry location.

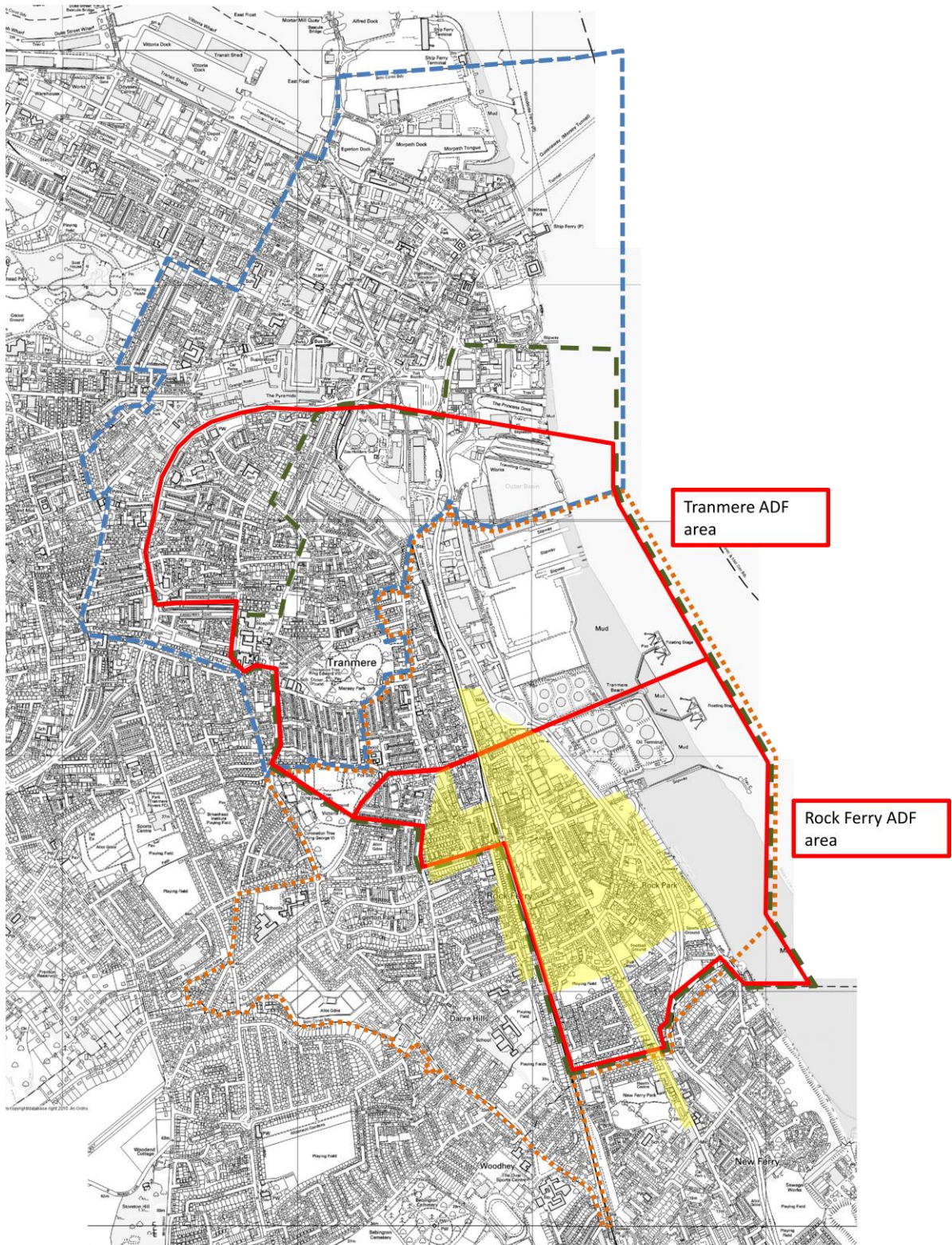


The two areas originally became urbanised in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, providing housing for workers in the shipbuilding and other port-related industries that grew up along the Birkenhead shoreline at this time. The housing closest to the shore was of the highest density and poorest quality, moving inland and onto higher ground the housing in upper Tranmere was of somewhat better quality and occupied by a more middle class population. Figure 5 illustrates the typical housing stock.

Figure 5. Traditional housing and recently completed apartments in Tranmere.



Figure 6. Tranmere and Rock Ferry relevant boundaries.



- |           |  |           |   |
|-----------|--|-----------|---|
| — — — — — | Tranmere ward (pre-2004)                 | — — — — — | HMRI Area Development Framework (ADF) areas |
| - - - - - | Birkenhead and Tranmere ward (post-2004) | ■         | Renewal Area                                |
| · · · · · | Rock Ferry ward (post-2004)              |           |   |

However, with growing affluence and a decline in local industrial employment the area began losing population, as residents migrated to better housing or to work elsewhere. Table 4 shows that between 1981 and 2001 the population decreased by 2,974 (20% of the 1981 figure [Wirral: 6%; LCR: 13%]). However, the 2009 population estimate indicates that since then the population has increased by 464 (4% of the 2001 figure [Wirral: -1%; LCR: -6%]).

**Table 4. Population in pre-2004 Tranmere ward – 1981-2009.**

Year	Tranmere	Wirral	LCR
1981 (present residents)	14642	333021	1,656,545
1991 (present residents)	13314	316337	1,522,000
2001	11668	312293	1,438,000
2009	12132	308,500	1,350,600

Source: Census (1981-2001); Office for National Statistics (2008)

Despite a population loss of around 20% between 1981 and 2001, the number of households in Tranmere declined by only 5.5% reflecting the fall in household size. Nevertheless housing demand continued to fall and housing vacancy increased to more than twice the Wirral average (see table 5). Also, by 2001 average dwelling prices in the Tranmere and Rock Ferry ADF area<sup>3</sup> were only 47% of the Wirral average (Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, 2009a; Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, 2009b).

**Table 5. Housing vacancy in Tranmere.**

	Tranmere	Wirral	LCR
1981	7.3%	4.6%	4.6%
1991	7.8%	4.3%	4.5%
2001	9.0%	4.1%	3.9%

Census data

### 5.3 Governance arrangements and policy responses

The governance arrangements and governance responses to the problems caused by shrinkage are very much connected in the two areas. The responses often lead to changes in governance arrangements and vice versa. Figure 7 below displays the governance arrangements from 1990 until 2010. Table 6 and the text which follows then explain the diagram. Figure 8 then displays a representation of the interactions between different agencies during 2009. Small symbols are used to indicate the reason/s for the interaction.

<sup>3</sup> The Housing Market Renewal Initiative (HMR) defined two Area Development Framework (ADF) areas (Tranmere and Rock Ferry) for intervention which put together closely match the boundaries of the pre-2004 Tranmere ward.



**Table 6. Institutions in Tranmere and Rock Ferry.**

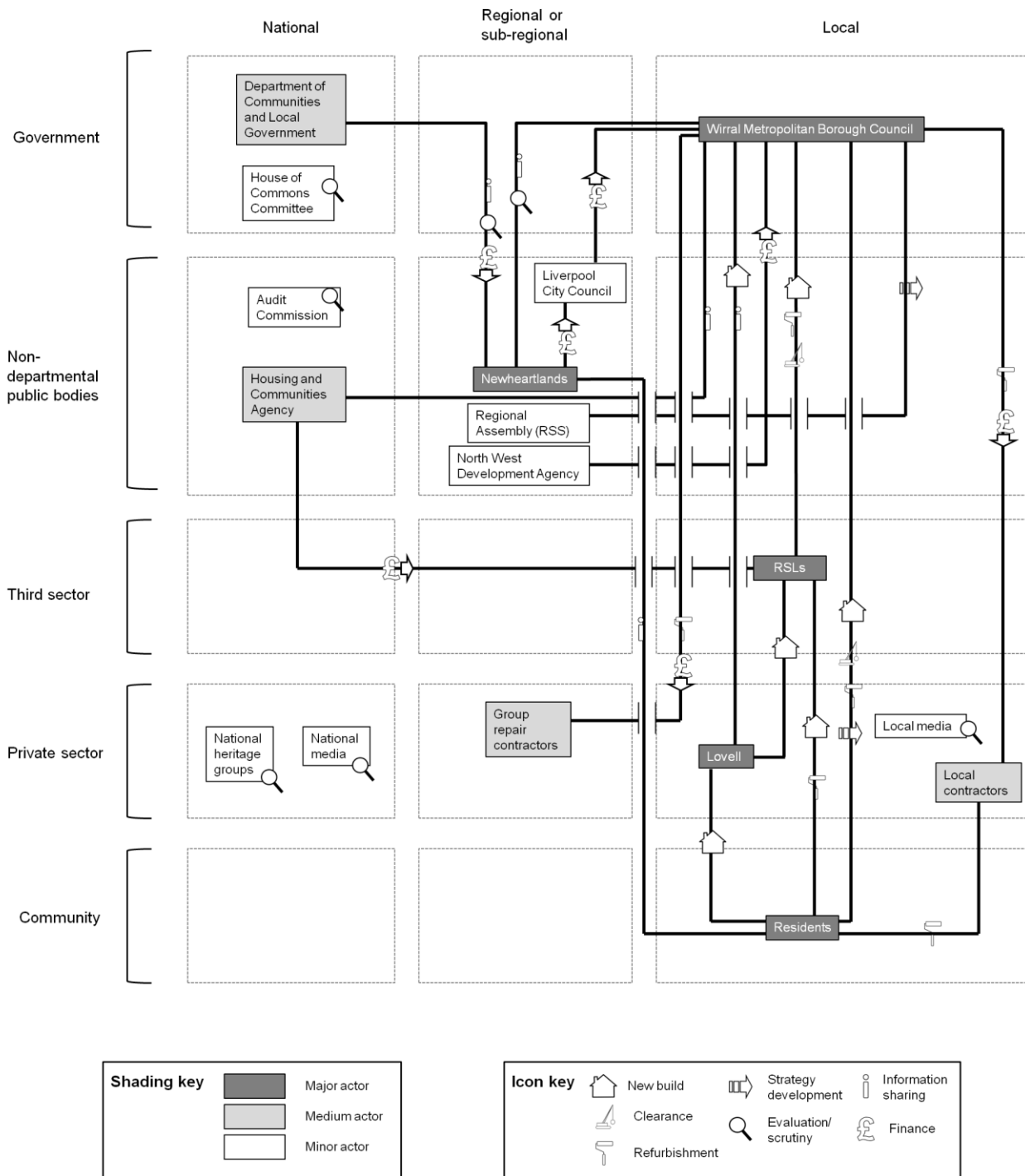
<b>Institution</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Nature of institution</b>	<b>Who funds it?</b>	<b>Role in housing renewal</b>	<b>Finance injected into housing renewal in Tranmere (where information available)</b>
Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council	1974 – present	Publicly funded local authority	Funded through local taxing capacities, and national government, through support grants.	The most consistent and most significant body involved in housing renewal in Tranmere/Rock Ferry. Responsible for general council funded renewal activity, as well as administering the Wirral HMR programme.	£6.8 million in Tranmere ADF since 2003.
Newheartlands	2003	Publically funded housing renewal coordinating body	National government	Responsible for coordinating the HMR programme across the LCR.	£15 million in Tranmere ADF since 2003.
Wirral Partnership Homes	2005 – present	Registered social landlord (Stock transfer)	Housing and Communities Agency (HCA) (national government funds), self-funding	The largest RSL in the two HMR areas, owning 58% of RSL stock in Rock Ferry and 26% in Tranmere HMR. Have undertaken significant improvement to their stock in recent years to meet the national Decent Homes Standard.	
Riverside Housing	1928 – present	Registered social landlord	HCA (national government funds), self-funding	Owns 18% of RSL stock in the Rock Ferry HMR area and 16% in the Tranmere HMR area. Jointly prepared the Fiveways Masterplan (with Inner City Solutions). Also involved with the Tranmere Housing Regeneration Partnership.	
Lovell	1970s - present	Private sector house builder	Self-funding	Lovell is the Council's preferred Private Sector Development Partner for the HMR initiative. They are the developer for the Fiveways scheme (the demolition of 241 residential properties and 7 industrial units, and the development of 283 new-build residential units), and other schemes across Tranmere/Rock Ferry.	£25 million on the Fiveways scheme and £15 million on Church Road scheme [authors' estimate based on average construction costs]. £3317 per person (2008 Tranmere pop.)
Beazer Homes		Private sector house builder	Self-funding	Have completed a large development at Longfellow Drive.	

Wirral Methodist Housing Association	1964 – present	Registered social landlord	HCA (national funds), government self-funding	Have completed a development of 8 units in Rock Ferry.	£912,952 [authors' estimate]. £76 per person (2008 Tranmere pop.)
Portergate Residential Ltd		Private sector house builder	HCA (national funds), government self-funding	Have completed a small residential scheme on New Chester Road.	
Venture Housing Association		Registered social landlord	HCA (national funds), government self-funding	Own 16% of the RSL stock in the Tranmere HMR Area. Developed 12 houses and four bungalows for rent on the site of 1 – 33 Leighton Road and Thompson Street, in partnership with Family Housing Association.	£1,825,904 [authors' estimate]. £151 per person (2008 Tranmere pop.)
Family Housing Association		Registered social landlord	HCA (national funds), government self-funding	Developed eight houses and six bungalows for rent on the site of 1 – 33 Leighton Road, in partnership with Venture Housing Association.	£1,597,666 [authors' estimate]. £132 per person (2008 Tranmere pop.)
Maritime Housing Association		Registered social landlord	HCA (national funds), government self-funding	Involved with the Tranmere Housing Regeneration Partnership.	
Regenda Housing Association		Registered social landlord	HCA (national funds), government self-funding	Involved in the development of 15 affordable units to complement the private developer scheme, Riverview, at the top of Holt Hill.	£1,711,785 [authors' estimate]. £142 per person (2008 Tranmere pop.)
Regenda First (possibly linked to the organisation above)		Registered social landlord	HCA (national funds), government self-funding	Provided 21 new affordable homes, completed in March 2010 at Old Chester Road and Southwick Road in Tranmere.	The development cost a total of £3.1m and attracted £1.3m of grant funding from the Homes and Communities Agency.
Inner City Solutions		Private regeneration consultancy	Self-funding	Jointly prepared the Fiveways Masterplan (with Riverside).	
Wirral Strategic Housing Partnership (WSHP)		Housing themed partnership		A sub-group of the LSP, the WSHP is the thematic partnership responsible for delivering the 'High Quality Homes; High Quality Housing Services' theme within the Sustainable Communities Strategy. It is facilitated by the Council's Housing Strategy Team and chaired by the	



				'Sector Champion' Brian Simpson of Wirral Partnership Homes.	
Merseyside Housing Forum		Partnership		A partnership of the five Liverpool City Region local authorities to address public and private sector housing issues.	
North West Development Agency	1998 – present	North West England Regional Development Agency	National government	Provided match funding for HMR related projects.	£744,000 in match funding in the Tranmere ADF since 2003.
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister/Department of Communities and Local Government		National government department		Government department responsible for housing and the built environment. Provided the funding for, and monitored, the HMR programme in Kensington.	
Housing Corporation/HCA	HC – 1964. HCA – 2008-present	National non-governmental public body	National government	Funded new affordable housing (through RSLs) and regulated RSLs in England. Provided funding for the RSLs involved in housing renewal in Tranmere/Rock Ferry.	

**Figure 8. Interactions between agencies in Tranmere and Rock Ferry, 2009.**



The driving force behind housing renewal in the area throughout the 20 year period has been Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council. In the early 1990s the Council designated Rock Ferry East and West Renewal Areas under the 1989 Local Government and Housing Act. The Renewal Area was to last 10 years and provide a more holistic approach to housing regeneration than had been undertaken by previous initiatives. The intention was to “focus attention on the use of a broader area strategy which may include environmental and socio-economic regeneration” and “should...secure a reduction in the number of unfit houses, whether by repair or demolition...This presupposes a more flexible approach in assessing the various renewal options” (Department of the Environment, 1990, p. 5, cited in Couch

and Gill, 1993, p. 1). This was to be achieved through the coordination of a number of private and public sector actors – with the programme having the intention to “create a true partnership between the local authority, residents and private sector interests” (DETR, 1997, p. 1).

The Department of the Environment defined the following criteria for the selection of RAs:

- A minimum of 300 properties;
- 75% of the properties should be in private ownership;
- 75% of dwellings should be unfit or qualify for grants under the terms of the 1989 Act;
- At least 30% of households should be in receipt of state benefits.

Within these criteria the Act allowed the local authority to declare the Renewal Area without reference to national Government and to “acquire land and property for improvements, repair and management by other persons. Property may subsequently be disposed of to owner occupiers, housing associations or other private sector interests in line with their strategy for the Renewal Area. The Authority may also provide housing accommodation on land acquired.” (Wirral Borough Council, 1991, p. 5).

In the early 1990s the Rock Ferry East and West Renewal Areas acted as umbrellas for a number of improvements. Several hundred older dwellings were refurbished, including a number in the ‘Fiveways’ area (see below). A small council housing estate within the area received ‘Estate Action’ treatment that included the refurbishment of one tower block and the top-downing of four storey maisonettes to create two storey houses, with the former public open space incorporated as private gardens. Obsolete and surplus shop units were removed from Bedford Road and a shop-front improvement scheme applied to the few remaining units. New boundary walls and street works were provided along the New Chester Road and Bedford Road in order to improve the appearance and visual impact of the neighbourhood.

In 1998 the Tranmere Housing Regeneration Partnership (THRP) was established to co-ordinate an ambitious, long term investment plan. The Partnership was made up of Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, Riverside and Maritime Housing Associations and the Housing Corporation. Between 1998 and 2004 the Partnership coordinated clearance and refurbishment of properties in the Tranmere area, as well as the development of new units. It was also involved in other related housing management schemes. After a successful bid by THRP to become a Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder, the Partnership was wound-up in December 2004.

THRP achieved the clearance of over 600 obsolete housing units, the refurbishment of around 1500 private and Council owned units and the development of a mix of over 250 rented and shared ownership affordable homes. This involved £33 million of housing investment and an estimated £4 million private funding levered into Tranmere up to 2003. THRP also secured national Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF)<sup>4</sup> finance for a neighbourhood wardens scheme which was run by Maritime Housing, development of service level agreements and a number of other projects since Wirral LSP targeted NRF at its five most deprived wards which included Tranmere. Over time, THRP’s focus widened and its core members decided to launch a bid to become a Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder.

The Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder (called ‘Together’) is a national government sponsored partnership of local public and voluntary bodies with residents. Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council is the accountable body and Riverside Group employs the neighbourhood management team. The partnership’s key objectives are to promote the benefits of neighbourhood management and a neighbourhood focus for services to partners; to better target resources and tailor service delivery at neighbourhood level; and to respond effectively to local need and where necessary encourage joined-up services. (Together 2005-06 Delivery Plan, cited in Evans, 2005, p. 9)

The scheme claims to have “built up the capacity of local residents to engage in a range of environmental, community safety, healthy eating and other projects which raise the perceptions of the area as a positive place to live” (Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, 2009b, p. 7), as well as

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<sup>4</sup> The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund was established by the national government in 2000. It provided social regeneration funds for what were judged to be the 88 most deprived local authorities in the country.

“strengthened their ability to influence service delivery to meet local needs and aspirations and to demand more from service providers in the area.” (ibid., p. 4).

In terms of empty properties, in the late 1990s the Council targeted resources specifically at the Renewal Areas and Tranmere Urban Village Area.<sup>5</sup> In Tranmere there also existed an empty properties partnership between the Council and local Housing Associations. Additionally, Single Regeneration Budget<sup>6</sup> resources were also used in the Church Road area of Tranmere to assist owners and landlords to both renovate and bring back into use vacant flats above shops and also to convert vacant retail units into residential units. (Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, 2000, p. 17)

In 2002 Tranmere and Rock Ferry were identified as Area Development Framework (ADF) areas under the Housing Market Renewal initiative. Newheartlands is the central body which coordinates and provides information sharing for the HMR initiative across the Liverpool City-Region. The delivery of the programme in each area is then led by each local authority. Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council in turn have designated preferred private developer partners (Lovell) and partner registered social landlords (RSL) (primarily Wirral Partnership Homes and Riverside, who are the major RSLs in the area) and worked closely with them to undertake renovation, demolition and the building of new properties.

The outcomes of HMR in these areas have so far included the following. Rock Ferry ADF Area - Fiveways development includes demolition of 241 residential and 7 industrial units and development of 283 new-build residential units. “The development will lever in private sector and NAHP revenues of £37 million and has stimulated market confidence in the area with new units being built opposite the site.” (Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, 2009a, p. 19). Figure 9 below displays new build housing in the Fiveways scheme.

**Figure 9. Replacement housing being built on a slum clearance site at Fiveways, Rock Ferry.**



Tranmere ADF Area – 220 units acquired and 189 demolished. HMR investment of £15 million has been matched by £744,000 from the NWDA and £6.8 million from the Council. 151 new build units by RSLs. “The programme for 2008-11 will complete the acquisition of the remaining 11 commercial and 4 residential properties identified for clearance and will enable the commencement of new build development which will revitalise the neighbourhood retail centre on Church Road, seen by residents as being at the heart of the community.” (Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, 2009b, p. 20) In

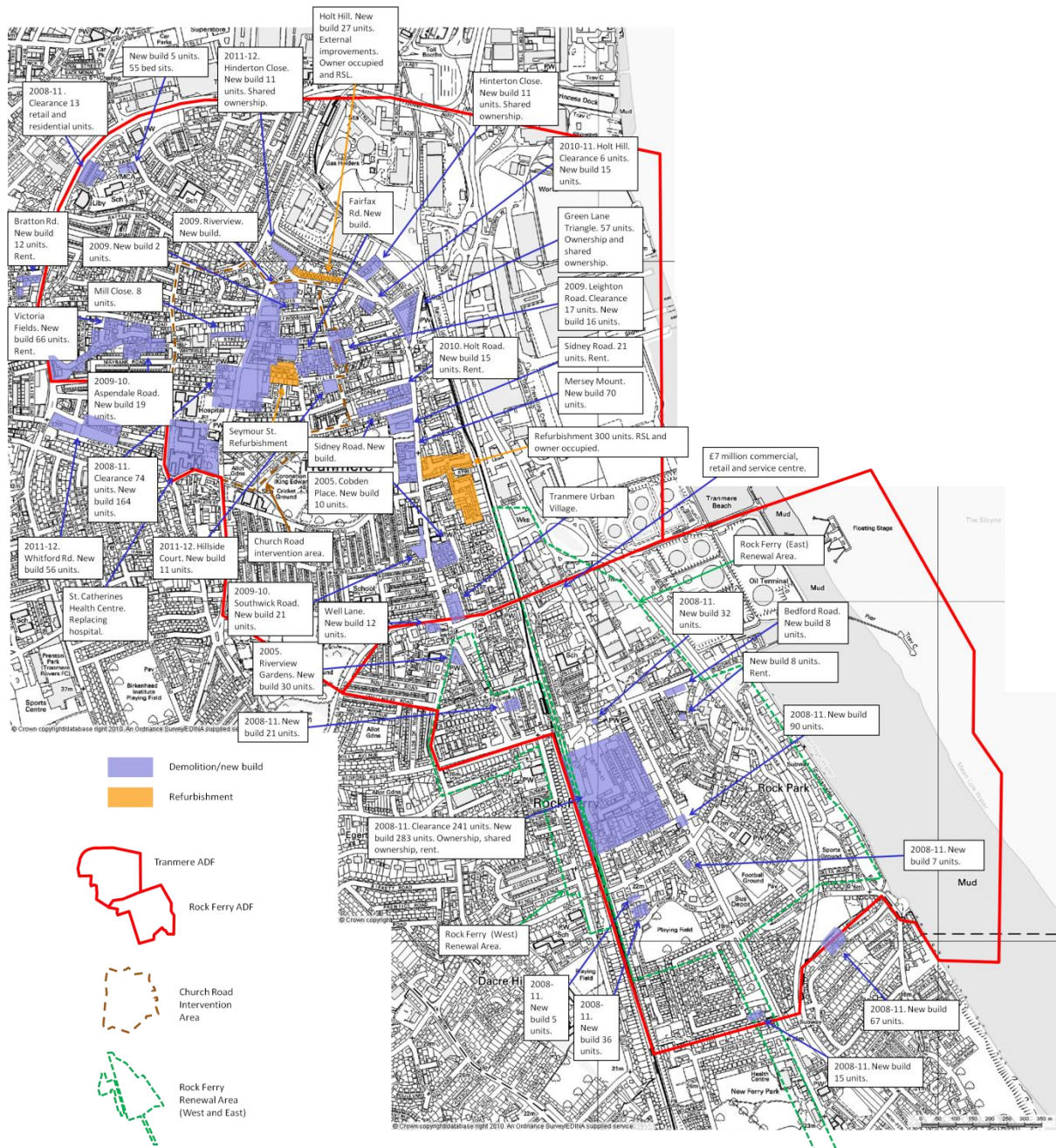
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<sup>5</sup> Tranmere urban village was a partnership between Arena Housing Association, Wirral MBC and the Lairdsie Partnership. It was funded by the three partners, along with Single Regeneration Budget and NWDA funding. The scheme created a new Library, a One Stop Shop, a local housing office, a post office, a bakery, fourteen retail units, twelve flats for rent, a community hall and some public open space.

<sup>6</sup> The Single Regeneration Budget was an amalgamation of a number of national regeneration funding streams by the national government in 1994. It provided finance for local partnership-based regeneration schemes.

addition to Church Road, it is planned to complete the acquisition and clearance of a dilapidated block of retail commercial and residential units at 311-319 Borough Road, Tranmere (ibid.). Figure 10 below shows the major neighbourhood renewal interventions in the Rock Ferry and Tranmere areas over the last 20 years.

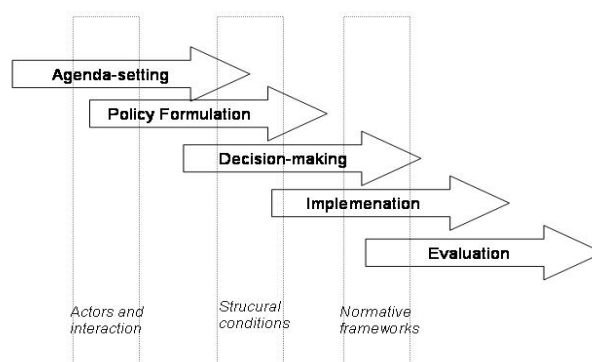
**Figure 10. Interventions in Tranmere and Rock Ferry.**



#### 5.4 Policy cycle analysis

The governance response to the effects of shrinkage in Tranmere and Rock Ferry will now be analysed more sequentially using a 'policy cycle' framework. Figure 11 below illustrates the policy cycle.

**Figure 11. Policy cycle.**



There is no specific date at which the problem was identified. Shrinkage has been an on-going concern in Tranmere and Rock Ferry for a number of decades and its negative consequences for housing have remained an issue for the relevant governance institutions throughout the period, although the policy discourse is rarely explicit about population decline, more usually focussing on (the albeit closely related) issues of economic decline, urban deprivation and social exclusion.

The leading institution throughout the period has been Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, working in partnership with private sector developers, RSLs, the national Housing and Communities Agency and local residents. In the late 1990s the national government became more heavily involved in the discussion of failing housing markets in the area, resulting in the HMR initiative. Their interest was to enable such markets to display a more balanced relationship between supply and demand. The growing concern with housing markets and the reliance on private developers as partners in providing new housing bring private sector requirements and objectives into the governance equation in a way that was not previously known.

Throughout the period structural conditions appear to have been very conducive to the development of workable strategies for housing renewal in the area. National government over the 20 year period has promoted initiatives (primarily Renewal Areas and HMR) and provided resources for Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council to develop and implement strategies (in partnership with other institutions). The actors which collaborated have already been detailed. There is no evidence of the specific exclusion of any relevant actors.

Alternative policies excluded were a 100% refurbishment programme, and not to do anything. Not doing anything was excluded due to there being clear physical, environmental, social and economic problems in the areas concerned. A 100% refurbishment programme was excluded due to reports suggesting poor quality and unwanted housing types, and a critical mass of residents being for demolition.

Renewal Area funds were largely from existing Council housing budgets, as well as RSLs and private developers. It is the legal powers, and strategic focus, which the Council could exercise upon declaring a Renewal Area which was the primary resource to enable them to take a central role. In contrast under the HMR, having agreed a strategy with central government, Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council was provided with substantial national government funding to carry out the programme with partners.

In terms of policy types a distinction can again be drawn between the Renewal Area and THRP where the policy appears to have been constitutive (i.e. self-regulative and persuasive) and HMR which has been more distributive (i.e. subsidies or other incentives were offered).

The main problem quoted by Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council housing officers involved in implementing the programme was wider changes in house prices and the economy. House prices rose shortly after the commencement of the acquisition of houses for demolition, halving the Council's purchasing power. Speculative buyers also caused problems, where individuals purchased houses very cheaply and then the local authority were forced to purchase them off them at a higher rate.

There was no substantial resistance reported in Tranmere and Rock Ferry. Initially some local politicians and residents were suggested to have been sceptical, but this attitude changed as the programme developed. The lack of use of any compulsory purchase orders (CPO)<sup>7</sup> would also suggest minimal resistance.

An evaluation of the efficacy of Renewal Areas nationally was undertaken in the mid-1990s (see DETR, 1997). Other academic studies were conducted throughout the process (see Couch and Gill, 1993; Couch et al, 2000). HMR has been closely monitored by national government, as discussed in Chapter 4. . Newheartlands also undertake evaluations of the individual councils, and local authorities undertake their own evaluations of individual projects. The whole programme is also subject to an annual independent formal evaluation by the Audit Commission. Additionally, more informal evaluation processes take place through academic commentary, as well as the local and national press.

## **5.5 Conclusions**

From the evidence collected, housing renewal in Tranmere and Rock Ferry appears to have been a successful process over a 20 year period. There also appears to have been little resistance to plans. This could be due to the attitude of Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council in how they approach the clearance process, with a preference for negotiation and avoidance of the conflict with local opinion that might be generated through the use of compulsory purchase powers, except as a last resort (interview, 17/01/2011). This highlights the central role of Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council across the 20 year period. Although initiatives, funding sources and partners have varied, the constancy of the Council as a central decision making institution has allowed a strategic approach over a long period of time, complemented by a pragmatic and piecemeal approach to policy implementation that has avoided excessive social or economic disruption in the area.

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<sup>7</sup> CPOs are a legal mechanism whereby councils and other government authorities, under certain circumstances, are able to purchase properties, whether they are for sale or not.

## 6. Case Study 2 – Kensington

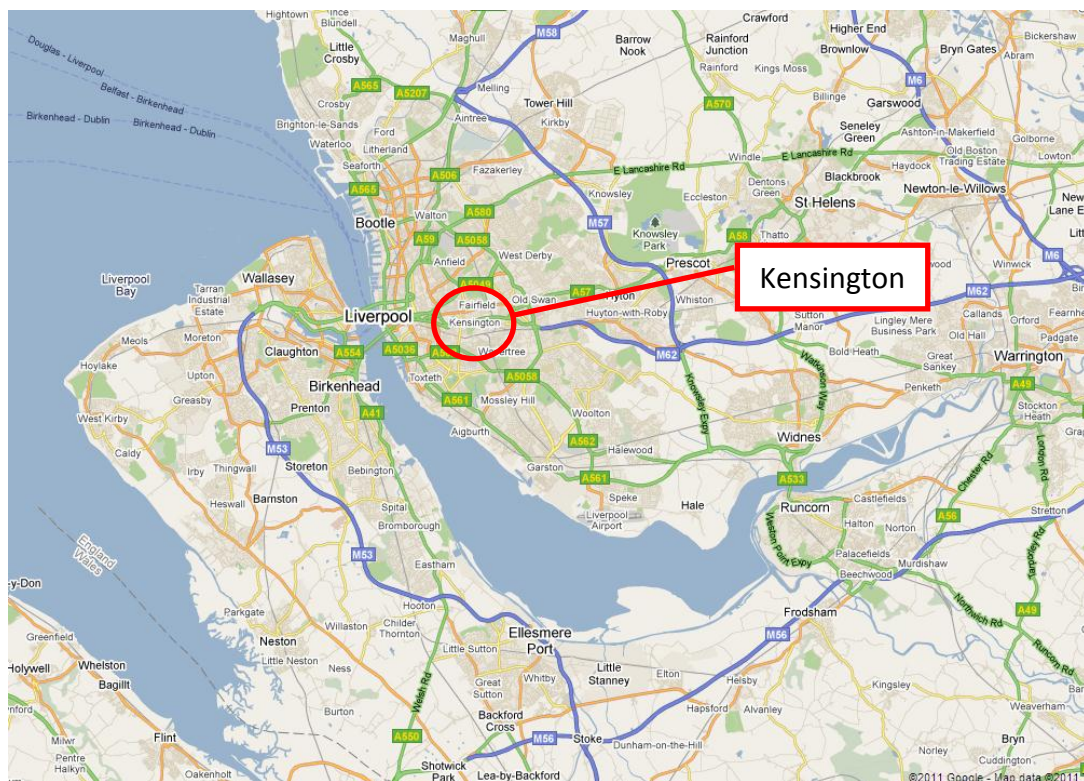
### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of research undertaken in the second of the two case study areas – Kensington. As with the previous chapter, some basic background information and data is firstly provided about the areas. The governance arrangements and response to the housing problems caused by shrinkage are then presented in detail, followed by the policy outcomes, and analysis from a ‘policy cycle’ perspective. Finally, some conclusions are drawn.

### 6.2 Background information and data

Kensington is an inner city residential area of Liverpool. Figure 12 below displays the location of Tranmere and Rock Ferry in relation to Liverpool and the rest of the Liverpool City Region. Figure 13 then displays the area and relevant boundaries in more detail. These are further explained below.

**Figure 12. Location of Kensington.**



Less than two miles from Liverpool city centre, Kensington is an area of predominantly working class terraced housing. Table 7 shows the population of the pre-2004 Kensington ward (see Figure 13 for the boundary). Between 1981 and 2001 the area lost 2,570 residents (17% of its 1981 population) but by 2009 it had regained 527 people (4% of the 2001 population). It has been suggested that this may have been a result of recent trends in inward migration.

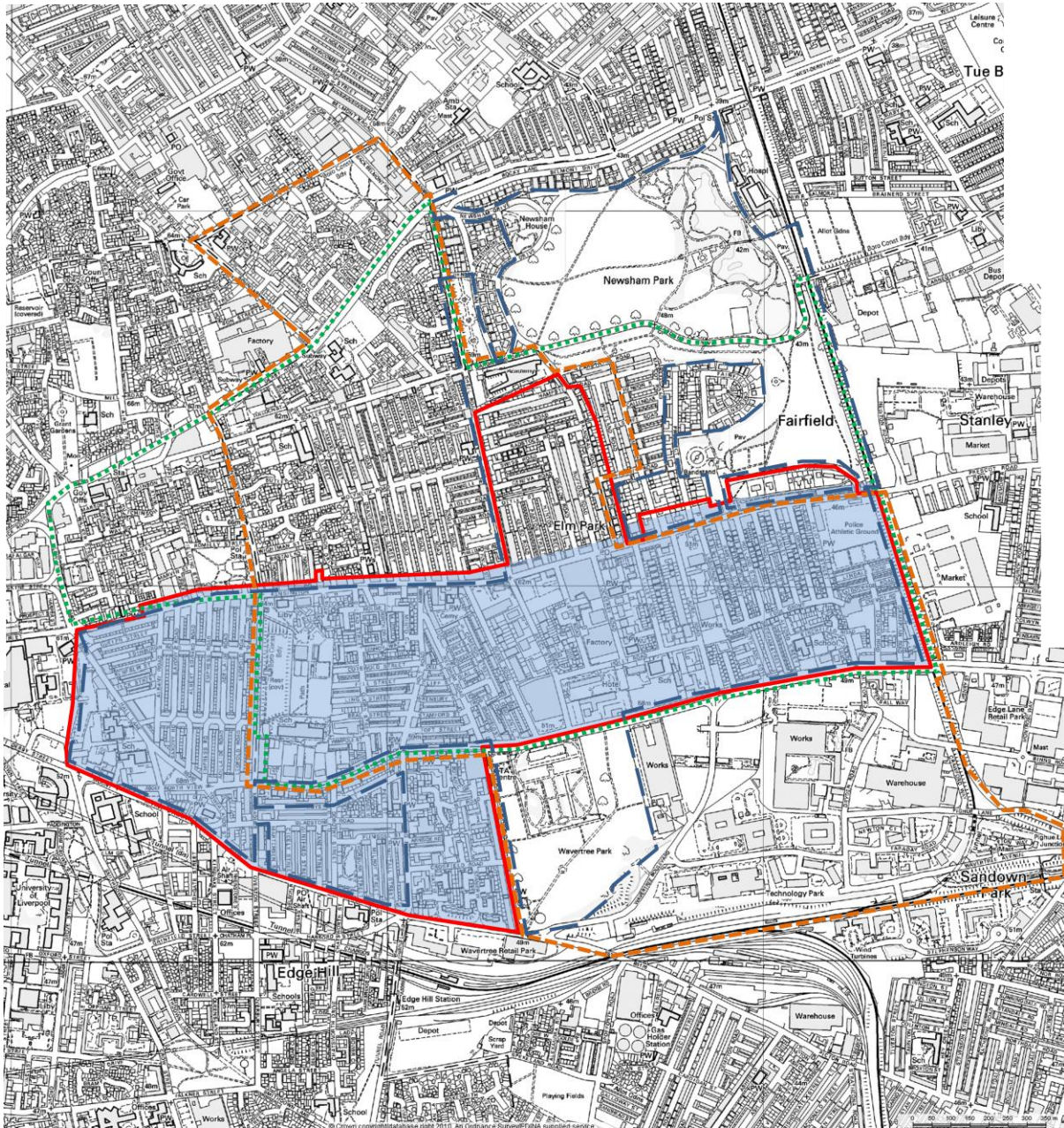


**Table 7. Kensington population.**

Year	Kensington	Liverpool	LCR
1981	15,310	517,000	1,656,545
1991	13,771	475,600	1,522,000
2001	12,740	441,900	1,438,000
2009	13,267	442,300	1,350,600

Source: Census (1981-2001); Office of National Statistics (2009)

**Figure 13. Kensington relevant boundaries.**



- - - - Kensington ward (pre-2004)
- . . . . . Kensington and Fairfield ward (post-2004)
- Kensington NDC
- Renewal Area
- HMRI area

Despite the loss of population the number of households in the area remained almost static between 1981 and 2001, reflecting a substantial fall in average household size and a change in the nature of the local community, with fewer large households and more single and childless adult households. The housing vacancy rate in Kensington has been consistently higher than in Liverpool and Merseyside as a whole. Table 8 shows that this was particularly pronounced in 2001, which Census data records vacancy as being at 16.3% in Kensington (pre-2004 ward), more than three times the city-wide rate. This depressed level of demand was also reflected in dwelling prices in 2001 but subsequently there has been some convergence towards the city-wide average. Average dwelling prices in the area (Wavertree Zone of Opportunity) were 49.2% of the city-wide average in 2001 but had improved to 73.8% by 2007 [Authors' calculation]. This suggests that the HMR initiative has had a degree of success in bringing about a more balanced housing market in the area.

**Table 8. Housing vacancy in Kensington.**

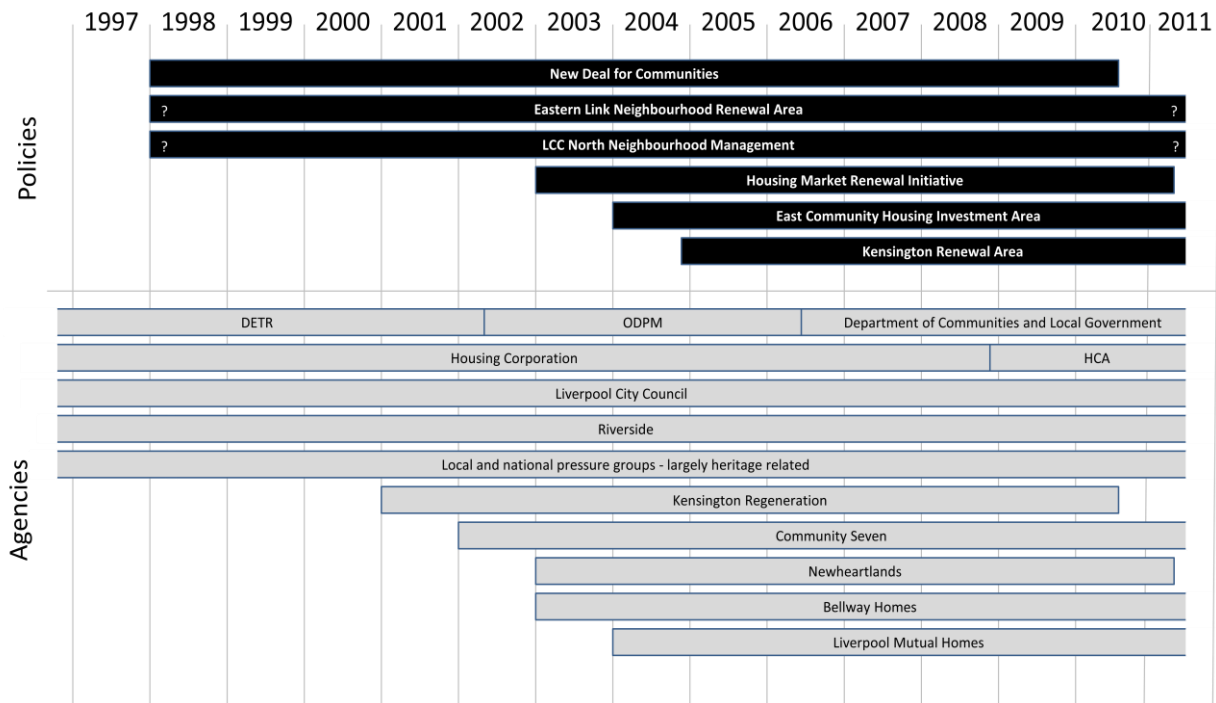
Year	Kensington	Liverpool	LCR
1981	8.8%	6.2%	4.6%
1991	9.4%	5.9%	4.5%
2001	16.3%	4.9%	3.9%

Source: Census data

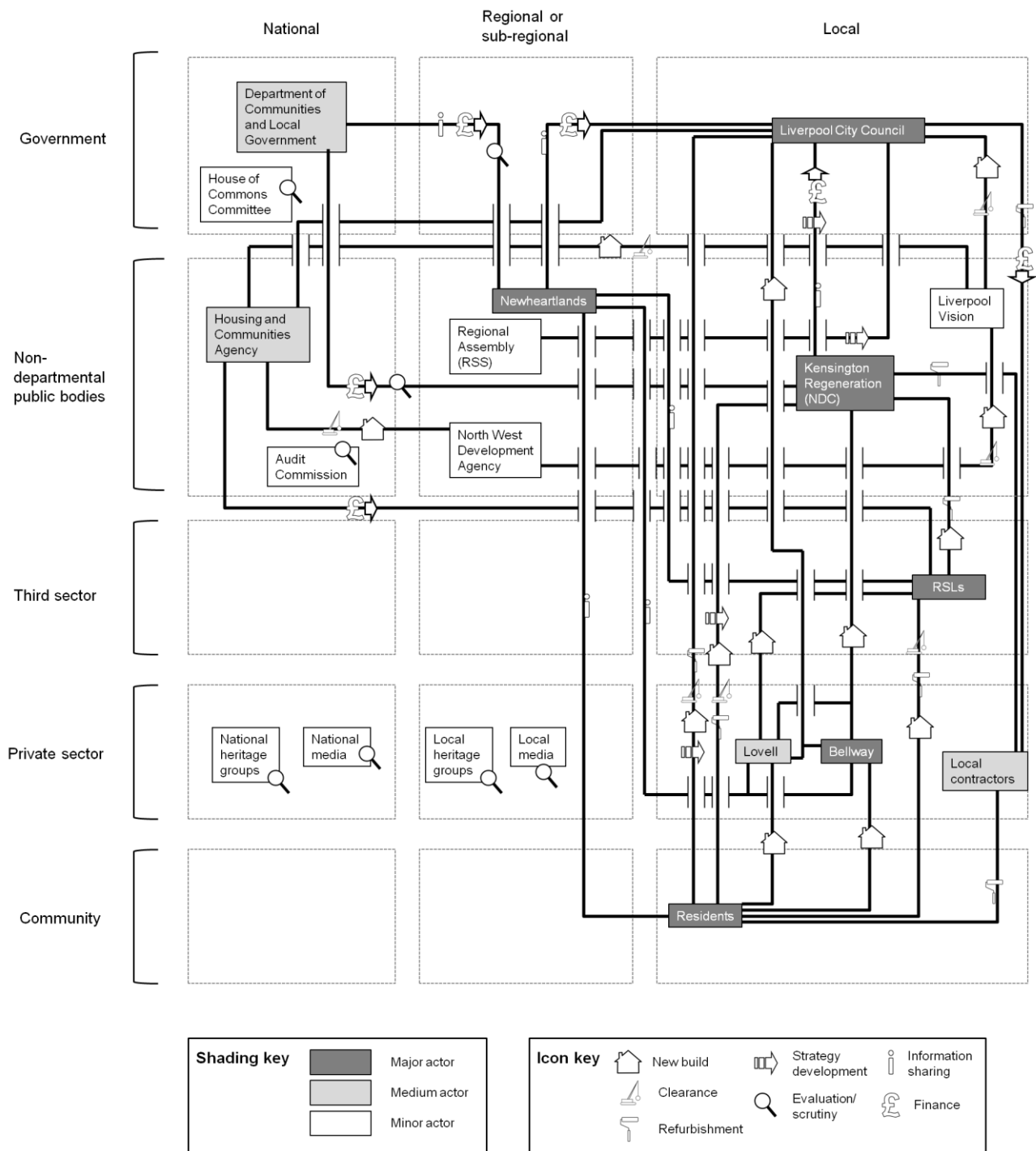
### 6.3 Governance arrangements and response

Similar to the cases of Tranmere and Rock Ferry, the housing renewal governance arrangements in Kensington have both shaped and been shaped by policy which has aimed to deal with problems caused by shrinkage. Figure 14 shows the policies and agencies between 2002 and 2010. Table 9 gives details of the individual agencies, which are explained further in the text which follows. Figure 15 then provides a representation of the interactions between agencies during 2009.

**Figure 14. Housing renewal governance policies and agencies in Kensington.**



**Figure 15. Interactions between agencies in Kensington, 2009.**



As can be seen from figures 14 and 15, the governance of housing renewal in Kensington since 2003 has been complex. The area is located within a number of overlapping housing intervention, regeneration and neighbourhood management areas. Due to this complexity, the role of each of the major institutions will be taken in turn and their role explained.

## Liverpool City Council

Liverpool City Council have remained the most prominent body for coordinating and instigating housing renewal in Kensington. But their means and methods for doing so have changed over time. The Council have been undertaking gradual renewal programmes of its housing stock for a number of decades, going back to the 1970s, but “the funds were never there to enable [them] to replace the stock that was obsolete and/or past its sell-by-date” (Liverpool City Council housing officer, interview, 25/01/2011). As the Council “started to try and get a handle on developing a better housing strategy” (ibid.) in the mid to late 1990s they commissioned research (Nevin, 2001) and from that “unfolded issues around vacancies in certain areas which had high turnovers of population. And...what emerged from it was this issue of an oversupply, which really hadn't been talked about before” (ibid.). When in 2002 the national government established the Housing Market Renewal programme, which included a substantial availability of funding, “it was basically addressing what the Council had previously wanted to try and address but just didn't have the resources to do it” (ibid).

Following the availability of finance from the HMR, in December 2004 the Council designated Kensington as a Renewal Area (along with six other areas of the city) for a 10 year period. This also followed the Council's commissioning of a Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment in Kensington to look at the condition of the housing and the environment; household circumstances and residents' views about what they would like to see happen to achieve the physical regeneration of the area. The designation of Kensington as a Renewal Area “gives the area “special status” which encourages all key partner organisations and agencies to work together in order to tackle the problems and issues identified. It also puts in place a legal framework which the City Council will act within. Renewal Area status means that a prioritised work programme for each neighbourhood will be developed and work undertaken (subject to financial resources) in a phased approach over the 10 year life of the Renewal Area status.” (Kensington Regeneration, 2008 Kensington NDC Delivery Plan, 2008/09, p. 21). However, it should be noted that RA status does not provide direct additional funds to the area, but rather “serves to bring together partners and co-ordinate actions so that an integrated approach to renewal is achieved.” (Liverpool City Council, 2007, p. 13). The Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment identified a number of issues in Kensington to be specifically addressed:

- High levels of long term vacant properties;
- Poor environmental conditions;
- Assistance for elderly and other vulnerable home owners;
- High level of multi-occupied private rented properties;
- A need to ensure a co-ordinated and comprehensive approach to private sector renewal.

(Kensington Regeneration, 2008, p. 22)

The Renewal Area strategy became the Council's blueprint for housing renewal in Kensington, the achievement of which would be through whatever means and resources were available. Part of their approach in securing the delivery of new housing in Kensington was by putting restrictions on housing development across the city through their planning policies. A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on New Housing Development was adopted in July 2005. The document discusses its purpose:

“The purpose of this SPD is to guide residential development in Liverpool. It has been prepared in light of recent changes in regional planning guidance and the Government's announcement that Liverpool forms part of its Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Initiative (HMR). Although the Liverpool Unitary Development Plan (“UDP”) was adopted by the Council in November 2002, the housing policies date back to their original formulation in the early 1990s. A number of these policies are no longer up to date and do not properly reflect the Government's Pathfinder Initiative and regional and national policy guidance.” (Liverpool City Council, 2005, p. 4)

**Table 9. Kensington Institution details.**

Institution	Date	Nature of institution	Who funds it?	Role in Kensington's housing renewal	Finance injected into housing renewal in Kensington
Liverpool City Council	1974 - present	Publically funded local authority	Self-funded, through local taxing capacities, and national government, through support grants.	Accountable body for both Kensington NDC and HMR in Liverpool. The major delivery agent for HMR in Kensington.	
Newheartlands	2003 - present	Secretariat coordinating the LCR HMR initiative	National government.	Overall coordination for the HMR programme across the city region, along with a statistical and information sharing role.	
Kensington Regeneration (Partnership)	2001-2010	Administration organisation for the Kensington NDC programme	National government. The Partnership was monitored by national government through a stringent 'traffic light' system.	Strategic development and delivery of the NDC programme in Kensington	
Bellway Homes	1946 - present	Private sector house builder	Private	The Council's preferred Private Sector Development Partner for the HMR initiative in Kensington.	£7,073,660 [our estimate] - £533 per person (2009 pop. figure)
Lovell		Private sector house builder	Private	Development of 175 homes on Gilead Street.	
Halsall Lloyd		Architects firm		Involved with designing new build homes for the HMR.	
Riverside	1928 - present	Registered social landlord	HCA/self-funding	The lead RSL in the area. Involved with a number of new build schemes, including Lovell's Gilead St development.	£23,394,395 [our estimate] - £1,763 per person (2009 pop. figure)
Community Seven (C7) (part of Riverside)	2002 - present	Registered social landlord	Riverside, HCA, Kensington New Deal (national government)	The principle housing association covering the Kensington NDC area. It has worked closely with Kensington Regeneration and been a key delivery	

				finance)	agent for the HMR in the area.	
Liverpool Mutual Homes	2004 present	-	Registered landlord	social		Own the recently transferred council housing stock in the area.
Rodney Housing Association			Registered landlord	social		
Steve Biko Housing Association			Registered landlord	social		
Pine Court Housing Association	1984 present	-	Registered landlord	social		Provide affordable homes for rent mainly for the Chinese and South East Asian communities but not exclusively in the LCR.
Venture Housing Association	1974 present	-	Registered landlord	social		
Pierhead Housing Association	1971 present	-	Registered landlord	social		
Urban Splash	1993 present	-	Private developer and builder	sector and house		
Local pressure groups						Eg. Merseyside Civic Society, Liverpool Victorian Society
Merseyside Housing Forum						Working with Newheartlands "to develop a sub-regional choice based lettings scheme, sharing best practice on sustainable home ownership products" (Newheartlands, 2008, p. 15)
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister/Department of Communities and Local Government			National government department			Government department responsible for housing and the built environment. Provided the funding for, and monitored, the New Deal for Communities and HMR schemes in Kensington.
Housing Corporation/Housing and Communities Agency	1964/2008		National governmental body	non-public		Provide funding and support for RSLs working in Kensington.

The SPD put restrictions on new housing development, focusing it in HMR areas. The document is a response to policies for the Liverpool City Region in the North West Regional Spatial Strategy (GONW, 2008) (Policy UR7), which set out a spatial framework for the city region and state a number of key objectives:

- To minimise the amount of land needed for new housing;
- To reduce the vacancy rates to 3% in the existing dwelling stock and 2% within new stock through the increased re-use of suitable vacant housing;
- To maximise the reuse of vacant and under-used land and buildings. In Liverpool, at least 90% of new houses should be built on brownfield land;
- To consider the impact of new housing development upon the existing housing stock and market in the area;
- To promote the urban renaissance of Liverpool City Centre and its surrounding inner area.

The North West RSS (Economy in Use of Land & Buildings - Policy DP1) stated that local planning authorities should adopt the sequential approach to the location of development by firstly making effective use of existing buildings and infrastructure within urban areas, then to use previously-developed land and then undeveloped land in appropriate locations which will not involve development on important open space areas. The SPD states:

“The City Council recognises and supports the objectives of RSS13 and the approach which has been adopted in order to secure sustainable spatial patterns of development. As a consequence, the Council is keen to encourage development in the most appropriate locations, where there is a strong planning rationale for development and not simply market demand, as emphasised in the City's Community Strategy, the City Council's Housing Strategy and the Regional Housing Strategy for the North West.” (Liverpool City Council, 2005, p. 9)

The HMR Zones of Opportunity were “prioritised alongside key strategic housing sites” (ibid., p. 10) for development, and the SPD sought to “control the supply, type and location of housing provided so as to assist HMR delivery, particularly the Zones of Opportunity, and respect the need to support wider regeneration and housing initiatives” (ibid., p. 11).

In terms of the Council's own ambitions with regards to solving problems of housing vacancy, its Housing Strategy Statement 2009-2011 includes the target to reduce the overall vacancy levels for all types of house in the city down to 5% by 2014 (Liverpool City Council, 2008).

Additionally, Kensington features in a number of other related policy initiatives by the Council. As part of its structure for coordinating neighbourhood services, the Council has divided the city into five Neighbourhood Management Areas (NMA). Kensington is located within the City and North NMA. The area is also located entirely within the East Community Housing Investment Area. This is a forum for tenants, leaseholders and the wider community, and is administered by Liverpool Mutual Homes. Much of the Kensington ward also sits within the Council's Eastern Link Neighbourhood Renewal Area. In order to deliver its Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (a strategy supported by national government Neighbourhood Renewal Funds, established by New Labour in 1998) the Council designated five Neighbourhood Renewal Areas across the city. Figure 18 below displays signs displayed at the entrance to the area, and indicate the degree of initiatives and institutions involved.

### New Deal for Communities

In 1998 Kensington, along with the surrounding areas of Fairfield, Edge Hill and Wavertree, was given New Deal for Communities (NDC) status. The Government designated 39 parts of the country as NDC areas, and Liverpool City Council successfully bid for £61.9 million of funding for an area of 4,200 households (see Figure 15 above for the boundaries of the programme). The bid was driven by a group from the Parks Partnership, Liverpool City Council, Liverpool Partnership Group (a Liverpool-wide public agency partnership) and the private sector, and co-ordinated by a secondee from Riverside Housing Association. The bid was also supported and contributed to by local residents through a 15 month consultation programme beforehand. In 2001 the Kensington Regeneration Partnership (named Kensington Regeneration) was established as an unincorporated association to

administer the programme using the finance obtained from the NDC programme. The programme has been coordinated by a Partnership Board which “has the responsibility for the conduct of the Partnership’s business, including the overview of all programmes and activities funded by the resources available from the New Deal grant.” (Kensington Regeneration, 2008, p. 41). The board comprised ten local residents (elected by residents), two nominees of the Parks Community Forum, three private sector representatives, personnel from the police, health service, employment service, local authority, RSLs and two representatives from Black and Racial Minority communities (ibid.).

Kensington NDC is also unable to operate independently, and so entered into an agreement with Liverpool City Council as its Accountable Body. LCC have the legal requirements needed to meet the requirements of funding bodies. The relationship between the two institutions was the subject of a separate Service Level Agreement.

The ‘housing and environment’ targets for the programme were:

- Eradicate all unfit housing
- Increase the levels of owner occupation from 36% to 50% of the total tenure
- Increase the proportion of residents who have lived in the area for 3 years or more to 70%
- Average three bedroom terraced house property values to be increased to within 20% of the Liverpool average
- Increase in satisfaction with the quality of the local environment to 75%. (Russell et al, 2009, p. 97)

Specifically with regards to housing vacancy, the 2008/09 Kensington NDC Delivery Plan stated that:

“The long term vision for Kensington NDC is to reduce the density of properties and to create more quality space and safe play areas so that residents get better value from their homes and its environment. The existing empty properties and land, together with the wider Merseyside HMR programme, provide a chance to redevelop areas and to facilitate this.” (Kensington Regeneration, 2008, p. 22)

It is clear, therefore, that the programme was utilising the impacts of population loss in the area - which have been manifest in vacant land and property - to its advantage in creating a more spacious environment.

The NDC conducted community consultation early on in the process. This was in line with the programme’s philosophy of being community-led, as determined by central government. However, the Chair of Kensington Regeneration between 1999 and 2004, the Rt Rev James Jones, Anglican Bishop of Liverpool, later suggested that there were some difficulties in this respect during the early phases of the programme:

“Commendably, the Government set the New Deal for Communities programme within a ten-year timescale. It insisted rightly that the regeneration should be community led. It was aware that there was much frustration in deprived areas at the way outsiders had, over the years, prescribed top-down solutions, and wanted genuinely to empower local people to devise their own strategies of neighbourhood renewal. Very early in the scheme, however, there was disappointment and frustration in central government at the lack of progress and the slow speed of delivery. Furthermore, these programmes had been initiated as a subversion of local government, whom national government felt were inefficient and inept at delivering local regeneration. But when local people, who had been courted to form these para-government organisations, failed to produce the results in time, they encountered a number of penalties. First, money was withheld if their programmes did not come in on time and, secondly, local authorities who initially had been marginalised were brought back into the picture.” (Jones, 2009, p. 284)

The Kensington NDC programme ceased operation in 2010.



## Housing Market Renewal

Like the NDC, in the Kensington case the Accountable Body for the HMR programme is Liverpool City Council. However, as indicated previously in this chapter, the Council have taken a much more central role than just being the Accountable Body. The goals for HMR in Kensington were defined by the Council “in collaboration with the local communities...[and] RSL partners” (LCC housing officer, interview, 25/01/2011) through the Renewal Area consultation process, mentioned earlier. This utilised the community engagement structures established through the NDC programme. Figure 16 below displays refurbished housing, and Figure 17 shows new housing being constructed by private development partner Bellway Homes.

**Figure 16. Refurbished housing in Kensington.**



**Figure 17. Newbuild homes in Kensington.**



## Edge Lane Corridor

In addition to the initiatives discussed above, Kensington is also undergoing a major road scheme, which includes new housing. Edge Lane is the major routeway into central Liverpool from the M62 (the major motorway leading to the edge of the city) and runs through the centre of Kensington. The road is the focus of a major improvement and development scheme. The scheme includes:

- Road widening at certain sections
- Around 280 new homes
- New and improved retail facilities
- New employment floorspace
- A new state-of-the-art health centre
- Changing the line of the road to make it an urban boulevard
- Safe pedestrian crossing points
- A safer and improved environment (including the planting of 300 trees)

Works are due for completion at the end of February 2012. The scheme is a partnership between Liverpool Vision (the city's economic development and regeneration agency), the HCA (previously English Partnerships), the Northwest Regional Development Agency, Liverpool City Council and, when it was in operation, Kensington Regeneration. Figure 19 then displays cleared areas in Kensington. Figure 20 displays new paving on Edge Lane, as part of the highway improvements.

**Figure 18. Signs at the entrance to Kensington.**



**Figure 19. Clearance for Edge Lane road widening scheme.**



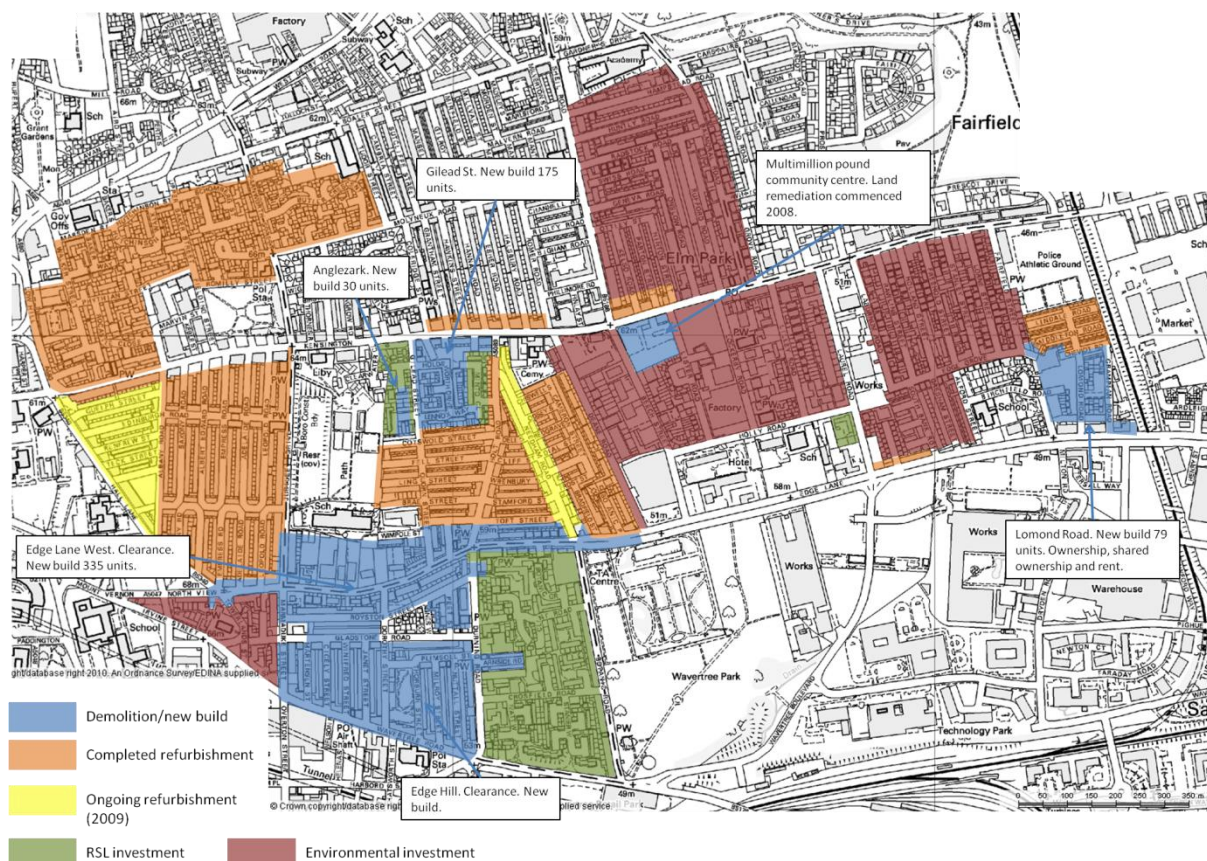
**Figure 20. Edge Lane highway and public realm improvements.**



#### **6.4 Policy outcomes**

Figure 21 below shows the major neighbourhood renewal policies implemented in the Rock Ferry and Tranmere areas over the last 20 years.

**Figure 21. Interventions in Kensington.**



The official evaluation of Kensington NDC contains a summary table of changes in baseline indicators in Kensington with regards to housing (see Table 10). Positive changes can be observed. However, it should be noted that it is difficult to relate causality of the changes back to the NDC scheme, when there were so many other programmes and forces at work during this period. Additionally, the authors of the report point out that “it is difficult to assess change in terms of unfit housing...because the baseline measure applied to all tenures whereas the update is only an assessment of social housing” (Russell et al, 2009, p. 97). The authors go on to comment:

“In any case, taking a snapshot at this point in a period of such intense housing activity would scarcely be meaningful. However, the widespread clearance will certainly have removed unfit homes and, in addition, the 1,697 houses built or improved amount to nearly two and a half times the number targeted. Levels of owner occupation have remained fairly stable. Again, given the turbulence in housing activity in the area, the lack of change is unsurprising. It is unclear whether the measures of change in the proportion of resident living in the area for 3 years or more are strictly comparable because the baseline was set in the NDC survey in 1999 whereas the more recent figure is derived from the 2008 MORI survey. However, it is possible to track the MORI survey responses. In 2002, 60% had lived at the same address for 3 years or more; 61% in 2008 is not a significant change. In terms of length of residence in the area, the question was not posed in the 2002 survey, but was asked in 2004. Then 72% had lived in the area for 3 years or more; by 2008, it was 68%, again an insignificant shift.” (ibid.)

**Table 10. New Deal for Communities: Kensington outcomes.**

Target/indicator	Baseline position	Latest update
Unfit housing	34.5% (1999)	22.9% ( <i>LAMP social housing only 2008</i> )
Levels of owner occupation (MORI 2002/2008)	36%	37%
Proportion of residents who have lived in the area for 3 yrs or more	53% NDC 1999	68% MORI 2008
	72% MORI 2004	
Average 3 bed terrace property values ( <i>SDRC</i> )	32.6% below Liv av 2001	12.3% below Liv av 2007

Source: Russell et al, 2009, p. 97

In order to gauge resident perceptions of various issues, MORI undertook an equivalent survey in 2008 to that conducted in 2002. In terms of the vacancy issue, whereas the issue of 'run down and boarded up properties' received a 47% rating in 2002 (that is, 47% of residents considering the issue a 'serious problem'), it had fallen to 39% in 2008. Table 11 indicates the level of resident satisfaction in the area.

**Table 11. Resident satisfaction, 2002 and 2008.**

	2002	2008
Very/fairly satisfied with area	43%	58%
Area much better than 2 years ago	2%	9%
Area slightly better than 2 years ago	11%	33%
Area slightly worse than 2 years ago	20%	10%
Area much worse than 2 yrs ago	39%	15%

Source: Russell et al, 2009, p. 97

In addition, the final Kensington NDC evaluation reported that the initiative had been significant in developing partnership in the area. Although a number of retrospective areas for improvement were identified, the following quotation from one of their interviewees indicates this to be the case:

"KNDC have been instrumental in getting people to sit around the table and talk. . . . I don't want that to disappear from the area. . . The partnerships that have been developed have been exceptional and have helped the residents that live round here." (Russell et al, 2009, p. 109)

With housing being such a major proportion of the programme, quotations such as the above indicate that NDC will have had a positive influence upon the housing governance of the area.

The documentation available does not allow a sufficient breakdown of figures to enable an accurate approximation of the finance spent on the HMR scheme in Kensington. Therefore, we have calculated estimates for the amount of expenditure from the scheme in the ward<sup>8</sup>. The calculation of these estimates will now be explained.

The HMR annual reports (Newheartlands, 2004a; 2005; 2006; 2007; 2008; 2009) provide a figure for the average construction costs of private and RSL properties in the HMR scheme for that year. They also provide the average demolition cost for the year. Furthermore, in the Wavertree Zone of Opportunity report for 2009, maps are provided which detail the HMR related schemes in the area. Specific figures are given for numbers and tenure of dwellings. From these maps, the interventions in the Kensington ward specifically can be isolated. Average construction and demolition costs over a three year period (2006/07 to 2008/09) were calculated.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> These calculations have also been used for the estimates provided in tables 6 and 9.

<sup>9</sup> These figures are:

Average construction cost per dwelling (2006/07 – 2008/09):  
Private - £89,540  
RSL - £114,119

From data provided by Liverpool City Council, it can be calculated that in 2009 in Kensington (the latest available data) there had been 331 units demolished, 205 RSL units constructed (or in construction) and 79 private units constructed (or in construction). The cost involved are therefore:

Demolished units:

$331 \times 3890 = \text{£}1,287,590$

Constructed units:

RSL –  $205 \times 114119 = \text{£}23,394,395$

Private –  $79 \times 89540 = \text{£}7,073,660$

## 6.5 Policy cycle analysis

The policy cycle analysis framework was presented in Chapter 5 (section 5.4). Analysis is now presented for Kensington, using the same framework.

Shrinkage has been a trend in Kensington for a number of decades. The identification of the problem in the area cannot therefore be isolated to a particular date or group of actors – as there has been a constant awareness on the part of the city's decision makers of the population losses in certain areas of Liverpool, and its consequences.

However, interviewee evidence indicates that a surplus supply of houses began to be talked about within Liverpool City Council in the mid to late 1990s. Much of the policy reaction since 2003 for dealing with the problems caused by shrinkage has been through the HMR initiative. A specific period can also here be pinpointed for the identification of housing market failure as a problem in the area – or certainly a period when it came very prominently to the Council's attention. This was the Council's decision in the late 1990s to commission the series of reports by the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies (CURS) at Birmingham University, which led to the establishment of HMR in the LCR and nationally. However, the decision to commission the CURS work actually originated in a prompt from the Housing Corporation and Government Office for Merseyside. An interviewee stated:

“In terms of population loss and household decline, the issue – I mean obviously locally people recognised it as an issue – but when it came to a head effectively was the Housing Corporation and Government Office for Merseyside... basically said to Liverpool “We are not putting any more housing money back into Liverpool until you arrive at a proper housing strategy, because it's complete and utter chaos”... This was about 96/97. “This is complete and utter chaos, we're giving you money, you're knocking down houses that people have never lived in. You've got to get a grip of this.” And I think that was probably then when population loss/household decline, and also structural and economic decline, basically came to the fore. Resulting out of that Liverpool City Council commissioned the University of Birmingham, CURS, to basically look at what was happening in the housing market and Liverpool.”

The participants in the discussion of housing market failure and what approaches should be taken to address it were largely the Council and national government, along with representatives from CURS. HMR was promoted heavily by national government, partially through their Sustainable Communities agenda. This was very significant in the development of the scheme locally. A similar situation can be observed with the Kensington New Deal for Communities initiative, which was a national government originating scheme which the City Council and partners made a bid for. The problem of housing 'market failure' was transferred to a political programme through national government intervention, in partnership with locally operating bodies (primarily Liverpool City Council).

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All - £99,146

Average demolition cost per dwelling (2006/07 – 2008/09):  
£3,890

The responsibility for the HMR programme was held by the Newheartlands organisation and Liverpool City Council as the accountable body and primary delivery agent. Monitoring is undertaken on a constant basis by national government. For NDC, the Kensington Regeneration Board were held responsible by national government through an ongoing traffic light system, whereby further resources were only approved following satisfactory progress. However, again, the City Council were technically the accountable body. The goals of HMR were presented earlier in the document, and defined by Liverpool City Council and local partners, in agreement with national government. The goals of the Kensington NDC in regard to housing vacancy were also presented earlier, and defined by Kensington Regeneration.

Whilst there was strong community support for redevelopment and new build as evidenced by Newheartlands documentation (Newheartlands, 2008) and by the relatively small number of objectors at Compulsory Purchase Order Inquiries, an area where local pressure groups have been particularly active in questioning the HMR initiative has been with regards to refurbishment versus demolition. Although much of HMR has involved refurbishment, the alternative to have a 100% refurbishment programme was excluded. This was due to the argument presented in the CURS documents that it is the housing type (largely 19th century terraces) which is deterring households from remaining and migrating to the area, and that these should be replaced by more 'aspirational' homes, with gardens instead of back yards.

For the NDC, the programme decisions were made by the Kensington Regeneration Board. Community participation was also part of the programme governance. For the HMR, it was national government who approved the decision to include Kensington in the Newheartlands area. In terms of the day-to-day decision making, Liverpool City Council primarily took the lead, in partnership with chosen private sector developers, local RSLs and residents.

In both the NDC and HMR the resources which enabled the decision makers to take a central role were central government funding and, in some cases, legal resources.

There is no evidence that any actors were explicitly excluded from the governance process. However, with regards to the HMR scheme, certain actors have expressed dissatisfaction with the community consultation process. The Chair of the Merseyside Civic Society, one of the groups lobbying against HMR demolition, wrote in 2005 (referring to HMR scheme in general):

"The local community and affected residents have limited scope to have a say in determining the future of their area. For example, consultants have convened meetings when most residents are at work, so that many people were not aware of the threat to their homes until it was too late...Three quarters of residents have been quoted as saying they are in favour of the demolitions and would be happy to move elsewhere, when in fact they were never given the option of remaining where they are, but in refurbished properties...The [HMR] programme should communicate the available options more openly, and enlist far greater resident support." (Brown, 2005, p. 5)

However, Newheartlands make the case that community consultation and engagement has been a primary focus of the programme throughout the process:

"Real people living real lives in real homes are at the heart of everything we do. They bring intelligence and knowledge to inform, influence and improve the shape and delivery of HMR on Merseyside. This drives our commitment to work with the community and find ways of engaging with new and existing residents at every stage of the delivery process." (Newheartlands, 2007, p. 5)

The policies which were enacted in Kensington were a mix of distributive and constitutive policies. A distributive policy includes subsidies or other incentives (win-win situations, no political conflict), whilst a constitutive policy is self-regulative, for example new procedures or persuasions (third parties come into play). The NDC was a mix of distributive and constitutive policies, whilst the HMR just fell under the distributive category.

One problem in implementing HMR in Kensington came from the process of acquiring the houses earmarked for demolition. Not all residents were in agreement with the proposals, and Compulsory Purchase Orders were implemented to acquire properties. As was the case in Tranmere and Rock

Ferry, another problem was the inflation of dwelling prices in the early 2000s and speculative pressures which meant that funding from the government didn't cover as many purchases as originally intended.

The monitoring of NDC was undertaken by central government (specifically the Department of Communities and Local Government) through a traffic light system. A final evaluation of the programme was also conducted by a private consultancy (Russell et al, 2009). The HMR programme is monitored in the same manner as already described for Tranmere and Rock Ferry.

There is no evidence of substantial challenges to the Kensington New Deal programme. The details as to challenges to the HMR have already been outlined above.

## **6.6 Conclusions**

This chapter has highlighted that housing renewal in Kensington has been much more complex than in Tranmere and Rock Ferry. This is primarily for three reasons. Firstly, Kensington has been the focus of more initiatives – mainly the HMR and NDC programmes. This has involved a greater complexity of governance institutions and finance arrangements. Secondly, there has been a greater degree of resistance from communities to the demolition of properties, resulting in a more substantial use of CPOs. Thirdly, housing renewal has been interconnected with the major Edge Lane road scheme, which has been undertaken in the area during the same period.

The next chapter provides a more detailed discussion and analysis of the two cases.



## 7. Discussion

### 7.1 What were the policy outcomes and achievements

There have been clear policy outcomes and achievements in both study areas. This has been through a large amount of refurbishment, demolition and new build. The maps presented in chapters 5 and 6 display the extent of this intervention. Significantly, this change has been financed through a large amount of private sector involvement, and not just through public funds. The HMR programme as a whole has achieved a roughly 50% private sector leverage rate into schemes across its area. A Newheartlands officer noted that “it is a very high leverage in an area that 10 years ago the private sector would never have been seen dead in” (interview, 17/01/2011). Indeed, there were some areas in Tranmere/Rock Ferry where houses were selling for as low as £6,000 (Wirral Council housing officer, interview, 17/01/2011). A former and current resident of the Fiveways area of Rock Ferry stated that “quite a few people that lived in Riverside houses were asking for exchanges out [of the area]. They just didn’t want to live there basically. People that had bought the houses were stuck with them. They couldn’t sell them.” (interview, 22/12/2010).

The primary quantitative measure of the effectiveness of housing renewal programmes in the two areas is through changes in house prices. In the Wavertree Zone of Opportunity (a wider area which includes Kensington) the average house price in 2001 was £24,973 (44% of the Merseyside average). In 2007 it was £92,500 (68% of the Merseyside average) (LAMP, 2009). Although a ‘housing boom’ was experienced during this period, and house prices in Liverpool also rose in 2003 when it was announced that the city would be European Capital of Culture in 2008, it is still clear that demand for houses in the area rose during the HMR period – as indicated by the rise in house prices relative to the city region as a whole. In Rock Ferry and Tranmere a similar pattern can be observed. In 2001 the average house price for the two areas was £28,062 (49% of the Merseyside average). By 2007 it had risen to £80,506 (64% of the Merseyside average) (Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, 2009a; 2009b). Nevertheless, these values are still considerably below the average house prices for the respective local authority areas (£125,223 in Liverpool and £139,664 in Wirral in 2007) (Land Registry data).

But what has been the outcome for residents? Newheartlands commissioned a survey with those residents relocated as part of the scheme. The survey had a sample of 202 relocated households (102 from Liverpool (50%), 63 from Sefton (31%) and 35 from Wirral (17%)). Overall, 90% reported being happy with their current home ranging from 100% (Wirral) and 92% (Sefton) to 84% (Liverpool). 70% preferred their new home compared with their previous one. This was particularly the case among those from Sefton (89%) and Liverpool (69%), contrasting with 40% of those from Wirral (Ecotec, 2010, p. 3). 60% felt that the condition of their current home was very good and a further 29% suggested it was good: 6% were critical. More than two-thirds (69%) felt that the condition of their current home was better than that of their previous one while 23% suggested it was the same and 8% contended that it was worse (Steele, 2009, p. 4). However, in regard to housing condition, the report states that:

“It must be noted that the HMR programme is an area based renewal programme to remedy low demand which is intended to remove obsolescent and redundant housing, so not all properties in targeted areas may have been in poor condition.” (ibid.)

In terms of their neighbourhoods, 92% of respondents were positive/happy with their neighbourhood/local area: 4% were critical. The proportion who were satisfied from each local authority area ranged from 97% (Wirral and Sefton) to 88% (Liverpool).

So, on balance, the views from residents appeared largely very positive. However, a major exception in the results presented above appeared to be that only 40% of Wirral respondents preferred their new home to their previous one. Three comments should be made on this. Firstly, it does not necessarily mean they were unhappy with their new home, as the survey also found that 100% of Wirral respondents fell into this category. Secondly, the sample was taken from across the Wirral HMR areas, and not just limited to Rock Ferry and Tranmere. Thirdly, the report states that caution should be taken when considering the Wirral results:

“It should be noted that given the relatively small size of the sample from Wirral the findings relating to this local authority need to be treated with caution when treated in isolation.” (Steele, 2009, p. 2)

Additionally, the following quotation from a Wirral resident may help explain the contrast in views from respondents on this issue:

“I had a beautiful house [before being moved]. There was nothing wrong with my house. It was old, it had character. But I knew, in another 10, 20, 30 years things would be going wrong...And that’s the way I look at it. You’ve got to look into the future with something like this...And it was sad. I cried when they knocked my house down...But it was worth every minute of the wait. Being in cold houses. [A local elderly lady] used to sit with three coats on and a blanket round her; it was that cold last year. And she’s 65/66...[The new houses] are lovely. They’re really warm. We’ve got solar power...We had a bill in for the gas and the electricity last February or March and I think it was £45 for the two of them. I was putting that in a week round the other house because it was that cold.”

Interview data which has been gathered from residents is mixed. In his 2008 book *Housing Market Renewal and Social Class*, Chris Allen provides a critical view of the programme from a sociological perspective. In the course of his research, he undertook a number of interviews with residents in Kensington, where his study was particularly focused. These interviews indicate very negative views from residents with regards to the programme, in contrast with the largely positive finds of the Ecotec survey presented previously. A series of example quotes are given below<sup>10</sup>.

“Q[uestioner] You know where the large Victorian houses are now? The plan is to demolish them to build apartments...”

[Resident] I fail to see the point really. If you asked anyone would they rather live in a flat or a house, for the most part people would say they’d live in a house. I don’t really see the point.” (Allen, 2008, p. 161)

“[Resident] ...they’re knocking people’s homes down not for the [Edge Lane widening scheme]...It’s not for the road at all. It’s to build apartments on. Who’s going to buy apartments? Not local community people. And there’s not enough space for them to build houses for people whose house they’re knocking down. And people don’t want, I don’t want to move house. I don’t like new houses. If I had a million pound now I wouldn’t go and buy a new house. A lot of people’s houses are coming down...It’s rubbish. They’ve totally, totally ignored the community.” (Allen, 2008, p. 164)

However, Allen’s interviewee quotes from Kensington can be contrasted with quotes from a past and existing resident in Rock Ferry, who gave her experiences of interacting with the organisations involved:

“I can honestly say the Council and the housing associations were 100% with us...Even Lovell have been marvellous. They helped quite a lot round here...They are marvellous. Even now we’re in our houses they still come round and check we’re alright. If anything’s going wrong, or whatever...It’s just amazing what they’ve done...We’ve made a lot of friends with [Lovell]. Especially the area managers and that. They’re lovely people...They are taking a big interest...They are very good. And Riverside [are too]. [Neither organisations are] 100%, you know, I’m not blowing them up. But I’d say 98% they’ve been marvellous.” (interview, 22/12/2010)

Clearly the evidence varies, depending on which residents are consulted and in which area. Nevertheless, the most objective source of evidence is likely to be the Ecotec survey undertaken, which tend to indicate that, overall, residents were in favour of the programme. It should also be emphasised that much of the HMR spend involved renovation, the Newheartlands programme

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<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that the quotations presented refer to developments included primarily as part of the Edge Lane road scheme, which is technically separate to the HMR interventions, although related in concept and strategy.

refurbishes 6 times as many houses as it demolishes. Extensive resources have also been expended on new building (Newheartlands officer, interview, 17/01/2011).

## 7.2 Was there a lack of capacity?

For the purposes of analysis, 'capacity' is broken down into four factors – financial, legal, managerial and political. Tables 12 and 13 show the analysis of these four factors for the two case study areas.

**Table 12. Tranmere/Rock Ferry capacity analysis.**

Capacity factor	Comments with regards to the governance of housing renewal in Tranmere/Rock Ferry
Financial	There has been no lack of financial capacity. Substantial financial resources have been put into housing renewal in the area over the 20 year period.
Legal	Renewal Area status provided Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council with substantial powers to undertake housing renewal. During the past decade, HMR has also had strong legal powers – these have included compulsory purchasing powers (although Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council has only used them for 4 out of the 1,200 houses acquired (housing officer, interview, 17/01/2011)).
Managerial	Evidence indicates that there has been no lack of managerial capacity. Administration of the Renewal Area, Tranmere Housing Regeneration Partnership and HMR have had sufficient managerial resources for research, coordination and monitoring (although monitoring reports have only been accessed for HMR). The requisite assessments (Neighbourhood Renewal Assessments) have also largely been undertaken in-house. (Wirral housing officer, interview, 17/01/2011)
Political	Political capacity has also been substantial – both locally and nationally. Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council responded to the 1989 Act by designating 6 Renewal Areas (the most for any local authority in the country). The Council then established the Tranmere Housing Regeneration Partnership in the late 1990s, and in the 2000s has been heavily involved with the HMR initiative – of which the national government has also provided strong political backing.

**Table 13. Kensington capacity analysis.**

Capacity factor	Comments with regards to the governance of housing renewal in Kensington
Financial	There has been no lack of financial capacity. Substantial financial resources have been put into housing renewal in the area over the 7 year period.
Legal	Since 2003, HMR (through Liverpool City Council) has had strong legal powers – these have included compulsory purchasing powers, which have been exercised.
Managerial	Evidence indicates that there has largely been no lack of managerial capacity. Administration of HMR, New Deal for Communities and City Council renewal programmes has had sufficient managerial resources for research, coordination and monitoring. However, there have been suggestions from some sources that early in the process the Council lacked expertise in conducting Compulsory Purchase Orders.
Political	Political capacity has also been substantial – both locally and nationally. Liverpool City Council has been heavily involved with the HMR initiative – of which the national government has also provided strong political backing.

There appeared to be no major lack of financial, legal, managerial or political capacity for housing renewal in the two areas. However, it is worth noting that on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 the national government terminated the HMR programme and the funding that comes with it. This happened after years 8 of

what was originally designated to be a 15 year programme. Therefore, there is likely to be a lack of financial capacity in both areas in the near future. Newheartlands are currently in the process of bidding for further funding from other governmental sources in order to ensure that elements of the programme are able to continue (Newheartlands officer, interview, 17/01/2011).

### 7.3 Did the area experience a dependence on external resources?

The dependency of local actors on external resources (including national government, private sector and public finance other than local authority funds) will now be analysed. Tables 14 and 15 illustrate the dependency upon external resources of each of the schemes in the two areas.

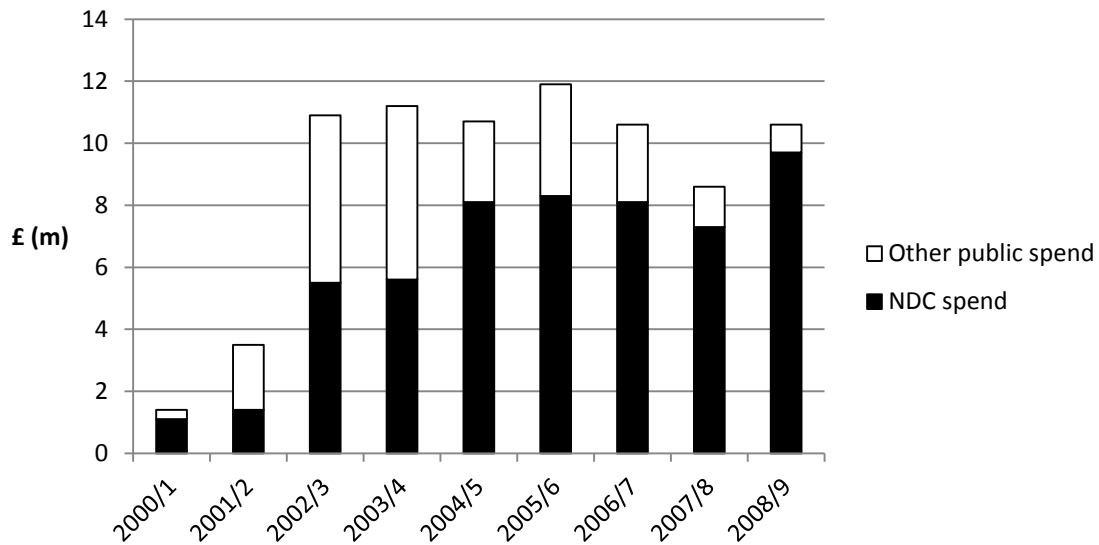
**Table 14. Tranmere/Rock Ferry dependency upon external resources.**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Dependency upon external resources</b>
Renewal Area	1990 – 1998	Not dependent. Renewal Area status conferred additional legal powers on local authorities, but provided no extra financial resources for housing renewal.
Tranmere Housing Regeneration Partnership	1998 - 2003	£33 million of housing investment and an estimated £4 million private funding was levered into Tranmere, up to 2003.
Housing Market Renewal Initiative	2003 - present	Heavily dependent. £15 of HMR (national) money in Tranmere since 2003, matched by £744,000 from the private sector and £6.8 million from Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council.
Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder (Together)	2004 - present	A mix of local and external funding sources. For example, "income in the year 2007/8 comprised £350,000 core funding for neighbourhood management received via the Wirral's Safer Stronger Communities Fund, with the balance of £163,767 consisting of external grants. The latter figure includes [Neighbourhood Renewal Fund] grant for the [Neighbourhood Environment Team] and the Healthy Food Initiative (Bag a Bargain), and a combination of [European Regional Development Fund], Riverside and Big Lottery Funding for the Green Together Environmental Improvement Programme." (Evans and Pemberton, 2007, p. 10)

**Table 15. Kensington dependency upon external resources.**

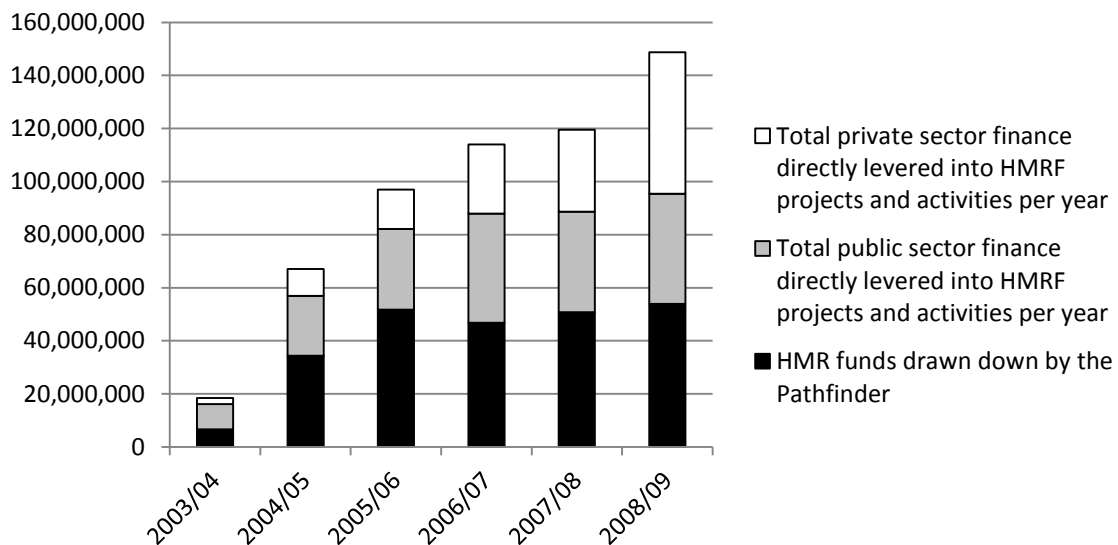
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Dependency upon external resources</b>
Kensington NDC		Figure 22 shows the level of match funding in comparison to NDC spend between 2000 and 2008 for the programme as a whole. It can be seen that across the programme period a substantial degree of NDC programmes were financed by match funding – over 50% in 2003/04 and 2007/08. NDC spend comes directly from national government. Match funding comes from a variety of sources, including local government, RSL, private sector and other government sources.
Housing Market Renewal Initiative	2003 - present	Figure 23 below displays the funding sources of total HMR activity between 2003/04 and 2008/09 in the Newheartlands area (ie. not isolated to just Kensington). It can be noted that there is a roughly even mix between HMR spend (which comes from national government), other public sources (local and national government) and private sources – although varying in their exact proportions between different years.

**Figure 22. NDC and other public spend – 2000/1 to 2008/9.**



Source: Hanlon Software Solutions, cited in Russell et al, 2009, p. 88

**Figure 23. Funding sources for HMR activity (all Newheartlands areas).**



Source: HMR Annual Reports (Newheartlands, 2004a; 2005; 2006; 2007; 2008; 2009)

The above information shows that funding for programmes was mixed, but that the majority were heavily dependent upon external resources for their funding. This was largely a dependency upon national government funds, as well as private sector contributions.

#### 7.4 Were there contradicting, instable governance arrangements?

During the study period both cases experienced changes in the stability of governance arrangements as a result of shifts in external frameworks. Table 16 below displays the major significant shifts in external frameworks which occurred during the study periods, and how these impacted upon each area.

**Table 16. Impact of shifts in external frameworks.**

Shift in external framework	Date	Impact upon the governance of housing renewal in Tranmere/Rock Ferry	Impact upon the governance of housing renewal in Kensington
1989 Housing Act	1988	Gave provision for the designation of Renewal Areas by local authorities.	
Economic downturn	Early 1990s		
Re-election of national Conservative government	1992	The government continued its Renewal Area policy.	
Election of new Labour government	1997	Labour established the HMR initiative in 2003, leading to the establishment of Newheartlands and HMR funding in Tranmere/Rock Ferry and Kensington.	
Sharp rise in national and local house prices	2002-04	Increased the cost of purchasing houses for demolition, causing delays in the HMR programme.	
Economic downturn	2008-2010	Lack of mortgage liquidity caused major problems in maintaining momentum of new build housing in the HMR scheme.	
Election of Coalition national government	May 2010	Cuts in funding for HMR, followed by the announcement of its dissolution in March 2011.	

It can be noted from Table 16 that both areas were subject to shifts in external frameworks during the study period. These were a mixture of wider economic circumstances and changes in national government administrations, which led to changes in policy.

In order to evaluate the stability of the housing renewal governance in Tranmere/Rock Ferry and Kensington three criteria were developed. These were:

- Criterion 1: The agencies involved in housing governance operating locally have remained consistent. This criterion evaluates the ‘churn’ of agencies. Theoretically, where agencies have remained consistent, it provides more favourable conditions for the development of stronger and more effective working relationships.
- Criterion 2: Amounts of funding coming into the area for housing remain constant. This enables agencies to plan ahead and create more strategic change
- Criterion 3: Sources of funding coming into the area for housing remain constant. This could mean that criterion for funding, or requirements on spend, remain similar, and therefore allow more strategic planning of funding use.

Table 17 analyses each of the criteria for the two case study areas.

**Table 17. The stability of the renewal programmes.**

Criterion	Summary of Tranmere/Rock Ferry case	Summary in Kensington case
1. The agencies involved in housing governance operating locally have remained consistent	Figure 7 displayed that the agencies involved have remained reasonably consistent. Particularly Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council and the Housing Corporation/HCA. Private developer and RSL partners have varied, but some remained constant, such as Riverside.	Figure 14 displayed that there has also been a reasonable degree of stability in Kensington during the past decade. Whilst the council have remained a constantly strong presence in terms of strategy development and intervention, the past decade has seen a number of consistent national government placed agencies (Newheartlands and Kensington Regeneration). However, these are no longer in existence, indicating a lack of stability of these

		kings of organisations over the long term.
2. Amounts of funding coming into the area for housing remain constant	External funding for housing renewal, other than standard Council resources has varied. In the 1990s there were few extra financial resources. Post-2003, the HMR initiative has provided substantial additional funding.	Figures 22 and 23 display a gradual rise in both external public resources and levered external private resources during the 10 year period.
3. Sources of funding coming into the area for housing remain constant	The sources of housing renewal funding have remained relatively constant – largely the national government (through Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, the Housing Corporation/HCA and Newheartlands). However, the 2008/11 programme represented the slowdown/exit strategy of HMR activity in the Rock Ferry Area, and in 2011 the programme was cut prematurely short.	During the period under study the sources of funding have remained constant. However, NDC closed down in 2010, and in March 2011 HMR will cease operation. Again, this displays that the consistency of much of the funding for housing renewal has been dependent upon national government.

### 7.5 What was the mode of governance?

In addressing this question, a typology set out by DiGaetano and Strom in 2003 will be used. Table 18 below displays their typology.

**Table 18. Mode of governance.**

	<b>Clientelist</b>	<b>Corporatist</b>	<b>Managerial</b>	<b>Pluralist</b>	<b>Populist</b>
<b>Governing relations</b>	Particularist, personalized	Exclusionary negotiation	Formal, bureaucratic, contractual	Brokering or mediating	Inclusive negotiations
<b>Governing logic</b>	Reciprocity	Consensus building	Authoritative decision making	Conflict management	Mobilization of popular support
<b>Key decision makers</b>	Politicians and clients	Politicians and civic leaders	Politicians and civil servants	Politicians and org. interests	Politicians and community leaders
<b>Political objectives</b>	Material	Purposive	Material	Purposive	Symbolic

Source: DiGaetano and Strom (2003), 366, modifications by the authors

An explanation of the terms used in the matrix can be found in DiGaetano and Strom (2003). However, it is clear from the evidence presented in this report that elements of the various other categories suggested by DiGaetano and Strom do feature in the 'modes of governance' in both case study areas. Tables 19 and 20 show the evidence of each category for the case study areas. The table displays a shading key, which indicates the degree of evidence that the case conforms with that particular element of the mode of governance.

**Table 19. Tranmere/Rock Ferry mode of governance.**

	Clientelist	Corporatist	Managerial	Pluralist	Populist
<b>Governing relations</b>	No evidence.	There is no evidence that groups were specifically excluded during negotiations.	Evidence of contractual relations. Concern about effectiveness and efficiency highly prevalent by central government.	Evidence of brokering, with the local authority acting in a mediating role.	Evidence indicates negotiations were inclusive.
<b>Governing logic</b>	No evidence that particular political alliances were formed to provide selective benefits for certain constituents.	Evidence of consensus building amongst elites.	Little evidence of authoritative decision making. CPOs largely unused.	Evidence of conflict management.	Evidence of mobilization of popular support. But resistance from some groups.
<b>Key decision makers</b>	Key decision makers largely local councillors, officers, private sector, RSLs, residents	Politicians (central and local) and civic leaders the key decision makers. But also the private sector and RSLs.	National politicians the key decision makers on wider strategic issues (eg. the continuation of the programme).	Yes, politicians and organised interests. But also council officers in collaboration with residents.	Yes, politicians. Community leaders included, but not in a major role. Private sector and RSLs more prominent.
<b>Political objectives</b>	Yes. Material – ie. refurbished or new houses for selected residents.	No. Benefits were selective	Yes. Material – ie. refurbished or new houses for selected residents.	No. Benefits were selective	No. Benefits were tangible.

**Table 20. Kensington mode of governance.**

	Clientelist	Corporatist	Managerial	Pluralist	Populist
<b>Governing relations</b>	No evidence.	Evidence of exclusion of certain rival groups during CPO process.	Evidence of contractual relations. Concern about effectiveness and efficiency highly prevalent by central government.	Evidence of brokering.	Evidence indicates negotiations were inclusive.
<b>Governing logic</b>	No evidence that particular political alliances were formed to provide selective benefits for certain constituents.	Evidence of consensus building amongst elites.	Evidence of authoritative decision making through the use of CPOs.	Some conflict management, but authoritative decision making employed.	Evidence of mobilization of popular support. But resistance from some groups.
<b>Key decision makers</b>	Key decision makers largely local councillors, officers, private sector, RSLs, residents	Politicians (central and local) and civic leaders the key decision makers. But also the private sector and RSLs.	National politicians the key decision makers on wider strategic issues (eg. the continuation of the programme).	Yes, politicians and organised interests. But also council officers in collaboration with residents.	Yes, politicians. Community leaders included, but not in a major role. Private sector and RSLs more prominent.
<b>Political objectives</b>	Yes. Material – ie. refurbished or new houses for selected residents.	No. Benefits were selective	Yes. Material – ie. refurbished or new houses for selected residents.	No. Benefits were selective	No. Benefits were tangible.

Shading key

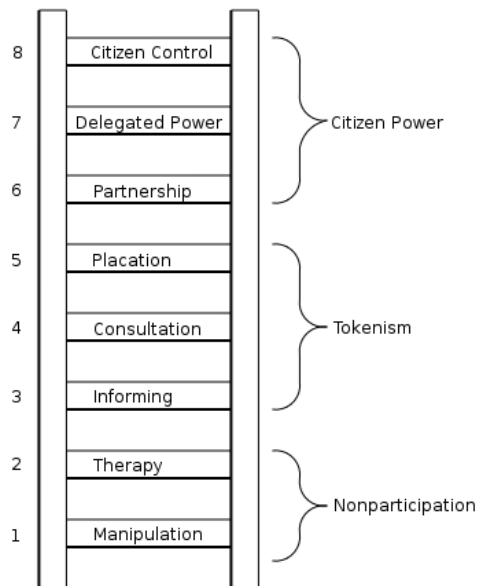
	Strong evidence
	Some evidence
	Little or no evidence



The above tables show a mixed 'mode of governance' in the two cases. Both show signs of pluralist and populist modes, but there is also evidence of corporatism and managerial elements. The more substantial use of CPOs in Kensington indicates that the area has shown more prominent signs of a managerial approach, whilst in Tranmere/Rock Ferry there has been very minimal use of CPOs, and a greater degree of bargaining and consensus building.

In terms of the degree of participation and involvement of residents, we can consult Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation (Arnstein, 1969) – see Figure 24 below.

**Figure 24. Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation.**



When considering the evidence gathered and presented in this report, the level of participation appears to be between 'placation' and 'partnership'. There is clear evidence of citizens being enabled to negotiate and engage in trade-off with the public, private and RSL institutions involved. For instance, a Rock Ferry resident reported the residents coming to compromises over issues with institutions (interview, 22/12/2011), and it was also report by a Newheartlands officer that in the case of Anfield, north Liverpool, a plan was originally developed to demolish 1,300 houses, but following consultation with residents, this was increased to 1,700 houses. However, these 'traditional' powerholders still retain the right to make the final decisions and, if necessary, use legal force (through CPOs) to have them carried through.

## 8 - Conclusions

Over a period of more than 20 years Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council have driven forward an incremental approach to neighbourhood renewal in the Tranmere and Rock Ferry areas that appears to have achieved significant improvements in housing and environmental conditions. This seems to have been achieved largely with the support of the local community and with little evidence of gentrification. The incremental approach has allowed both social and physical infrastructures to be maintained throughout the period with the minimum of disruption to the life of the area.

Kensington represents a more problematic area. The scale of the social and environmental problems appears to have been greater in this area. There is little doubt that by the millennium the area was experiencing serious housing market failure and social conditions were poor on a number of indicators. Matters were further complicated by the controversial decision to widen and improve Edge Lane at a cost of demolishing many dwellings. The whole experience of neighbourhood renewal in Kensington seems to have been more difficult than in the other case study with more opposition both from some local people, especially in relation to the compulsory purchase process, and professional commentators (cf Allen, 2008). This is not to say that many residents clearly welcomed the renewal programme. Despite misgivings the gentrification that some commentators feared does not seem to have materialised in Kensington either (Nevin, 2010). Writing in 2011 there are clear signs of progress in Kensington with new dwellings being completed and the new road layout coming to fruition. However it is also clear that there are large swathes of cleared land that are likely to prove difficult to redeveloped in the near future because of failings in the system of financing housing development. It is ironic that a policy designed to tackle local housing market failure may itself flounder because of national failings in the housing market – the inability of the system to finance either housing construction or purchase. However, the most powerful bloke to policy implementation has been delivered by political instability: the recent national election of a Coalition Government and its decision to cease funding the programme.

Through the study period housing renewal in both case study areas appears to have had the resources and capacity necessary to carry out the programme. But then, the programme was already geared to the capacity of the system to implement it. What is clear is that local housing renewal has become heavily and increasingly dependent upon central government and private sector funding for its implementation. Once these two sources of funding went into crisis after 2008 the rate of progress has slowed sharply.

It can also be said that whilst the governance arrangements were stable for periods of time, usually coinciding with national government terms of office but also reflecting economic cycles, these governance arrangements were not sufficiently robust to withstand changes in the external environment: with changes of national government came changes in local policy and governance. Comparing the two case studies, governance arrangements in Wirral appear to have been more stable than those in Liverpool.

In terms of the mode of governance the predominant characteristic of housing renewal in the Wirral appears to have been pluralism with an inclusive style that minimised conflicts whilst taking a fairly pragmatic approach to policy and implementation. In Liverpool the approach seems to have been slightly more managerial with greater dependence on formal systems (e.g. CPOs) and top-down decision making (e.g. regarding the Edge Lane improvements) and greater external scrutiny.

Taking the long view it is clear that the policy of housing renewal has undergone substantial change. The clearance and rebuilding policies of the post-war era were top-down corporatist strategies with little room for community involvement. Furthermore they were almost entirely funded through public investment and allocated to households on the basis of housing need. As such they were not vulnerable to the vagaries of the housing market.

Whilst the housing improvement policies of the 1970s and 1980s allowed and required much greater community involvement and were dependent upon inputs of private capital, the scale of individual projects was modest: one dwelling, one street. Thus what was involved was petty capital, usually involving local firms and modest sums of money. With strong political support nationally and locally this programme was also relatively immune from macro-economic forces.

The Housing Market Renewal policy on the other hand has been a mixture of top-down strategic policy making tempered by local community participation. But the implementation of HMR, whilst successful in achieving its aims for a period, has proved to lack long-term robustness and shown to be vulnerable to changes in the macro economy and national political will, regardless of the wishes of local government or local communities.

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