A place in the country: 
the contribution of second homes to North Devon communities

Submitted by Jenny Elizabeth Barnett, to the University of Exeter as a thesis for 
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Geography, August 2013.

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Abstract

This research examines the sustainability and participatory objectives of the UK’s planning system in a geographical context. It aims to explore the relationships between communities and place, and the connections between national government, local governments and communities in planning processes and outcomes. It also considers the role of planning in shaping places and communities, and how planning endeavours to include communities in decision-making through encouraging participation in community activities. This thesis argues that there is a gap between planning policy and rhetoric and the implementation of policy within specific community contexts. The research is a piece of collaborative research conducted with the planning department at North Devon Council (NDC). Through developing an original empirical case study of data from parishes within North Devon, planning’s sustainability and participatory agendas are examined through the framework of second homes considered a distinct yet related form of tourism (Jaakson, 1986). The research unpicks popular understandings of second homes through quantitative and qualitative research and argues that there are nuanced existences and experiences of second home properties, compounding the difficulty of defining these properties that produce both non-permanent residents and semi-permanent tourists. Exploration of the socio-economic contributions of second homes within host communities suggests that second homes have potential to contribute unsustainable traits, particularly social impacts, to host communities while also having potential to bring positive, predominantly economic, contributions.

The empirical research demonstrates that notions of community from resident and policy maker perspectives illustrate that place is not necessary to understanding or experiencing community but has a key role in framing both policy and North Devon residents’ perceptions of community. Through examining the most recent round of democratic renewal in the planning system, issues of power and responsibility within planning functions are reviewed. It argues that the Conservative – Liberal Democrat Coalition neighbourhood planning obligations reveal a dichotomy between community desire for power and the realism of heightened responsibility.
“But Mr Dent, the plans have been available in the local planning office for the last nine months.”

“Oh yes, well as soon as I heard I went straight round to see them, yesterday afternoon. You hadn’t exactly gone out of your way to call attention to them had you? I mean like actually telling anyone or anything.”

“But the plans were on display...”

“On display? I eventually had to go down to the cellar to find them.”

“That's the display department.”

“With a torch.”

“Oh, well the lights had probably gone.”

“So had the stairs.”

“But look, you found the notice didn’t you?”

“Yes,” said Arthur, “yes I did. It was on display in the bottom of a locked filing cabinet stuck in a disused lavatory with a sign on the door saying: “Beware of The Leopard”.

Douglas Adams (1979)
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**List Of Frequently Used Acronyms**

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<tr>
<td>CM#</td>
<td>Community Member (# interview number)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSLTR</td>
<td>Centre for Sport Leisure and Tourism Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>Devon County Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCLG</td>
<td>Department for Communities and Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENPA</td>
<td>Exmoor National Park Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESRC</td>
<td>Economic and Social Research Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDNPA</td>
<td>Lake District National Park Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPA</td>
<td>Local Planning Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDC</td>
<td>North Devon Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPPF</td>
<td>National Planning Policy Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM#</td>
<td>Policy Maker (# interview number)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCS</td>
<td>Sustainable Community Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHMANP</td>
<td>Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the Northern Peninsula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDC</td>
<td>Torridge District Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UoE</td>
<td>University of Exeter</td>
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Chapter 1: Introduction

This research examines UK planning’s sustainability and participatory agendas in geographical contexts looking at relationships between communities and place, the connections between national government, local governments and communities in planning processes and outcomes. It also considers the role of planning in shaping places and communities and how planning endeavours to include communities in decision-making and encourage participation in community activities. Through examining the most recent round of democratic renewal, predominantly the Localism Agenda, issues of power and responsibility within planning are reviewed.

This project is an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) CASE PhD studentship which is a piece of collaborative research partnered with and part-funded by the planning department at North Devon Council. This firmly situates this research within UK planning objectives exploring notions of community, sustainability and participation. Reviewing planning’s most recent round of democratic renewal, the means through which citizen participation is pursued and responded to, is examined through exploring connections between different scales of government and communities. These broader issues are explored through the framework of the geographies of second homes examining experiences and perceptions of semi-permanent residents and second home properties within host communities. The research progresses knowledge about second homes offering insight into the nuanced existences of second homes, as well as in-depth examination of the perceived contributions of second homes to their host communities in terms of community, sustainability and participation.

This research proposes that there are discursive realisations of planning interventions intending to deliver sustainable and participatory communities. Exploration of notions of community from resident and policy maker perspectives examines the extent to which place is necessary to understanding or experiencing community reviewing its role within policy and resident perceptions. Examination of democratic renewal processes and issues of power and responsibility within planning functions review the relationship between new neighbourhood planning obligations and community desire for and response to heightened responsibility.
This research brings together literatures regarding planning, community, governance with second homes. It considers the discursive realities of planning interventions through the lens of governmentality and grounds all of these ideas in an original empirical data set examining second homes in North Devon.

1.1 The Origins Of The Research Proposal
This PhD originates in a proposal developed by the project supervisors at the University of Exeter (UoE) with the partner and co-funder: North Devon Council (NDC). It was awarded external funding from the ESRC through the Centre for Sport Leisure and Tourism Research (CSLTR) based at UoE. The PhD, as an ESRC CASE studentship, has worked in strong partnership with the planning department at NDC and while this exact form of competition has been discontinued its purpose was to:

“encourage greater interaction between organisations and academic research by providing opportunities...to carry out research in conjunction with private, public or third/voluntary sector organisations” (ESRC, 2011: online).

Being in partnership directed the research from the outset, not least through situating the research within a planning context. The ESRC’s economic and social research focus, combined with the central role of sustainability in UK planning grounded this PhD research within the concepts of social and economic sustainability and communities through the framework of second homes. The project, as a collaborative CASE studentship, is also presented within and contributes to both academic and policy contexts.

This research uses the unique framework of second homes to assemble a significant contribution to the debate regarding UK local planning authorities (LPA) delivery of sustainable communities. North Devon has parishes and villages with high concentrations of second homes and the socio-economic impacts and contributions second homes have on host communities are largely unknown. The research focus on second homes was driven by NDC’s interest in obtaining greater understanding of the impact of second home ownership across the district. Second homes account for 3.7% (2011/12 council tax data) of housing stock in North Devon District, with certain individual parishes seeing concentrations of up to 27%. The 2008 Strategic Housing Market Assessment
for the Northern Peninsula (SHMANP) confirmed the unknown influence of these significant proportions of second homes.

NDC contributed to the development of this research proposal to facilitate exploration of the issues raised in the SHMANP regarding second homes, and also played a substantial role in developing the methodological process (Chapter Four). In addition to this research being situated in the political arena the empirical research lies within the academic conceptual framework presented in Chapter Two combining geography and planning literatures. The basis for research is grounded in UK planning processes, concepts of communities and sustainable communities, and the presentation of these in policy and realisation of these in practice. Furthermore, the concept of formal and informal participation in both governance roles and community activities will be examined in terms of contributions to community and sustainability, and the implications of semi-permanent presences. These concepts will now be introduced in more detail.

1.2 Sustainability, Communities and UK Planning

The empirical research centres on the understanding and experiences of notions of community reviewing existing literature, planning policies and as articulated by research respondents. Within this context the research examines opinions and experiences of policy makers and residents regarding the contribution of second homes, as semi-permanent presences, to the sustainability of host communities. Through this the necessary role of place in understanding community is explored considering its role within North Devon residents and policy articulations of community.

The central role of sustainability to UK planning was asserted in the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. The Egan Review (2004) introduced ‘Sustainable Community Strategies’ (SCS) to the statutory policy framework with the purpose to determine the vision for sustainability locally. The SCS vision for Northern Devon is for the area to be:

“As an economically vibrant place which, combined with an exceptional and diverse environment, offers an excellent quality of life for all its people and communities in a safe, healthy and sustainable manner”.(NDC and TDC, 2009:2)
Planning policy frequently situates policy outputs within community as the site for policy realisation, as well as something to be created as a result of planning policy, which led to this research examining the concept of ‘community’. Within this research ‘community’ is grounded in a fluid and evolving understanding rather than seeking a normative definition of the term and expresses the notion’s plurality of existences. The empirical research builds upon concepts unearthed in the literature review, using individual experiences to ground policy and explore the ways community is understood, experienced and created. It argues the importance of the individual in understanding notions of community through empirical accounts of personal experiences, and the concept of community existing through ‘personal community’ generated through individual’s personal connections (Pahl and Spencer, 2004).

The ‘sustainable community’ is predominantly a New Labour concept and while the exact terminology may not have persisted into Conservative – Liberal Democrat Coalition policy, this thesis argues that the rhetoric has. It is understood to remain present through planning’s ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ (DCLG, 2012a) and focus on ‘place-making’ for ‘strong vibrant communities’. The extent to which the Coalition Government’s most recent planning reform is instigating radical change (Davoudi, 2012) is debated throughout the thesis. Primary research was conducted during the early stages of the Coalition administration and planning reform intending to ‘open up’ planning and “disperse power more widely in Britain” (DCLG, 2011a:3) through political agendas such as Localism and neighbourhood planning. This planning reform intends to disperse power through removing a substantial amount of planning guidance and tools deemed to be ‘over prescriptive’ (DCLG, 2011a:3). However, discussions with NDC revealed the persistent use of some planning tools due to the absence of alternative options. NDC expressed use of the ‘Egan Wheel’ (2004) as guidance in assessing the sustainability of communities. Consequently, this tool is used critically to frame the analysis of the impacts of second homes to the sustainability of host communities. The persistent statutory sustainability objective of planning also provided the framework to explore the socio-economic contributions of second homes, to be reviewed through this original empirical data set. This will examine the extent to which second homes and semi-permanent presences are
understood to contribute to or compromise planning’s sustainability interventions and the social sustainability of host communities.

1.3 Participation and Communities
The 2004 Planning Act in addition to placing sustainable development at the heart of planning set up a parallel programme of transparency and engagement with stakeholders (Counsell and Haughton, 2006). Planning’s repeated rounds of attempted democratic renewal have seen a persistent endeavour to increase both the diversity and volume of participants in decision-making processes. Concern over the potential for participation to “induce organizational paralysis” (Williams, 2002:201) is connected to simultaneous endeavours to overcome this through the selection of participants. The most recent focus on the ‘neighbourhood’ and Parish Councils as a means to select participants and as a mechanism of participation are reviewed throughout the research. Consideration of participation extends to include informal participation, in terms of community activities for example, and the research explores the extent to which participation has been increased. The rationale behind efforts to enhance participation in decision-making comes from a need to overcome perceived civic disenchantment with the representative democracy approach to politics (Bucek and Smith, 2000; Michels and De Graaf, 2010). This research reviews the extent to which this is perceived to be occurring and the apparent dichotomy between communities desire for power and the reality of receiving additional responsibility.

Planning outcomes are understood to depend upon the participants involved and planning has the role of determining whose voice is heard in determining planning issues (Rydin, 2011:10). The Coalition’s planning reform intends to increase the level of neighbourhood responsibility through new neighbourhood planning functions, although the process has been suggested to generate a mismatch of power, responsibility and duty (Holman and Rydin, 2013). This leads to questioning the rationality behind neighbourhood planning to disperse power or reduce budget deficit as “austerity localism” (Featherstone et al, 2012:177). This questioning of rationality is used to frame the empirical research and analysis regarding the role of communities and individuals within
planning, and examination of how NDC views the role and delivery of the participation agenda.

Viewing this research through the lens of governmentality, as coined by Foucault (Burchell, 1991; Dean, 1999), explores the micro scale processes of governing within communities. It therefore enables examination of planning’s attempts to govern the civic domain and the ways which this is resisted and altered by the actions and influence of the autonomous individual. The research perceives planning, sustainability and participation as rationalities of government creating related problematisations of ‘non-sustainable’ and ‘non-participatory’. Planning’s shift from government to governance (Davies, 2002) outlines the relevance of governmentality to this thesis through acknowledging the many sources of power influencing situations through a governance concept. This is vital in considering planning’s location at a nexus of power and knowledge, where knowledge is reinforced through power being carried through strategy and discourse (McGuirk, 2001). Individuals following their own agendas based upon their own set of meanings, power and knowledge are understood to have a significant impact on the outputs of planning (Pløger, 2001). The governmentality thesis recognises the disjuncture between policy aims and outcomes as a part of the governing process rather than suggesting a sign of failure accounting for discursive policy outcomes.

1.4 Second Homes
Second home properties are understood to be a distinct form of both tourism within host communities, as they tend to have frequent and repetitive visits to exactly the same property, but while unique also exhibit similarities common to most forms of tourism (Jaakson, 1986). The second home tourist can be perceived as distinct from a ‘constant foreign tourist’ who has a brief encounter with rather than ‘belonging to’ a community (Hall and Muller, 2004). Consequently, the extent to which this unique non-permanent resident/semi-permanent tourist contributes to the host community is to be reviewed in this research. This provides the framework for researching the core themes of this research reviewing second homes and their owners’ and occupants’ roles within and contributions to understandings of notions of communities and the sustainability of communities. This research seeks to further understandings of
second homes while recognising that attempts to define second homes have been described as a ‘perennial problem’ due to problems typifying living patterns (Gallent et al, 2003; Wallace et al, 2005).

Nationally second homes in the UK are not perceived to be an issue making up only 1% of housing stock (Oxley et al, 2008) and this lack of concern is reflected by the absence of reference to second homes in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (DCLG, 2012a). The second home phenomenon in the UK is proposed to be more akin to an ‘epidemic’ nature as opposed to the ‘endemic’ experience in other countries (Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones, 2001). The UK has been considered to lack the cultural acceptance or expectancy of second homes which can be found in other countries, especially Scandinavia where nearly a fifth of all households own a second home and there is a less conflictual experience of second homes (Rye, 2011).

Stereotypes of second homes are often expressed and these will be examined throughout this research. Such truisms include the frequently cited perception that second home ownership leads to house price inflation due to the additional demand placed upon local housing markets. Focus on the negative implications of second homes grew alongside a rapid growth in second homes that occurred as disposable income increased and mobility eased (Williams et al in Hall and Muller, 2004). As such, a causal connection is often made between an increase in second homes and a suggested ‘thinning out’ of communities (Muller, 1999, 2001 cited in Hall and Muller, 2004); however the potential ‘loss of community’ proposed should not be confused with broader social change (Cloke and Milbourne, 1992; Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones, 2001). More recently second home literature has moved away from suggesting second homes are inherently negative, rather suggesting that second homes have potential to generate localised negative impacts (Gallent et al, 2003).

Planning offers one potential management approach through its role of reconciling competing land uses (Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones, 2001). Research in New Zealand suggests local governments view second homes as ‘a curse and a blessing’ with a belief that planning should not solely deal with negative issues but be used to “effectively gain the most benefit now and in the future” (in Hall and Muller, 2004:194). Existing literature has highlighted substantive gaps
in second home research including regarding the sustainability of communities in a more recent socio-economic landscape and examination of the positive impacts of second homes (Wallace et al, 2005; Oxley et al, 2008). This research therefore furthers understandings of second homes in a localised context within the current socio-economic landscape through an empirical grounding in North Devon. This will support and enable future management approaches regarding second homes through highlighting the nuances of second homes properties.

1.5 Case Study Location and Collaborative Research
The collaborative nature of this research plays a significant methodological role through expressing certain conditions and expectations and requiring negotiation during the development and undertaking of the research. The main benefits of working in partnership with NDC include their role as gatekeepers, providing access to information including key resources such as council tax data, policy documents, access to internal staff for interview and contacts further afield, such as communities. The partnership facilitates understanding of the creation of key policy documents, providing background to the structure of local government and interactions with communities in North Devon. NDC facilitated indirect access to household addresses facilitating contact with the community to enable research to examine response to, and experience of, policy delivery and community within parishes.

This research uses a triangulated methodological approach drawing on three research methods from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. Broadly, the three key research methods are an analysis of secondary data, a large-scale quantitative survey and a series of qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviews. These primary data collection methods have been used in previous second home research and are well situated to further understanding of the core themes of this research. This methodological approach will produce two substantive pieces of data facilitating both the verification and questioning of quantitative findings through further in-depth research; while also producing standardised data to present the broad context of the extent of the opinions and attitudes presented in qualitative data (Silverman, 2004). This approach satisfies both institutions’ approaches to research and desired outputs, whereby the quantitative questionnaire provides numerical descriptions and standardised
data for use within policy evidence base; and in-depth semi-structured interviews explore the more nuanced opinions regarding notions of community, understandings of second homes and the relationships between government bodies and communities.

Five North Devon parishes with comparatively high proportions of second homes provide the empirical case study. Georgeham parish includes the coastal resort of Croyde and the highest proportion of second homes, 23.3% (percentages based on 2011/12 council tax data), out of the three parishes. Instow provides an estuary location close to North Devon District’s main town, Barnstaple, and contains 14.5% second homes. Brendon and Countisbury provide a National Park case study in Exmoor National Park and contain 17.9% second homes. Two further case studies, with lower proportions of second homes were included in the quantitative survey in order to facilitate a comparison between parishes. This enables examination of the perceptions and experiences of varying proportions of second homes and semi-permanent residents within host communities. Interviews with policy makers and residents within the parishes with higher proportions of second homes focus on the experiences of community, participation and second homes.

1.6 Research Aim, Objectives And Research Questions
The planning department at NDC have the legal remit of implementing and delivering statutory planning functions within their local area, and partnership with this body directed the aim of this research. The overall aim of this research is to assess UK local planning authority delivery of statutory sustainability and participatory agendas through examining the contributions and apparent conflict that high concentrations of second homes in selected North Devon parishes pose. This will be explored through the following three key research objectives:

1. To explore popular understandings of second homes, and socio-economic impacts of second homes to host communities from North Devon resident and policy maker perspectives.

2. To further understandings of notions of community from policy maker and resident perceptions and review the role second homes and their occupants are perceived to have within host communities.
3. To explore citizen participation within communities and in a planning context, reviewing policy attempts to increase participation, personal motivations and the contributions of second home occupants through their semi-permanent presence within host communities.

These objectives will be used to guide the research, provide the framework for presenting the empirical analysis and will contribute to NDC’s policy evidence base. The research objectives will be achieved through answering the following research questions:

1. How are second homes conceptualised and to what extent do these properties and their occupants fit or conflict with planning’s sustainability agenda?

Sustainability has become central to planning and planning has been placed at the heart of coordinating national sustainability policy. Sustainability can be broadly defined as the incorporation of temporal and spatial stewardship with the ‘enmeshing’ of the environment with broader social issues and economic realities (Smith et al, 1999). This research brings together planning and geography literatures through examination of the socio-economic contributions of second homes to host communities. Planning’s sustainability role situates this research to examine the sustainability of communities within North Devon parishes. Through critical application of the Egan Wheel (2004), a tool for judging the sustainability of communities, the contributions and conflicts second home ownership is perceived to pose to sustainability within host communities will be examined. Profiling second home properties alongside the perceptions and experiences of second homes within host communities will contribute to knowledge within the geographies of second homes literature. Greater understanding of the nuanced existence of second homes can contribute to potential management approaches through enhancing understanding of what is attempting to be managed. This research question responds directly to the overall aim of the research, and research objective one, through examining planning’s sustainability agenda and associated implications of second homes. It will ground understandings of second homes in a new and current empirical case study set within current planning agendas and policy.
II. To what extent is place integral to understanding notions of community? How is community understood and experienced by residents and how do semi-permanent presences brought about by second homes contribute to and undermine community?

This research question examines notions of community through in-depth explorations into how community is understood and experienced by residents, and the contribution of semi-permanent presences within communities. This research question connects to the research aim and research objective two placing focus on social sustainability and the ways in which second homes are understood to contribute to or undermine experiences of community. The articulation of place within policy references to community, and Coalition focus on the 'neighbourhood' will be examined to consider the necessary role of place in understanding community, contributing to wider debates regarding notions of community. The research uses the unique framework of second homes to ground exploration into understandings and experiences of the notions of community in a new empirical case study.

III. How do on-going processes of democratic renewal in planning seek to create increased citizen and community participation? How are these realised by practitioners and communities, and challenged by the presence of semi-permanent residents?

This research question builds on the previous in examining notions of participation within understanding and experiences of community as well as reviewing the connections between national government, local governments and communities. This will focus on formal participation, such as with regard to plan making and decision-making as well as more informal participation, such as presence, and contribution with activities and events within the communities. The extent semi-permanent second home presences impact participation agendas will be reviewed.

The research examines new planning obligations placed upon communities under the Coalition government, how communities have responded to these and the apparent dichotomy between community desire for increased power and the reality of heightened responsibility. It examines mechanisms of governance and how planning interventions are translated, adapted and
discursively delivered in practice. This research question pursues the overall aim of the research, and research objective three, through reviewing how planning endeavours to create participating communities. It examines how governance processes endeavour to influence populations but are ultimately resisted and discursively interpreted.

The way in which this thesis is structured will now be outlined to detail how the research aim and objectives will be met and research questions answered.

1.7 Thesis Structure
This first chapter has detailed the research rationale, aim and objectives. Chapter Two will review and bring together the relevant literatures regarding planning, community, sustainability, and participation and how these can be viewed through the lens of governmentality. Chapter Three details the context of housing and second homes as the framework for exploring the themes outlines in Chapter Two. Chapter Four presents the methodological approach used for the empirical research. The empirical research employs three main approaches: analysis of secondary data, a large scale quantitative survey with permanent and second home residents, and a series of in-depth qualitative interviews with permanent and second home residents, as well as policy makers. Chapter Four also extensively reviews how the research as a collaborative project influenced and formed a part of the methodology. The thesis then moves to present the research analysis where three chapters respond to the three research objectives. Chapter Five examines the problem of second home definition through examining understandings and articulations of second homes and assesses their sustainability impact through critically referring to six of the eight Egan Wheel segments for assessing the sustainability of communities. The two remaining Egan Wheel segments are examined in greater detail in the two remaining analysis chapters. Chapter Six focuses on social sustainability, notions and experiences of community articulated throughout the research and the role of semi-permanent presences within these perceptions. Chapter Seven concludes the analysis through examination of participation and governance within parishes, and the connections between local and national governments and communities. This chapter examines the level of input required by neighbourhood bodies under
new planning obligations and the extent to which semi-permanent second home presences can contribute to these. Chapter Eight draws together the main findings and conclusions of this research through responding to the research questions set out in this chapter. It also outlines recommendations for policy responses generated from the empirical research and discussions with partners at NDC.

This research makes a series of original contributions to knowledge. Firstly, it develops greater understandings of notions of community through new empirical research into personal perceptions of community. This is considered through the unique framework of the contribution of semi-permanent members of communities and the relationship of community to place. Secondly, the research examines the way in which planning interventions seek to deliver sustainability, community and participation and the discursive actualisations of these. Thirdly, it examines new planning obligations and the connections between power, responsibility and obligations in the process of governance. Finally, it progresses knowledge within the realm of the geographies of second homes regarding understanding of the nuanced existences of second homes. The research expresses originality through the exploration of concepts and processes of community, participation and governance through an empirical study on second homes from a planning perspective viewed through the lens of governmentality. Exploration of these notions provides a depth of knowledge particularly relevant for those endeavouring to generate and deliver relevant policy.
Chapter 2: Research Context: Community, Planning and Participation

2.1 Introduction To Chapter

This chapter will examine existing literature to outline the research context of this thesis: planning, community and participation. As collaborative research, partnered with NDC’s planning department, the research is situated within planning and the statutory sustainability and participatory agendas. This chapter therefore sets the research context through exploring UK planning in order to understand the processes that led to current planning policies and agendas.

Through recognising planning’s attempts to represent and include communities in decision-making this chapter examines the concept and notions of community. Similarly, the concepts of sustainability, sustainable communities and participation are explored due to their existence as statutory planning agendas and are therefore core aims of research. The scene is set, through this chapter, for the research to explore the connections between national government, local governments and communities through exploring the literature related to these concepts, in a planning context.

The review in this chapter provides the foundations for this research to explore the experiences and articulations of communities, sustainability and participation through grounding these in existing literature. This chapter also introduces the lens of ‘governmentality’ through which the research is to be viewed. This understands there to be many sources of power and influence upon, and within, populations, and discursive realisations of dominant ‘rationalities’ and ‘programmes’ of government seeking to govern populations to act in certain ways. This provides the framework for the primary research to examine the ways in which planning policy is realised by populations through reviewing the articulations of community, second home impact on the sustainability of communities, and participation within communities.

The chapter will begin by completing an overview of post-war planning and the rising importance of sustainability in planning. It will consider the post-2004 statutory inclusion of sustainability and increased governance remit. It will review rescaling of planning policy as attempts to attain greater representation of and connection to ‘communities’. This leads into a review of the concept of community, considering the differences between community, society and
neighbourhood and the need to account for the existence of multiple communities. The necessary role of place in community is then examined, in light of the priority of place-based communities within policy. This chapter introduces the suggestion that ‘personal communities’ (Pahl and Spencer, 2004) exist; these are understood to be individuals generating their own communities through their own connections. This furthers discussion of the perceived ‘loss’ of community through grounding community in personal experiences and connections (Massey, 1991).

The chapter then introduces the concept of sustainability and considers the sustainable community. This reviews evolution from a ‘three-pillar’ concept to include broader issues of governance and suggests a shift of sustainable communities being concerned with global sustainability to now focussing on local resilience (Barr and Devine-Wright, 2012). While avoiding a normative definition of sustainability facilitates interpretation relevant to each community or situation, the uncertainty this brings is recognised as having potential to render the term meaningless (Davidson, 2010; Kelly et al, 2004). Nevertheless, the chapter will suggest that the sustainable community rhetoric has persisted into Coalition planning policy. However, it will be argued that the Coalition places an economic priority within their sustainability commitment. The Coalition’s post 2010 planning reform has condensed planning guidance with the intention to ‘open up’ planning; however for practitioners the removal of such planning apparatus has meant that some tools, such as the Egan Wheel of Sustainability (2004), remain.

The shift of planning and sustainability to take on greater governance roles provides one justification for viewing these concepts through the lens of governmentality. This considers how planning can be viewed as a ‘rationality’ of government, and sustainability and participation as ‘rationalities’ of planning; problematising the ‘non-sustainable’ and ‘non-participating’ communities. It also enables examination of how spheres of the civic domain attempt to be brought into a governable framework. The lens of governmentality recognises the multiple sources of power, including that of individuals, who are understood to influence planning outcomes through following their own agendas, based upon their own set of meanings, power and knowledge (Pløger, 2001).
The chapter concludes with a review of participation, considered central to sustainability and planning. A desire to increase citizen participation in policy decision-making has been considered to both legitimise decision-making and reverse the perceived demise in personal responsibility (Gallent and Robinson, 2012). This chapter presents the range of participation from consultation through to empowerment; alongside the suggestion the participation processes in the UK are weak (Bucek and Smith, 2000). The most recent round of democratic renewal sets out an agenda to devolve power through the Localism agenda; however, the rationale of localism is questioned through examining the parallel austerity agenda (Featherstone et al, 2012). Finally, motivations and barriers to participation, and the process of selection of participants to avoid ‘organisational paralysis’ (Williams, 2002) are outlined. This provides the framework for the section of the empirical research that explores experiences of participation in policy-making and in community.

2.2 The Purpose Of Planning
This CASE studentship is a collaborative piece of research conducted between UoE and the planning department at NDC, situating the research within a planning context and the statutory aims of UK planning. This chapter begins by examining the purpose and origins of UK planning, and major shifts leading to and including current Coalition parliament policies. It will focus on detailing the ways in which sustainability has become central to planning in addition to continual efforts to produce a more democratic planning system.

The infiltration of planning into the mediocre actions of daily life does not tend to be recognised. This permeation of planning is however recognised by some, including Rydin who suggests that as individuals “we have a vital, even visceral relationship to what planning is all about” (2011:2). This thesis recognises the role of planning in shaping places and impacting, but not dictating, many daily actions rather than viewing planning solely as a bureaucratic system detached from our day-to-day lives.

The purpose and consequent structure of planning varies between countries; the UK system intends to reconcile conflicting land use interests which arise as “different interests are rationally seeking different objectives” (Cullingworth and Nadin, 2002:1). Conflict arises as change can be framed as a threat or an
opportunity within each individual’s rationality. Rationalities are constructed on different scales and may be based on understood local impacts, national needs, or international protocol for example, and have potential to conflict or assist one another.

Land use planning determines land use based on objectives, ambitions and interests within place and time frameworks and intends to avoid unacceptable consequences of development and social changes (Cullingworth and Nadin, 2002; Rydin, 2011). This originates from ambition to set control standards to raise the conditions of disease-ridden Victorian cities (Gilg, 2005). While it is important to recognise that planning plays a role in overcoming certain issues, such as raising health standards, it should not be viewed as an unerring remedy. Equally, the public is often quick to blame the planning system for undesirable outcomes which often result from a collective of causes of which planning may be one (Rydin, 2011). Planning cannot necessarily avert negative outcomes but its persisting role is recognised by Davoudi in commenting that the:

“British planning system survived Thatcher, Ridley, and Heseltine, it’s pretty solid and is going to remain in place for a very long time...there will be planning but (perhaps) not as we know it” (2000:125)

Having suggested the potential for future UK planning reforms the next section will seek to demonstrate various reforms planning has undergone and in some ways has progressed from the master plan approach to attempt to, arguably, become a more democratic exercise. The extent to which it can now be considered “a means by which society collectively decides what urban change should be like and tries to achieve that vision” (Rydin, 2011:12) will be examined throughout this literature review.

2.3 Post-War Planning
The foundations of the UK planning system lie in the Town and Country Planning Act 1947. Planning was introduced as a means of land development control, through planning permission processes, and the prevailing role of the local planning authority (LPA) to oversee local planning policies and permitted development. Crucially, at this time there was a shift in political ideology towards the creation of a welfare state and belief in planning to help address
problems associated with a low standard of built environment, including the following vision:

“to make a better society, one which was fairer, more compassionate, and more equal” (Robson in Cullingworth, 1999:1).

Planning was initially a centralist state led approach. The realities and difficulties of delivering this vision soon came to fruition as other issues dominated the political agenda, and 20 year Development Plans took local authorities longer than anticipated to develop. These plans were also seen to be too rigid and detached from genuinely considering how people were going to live. The resources available to deliver were also considered inadequate, especially as the plans were based upon a modest and balanced rate of change in the economy and population (Cullingworth, 1999; Gilg, 2005) which wasn’t what was experienced. While needing to account for the future, the capacity to anticipate change remains a key challenge for planners.

A more strategic approach to planning was introduced in the 1960s with focus remaining on development control. This was followed by the Conservatives introduction of a two-tier, county and district, local government system in 1974. This division split planning functions, whereby counties were responsible for the Structure Plan and Transport, and districts for the Local Plan and Development Control. This generated tension as the authorities had different levels of power and potentially different political affiliation but were tasked to create a holistic planning policy through separate Structure and Local Plans (Gilg, 2005). The 1970s also saw concern develop about the ‘impermeability’ of planning whereby communities did not feel they could effectively communicate with planning institutions about items that were influencing their lives (Gallent and Robinson, 2012). The 1980s did not respond to this growing concern but rather Margaret Thatcher’s ideology sought to free the market from state control and deregulate planning (Rydin, 1993). Neoliberal thinking impacted the governance of social relations advocating the use of market and quasi-market mechanisms for providing public services, private investment, rescaling and ‘rolling back’ of state functions (Griggs and Roberts, 2011). It is argued that the Coalition’s ‘Big Society’ echoes this approach (Section 2.10).

The 1979-97 Conservative administration drove a period of substantial deregulation with a reduced local government role limiting public-led
development and encouraging private investment and urban regeneration at an ‘arms length’ from Government. The 1980s was not a period of progression for planning. The statutory planning framework of development control and plan making remained in situ but attempts were made to by-pass planning as it was seen to contain “obstructive bureaucrats who would stifle wealth-creating private enterprise by putting unnecessary rules on development projects” (Davoudi, 2000:125). Planning’s achievements were limited due to a focus on top-down implementation, coupled with remedying unintended consequences of planning policy raising the levels of public spending (Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones, 2002). The Planning Advisory Group report 1965 and 1985 White Paper Lifting the Burden both raised concern about the slow process of Structure Plans claiming that they were too often out of date and an unnecessary level of governance above the local district level (Gilg, 2005). Nevertheless, Structure and Local Plans were reaffirmed in the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act, which also opened the way for regional planning to be reintroduced in 1990s, after a brief preview in 1970s (ibid). The regional rescale of planning initially involved partnership working between local authorities to produce Regional Planning Guidance but gained greater importance following the election of the 1997 Labour Government (Section 2.4.1).

The 1990 Planning Act brought about greater consideration for conservation of natural beauty and land amenity, improvement to the physical environment and traffic management (Gilg, 2005). The 1990 Act included Section 106 (S106) Agreements, a clause that allows the LPA “to enter into a legally-binding agreement or planning obligation with a landowner in association with the granting of planning permission” (DCLG, 2012b:3). These agreements provide an avenue to make a development acceptable in planning terms through subjecting the developer to reasonable arrangements and restrictions relevant to planning and the proposed development. S106 agreements intend to offset negative development impacts through financial contributions or provision of services, infrastructure or affordable housing. These agreements can help facilitate developments through pacifying social and/or environmental costs through economic gain and were thought to introduce more than economic consideration for developments. However, S106 has since been considered to stall projects through reducing economic viability and there has been a
consultation regarding potential renegotiation of S106 planning obligations (DCLG, 2012b).

Social issues rose up the political agenda under John Major’s Conservative Government, seeming to soften the previous market-led agenda for planning (Gallent and Robinson, 2012), however the role of planners remained overseeing legislative processes and mediating competing interests (Davoudi, 2000; Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones, 2002). The ‘other face’ of planning: pursuing public interest can be seen to have risen further following the 1997 general election as ‘New’ Labour brought promise of a new political era incorporating social justice and community inclusion alongside a concern for the market (Tewdwr-Jones, 2002). Labour’s ‘third way’ politics reinvention referred to the political ideology that lay between market-led policies and state governance. Under Labour local authorities were given the opportunity to earn trust and autonomy through meeting criteria and demonstrating improved performance (Gallent and Robinson, 2012). There were a series of Local Government Reforms under New Labour with the ‘modernisation’ of the planning system taking some years to develop and major planning reform occurring in 2004.

2.4 The 2004 And 2010 Planning Reforms And Civic Inclusion In Planning

The 2004 Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act\(^1\) marked a step change in UK planning culture with the intention of modernising a planning system that had remained much the same since 1947. Planning’s statutory land use duty was reinforced through a spatial planning approach; a concept was argued to place planning at the “centre of the spatial development process, not just as a regulator of land and property uses, but as a proactive and strategic coordinator of all policy” (Nadin, 2007:43). Planning’s widened remit was now to incorporate a statutory sustainability duty and a ‘governance’ role (Gallent et al, 2008) including “a direction that greater transparency and engagement with stakeholders is required” (Counsell and Haughton, 2006:921). Spatial planning intended to be used as a mobilising force for increased participation and for this to be built on strategic and local partnerships (Gallent et al, 2008). New Labour placed importance on partnerships between citizens and public and private

\(^1\)Referred to as the 2004 Act from here on in.
sectors to facilitate democratic renewal through greater close and regular contact between these sectors (Leach and Wingfield, 1999). This approach fell alongside and within prescriptive national policy guidance and targets (Coaffee and Hedman, 2008 in Featherstone et al, 2012) representing the subordinate position of localism within New Labour. This reform intended to deliver a place-focused approach to planning through regional and local plans. Planning policy has long been situated within local government and the Lyons Report (Lyons, 2007) emphasised local governments ‘place-shaping’ role whereby greater local choice and flexibility was encouraged to promote the well-being and prosperity of communities and citizens.

The 2010 General Election and resulting hung parliament led to the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition government\(^2\). The Coalition was met with some criticism due to the belief that the different ideologies would hinder delivery of radical change (Lowndes and Pratchett, 2012). However, coalition governments are common around the world and demonstrate variation in success and demise of both the coalition and individual parties (Bale, 2012). The fate of the UK Coalition is yet to be determined but commentary on the early stages of Coalition planning policy reform will begin to be unearthed in this thesis. While there is the presence of localist notions in previous government manifestos Coalition planning reforms took an invigorated approach to ‘localism’ described as proceeding at a “blistering” pace (Gallent and Robison, 2012:29). This has included the stripping of various ‘over prescriptive’ planning guidance and tools aiming to fulfil their ambition “to disperse power more widely in Britain today” (DCLG, 2011a:3). Coalition reform quickly abolished regional planning in favour of a new economic model of ‘Local Enterprise Partnerships’ and perhaps demonstrated a shift away from the 2004 sustainability commitment. The reform also condensed planning policy into the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) intending to remove substantial and prescriptive planning policy to “allow people and communities back into planning” (DCLG, 2012a:ii). Multiple Planning Policy Statements and Guidance (PPS/PPG) were superseded by the single, shorter NPPF, demonstrative of the removal of apparatus and guidance for planners. The NPPF provides the framework for preparing Local Plans and

\(^2\)Whereby the Conservatives contain majority seats within parliament but forming a coalition with Liberal democrats enabled them to obtain parliamentary majority.
informs planning authorities on the appeal and application process, claiming to move away from top down governance through a less detailed, and assumed less prescriptive approach. While presented to instigate change there are subtleties within the Coalition planning reforms that support Davoudi’s view that:

“[r]egarding the future of planning, I think contrary to the claim made repeatedly in the last 3 reforms (in 2004, 2008 and 2011) we will see more continuity than radical change.” (2012: conference).

The NPPF claims to recognise the key role planning plays in securing a sustainable future and articulates economic, environmental and social planning policies for England intended to be interpreted and applied locally. The NPPF’s sustainability commitment lies in the form of the ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ subject to the proviso that sustainability should not hinder economic progress, placing a hierarchy on planning functions (section 2.7.1). Planning as a pro-growth agenda is not new, although the language in the NPPF incentivises proactive local planning within a national policy framework. This thesis argues that the neighbourhood and citizen involvement has been reinvigorated and valorised through planning policy which at the same time denies the local arena complete autonomy. This is understood to be occurring through Coalition policy as well as within the previous Government’s democratic renewal processes (Gallent and Robinson, 2012).

The Localism Bill (2011) drew up rights for communities to be in control of shaping new development. The community here refers to the ‘neighbourhood’ defined by and in the guise of Neighbourhood Forums and Parish Councils tasked with producing ‘neighbourhood plans’, which comply with the strategic overview set by the local council’s Development Plan (DCLG, 2011a:12). Neighbourhood plans connect with and alongside other planning policy, including long standing local Parish/Community Plans. In order for neighbourhood plans to come into force they must fulfil various conditions including gaining majority support through a neighbourhood referendum and legally comply with wider planning policy, such as the local Core Strategy, EU and international legislation and requirements (Planning Portal, 2012). The LPA

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3 Parish/Community Plans are five year plans created by the community detailing issues they want to improve or achieve and can cover all things important to a community; whereas a neighbourhood plan relates only to the use and development of land in the local area.
is the independent examiner of the neighbourhood plan ensuring compliance and organising the referendum, subject to referendum approval the LPA has a legal duty to bring the neighbourhood plan into force. Localism, verbally, intends to attain extensive community engagement and enable community empowerment, however, the argument that it acts is a means to reduce state responsibility will also be discussed throughout this chapter (Lowndes and Pratchett, 2012). The next section will further examine the continual rescaling of planning policy.

2.5 The Fluid Rescaling Of Planning Policy

The Coalition’s planning reform represents the latest rescaling of policy with an apparent emphasis and advocacy of the ‘small state’ as a means of overcoming perceived civic frustration with undemocratic planning processes (Gallent and Robinson, 2012). Planning reforms reconfigure planning scales representing the fluid existence of scales as multiple rescaling occurs as well as spatial and temporal conflict between scales (MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999; Murdoch, 2000; Gibbs and Jonas, 2001). There is little agreement over how scales are or should be defined, or even whether they exist at all (Marston, 2000). The density of the concept is detailed by attempts to place scalar boundaries which can be [re]created vertically, horizontally and cut across networks. Scale, regarded as socially and politically constructed, destroyed and transformed (Madanipour, 2001; Paasi, 2004) can be understood as a means of coordination and management within a policy context. Equally, scales may result in contradiction, such as national or regional policy overlooking the specifics of locality, and for the local to ignore wider pressures (Gallent, 2009). Similarly, Gibbs (2000:18) highlights that spatial scales do not simply permit problem-free devolved policy implementation as these exist within complex networks and power relationships. National, sub-national and local devolution dominates the UK planning policy landscape and a review of the processes of devolution in terms of their sustainability and democracy outputs will occur in the next section.

2.5.1 Processes Of UK Devolution As Spaces Of Sustainability And Democracy.
Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were granted certain autonomous powers, including policy and service provision for housing, community and sustainable development in 1999. The devolved Welsh and Northern Irish Assembly Governments and Scottish Parliament left only England with no separate representative body described as England’s ‘territorial enigma’ whereby “Englishness and Britishness are fused” (Osmond, 1998 in Taylor, 1991:148). In contrast devolution facilitated other UK countries to ascertain and maintain their own distinct identity, while retaining a degree of subordination to Westminster. National devolution also enabled New Labour’s pursuit of their English regionalist agenda. However, it has been suggested that relationships between new regional agencies, existing LPAs and national planning policy led to fragmentation rather than the intended greater local representation (Benneworth et al, 2002; Tewdwr-Jones, 2012). Regions arose from a European concept and funding stream (Gibbs & Jonas, 2001; Counsell and Haughton, 2003) although the European Union’s regional development programme focuses on social and environmental objectives (Benneworth et al, 2002) whereas the UK regionalisation programme had an economic rationale.

The Regional Development Agency Act 1998 created nine Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) which were “partnerships with strong private sector input” (Counsell and Haughton, 2003:228) and a focus on planning and economic development. Their purpose was continually disputed as RDAs had relatively few functional powers beyond delivering policy, holding more economic than environmental persuasion and operating within a contested terrain of multiple agencies, such as the Environment Agency claiming jurisdiction over single-issue environmental matters (Gibbs, 2000). The intention to bring economic development and environmental protection goals together through regional governance was believed to have limited impact due to contradiction of terms:

“despite being one of the five objectives for RDAs sustainable development does not feature in the list of 12 RDA core functions” (Gibbs, 1998:366).

The post 2004 statutory sustainability planning duty recognised this regional omission through the introduction of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS), a single regional policy with an overriding principle of achieving sustainable development. This contrasted to previous Regional Economic Strategies that
existed alongside a separate regional sustainable development framework and vision (Benneworth et al, 2002).

The political regional boundaries were established to manage the 1940s wartime economy, however Gibbs and Jonas (2000) suggest regional boundaries should better reflect bioregional principles if they are to have greater influence over ecological policies. Similarly spatial planning has led to the suggestion of emergent ‘soft spaces’, lying alongside or in-between formal ‘hard’ scales and spaces of governance typically defined by territorial and administrative boundaries, (Allmendinger and Haughton, 2007; Haughton et al, 2013). They suggest that soft spaces emerge around certain phenomena and enable more creative thinking about boundaries used although are not guaranteed to deliver the most constructive results. There has been little political discussion of redefining political regional boundaries detailing conflict between regionalization, which New Labour pursued, as opposed to the idea of regionalism embedded in local culture and participation (Jones and MacLeod, 2004). In addition to overlooking non-economic drivers, the regional focus on economic growth is understood to fail to acknowledge local variation, including substantial economic differences, between the regions therefore disregarding the uneven development that exists within the UK (Jones and MacLeod, 2004).

English regionalisation has not been considered to deliver radical rescaling of governance or devolution of power, but equally this has not resulted in hegemony. Counsell and Haughton emphasise that “regional systems of governance in England are not constructed in a vacuum, and require continuing negotiations involving the brokers of power both at national and at local policy scales” (2003:236). This understanding suggests that while there is scope for regional and local interpretation, policy is not implemented in isolation and must comply with wider policies. Counsell and Haughton’s research concluded that while national growth imperatives and planning policies appeared to reduce the autonomy of regions, this should not be viewed simplistically. Intervention was often welcomed to challenge the influence of dominant regional political lobby groups, highlighting the pertinence of scalar cross-checking in some instances. Regions were not a democratic creation, conflicting with the sustainable development themes of equity and democratic participation (Gibbs, 2000:17). The Localism Bill (2011) proposed the abolition of many large scale planning
functions, including the RSS and much of the RDA function, which the Coalition claim to have been blocking economic and social development acting as an expensive and unnecessary layer of bureaucracy (Lowndes and Pratchett, 2012:26). It was the non-democratic nature of the RDA that appeared to place them at the forefront of the Coalition’s reform. Desire to overcome perceived frustration and civic dissatisfaction with the existing planning structure paved the way for Coalition localism (Gallent and Robinson, 2012).

2.5.2 Coalition Removal Of Regional Planning And Connections With Communities

Regionalisation is understood to have exacerbated regional inequality rather than disturb the concentration of political power in London, with suggestions that national policy is considered to act as, at most, ‘South East policy’ (Taylor, 1991; Massey et al, 2003). The Coalition’s apparent radical localist agenda plans to disturb this concentration of power and help overcome civic society’s perceived disillusionment with local and elected government. The Coalition has justified localism through portraying “the public sector as profligate and responsible for budget deficit and recession” (Featherstone et al, 2012:178). The reality of the ‘transfer of power from Whitehall’ includes various centrally set compliance policies, boundaries, guidelines and limitations and focus on improving the economy in the short-term, targeting the next election (2015) rather than long-term goals of government (Lowndes and Pratchett, 2012:22).

Parsons (2012) while discussing planning reform claimed a need for cultural as well as policy change perhaps emphasising Davoudi’s (2012) claim that recent planning policy reforms are likely to see more continuity than change.

Local councils remain charged with the strategic overview of planning and sustainability agendas, as the closest government body to communities and the places where policies are realised. However, it is suggested that community is somewhat detached from local government:

“long-standing dysfunctional relationships between local authority officials and communities severely inhibit the possibility of developing a new citizen/local government dynamic” (Sullivan et al, 2006:505).

The Coalition’s devolution of power has been suggested to create a high level of central-local tension, whereby local government is being undermined by deep
funding cuts. While this has been perceived as a measure to seek an alliance between central Government and communities through blaming local government, a higher proportion of the public in 2011 believe the blame for cuts to services lies with central Government but could be ‘open to persuasion’ (Wilks-Heeg, 2011). Therefore a series of dysfunctional relationships appear to exist between government bodies and communities that are interpreted by individuals and subject to various attempted manipulations through policies.

In intending to reconnect communities and government bodies, Chandler (2010) argues for the justification of local government to exist as representative of its citizens, rather than for the purposes of efficient management. Central government is understood by Chandler to respect the interests of locality whereby upper tiers of government should only be consulted when a critical mass of people is affected (2010:16). It is disputed whether current local governance, through local government or such techniques as ‘neighbourhood planning’, enhance diversity or simply reproduce and reinforce central policies creating further homogenisation. While actors within the political system can instigate change within their area, their role and discretion can be limited by the institutional structure they configure within (Whitehead, 2007; Jones et al, 2004; Leach and Percy-Smith, 2001). Pløger (2001:225) concluded that a planner’s role is to defend national political decisions rather than act as facilitator. However, research by Jones et al (2004:105) details scope for variation whereby a practitioner claimed they had capacity to instigate and develop regional diversity as well as deliver central government policy. This introduces viewing planning processes through the lens of governmentality (Section 2.8). Counsell and Haughton review how ‘sustainability appraisals’ sought to normalise the definition of sustainable development within a governmentality framework. They found that key actors shaped the technique locally and that “the subjects of ‘governmentality’ are not perhaps the unwitting dupes that naïve readings of the theory might suggest” (2006:929). The framework of governmentality therefore lends itself to aiding understanding the actualisations of planning processes and considering planning’s perception of places and communities. Both Labour and Coalition governments have perpetuated simplistic views of localities, as discrete and unitary somehow awaiting governance (Featherstone et al, 2012). However this is not necessarily how
localities are experienced and the next section offers further exploration into concepts of ‘local’ and understandings of the notions of community.

2.6 ‘Local’ Spaces Of Community And The Neighbourhood
The concept of ‘community’ in this research is grounded in a fluid and evolving understanding, including but not exclusively linked to place. Rather than seeking normative definitions of community and sustainability, this research explores and expresses the plurality and dynamic existences of these notions and this section will conceptually examine understandings of ‘community’.

2.6.1 Community And Society
Tonnies suggested a distinction between ‘Gemeinschaft’ (community) and Gesellschaft (society). Community is understood to refer to “close human relationships developed through kinship...common habitat and...cooperation and coordinated action for social good” (Harper, 1989 in Woods, 2005:91). It is understood to be distinct from society’s “formal exchange and contract” (Woods, 2005:91) where “individuals live alongside but not independently of one another” (Harris, 2001:19). ‘Community’ is presented to encapsulate something more personal and of greater depth than ‘society’:

“community means genuine, enduring life together, whereas Society is a transient and superficial thing” (Harris, 2001:19).

While distinct concepts, they share space, as demonstrated by Gilchrist (2000) in considering community as a “layer of society” where “interaction takes place between people who are neither close family and friends, yet nor total strangers” (in Barton, 2000:147).

Community transpires to be both universally valued and desired (Gilchrist, 2000, in Barton 2000; Schofield, 2002) enabling “high quality social interaction” (Woods, 2005:91) offering a sense of belonging to help “shape our social identity” (Gilchrist, 2000, in Barton, 2000:147). However, it is important to not naively accept that social connections are necessarily ‘good’ or positive (McLean et al, 2002). Nevertheless, community is commonly regarded a positive contributor to individuals mental and social state, enabling communication and promoting social cohesion through the development of trust relationships between acquaintances.
Community is often considered as something that used to exist in a past ‘golden era’ existing as “a passport to both Arcadia and Utopia” (Schofield, 2002:664). Perceived ‘loss’ of community relates to a number of factors including the often under represented ‘general societal change’ (Cloke and Milbourne, 1992:369). Equally, suggestions of the ‘utopian’ community should not position it as an attainable end state but more appropriately community should be fluid processes (Callaghan and Colton, 2008; Liepins: 2000a: 2000b; Whitehead, 2003). Within this framework Putnam’s (2000) assertion that community has diminished in the US could be challenged through viewing community as an evolution subject to change. Equally the importance of recognising “the ways in which “community” or “communities of place” are produced as an “imaginary” or “imagined” – real enough but not pre-given” aid understandings of community (Anderson, 1991; Burns et al 1994 in Cochrane, 2007:48). From this viewpoint community is neither definable nor stationary therefore highlighting complexities in discussing community development, loss or creation. The conception of an ‘imagined’ community also derives from a personal view of community, with references to a ‘loss’ of community reflecting a perception of “an apparent decline in the range and quality of their informal relationships” (Gilchrist,2000 in Barton, 2000:153);to be discussed further in the next section.

The interpretation of community in policy tends to assume the existence of a local entity awaiting intervention, whereas in reality communities often form around a “specific issue, communities often construct specific local identities as part of the campaign against an external development understood as a threat” (Dalby and Mackensie 1997:101 in Raco, 2000:578). This highlights how multiple forms of community are [re]created over time. Etzioni’s Communitarian Perspective suggests three characteristics in attempting to define an authentic community as the balance of order and autonomy:

1. A web of affect laden relations among a group of individuals that reinforce one another;
2. A commitment to shared set of values, norms, and meanings, and shared history and identity, a shared culture. Communities are not only aggregates of persons acting as free agents but also collectives with identities that can act as a unit;
3. Communities are characterised by a high level of responsiveness excluding social entities that oppress members,
Point three acknowledges McLean et al's (2002) criticism of Putnam’s neglect of the potential for adverse social capital which is also recognised by Etzioni’s *centripetal* and *centrifugal* forces. *Centripetal forces* seek to pull in community’s resources and endorsing the notion of the common good which needs to be balanced with *centrifugal* forces such as individual autonomy. These forces are assumed to influence all communities and to be mutually enhancing to a point as long but ultimately aim to be balanced.

The creation of community boundaries is problematic and generates ‘exclusivity’ through ‘inclusivity’ (Raco, 2003). Here Etzioni (ibid) proposes *layered localities* whereby individuals are recognised to be members of a number of communities (Sullivan et al, 2006), creating a community of communities. A multiplicity of communities include Wilmott’s (1987; in Barton, 2000: 149) “communities of interest or identity”; moving beyond spatially grounded communities often targeted through policy. Similarly, Anderson’s (1991) ‘imagined communities’ depicts the non-essentiality of face-to-face contact in generating community. Further understanding of the community beyond *in situ* includes suggesting that “in a temporary sense, ‘community’ can be conceived as a social phenomenon that unifies people in their ability to speak together” (Liepins, 2000a:27). Liepins outlines four dimensions for making a ‘sense of community’ which refer to space rather than place: a social construct by *people* who develop shared *meanings* and *practices* which will be embodied through *spaces* (2000b:327-328). Having discussed ‘community’ as not being defined by place the role place can play and the focus of place in policy will now be discussed.

2.6.2 The Role Of Place And The ‘Neighbourhood’

Coalition policy has chosen the ‘neighbourhood’ as the site of intervention for local planning, reaffirming an unwritten commitment to communities of place. Barton (2000:5) opposes ‘neighbourhood’ to ‘community’ suggesting the latter is a social term, not necessarily implying local, whereas the former is a spatial construct. Planners have a tendency to refer to communities in this spatial sense despite ‘proximity of residence’ being understood as neither sufficient nor necessary in understanding a sense of community (Illsey and McCarthy, 1998).
Planning’s focus on place communities rather than considering non place-based communities, such as communities of profession, religion or interest, fails to recognise the many communities that exist alongside and within communities of place. Mazanti and Pløger’s (2003) work highlights the need to recognise how people add meaning to place through individual understanding and experiences of place. In this respect, the interpretation of community in policy overlooks how community can be realised through individual and collective needs and interest rather than as an ontologically existing entity (ibid).

Focus on ‘neighbourhood’ policy has been due to its suggested manageable size, convenience, assumed sociability, representation, efficiency and familiarity (Lowndes and Sullivan, 2004; Kearns and Parkinson, 2001 in Bailey and Pill, 2011), however this is often suggested to be based upon:

“Assumptions often made about the interactions between residents and the extent to which they depend on local services in the immediate vicinity...[W]ith increased mobility and wider social networks based on changing employment patterns and new technologies it can be argued that many social groups are much less dependent on social contacts in their neighbourhoods.” (Bailey and Pill, 2011:930)

Similarly Buser questions the role of the place-based neighbourhood in proposing a need to “consider the spatial reach of Big Society and localism policies and the relationship of place to empowerment, democracy and social issues”(2013:16). This reiterates that place can facilitate understanding of community but should only be one potential dimension of, or contribution to, community. The on-going political commitment to ‘neighbourhood’ creation and emphasis on geographically local community is suggested to be challenged and fragmented, albeit somewhat unwittingly, through policy, technology, lifestyles and mobility, as detailed by Raco:

“ongoing reforms to the welfare state – such as the expansion of ‘choice’ in education, health and other public services – are undermining some of the central pillars of community building by removing the ‘localness’ of schools and other social facilities”. (2007:318)

This suggests the continuing confused use of ‘community’ in policy leading to uncertainty over what is trying to be mobilised. Moreover, the suggestion that policy can or should be used to create community overlooks that “the
development of a community is a long-term organic process" (Gilchrist, 2000 in Barton, 2002:151). ‘Community’ has been used in conjunction with ‘neighbourhood’ in policy, referring to the individual and collective in terms of voluntarism, independence and dependency, the interaction of geographically local people and both the inclusion and exclusion of State (Curry, 2012; Hale, 2006). ‘Community’ in policy therefore appears to be confused and fails to recognise the continual [re]creation of multiple, overlapping and conflicting communities that details the complex arena of community policy.

Technology and mobility are suggested to fragment place communities as individuals choose their own ‘community’ to interact and communicate with, through direct (face-to-face) or indirect forms of communication, rather than relying on local connections. In an examination of whether virtual communities are ‘true communities’ Driskell and Lyon conclude that these do not allow the level of closeness, comfort and trust available in face-to-face relationships and that communities exist “most readily, most naturally, and most often when people identify with place” (2002:387). Postmodernist claims include the suggestion that people live more isolated lives, related to a perceived loss in neighbourhood and community connections, however Pahl and Spencer (2004) challenge this in their research about ‘personal communities’. They suggest that most people are not lacking in relationships within their own personal communities and these are diverse and likely to combine neighbourly, familial, work and technology enabled ties and relationships. Similarly the role of place within personal communities must be considered in the plural sense, personal to each individual as exclusive intersections between individual and place are produced over time (Massey, 1991, 2005). Community in policy tends to focus on the individual and collective of individuals to form cohesive place-community rather than multiple overlapping personal communities. Massey (1991) also suggests that communities in the sense of coherent social groups with a connection to place are rare and it is individuals within communities that develop this connection. The importance of the individual and place is an important avenue for this research to consider as second home owners are non-permanent residents in places and therefore draw a need to connections that develop with that place and with other residents.
The resolute ‘good’ and enduring desire for community is recognised by Gilchrist (2000) alongside referring to the “fuzziness of the term community” (in Barton, 2000:148). Community may be “best envisaged as multi-dimensional entities” (Woods, 2005:91), as a web of interactions between individuals and social networks through various interaction mechanisms. Existing between public and private, state and market (Gilchrist, 2000, in Barton, 2000; Schofield 2002), community is perceived to offer depth and quality expressed through such words as friendship, support and trust. New Labour’s ‘Third Way’ progressed an ideology of a nation containing more than ‘individuals’ and ‘the State’ and developed political agendas in favour of building community and sustainable communities. The Coalition’s planning objectives of a ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ and ‘Localism’ through the ‘Big Society’ also pursues this agenda from the perspective that excessive state responsibility has eroded personal and collective responsibility and is in need of reinvigoration (Gallent and Robinson, 2011). The next section builds on this reviewing sustainability and the ‘sustainable community’ both theoretically and as a statutory political goal.

2.7 The Evolution And Statutory Inclusion Of The Sustainable Community

A commonly cited definition of sustainable development is the anthropocentric concept presented in Our Common Future Brundtland Report:

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” (WCED, 1987)

Sustainability is also commonly interpreted as the reconciliation and balancing of the ‘three pillars’ or triple-bottom-line of environmental, societal and economic objectives recognising the “common misconception that ‘sustainability’ refers to environmental concerns” (Parkinson and Roseland, 2002:412). Sustainability requires ‘enmeshing’ the environment with broader social issues and economic realities (Smith et al, 1999) as well as considering temporal and spatial stewardship. This enmeshing leads Gilchrist (2000) to suggest that community is “inextricably linked to sustainability” (in Barton, 2000:150).

The ‘three pillars’ of sustainability are intricately linked within and between one another, embracing temporal and spatial dimensions. Temporality in the Brundtland definition is included in the requisite for inter-generational
consideration in decision-making and this has become engrained into planning considerations. Equally, planning attempts to situate and review its position within wider networks and systems. Capra believes human communities could learn a great deal “from ecosystems, which are sustainable communities...developing the most intricate and subtle ways of organising themselves so as to maximise sustainability” (1994:1). However, human populations cannot directly apply ecosystem management. The principles of ‘deep green’ thinking reassess anthropocentric dominance and superiority but individual choice would result in varying degrees of commitment. Essentially, there is a point of departure between human communities and ecosystems, recognised by Ladkin as “differences between human ways of being in the world” (in Blewitt, 2008:110). However Ladkin goes on to suggest that the ‘natural world’ should not be juxtaposed against ‘human' in pursuit of sustainability (ibid). In overcoming potential detachment from natural systems within which individuals and communities function; considerations of connections to place arise again. Heidigger’s notion of ‘dwelling’ encapsulates the following:

“a relationship of interdependency in which both the place in which the dwelling occurs and the ‘dweller’ herself are altered by interaction...dwelling means to “cherish and protect, preserve and care for”” (Blewitt, 2008:117).

This proposes that place-based interactions can aid pursuit of the sustainability vision through potential to generate greater connection and responsibility to nurture ‘place’, as well as instigating environmental stewardship on wider scales. However, the capacity to ‘dwell’ does not oblige permanent residency as Gallent (2007) details in arguing second home owners deliver key aspects of ‘dwelling’ through their use of private property to be further discussed in empirical chapters.

2.7.1 Resilient Sustainable Communities
As has been discussed, communities are understood to be positioned within a complex web of systems whereby these dynamic relationships define them as “a community, which means that they are interdependent: they depend on one another” (Capra, 1994:2). Awareness and response to these reciprocal relationships provides the crux of the sustainable community:
“Community is a complex system of humans and natural environment, it is necessary to deal with it from a comprehensive and systematic viewpoint” (Chan and Huang, 2004:134).

Systems thinking can remedy possible isolation through excessive ‘local’ inward facing focus. Through fostering understanding of the multiple and unexpected influences that can occur it can assist the community to become sustainable through raising resilience. Barr and Devine-Wright (2012) suggest that discourses in community sustainability have shifted from global environmental concerns to more local inward facing approaches – from global responsibility to local resilience. Resilience, while considered subtly different to sustainability, also offers a symbiotic goal and potential assessment sustainability (Barr and Devine-Wright, 2012; Beratan et al, 2004; Dale and Newman, 2006). Resilience, in the quote below, is understood as a means of examining and ultimately assisting a move towards community sustainability:

“By shifting focus away from an ultimate end goal of sustainability, to an ongoing process of enhancing resilience, managers, planners, council members, and residents can examine the community in its entirety, the interrelations among the various elements within a community, and how these elements collectively enhance community resilience and ultimately move a community toward sustainability” (Callaghan and Colton, 2008:932-933)

Resilience is recognised as the ability to cope with and adapt to pressures, in the long and short term, and in terms of both gradual and sudden impacts. Gilchrist illustrates community resilience as being held on the ‘edge of chaos’, requiring uncertain decisions to be made based on current knowledge and circumstances (2004:120). Raising resilience is considered a process whereby a community develops the flexibility and adaptability to a wide range of fluctuations and crises in order to maintain functionality. The recent economic recessions identify the vulnerability of various communities of scale, as well as reiterating the elevated value of economics within certain places thinking about community sustainability. Raising resilience requires the sustainable community to assess both the “micro and macro viewpoints” (Chan and Huang, 2004:135) such as resilience within wider economic processes.

Diversification of skills, industry, genes and ideas, for example, are also considered to be a strategic advantage to aiding social resilience alongside connection to neighbours and community (Beratan et al, 2004; Capra, 1994). A
homogenous community, sharing beliefs with uncontested innovation, is likely to be stifled and consequently lower resilience and ability to adapt. However, while a sustainable community needs balance, security and trust to thrive (Gilchrist in Barton, 2000; Raco, 2007; Smith et al 1999) diversity can both provide for and undermine this. While diversity is desirable “if there is fragmentation, if there are subgroups in the network or individuals who are not really part of the network, then diversity can generate prejudice...friction and...violence” (Capra, 1994:9). Diversity reflects Etzioni’s balancing centrifugal and centripetal forces acting upon a community.

Enhancing community resilience can be understood as a more tangible target than sustainability, however is also characterised by uncertainty:

“the only thing we know for certain about the future is that we will face surprises” (Beratan et al, 2004:181).

Planning for sustainable and resilient futures requires judgement and prediction within uncertainty. Feedback mechanisms can help to minimise risk surrounding these decisions through ensuring flexibility and responsiveness within a system. Feedback mechanisms within human populations are suggested by Capra (1997) to be ‘learning’ and the network links are conversations and interactions. The fluidity of these concepts details the complexity of sustainability and resilience decision-making, and the uncertain decisions that planning policy makers have to face. The statutory inclusion of sustainability into planning and the inclusion of sustainability into policy will be reviewed in the next section.

2.8 Sustainability And Sustainable Communities In Policy

When considering sustainable communities “often people despair assuming that building a sustainable community works in theory but not in practice” (Callaghan and Colton, 2008:931). Sustainability and sustainable communities have infiltrated planning policy, originating in the signing of the international legally binding Rio Earth Summit in 1992. Three UK Sustainable Development Strategies have been published including the current: ‘Securing the Future’ (2005). This document details the UK’s sustainable development response, vision and overriding guidance for UK policy which includes international consideration:

“Our Strategy for sustainable development aims to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better
While reminiscent of the Brudtland report, this approach appears to have wider sustainability considerations through defining five guiding principles for sustainable development (Figure 2.1). These express broadening of sustainability understanding to include ‘good governance’ and the precautionary principle:

![Figure 2.1: Sustainability Principles In ‘Securing The Future’ (Defra, 2005:16)](image)

These guidelines have been progressed by UK policy and guidance documents including the Egan Review (2004), which was tasked with examining why many UK communities were not sustainable. It supplied the following key suggestion to progress the sustainable community agenda:

“the mechanism for engaging all key stakeholders in developing the vision should be a Sustainable Community Strategy…We believe that existing and future Strategies should be aligned better with the objective of delivering sustainable communities, and should articulate clearly how sustainable development can be used to promote economic prosperity, social cohesion and environmental quality in their area.” (2004:8)

It was understood that incorporating sustainability into all policies should help to deliver sustainable outcomes. In response the 2007 ‘Sustainable Communities Act’ added the ‘sustainable’ requirement to Community Strategies, making the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) a statutory document for English local authorities. The process through which the SCS is generated and monitored
has undergone subtle changes under the Coalition but it remains the ‘plan of plans’ setting the context for planning in local areas. Labour’s publication ‘Strong Safe and Prosperous Communities’ persists as current SCS guidance and outlines the purpose of the SCS:

“to set the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of a local area – typically 10 to 20 years – in a way that contributes to sustainable development in the UK.” (HM Government, 2008:26)

This demonstrates another Labour planning tool that has persisted into Coalition planning. North Devon Council and Torridge produced a joint SCS responding to the above guidance and developed the following vision for the Northern Devon:

“An economically vibrant place which, combined with an exceptional and diverse environment, offers an excellent quality of life for all its people and communities in a safe, healthy and sustainable manner”. (2009:2)

The document is locally focussed but retains statutory wider connections referencing the national Sustainable Development Strategy and therefore an intrinsic connection to international sustainability commitments. This again demonstrates how planning processes can be viewed within governmentality, as these dominant rationalities have been incorporated and are used to guide local outcomes (Section 2.8).

The Local Area Agreement (LAA) delivered and monitored the SCS under Labour, which the Coalition drew to a close in March 2011. LAAs were three-year action plans developed through the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) consisting of a number of reporting and monitoring mechanisms enabling government to measure sustainability performance and progress in each local authority area. It is suggested that local authorities under Labour gained enhanced powers through demonstrating competency or receiving ‘earned autonomy’, whereas the Coalition approach is of ‘assumed autonomy’ (Coaffee, 2005 in Gallent and Robinson, 2012). LSPs were developed in the ‘Local Government Act 2000’ and now exist as non-statutory partnerships between local authorities and agencies from private, voluntary and other public sectors. LSP has non-reporting roles focussing on their original purpose to lead and
oversee community engagement and produce a Sustainable Community Strategy (HM Government, 2008).

Together the SCS and LSP were created to provide a vehicle for generating local vision and facilitating public involvement through consultation. While the SCS does not have to be submitted to central Government for review it does have certain statutory requirements to fulfil, including compliance with national guidance and the need to fulfil consultative and participatory duties. The SCS can be continually updated and provides the framework for key local documents including the ‘Core Strategy’ which details the spatial and land use plan for the area, demonstrates delivery of the SCS and coordinates local authority functions and services. Having detailed how the sustainable community agenda has been incorporated into planning policy, understanding of this concept within policy will be the focus of the next section.

2.8.1 Establishing The Meaning Of Sustainable Communities In Policy

The survival of the SCS in the latest planning reform and the Coalition’s continuing focus on ‘place-making’ for ‘strong vibrant communities’ suggests persistence of New Labour’s sustainable community rhetoric. The NPPF reasserts the central role of sustainability to planning through the ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ (DCLG, 2012a). However, this places sustainability as subservient to economic development whereby sustainable development should not compromise economic growth. It has been suggested that rather than prioritising sustainability, current policy places growth and development in a “parallel universe” from climate change and sustainable development (Luhde-Thompson, 2012). This is not necessarily new however, as the "win-win-win" sustainable approach has previously been suggested to deliver economic preference (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2010).

Labour’s pursuit of “ethical values such as equality, social justice, fellowship and community” (Bevir and O’Brien, 2001:536) fuelled political progression of the sustainable community agenda. The ‘Sustainable Communities: People, Places and Prosperity’ plan for the delivery of sustainable communities developed the following sustainable community definition:

“Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing
and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.” (HM Government, 2005:56)

This is reminiscent of Brundtland in addition to reiterating the priority of ‘place’ in understanding community. This definition less explicitly refers to the empowerment and participation elements of sustainability despite Giddens’ argument for democratic renewal through a revival of civil society (1998). In contrast Rogers and Ryan suggest the following conceptual definition:

“A sustainable community:

- Utilises nature’s ability to provide for human needs, without undermining its ability to function over time;
- Ensures the well-being of its members, offering and encouraging tolerance, creativity, participation and safety;
- Empowers people with shared responsibility, equal opportunity and access to expertise and knowledge with the capacity to affect decisions which affect them;
- Consists of businesses, industries and institutions which collaborate as well as compete, are environmentally sound, financially viable and socially responsible, investing in the local community in a variety of ways”. (2001:282)

Here there is no explicit mention of place, rather offering a very broad conceptualisation of the environmental, social and economic elements of sustainability. In compiling this definition Rogers and Ryan (ibid) proposed the sustainable community should firstly conduct a triple bottom line audit of their human, environmental and economic resources in a community. Secondly, it should develop a shared vision based on identified resources, and thirdly produce community-based indicators in order to evaluate progress. This expresses a need to avoid a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to sustainability, rather suggesting sustainability should be generated as relevant to specific circumstances (Counsell and Haughton, 2003; Gibbs and Jonas, 2001; Rogers and Ryan, 2001). Avoiding defining sustainability enables a reflexive and multiple “discourse rather than concept” (Dryzek 1997, in Gibbs, 2000:11) but this is also recognised as having potential to render the term meaningless (Davidson, 2010; Kelly et al, 2004). Gallent and Robinson suggest both ‘sustainability’ and ‘localism’ are “couched in political rhetoric and conceptual uncertainty” (2012:23) and can mean many different things to different people.
Flexibility of definition is therefore considered necessary in developing sustainable community visions but is something that policy often fails to acknowledge.

Exploration into the realisation of sustainable planning policies locally and the implications second home ownership may have within this is prudent and timely. The literature reviewed tends to concentrate on processes of developing sustainability discourse, often emphasising difficulties in the translation of sustainability into policy and delivery:

“While sustainability has proved difficult to translate into practical and widely acceptable policy, it has, at the same time, been vulnerable to linguistic and...paradigmatic appropriation by a diverse range of governments, politicians, policy makers, environmentalists and businesses”. (Kitchen and Marsden, 2011:753)

Interpretation leads to a diffusing of policy, which can be seen to enable flexibility and variation in local planning but can also be seen as problematic through lacking clear direction. The empirical research in this thesis will examine local policy delivery, reviewing scope for local interpretation by policy makers and the influence of residents through civic inclusion in decision-making. The broadened remit of planning following the 2004 Act encompasses governance whereby civic inclusion has been used to mobilise support from communities. The 2010 planning reform maintained this approach offering empowerment through the Coalition concepts of ‘Localism’ and the ‘Big Society’. Raco has expressed the importance of civic empowerment and local devolution to sustainability objectives:

“One of the defining principles of sustainability is that democratic systems of governance should become more open and accountable, with powers and responsibilities devolved to the lowest possible level to ensure greater connectivity between citizens and state agencies” (2007:310).

Prior to examining this crucial role of participation within planning and sustainability objectives it is timely to review this chapter. Having detailed the main features of post-war planning in order to contextualise this research within UK planning, which aims to reconcile conflicting land uses. It has presented the intricate ways in which planning infiltrates day-to-day lives through policies that endeavour to create and govern the places in which individuals inhabit although has suggested that policy too heavily regards the role of place in understanding
such concepts as community. The increasing importance of sustainability led to it becoming a statutory purpose of planning in 2004. Sustainability has called for the enmeshing of economic, environmental, social and governance concerns however, it has been suggested that there remains a prioritisation of economic goals within policy. The aim to create sustainable communities has persisted into Coalition policy, perhaps through rhetoric rather than terminology through Coalition focus on the neighbourhood, place making and presumption in favour of sustainable development for example. Furthermore, resilient communities that are able to cope and adapt to various pressures, have been suggested to provide a tangible and measurable sustainability target aiding conceptualisation of sustainable communities.

Running parallel to the increasing role of sustainability in planning have been processes of deregulation of planning and repeated rounds of democratic renewal. This has led to planning performing a governance rather than governmental role intending to overcome a long standing dysfunctional relationship between local government and communities (Sullivan et al, 2006). The NPPF condensed planning with the goal of opening up planning to communities, however this has been considered to have both enabled a degree of flexibility and remove guidance and planning apparatus. As such certain planning tools and guidance that were developed by the previous Labour government have remained in practice.

There has been continual rescaling of planning policy with the most recent devolution generating ‘neighbourhood planning’ which places an obligation on the community, through the ‘neighbourhood’, to participate in planning processes. This has also been suggested to ‘open up’ planning; however it has been questioned whether this process results in greater diversity or is ultimately centrally circumscribed. Through exploring concepts of community differences between community and society have been suggested, whereby community is suggestive of closer social connections than society. Furthermore the ‘neighbourhood’, featuring heavily in policy, is understood to express the situation of community in place (Barton, 2000). Community has been presented to not be singular or homogenous, but rather, reflective of Etzioni’s (1996) need to balance order and autonomy, and centripetal and centrifugal forces that are present and both dividing and drawing a community together. It is understood
that policy approaches present a relatively closed understanding of community largely failing to acknowledge the presence of multiple communities and the presence of ‘personal communities’. This concept understands individuals to create their own communities through a range of connections such as neighbours, family and work (Pahl and Spencer, 2004). Policy appears to present ‘place’ as significant in understanding community, and the necessary role of place in community has been questioned in this chapter, suggesting that policy overlooks non place-based communities that exist alongside and within the place communities. This chapter will now go on to further explore planning policy’s attempts at democratic renewal. It will also outline Foucault’s governmentality to enable viewing of planning policy and civic engagement through the lens of governmentality, something which has already been introduced in this chapter.

2.9 The Lens Of Governmentality

Governmentality, as coined by Foucault (Burchell, 1991; Dean, 1999) can be used to explore micro scale processes of governing within communities. It can therefore enable examination of planning’s attempts to reach and govern the civic domain and the ways which this is resisted and altered by the actions and influence of the autonomous individual. Its application to planning has been referred to already in this chapter. The appeal of Foucault's approach in this research includes the wide and dispersed conception of power that extends beyond a hierarchical, centralist understanding. This facilitates exploration into how individuals and populations are governed at the micro level and how ordered society is pursued ‘at a distance’ (Prince et al 2006).

Connecting the word ‘govern’: the process of governing, to ‘mentality’: the modes of thought through which governing takes place, describes Foucault’s understanding that technologies of power i.e. the processes of governing, could not be studied without an analysis of the political rationality underpinning them i.e. the modes of thought through which governing occurs (Lemke, 2000). Exploration of underlying rationalities should be combined with Foucault’s intention for ‘government’ to include all institutions, as they all carry social meaning and generate power relations, rather than being discussed only in formal political contexts. Institutions form social order through both formal and
informal practices, physical structures and discourses reiterating this wide conception of governing (Healey, 1997). A governmentality framework can aid understanding of day-to-day experiences by including policy implementation gaps as a part of governing, appreciating the influence of individuals acting autonomously subject to their own personal governance. Individuals are not understood to be free but to have freedom to make choices, which Foucault views as important, since it is this which can resist and re-shape dominant rationalities. This freedom also situates governing in a particular ‘moment’ which enables understanding of specific interpretations and outcomes at the local level (Prior in Barnes and Prior, 2009). Murdoch and Abram view the plan making process from a governmentality perspective and suggest:

“Policy might therefore be characterised as subject to a constant struggle between, on the one hand, the construction of tightly regulated networks that permit central agencies to determine the actions of all network members and, on the other, loosely connected agencies which reshape policy in line with their own locally constructed preferences” (2002: 10 in Gilg, 2005:93).

Here policies are viewed as result of a combination of centrally driven rationalities and policies that are reshaped locally.

A governmentality framework is appropriate for this research as it views the disjuncture between planning policy and planning outcomes “not as signs of their failure but as the very condition of their existence” (Lemke, 2000:10). It allows exploration into the ways in which planning seeks to govern areas where it doesn’t have complete jurisdiction, such as community development, while also recognising discursive outcomes in these domains. Furthermore, governmentality allows recognition of planning’s shift from government to governance (Davies, 2002). Planning has shifted from a plan led, calculated procedure, driven by a particular rationality of government, to a new technology of spatial governance post-2004, and the sustainable and participating community and individual. However, Allmendinger and Haughton argue spatial planning reinforces “metagovernance” whereby the ‘rules of the game’ are codified by a range of actors (2010:808), similar to this chapter’s argument that Coalition localism can be viewed as a centralising process. Viewing planning within a governmentality framework recognises that there are normalising activities, but that these are in a constant struggle with other agencies and
individuals. This enables a review of community resistances to policies, which is where this research is situated. Applying a governmentality framework aids understanding of “how forms of rationality inscribe themselves in practices or systems of practices, and what role they play within them” (Foucault, 1991 in Lemke, 2000:7). This research explores the rationalities guiding planning policies and the inscription, resistance and recreation of these in local communities. The next section will review the language of governmentality to further explain its application to this research.

2.9.1 The Rationalities, Technologies And Problematics Of Government

Huxley provides the following description to reinforce how planning can be viewed from a governmentality perspective:

“Foucault is not proposing a ‘grand’ theory that could provide an explanation of a social totality. Rather, governmentality is a framework or perspective that allows certain kinds of questions to be asked about how particular aspects of taken-for-granted social relations came to be as they are.” (2008:1636)

These questions are asked by applying various terminologies. This chapter has already begun to explore planning as governmental rationalities and sustainability and participation as rationalities of planning. The many ‘rationalities’ of government are understood to:

“provide narratives of ideas, values, beliefs and explanations that shape and organise collective thinking, both consciously and unconsciously, about needs and problems in society” (Fischer, 2003 in Barnes and Prior, 2009:18).

Rationalities play a role in seeking to construct identity and are understood to be relatively unstable and contradictory due to their multiple existences (Prior, in Barnes and Prior, 2009). Rationalities are therefore understood to be:

“[a]ny relatively systematic way of thinking about government including techniques to be employed and ends to be achieved” (Dean, 1999:211).

Murdoch (2000; 2004) views planning as a rationality of government and ‘sustainability’ as a rationality of planning and therefore these are narratives about the ways in which society is thought about. ‘Technologies’ of governmental are understood to deliver the realisation of rationalities and are described as:
“means, mechanisms and instruments through which governing is accomplished... [They] emphasize the practical features of government which might include forms of notation, ways of collecting, representing, storing and transporting information... and so on...[They] subsume the moral and political shaping of conduct by performance criteria.” (Dean, 1999:211).

These are understood to bring spheres of the civil domain into a governable framework. This can occur through, for example, the use of statistics acting to transfer rationalities of policy discourse into local arenas and coordinating local actions by suggesting volumes of population do and should act in certain ways (Murdoch, 2000; 2004). This is an example of the ‘conduct of conduct’ of individuals whereby:

“processes of governing operate through a myriad of mundane, everyday techniques and routines of discipline and control that are exercised by individual citizens and which enable them to function as self-regulating members of the polity” (Prior, in Barnes and Prior, 2009:17).

The individual is considered to be ‘governed at a distance’ whereby governmental ‘techniques’ lead the individual to act in ways that comply with the governing rationality; although governmentality does not assume compliant actions are a necessary outcome.

Governmentality enables exploration into the creation, challenge and recreation of rationalities of government. Challenge is presented by individual practices of government due to the presence and expression of power through many different forms:

“Power is not so much a matter of imposing constraints upon citizens as of ‘making up’ citizens capable of bearing a kind of regulated freedom. Personal autonomy is not the antithesis of political power, but a key term in its exercise, the more so because most individuals are not merely the subjects of power but play a part in its operations.” (Rose and Miller, 2010:272)

This recognition of the many sources of power views the individual as not expected to conform to rationalities, rather they are viewed as delivering an active governmental role.

Governmentality is understood to be seeking to remedy apparent ‘problematisations’ within the population being governed, although as it is not conceived as a grand social theory, there is no expectation for conformation:
Governmentality refers to the way that this centre, or ensemble of centres, ‘problematizes’ life within its borders and seeks to act in response to the resulting ‘problematizations’.” (Murdoch and Ward, 1997:308).

Problematisations are understood to lie at odds to rationalities as well as emerging from potential disjuncture between multiple and changeable rationalities, or between rationalities and technologies. Political rationalities are understood to ‘engender’ problematisations defined as posing threats and challenges to good governance (Merlingen, 2011). They are understood to occur when an action or conduct is called into question, based upon relevant rationalities that suggest how people should be governed:

“[g]overnment is a problematizing activity... The ideals of government are intrinsically linked to the problems around which it circulates, the failings it seeks to rectify, the ills it seeks to cure” (Rose and Miller, 2010:279).

Sustainability, as a rationality of planning, conceptualises unsustainable and non-participating communities and individuals as problematics of government, seeking to be addressed. Policies transmit political rationalities of sustainability and programmes and technologies of government aim to instigate local sustainability and participatory behaviours:

“Through policies, as expressions of discursive power, meanings are attached to individuals and social groups and to different kinds of behaviour or activity, associating them with virtue or danger, with rewards or sanctions, with encouragement or disencouragement; social groups are constructed through policies as making either positive or negative contributions to the social collective, and issues are identified either as problems warranting governmental intervention or as unproblematic and outside of the scope of governmental concern.” (Prior, in Barnes and Prior, 2009:19).

This identifies how policies express power to endeavour to guide actions based upon whether an activity is considered problematic or not. Having introduced the application of governmentality to this thesis to understand how planning rationalities are created and recreated, the next section will explain these at a greater depth.

2.9.2 Viewing Planning Through The Lens Of Governmentality

Techniques of government, such as policies, intend to enshrine certain rationalities, but are often shaped locally as different rationalities combine and
are met by personal freedom of choice to create everyday practices, understood as how:

“Foucault endeavours to show how the modern sovereign state and the modern autonomous individual co-determine each other’s existence” (Lemke, 2000:3).

There are two broad justifications for using the lens of governmentality in this thesis, which are both grounded in the planning system’s shift towards governance and the many sources of power within a system of governance. Firstly, rationalities of post-2004 planning include delivery of sustainability and participation goals, which imply the problematisation of both the non-participating individual and the unsustainable community. These provide two avenues for examination regarding how these have been created, which has begun within this chapter, and how they are realised in the local arena will be completed in the empirical chapters. The second major justification for applying the lens of governmentality refers to planning as a calculated process. The previous ‘predict and provide’ approach to planning has been replaced post-2004 with heightened citizen participation technologies of government. However, despite the inclusion of neighbourhood planning functions, planning remains a calculated procedure not least demonstrated through NDC’s supply of and desire for quantitative data collection within this research. Planning administration demands the collection of numbers about populations to make them visible to experts and thus calculable and able to be acted upon, bringing aspects of civil society into state regulation despite not having direct control (Murdoch and Ward, 1997). This serves as a method in this research as information about second home owners and the local parishes within the study areas are sought to be normalised through the collection of quantitative data. Such data is understood to have the potential to govern through individuals’ instinct and desire to conform:

“’Counting’ leads to the articulation of ‘norms’ whereby people are considered ‘normal’ if in their characteristics they conform to the central tendencies of statistical laws; those that do not are considered ‘pathological’” (Murdoch and Ward, 1997:312).

As such, data can be used to determine ‘normal’ and ‘pathological’ behaviour, which can guide behaviour. Hacking (in Burchell et al, 1991:181) notes the influence of statistics through the ways it has assisted forming laws about society and the character of social facts. During this research NDC provided
access to substantial data about North Devon and various parishes that direct their understanding and provide basis for policies. In part, the desire for quantitative primary research to be undertaken bore out of the issue of limited data regarding second homes, which collection of was perceived to have potential to normalise second homes with the intention of potentially facilitating better local management.

2.9.3 Power And Micro Governance

Through recognising governance as any “form of activity aiming to shape, guide or affect the conduct of some person or persons” (Burchell et al, 1991:2), governmentality provides a useful tool for reviewing the realisation of planning rationalities and processes at the micro level. Governmentality’s “flexible” and “open-ended” (Rose et al, 2006:101) analysis tools makes it applicable in a number of realms by seeking to understand how populations are governed. It is the focus of research to specific populations, for example, that is used to overcome criticism of the approach due to its wide application:

“The criticisms that governmentality is too diffuse and all-encompassing to be a meaningful framework for research and analysis are countered by studies that examine specific, located instances of governmental projects revealing aims and strategies for the conduct of conduct.” (Huxley, 2008:1653)

This research is a “located” study, as it seeks to examine how planning policy is realised within parish communities and the influence second home ownership has in the intended outcomes of planning. As such it therefore could encounter such criticism.

Foucault’s governmentality focuses on the ‘art of governing’ concerned with the way governing is thought about and occurs, rather than the actions of hierarchical Government. This has been implied throughout this section and is summed up by Rose et al:

“instead of seeing any single body – such as the state – as responsible for managing the conduct of citizens, this perspective recognises that a whole variety of authorities govern in different sites, in relation to different objectives” (2006:85).

The use of a governmentality perspective therefore enables examination of the ways populations are governed and govern themselves:
“[f]orms of governmentality, then, aspire to shape the actions and comportments of subjects towards certain ends, but this does not mean that such projects automatically achieve their aims: government and subjects are complex, multiple and contradictory” (Huxley, 2008:1642).

This research will examine how community, sustainability and participatory rationalities of planning are interpreted and experienced. The lens of governmentality will allow the research to consider the presence of rationalities and programmes of government and how these are resisted, challenged and diffused through bottom-up practices. In pursuit of Stenson’s ‘realist governmentality’ approach (2005; 2008, in McKee, 2009) McKee recognises this disjuncture and:

“advocates complementing discursive analysis of emergent governmentalities with localized empirical accounts of actual governing practices, which seek to regulate the conduct of specifically targeted populations” (2009:480).

Processes of democratic renewal and the Coalition’s Localism and Big Society agendas seek to shift responsibilities onto the neighbourhood and individual, which can be viewed as an attempt to regulate personal conduct. However, in seeking out ‘localised empirical accounts’, the research will explore the “value-action gap” (Blake, 1999:257). This is referred to in relation to environmental issues and is understood to signify that the concern expressed does not always align with the action taken. It will view these as part of the process of governing, to enhance understanding through recognising the many alternative rationalities, technologies and sources of power that are exerted upon and by the community and individual. Governmentality framework connects:

“everyday individual behaviours... into wider rationalities of government through, on the one hand, a moral imperative for self management and, on the other, the external definition of responsible choices” (Atkinson and Joyce, 2011:135).

To refer back to the beginning of this chapter and the suggestion that “we have a vital, even visceral relationship to planning” (Rydin, 2011:2) is demonstrated through the ways it seeks to govern populations and civil domains at a distance. Huxley reinforces and summarises how planning can be viewed as a form of governmentality as it:

“practices shaping the actions of others and strategies for the management of a population...to see planning as a form of
governmentality, then, is to trace its connections to various normalising discourses that seek to render subjects and the spaces constituted through them both manageable and free.” (in Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones, 2001:137-145).

While other non planning rationalities exist seeking to manage populations, viewing these specific rationalities from a governmentality perspective enables understanding to develop as to how “subjects and spaces” are both “manageable and free” (ibid).

2.9.4 The Non-Sustainable And Non-Participating Communities As Problematisations

Unsustainable and non-participating communities have been identified as problematisations that planning policy seeks to remedy. Various techniques of government seeking to implement the sustainable community have been developed including the ‘Egan Wheel of Sustainability’ (2004). This attempts to normalise the sustainable community and is a tool for judging the sustainability of communities based around eight key areas (figure 2.2). It was created under the New Labour government but has persisted into current planning, identified by NDC’s planning department as playing a role in assisting the delivery of their sustainable communities agenda. The segments group themes that are used to assess the level of community sustainability highlighting current success and areas for improvement. Referring to the literature reviewed in this chapter, the Egan Wheel can be criticised as it develops a conceptual assumption about ‘the community’, not least in the size and capacity to support local services and an economy. It overlooks the existence of multiple connected communities, as has been discussed, and furthermore focuses on place-based communities without acknowledging the influence place can have in, for example, determining the size of communities, or proximity to other communities or services. Nevertheless, its use as a planning tool persists, although it is not used in isolation.
Other relevant statutory technologies relevant to delivering sustainability agendas include the ‘Duty to Involve’ outlining a local authority’s strategic plan for citizen participation (Section 2.10), the joint Northern Devon SCS, and the Core Strategy existing as subordinate to the SCS detailing cross-departmental local delivery of sustainable development.

The Coalition’s Localism Agenda reaffirmed the presence of the participatory rationality, and developed techniques to bring the role of the neighbourhood as central to planning policy decision-making. Planning’s goal to deliver spaces and places to enable individuals to meet, interact and socialise is given high importance in planning’s conceptualisation of community. The Government’s objective of creating ‘strong, vibrant, healthy communities’ persisted from Labour policy into the current NPPF as a goal for planning to facilitate social
interaction and create inclusive communities (DCLG, 2012a:17). The written rationale for raising the role of the neighbourhood is to enhance personal responsibility which is understood to then deliver increased community and personal resilience and sustainability. The role of the neighbourhood is viewed as an aid to delivery of planning’s top-down creation of spatial sustainable communities. However, this should not be viewed naïvely as solely a desire to increase participation in the name of democracy.

This problematisation of non-participating individuals also sits within a wider neoliberal discourse, whereby the freedom to make choices results in renegotiation of rationalities. However, viewed from a governmentality perspective, neoliberalism is suggested to permit and promote individual choice as well as encourage conformity:

“[w]hile on one hand neo-liberalism problematizes the state and is concerned to specify its limits through the invocation of individual choice, on the other hand it involves forms of governance that encourage both institutions and individuals to conform to the norms of the market” (Larner, 2000:12).

Infiltration of the private sector into public services and society places focus on competition, supply and demand and profitability, and this is perhaps evident within the ‘Big Society’ and ‘Localism’ agendas. The rolling back of state function appears to be encouraged through focus on volunteerism whereby neighbourhoods are encouraged to take self responsibility for personal and community actions and outcomes. At the same time the potential reduced state expenditure available for these agendas can’t be ignored (Lowndes and Pratchett, 2012). Whether the rationality for these agendas is to raise civic empowerment and responsibility or to reduce budget deficit, McKee, following governmental analyses, suggests that less direct government, such as the reduced role of state regulation in neighbourhood planning, does not necessarily entail less governing (2009). This notion is particularly pertinent when considering the leverage, or lack of, that local planning has in managing potential influences of second homes, delivering sustainable communities and increasing participation levels.

The role of citizens in sustainability has been discussed throughout this chapter and governance is one of the key segments through which the sustainability is
judged in the Egan Wheel (2004). This has become an area of key focus for the Coalition Government, further problematizing those who do not participate in community and micro scale governance and decision-making functions. The next section will explore the mechanisms and theories of participation in decision-making, predominantly reviewing Coalition planning policy and the suggestion that participation has become an obligation rather than choice.

2.10 Participation As Core To Sustainability And Planning

Participation is understood to be crucial for making community development programmes relevant and consequently more likely to be successful and sustainable (Rogers and Ryan, 2001; Smith et al, 1999). Participation in spatial planning has been long standing and has moved from a centralised approach to greater active engagement and inclusion of a large range of community, public, private and voluntary sector stakeholders in decision-making (Curry, 2012). The participatory agenda has been viewed as running parallel to planning’s sustainability discourse (Counsell and Haughton, 2006) or as a part of it:

“indeed, public participation has become a core component of the official discourse of sustainable development, particularly at local level” (Macnaghten and Jacobs, 1997:5).

The rationale to enhance participation in politics comes from a need to overcome perceived civic disenchantment with the representative democracy approach to politics, which is expressed by low voter turnout, undermining the democratic nature of the process (Bucek and Smith, 2000; Michels and De Graaf, 2010). Low uptake of such participation mechanisms suggests the need for more innovative approaches to participation, especially as many services are delivered beyond the political government arena.

The concept of participation in this research reviews the political connotations of this term in addition to participation in non or quasi-governmental agencies, as well as other daily activities as suggested in this quote:

“Modern theorists on participatory democracy do not want to limit participation to political decision-making, but stress that participation should encompass such areas as the workplace and local communities as well” (Pateman, 1970; Barber, 1984 in Michels and De Graaf, 2010:479).
While participation within this research will focus more heavily on the political inclusion of citizens within planning, sustainability and localism agendas, individual participation within local communities and other activities will also be examined. This will be viewed in terms of developing understanding of community as well as the participatory role of non-permanent second home residents within the parish community and political agendas.

2.10.1 Mechanisms Of Participation

Participation is understood to help legitimise decisions through enabling routes for citizens to express opinions regarding local issues which is understood to generate more responsive outcomes (Bucek and Smith, 2000; Michels and De Graaf, 2010). This partially relates to the suggestion that sustainability, community and participation should be situated within specific circumstances:

“Initiatives that seek to work towards the creation of more sustainable communities at local level must pay more critical attention to the meanings of 'local', 'public', 'community' and 'participation' in different circumstances” (Blake, 1999:274).

Blake argues that in order to bring about changes in behaviour, in order that they are more likely to fall in line with understanding and knowledge of environmental concerns, that there must be recognition in variations of the terms outlined above. Furthermore, responsibility must be more equitably distributed, requiring a change in democratic governance not just a redistribution of responsibility. Participation is not understood to have the potential to deliver sustainability actions but is presented as one approach that can contribute.

The notion of participation is often used interchangeably with engagement and empowerment, but these cannot be assumed to have the same meanings as they are understood to infer differing participator roles. These range from non-participation, to providing information, through to partnership where decisions are made and potentially delivered together, and through to citizens becoming independently in control of their planning process. These differing methods of participation are presented in models such as Arnstein’s ladder (1969, figure 2.3). The diagram visualises Arnstein’s description of gradations of public participation presented as a hierarchy based upon the degree of participation. The lowest grouping of 'non participation' includes ‘therapy’ and 'manipulation’
which are understood to generate façades of participation pretending to involve people or educate them. The next group is ‘tokenism’ whereby the lowest form of participation is ‘informing’: a one-way flow of information. The next rung up the ladder is ‘consultation’ where views may be expressed but not necessarily reacted to; or finally in this group ‘placation’ permits certain committees, for example, to exert influence in decision-making and to advise but not to obtain power. The ‘citizen power’ rungs increase the decision-making power of citizens whereby negotiation may occur within ‘partnership’ or decision-making is undertaken by ‘delegated power’ or ultimately ‘citizen control’.

![Diagram of the ladder of citizen participation](image)

**Figure 2.3: Eight Rungs On The Ladder Of Citizen Participation (Arnstein, 1969)**

Further guidance was developed by Wilcox (1994), which conceptualised a similar approach presenting participation as a continuation process. Neither Arnstein nor Wilcox positioned participation at one point within these models but rather considered that participation programmes may make use of techniques at different stages along the models and this may vary throughout the participation
process. The approach to participation in UK planning has been described as being “of the weaker kind” (Smith, 2000:92) or “tokenistic” (Bucek and Smith, 2000:14); and thus can be predominantly viewed to fall mid-ladder on Arnstein’s model. The concept of empowerment is described to be where individuals have the right to a voice within politics and decision-making, and developed throughout the 1990s (Cheater, 2000:4). The suggested lack of empowerment through UK approaches has been considered to occur regardless of whether an active or passive voice was provided to citizens, which tended to depend upon local practices (Bucek and Smith, 2000). This notion that the processes through which citizens can get involved and the outcomes of participation programmes are dependent upon local circumstances remains a core theme throughout this research.

2.10.2. The Democracy Of Participation In Planning

Those who are leading a participation programme often have greater control over who the participants are. Furthermore, outcomes have been understood to depend upon the participants and planning must determine whose voice is heard in determining planning issues (Rydin, 2011:10). Participants should be relevant to each participation programme, however the use of delegates as a way of determining whose voice is heard, has been criticised due to potential to impose irregularity and selectivity in participant selection:

“despite various possibilities and valuable experiences, such an approach can be irregular and selective, with nonelected participants being insufficiently influential, so the extent of participation and effectiveness remains limited” (Bucek and Smith, 2000:9).

The processes through which participants are selected and the motivations of individuals to participate will be further examined throughout this thesis.

Electoral politics is understood to have little impact on building communities and relationships between people; rather helping people to see themselves as a larger community it is understood to reinforce individualism (Sanderson, 1999). The very personal act of voting is used to enable representative democracy and also defines the extent of participation for most (Warren, 2002). For some this may depict the desirable extent of involvement, however this is considered
limited. Dean, with reference to US politics, suggests that discussions regarding democracy focus around participation but are limited in action:

“More pronounced are themes of participation and deliberation, immanence and inclusion, ideals that are necessary but impossible, perpetually deferred, forever to come” (2009:75-76).

Planners in the UK have endeavoured to provide greater opportunities for participation, but equally the democratic implications and extent of these efforts is perhaps limited. Warren proposes that participation should not be utilised for every issue, rather only those classified as ‘political’ based upon the following:

“(1) there is disagreement about what to do and (2) one or more of the parties has the power to force the issue” (2002:687).

This could reduce the volume of participants and overcome issues of practicality, which will be considered later in this section. Nevertheless, this approach is inherently problematic as it requires a judgement of whether an issue is ‘political’ enough to warrant a participatory process.

Bucek and Smith (2000) propose that participation processes should implement ‘an infusion’ of commonly used ‘participatory democracy’ mechanisms such as consultations, public hearings or meetings, and ‘direct democracy’ approaches including referenda and citizen assemblies. They distinguish between participatory and direct democracy for practical purposes but recognise that it is an “overlapping distinction continually in transition” as democracy itself implies participation (Bucek and Smith, 2000:4). Their distinction is explained through decision-making, whereby direct democracy is understood to include the approval of decisions which participatory democracy does not lead to. Owen et al (2007, in Curry 2011) suggest there has been a move from representative to participatory democracy, although the literature reviewed in this chapter questions the extent to which this has occurred. The unequal distribution of power and influence within decision-making in planning plays a role in suggesting participation has been limited and will be considered in the next section.

2.10.3 Neutral Planning

A brief review of Communicative Planning Theory (CPT) is useful at this juncture as it aids understanding of some of the complexities of the distribution of power within planning processes. While more complex, the ‘core aim’ of CPT
is said to be “the democratisation of planning practice and the empowerment of discourse communities” (McGuirk, 2001:195). The theory requires a power-neutral space where shared meanings are grounded in dialogue and consensus between actors; planners are present as facilitators providing information when necessary. The process of representative democracy and current UK planning approaches cannot be deemed to deliver such neutral planning spaces. A governmentality perspective offers a critique of CPT through the belief that “power will always be present in every human act and interaction, and, furthermore, planning represents political interests, tactics and strategies” (Flyvbjerg, 1991 in Pløger, 2001:219). Individuals are also understood to follow their own agendas based upon their own set of meanings, power and knowledge rather than a “search for and accept rational arguments” (Pløger, 2001:223). Planning is deemed to fall within a nexus of power, knowledge and rationality whereby power is carried through discourses and strategies arising from and reinforcing dominant knowledge (McGuirk, 2001:207). While planners can be viewed as being in a position of power due to their planning knowledge, Pløger refers to Foucault in saying “it is also important to stress that it is power that defines what can count as knowledge” (2001:227). Current participation processes do not provide citizens such a position of power and are therefore understood to serve more to reduce conflict and legitimise decisions (ibid) and provide those elected with power to implant decisions on behalf of others. For Michels and De Graaf (2010) direct citizen rule became unrealistic during the twentieth century due to increasing dominance of representative democracies. Having considered the ways in which planning is power-laden the next section will review attempts of planning democratic renewal.

2.11 The Democratic Renewal Of Planning Policy

The desire to increase participation in planning policy tends to be perceived as positive and as a means to ‘open up’ the planning process (Rydin and Pennington, 2000). However, a political desire for a heightened community governance role “may not fit with the aspirations of neighbourhood citizens themselves – to become self-governing, for example” (Lowndes and Sullivan, 2004:71-72). Introduced as statutory in the 1968 Planning Act the 1969 Skeffington Report, 'People and Planning' put forward a participation model that involved everyone within all stages of the planning process (Gilg, 2005; Illsey
and McCarthy, 1998). As noted by Curry (2012), this marked the shift for planning to be no longer regarded as a technical exercise. However, Skeffington’s ambitious proposal for mass participation was a more consultative reality, focussing on the provision and exchange of information until the late 1980s early 1990s. It was at this point at which more pro-active and integrated methods of engagement and partnership were pursued (Curry, 2012; Illsey and McCarthy, 1998). Partnership was used under New Labour in particular as the main vehicle for community involvement and as a means to coordinate, consult and engage key local stakeholders and knowledge.

New Labour instigated “a programme of democratic renewal and civic renaissance, which values both citizenship and community” (Williams, 2002:197). New Labour’s focus on partnership between public, private and voluntary sectors have been criticised for placing focus on construction from above rather than bottom-up community empowerment. There is ambiguity surrounding the effectiveness of community participation through partnerships and whilst community representatives are formally recognised as partners they rarely operate as equals, due to a lack of power, expertise and/or resources:

“the creation of local partnerships per se do not, therefore, necessarily address the inequalities of power that may exist on the local level” (Raco, 2000:597).

Partnership has therefore not been understood to deliver a redistribution of power or empowerment of communities and the Coalition has attempted a shift away from partnership, with the LSP now encouraged but no longer statutory.

Following the 2004 Act communities were made a stakeholder in policy formulation through the requirement for each LPA to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), setting out how communities will be engaged in the production of Local Development Documents. However, much like partnership approaches, this did not equate to empowerment of communities and involvement had limitations including extensive variation between communities (Curry, 2012). In 2009 the statutory ‘Duty to Involve’ communities came into force, obliging all local authorities to embed a culture of community engagement and empowerment in all decisions providing greater opportunities for local people to get involved (HM Government, 2008). Curry emphasises the curious nature of the semantics of this as it “places obligations on local
authorities but provides only opportunities for communities to become involved” (2012:348). Curry (ibid) therefore places the ‘Duty to Involve’ in the second of three dominant forms of community participation generated from a review of participation literature. The first of deliberative democracy sees populations play an active role in their own self government through getting people to take part in ‘public’ decisions. Second is responsible participation where citizenship is an ‘obligation’ rather than an ‘opportunity’ and communities take on public decisions to reduce state expense and can bring communities in line with state objectives. The third, neoliberalism, shifts opportunity for service provision onto individuals as a part of personal freedom with focus on freedom rather than reducing expense or bureaucracy. Curry’s second notion of ‘responsible participation’ has persisted into critical discussions about the current “austerity localism” (Featherstone et al, 2012:177) approach. The rationale for participation here is said to focus on national deficit reduction and withdrawal of state support, rather than restructuring power (Bailey and Pill, 2011; Lowndes and Pratchett, 2012). Localism, as a term applied to a range of strategies emphasising devolution of power, is criticised in Bailey and Pill (2011:938 referencing Deloitte 2011), who demonstrate that localism reconfiguration is not occurring with the same energy as budget cuts. Lowndes and Pratchett (2012:28) also detail that Whitehall continues to control 75% of local government revenue spending suggesting local authorities and communities receive conflicting guidance. This critical assessment suggests Coalition localism is performing a decentralisation of responsibility but not power (Bailey & Pill 2011; Featherstone et al, 2012), a notion to be further explored in the empirical research.

The Conservatives 2010 election manifesto centred around the ‘Big Society’, is described as “ill-defined” (Lowndes and Pratchett, 2012:30) but as having the following three essential elements:

“The first is about what the state can do for us. The second is about what we can do for ourselves. And the third is about what we can do for others” (Clark, 2010:online)

This is grounded in the perception that the state has reduced personal responsibility, and Coalition policy through helping ‘ourselves’ and ‘others’ is understood to instigate more self-sufficiency and responsibility, aiming to instil
consideration of the roles individuals and voluntary groups can perform. Viewed through Foucault’s ‘technologies of the self’, responsibility for issues is passed to the individual, but rather than redistributing power, there is perceived potential to reinforce inequalities as resources are unevenly distributed (Curry, 2012; Lowndes and Pratchett, 2012).

Further, critiques of Localism are presented through the apparent distrust of local government viewing community and government as competitors rather than mutual benefactors. The Localism Agenda at times appears to echo 1980s thinking through a seeming desire to by-pass government (Davoudi, 2000), reconfiguring planning expertise into a planning advice service. Furthermore, reducing the support role of local government and suggesting communities can act more independently is considered a somewhat “sink or swim” approach to communities (Lowndes and Pratchett, 2012:37). Curry (2012), however, suggests the problem lies with uncertainty over what and who is being targeted. This is due to ‘community’ in Coalition policy being expressed as the local state whereas at other points it clearly depicts exclusion of the local state.

Barr and Devine Wright (2012) suggest a change in sustainability governance has occurred whereby communities now aspire to bottom-up community led responses, as opposed to the local authority plan led approach dominating the 1990s. The Coalition’s localism agenda claims to progress such a focus through community led planning and establishing the neighbourhood referendum as a key element of neighbourhood planning (DCLG, 2011a). Bucek and Smith refer to ‘consultative’ referendum as a “cautious type of direct democratic innovation in local government” (2000:7), thereby questioning the true participatory nature of referendum. Focus on the ‘neighbourhood’ has been long standing in policy (Section 2.5), although this perhaps lacks acknowledgement of the existence of multiple neighbourhoods. This consequently overlooks the presence of collective interest alongside subgroups that may compete for political influence (Bailey and Pill, 2011). The approach to participation in policy is therefore not understood to align with the desires and experiences within neighbourhoods. This is partially to do with the influence individuals can bring to each situation including the motivations and barriers these individuals are subject to.
2.12 Motivations And Barriers To Participation

The personal motivations individuals experience in choosing to whether to participate will be further examined in Chapter Seven, but will be briefly reviewed here. Kambites, with reference to Blake, proposes three ‘requisites’ needed to generate action from the individual: “acceptance of responsibility, the belief in being able to make a difference and the ability to overcome practical barriers” (2010:868). The Coalition has endeavoured to pass responsibility to communities, and have suggested their approach will enable communities to have greater influence and ‘make a difference’. The extent to which this is desired and realised at the local level will be examined in the empirical chapters. Rydin and Pennington (2000) also refer to being heard and responded to as a necessary motivation for participation. Furthermore, Sullivan et al suggest that securing public engagement requires the following factors:

“an expectation that participation will impact on outcomes; ownership of the process and a hand in developing the rules of engagement; and a focus on issues likely to be perceived by the public as both accessible and important” (2006:493).

Therefore a major motivation to participate appears to be the capacity to have impact, a degree of ownership and an interest in the issue requiring participation. Two further suggested rationales for participation are firstly, the democratic right to be involved in the public policy process, and secondly to assist in producing ‘better’ policy outcomes representative of and utilising local knowledges (Rydin and Pennington, 2000). However, it is not possible to assume that these outcomes are achieved, nor does participation automatically facilitate this. It is important that participation is not seen as a ‘panacea’ for overcoming exclusion or other government issues, or as building social capital (Michels and De Graaf, 2010; Raco, 2000; Rydin and Pennington, 2000). While participation has been suggested to have positive effects on democracy including raising the feeling of responsibility, increasing public engagement and enabling a higher degree of legitimacy of decisions, the role of participation is considered instrumental yet not pivotal (Michels and De Graaf, 2010:489).

Aside from the motivation to generate outputs, there are also personal and community motivations that are understood to exist. Curry (2012) suggests different degrees of self interest are expressed through community involvement and may present the motivation of ‘public’ interest, or of ‘extended self interest’
where benefits to the community are perceived to also be of benefit to the individual. Kambites (2010) referred to above, mentions the ability to overcome barriers as a motivation, and the final section of this chapter will consider the barriers and limitations of participation.

2.12.1 Barriers To Participation And The Potential For ‘Organisational Paralysis’
The desire to expand political participation has included the desire for greater societal representation alongside greater opportunities to participate in political decision-making. The difficulty in widening participation responses from all sections of society has been described as a “notorious problem” (Rydin and Pennington, 2000:156). Greater inclusion of individuals in decision-making processes has potential to lead to a stifling situation of inactivity or ‘organizational paralysis’, as suggested by Williams:

“There is a real danger that the process of involvement might become institutionalized and cumbersome—meetings, reports, accountabilities—the logistics of the exercise could induce organizational paralysis defeating the purpose. Inclusivity has to be balanced with outcomes” (2002:201).

One approach to avoiding this situation has been to not pursue mass inclusion but to select participants, such as through processes of representative democracy including the representation of communities through selected neighbourhood bodies. The prioritisation of the neighbourhood in Coalition policy especially and discussion regarding the representativeness of community bodies will be examined in Chapter Seven.

Through the political drive for increased levels and diversity of participation non-participation has become a problematised activity. Nevertheless, individuals have the freedom and right to not participate (Lowndes and Sullivan, 2004; Young, 2000 in Curry, 2012). For those who desire to participate but don’t, the suggested barriers are deemed to lie with the participant as well as the local authority. UK planning is understood to have more personal relevance in terms of dealing with everyday issues and neighbourly disputes (Selman, 1998) rather than improving quality of life and local sustainability. This disconnection is understood to act as a limitation to participation in terms of these broad goals of planning.
Participation in plan making has been understood to favour articulate and well-educated groups with available resources, whereas there is a greater and more diverse response to development control issues when individuals feel threatened (Imrie and Raco, 2003 in Curry, 2012:355). Curry also suggests that the extent communities possess knowledge can influence the success of their involvement, acting therefore as a form of social control and self-regulation (2012:353). Empirical research examining the extent to which local communities feel they have the knowledge and access to resources to successfully implement localism to the extent the Coalition rhetoric intends, will be examined in Chapter Three. Furthermore, it will further discuss the extent to which centralism is at the heart of localism (Buser, 2013). In viewing participation policy within a governmentality context this research will examine the discursive reality of how the participatory rationality endeavours to deliver self-regulating participating individuals.

In considering community knowledge and power it is necessary to consider the release of and access to both knowledge and power of the local authority. Despite reference to perceived ‘resistances’ professionals may have toward community involvement, Curry’s (2012) research found contrary positive relationships; authorities generally claimed to be in favour of community participation believing that it brings ‘local expertise’ to the process. Difficulties of participation were raised by local authorities, including that it is not always clear what communities are trying to achieve, the additional ‘outside of normal working hours’ time that was required, and a lack of ability to adapt national policy to local circumstances. Therefore participation appears to be valued by local authorities, at least verbally; however the processes of implementation have suffered a series of difficulties that are likely to vary between each situation. Furthermore, the Coalition’s most recent planning democratic renewal process is suggested to create a mismatch of power, responsibility and duty (Holman and Rydin, 2013). This is relative to the new neighbourhood duties that emerged and are suggested to lack appropriate resources. This understanding will also be used to frame the research and analysis into the role of communities within planning to review how NDC views the role of participation and experiences of delivering the participation agenda.
To conclude this section reference is made to the potential to limit consideration of participation to the political domain and to planning, a participation barrier in itself:

“Communities shouldn’t limit their aspirations to the planning system. There’s a whole range of different things that people can do to improve the sustainability and wellbeing of their community that isn’t limited to spatial planning. The localism agenda should not stymie this” (Vincent, 2012: conference presentation).

This critical account of the Coalition focus on participation in the political arena reiterates the need to consider the wider conception of the term ‘participation’ that contributes to both sustainability and community agendas.

2.13 Chapter Summary
This chapter has reviewed the literature relevant to this research contextualising the research within the inclusion of sustainability as a statutory goal of planning. Exploration of the notions of community and focus on place-based community within policy has been discussed alongside a conceptual review of and sustainability. The continuing rounds of democratic renewal in planning policy have most recently included the Localism Agenda and neighbourhood planning, resulting in the removal of many planning tools through the ambition to ‘open up’ planning processes. Viewing this research through the lens of governmentality perceives planning as a rationality of government, as well as sustainability and participation as governmental rationalities. Planning’s shift from government to governance details the relevance of governmentality to this thesis through acknowledging the many sources of power. This is vital in considering how planning is influenced by populations and is positioned at a nexus of power and knowledge, and that knowledge is reinforced through power being carried through strategy and discourse (McGuirk, 2001). Governmentality therefore conceives planning outcomes to be influenced by individuals, as they follow their own agendas based upon their own set of meanings, power and knowledge (Pløger, 2001).

This chapter also explored the concept of citizen participation in policy and decision-making, as well as in community, viewing this as central to sustainability. It examined how processes of participation range from consultation to complete empowerment, and the suggestion that UK
participation approaches are “the weaker kind” (Smith, 2000:92) or “tokenistic” (Bucek and Smith, 2000:14). The processes through which participants are selected, as well as the motivations and barriers to participation detailing the power of influence, have been introduced here and will be continued to be explored throughout the empirical chapters.

Repeated rounds of democratic renewal in planning endeavour to increase the role of communities in policy, and individuals within community. Most recently the Coalition has driven this through its Localism Agenda, emphasising the role of the neighbourhood in planning. However, the questioning of the rationality behind the localism agenda has led to the suggestion that it is “austerity localism” (Featherstone et al, 2012:177), as well as that centralism is at the heart of localism (Buser, 2013). These concepts will also be explored further during the empirical chapters of this research.

This chapter has focused on the literature regarding planning’s statutory sustainability and participatory goals, as well as notions of community and connections between scales of government and communities. This thesis will now examine these concepts through the lens of second homes reviewing how semi-permanent presences impact host communities and planning agendas within communities. The next chapter will outline UK housing and present existing second homes literature and research, to review the contributions second homes have been suggested to make to host communities.
Chapter 3: Housing And Second Homes: Key Characteristics And Issues

3.1 Introduction to Chapter

This chapter will outline the literature and previous research regarding second homes. It will provide the grounding for the empirical research providing the framework for examination of the concepts outlined in the previous chapter: planning, sustainability, communities and participation. As has been detailed, the sponsorship of this PhD by the planning department at NDC situates this thesis within a planning context and the statutory sustainability agenda. NDC desired research to explore the potential challenge that second home ownership presents to the attainment of this agenda within host communities. This chapter outlines UK housing to provide context for the experiences that are to be explored in the empirical chapters. It also reviews previous second homes literature and research to detail proven approaches to research and highlight the gaps in the literature. This empirical research seeks to respond to these gaps through firstly, increasing knowledge about second homes to assist potential management approaches. Secondly, it enhances understandings of the socio-economic contributions of second homes, at the local scale, in a contemporary landscape, considering their sustainability contributions to host communities. Thirdly, it will examine understandings and experiences of community and participation within planning and communities framed through the presence of second homes and semi-permanent residents.

The chapter will begin by outlining the shift from social and rental housing tenancies to owner-occupier, which has altered the housing structure in the UK and contributed to a shortage of, particularly affordable, housing. The chapter will then examine the concept of housing affordability, presenting a commonly used definition. It will then move to concentrate on second homes, comparing the UK context to overseas experiences suggesting that second homes are more of a localised issue in the UK (Gallent et al, 2004). Finally, the chapter will examine second homes in terms of attempted definition; economic, social and environmental impacts, connections to inflated house prices, and conclude with a brief review of the issues surrounding second home governance and policies.
3.2 Social Housing And The Right To Buy

House tenure shifted from 90% of households renting post-war to 50% home ownership in 1971 which has now stabilised at around 70% (Coe & Jones, 2010). The 1979-97 Conservative period encouraged owner occupation leading to a fall in demand for local authority housing, suggesting and justifying a reduced need for social housing. This was accompanied by the ‘Right to Buy’ scheme contained within the 1980 Housing Act and as council tenants bought their homes below market value the financial burden of housing provision placed upon local authorities dramatically reduced. A second policy that significantly impacted the housing landscape was the deregulation of building societies under the Building Societies Act 1986 allowing large mortgages to be approved (Savage and Atkinson, 2001). Economic downturn in the early 1990s highlighted the vulnerability of the mortgage process, leaving many people in negative equity and offered opportunity for lessons to be learnt. By the 1997 Labour election there were many people in better housing, due to the strategies outlined above, but there were also a number of households worse off and stuck in a benefits trap. These political approaches, representative of a neoliberal framework, provide the foundations for a number of issues local authorities experience today of relevance to this thesis. The reduction in rentable local authority housing stock resulted from a programme of deregulation, and increased market influence of housing policy, with the intention of greater economic efficiency. In addition to consequences for those in need of social housing there is increased demand for property, including from the second home market, which is perceived to connect to inflated house prices.

3.3 Housing Affordability And Planning

Article 11 of the UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognises and legally binds the UK to supplying adequate housing for everyone (OHCHR, 1966). The Equality and Human Rights Commission’s response to this was a recommendation to develop strategies to increase levels of affordable housing and social housing (2009). Access to a decent standard of housing is recognised to be influential on health and education establishing a relationship with significant social consequences. High rental and house purchase cost are understood to be influencing social configuration in the UK,
contributing to delays in starting a family, challenging relationships as individuals live with parents longer, exacerbating unemployment as people are unable to move with ease and the financial burden of extensive and lengthy debt (Turffrey, 2010).

Reduced availability of affordable housing has been partially due to limited affordable and social housing developments and a secondary rapid rise in house prices from 1998 through to 2007. Average salaries did not undergo an equivalent increase, contributing to an understood decline in housing affordability, however this is complicated by nuanced understandings of affordability (Gallent and Robinson, 2011). A common and favoured approach to measure affordability is through a ratio of lower quartile or average house prices, to lower quartile or average earnings. Nationally in April 2010⁴, the average price of a property was 4.75 times the average salary (Halifax, 2010; Section 4.5). The reduction in affordability of UK property results from a range of supply and demand factors, and the scale of the problem varies between locations, with higher house prices in desirable locations. Additional demand stems from increased population, longer life expectancy and living alone as well as some locations facing increased pressure from commuters, retirement, migration, holiday and second homes. These are suggested to have contributed to pushing house prices beyond ‘local’ wages (Gallent and Robinson, 2011). Their research suggests ‘affordability’ should not trigger development but, rather, a need to review whether unaffordability prevents people living from where they need to, and potential inability of affordable property to remain affordable in some areas (ibid).

The availability of buy-to-let (BTL) mortgages saw an increase in private rental in the early 2000s, accounting for 9% of mortgages in 2007 (Coe and Jones, 2010). The housing slump in 2007 saw many of these properties suffer great losses and mortgage lenders become more cautious. However, options for those with good credit ratings to access 95% mortgages have begun to emerge once again through, for example the ‘Help to Buy’ home ownership schemes.

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⁴This date reflects the timing of the secondary research process. Due to the complexities in measuring affordability, as outlined above, this figure and use of 2010 represents a snapshot in time, selected as the most recent figure at the time of writing.
These include mechanisms such as reducing the amount of deposit and mortgage needed through availability of government loans, or shared ownership where a share in the property is bought and the remainder rented. These schemes are available to both first time buyers and new-build properties. Such approaches endeavour to overcome the issue that owners appear less willing to sell, contributing to market stagnation and a proportion of the population now who does not aspire to own a property due to financial and employment concerns (HSBC, 2012). Consequently there is a need for policy to consider housing affordability in terms of both rental and purchase.

3.4 Housing Policy
Planning has been used to stimulate house building for the past twenty years (Barclay, 2010). However, Rydin (2011) details that house building forms only part of the supply, and turnover of existing stock is also necessary, and this tends to slow during market downturns keeping house prices high. New Labour took an in situ approach to housing affordability whereby state should enable people to live in their favoured neighbourhood or community. However, as Gallent and Robinson (2011) demonstrate, there was clear sky between rhetoric and delivery, and the most sustainable approach to deliver affordable housing was to place it in bigger centres that are more efficiently serviced (Savage and Atkinson, 2001). The delivery of housing has also been influenced by the inclusion of the private sector in house building, and concern has been expressed regarding focus on profitability rather than delivery of social need. Consequently, while Rydin (2011) recognises planning cannot be separated from the market, greater public and third sector investment should be encouraged in housing policy. Problems develop due to limited availability of finance to support social and affordable housing, plus planning is not supposed to intervene with tenure and land/property prices (Cullingworth and Nadin 2002:168).

The Barker Review of Housing Supply (2004) emphasised that government should aim to improve problems generated in terms of affordability of housing, that in part reflect high levels of owner-occupation. To achieve lower house prices Barker’s major recommendation was a substantial house building programme of private and social houses, and for planners to allocate more land
for development. This report was provided for UK Government but reflected the situation in England and its regions rather than the devolved countries. Housing forecasts were used as a means to raise house building and required Regional Government Offices to accommodate the housing projection figures. While these recommendations had to be approved by the Secretary of State, they did not have to meet the regional housing projection leading to a potential shortfall in delivery. While this intended to instigate regional responsiveness, Murdoch (2000) suggests it encouraged the temporal to be undermined by the spatial. These housing projections can be viewed as a system of accounting and surveillance central to a governance regime in which indicators and targets shape goals and vision (Rose and Miller, 2010; Rydin in Atkinson and Joyce, 2011). Murdoch used Foucault’s governmentality framework to suggest regional housing projections made civil domains “calculable and, therefore, governable” (2000:506), but that these were challenged and resisted locally.

The Coalition Government’s Housing Strategy planned reforms to “get the housing market moving again” through methods that include making it easier to secure mortgages, improving fairness in social housing and ensuring empty homes are lived in (HM Government, 2011). The Coalition government’s aversion to top-down planning gained this strategy criticism through failing to state the scale of need, or provide targets, making it difficult to assess achievement. It is understood to be ‘less of a strategy more of an overview’ (Perry, 2012). Housing output is not understood to be occurring at a rate that will deliver the three million homes claimed to be needed by 2020, rather suggesting current building is at the level of the 1920s (Elliott, 2012). Similarly, Gallent and Robinson (2011) express concern about the Coalition’s approach being ‘too local’ ignoring wider strategic concerns, as the appetite in current policy is to free communities and for Parish Councils to assess housing need. Second home ownership is suggested to be one of a collection of housing demands in certain areas, and further complicates housing forecasts. The next section will review the literature and existing research regarding the descriptions and influence of second homes.
3.5 Second Homes
Second home properties are understood to be a distinct form of tourism and residence within host communities, but while unique, also exhibit similarities common to most forms of tourism (Jaakson, 1986). The second home tourist can be perceived as distinct from a 'constant foreign tourist', who has a brief encounter with the community not belonging to or taking part in a community (Hall and Muller, 2004). The second homes phenomenon in the UK is proposed to align to an ‘epidemic’ nature, as opposed to the ‘endemic’ experience in other countries (Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones, 2001). Rye (2011) suggests second homes should be reviewed in a national context and while this aids a degree of understanding it overlooks issues experienced locally. Second homes are not perceived to be an issue at the national level in England, making up only a little over 1% of housing stock (Oxley et al, 2008) and this lack of concern is reflected by absence of second home comment in the NPPF (DCLG, 2012a). The UK does not consider second homes to be a normative experience, or as culturally acceptable as in other countries, such as those in Scandinavia where nearly a fifth of all households own a second home. Second home ownership in Norway exists across the social spectrum and urban/rural dimensions and the result is a less conflictual experience of second homes (Rye, 2011). In New Zealand, second homes have historically been an integral component of lifestyles with the traditional ‘bach’ seen as an icon of culture and heritage; similarly the Canadian ‘cottage’ of strong cultural significance (Hall and Muller, 2004). However, this research also raised concerns over the negative implications of second homes in these locations. These examples offer a contrasting cultural approach to the UK second home phenomenon.

Second home ownership in the UK is not considered a commonplace or non-problematic form of housing consumption (Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones, 2001). As stated, second homes are in low proportion nationally and therefore are considered to be of limited significance; however, the tendency for these properties to concentrate in certain areas and communities, are understood to create substantial localised impacts (Gallent et al, 2004). Second homes are in high percentage in the South West of England and are predominantly found in the most beautiful villages in England and Wales. This highlights the
geographical unevenness of external interest in rural housing markets (Gallent et al, 2008; Oxley et al, 2008), acting as one, but not the sole pressure.

While negative opinions and perceptions of second homes are frequently cited, positive references are also made within the literature, requiring impacts to be balanced within local circumstances (Gallent et al, 2003). Coppock (1977 in Hall and Muller, 2004) describes second homes as a “curse and blessing” while Shucksmith demonstrates the polarised views of second homes, describing them as:

“flagrant inequality, as conspicuous consumption or as a factor adversely affecting rural economies and communities, others see them as a natural and desirable form of recreation, and as stimulating the economy and vitality of rural areas” (1983:174 in Gallent et al, 2004:287).

Research has suggested that second homes have been more symptomatic, rather than problematic, responding to national social, political and economic changes (Gallent et al, 2004). The literature exploring these nuanced impacts and perceptions will now be reviewed.

Oxley et al’s (2008) review of second homes literature presents social, economic and environmental considerations while also recognising these categories are not distinct or isolated from one another. It endeavours to provide a framework to consider second homes within the “three pillar” approach to sustainability, important for considering second homes in a planning context. This research refers to the eight segment approach to sustainability provided through the Egan Wheel (Egan, 2004) and the sustainability of second homes is considered within the following proviso:

“The reality is that it is certainly impossible to accurately ‘model’ the positive and negative impacts of second homes on any ‘balance sheet’ or for any of the three legs of sustainability.” (Gallent et al, 2005:35)

Consequently, there is no expectation for this research to compile a ‘balance sheet’ for the sustainability of second homes.

3.5.1 Second Homes - The Problem Of Definition
Attempts to define second homes has been described as a ‘perennial problem’, not least because it requires definition of a first home, and typifying living patterns is intrinsically problematic (Gallent et al, 2003; Wallace et al, 2005).
Wallace et al (2005) referred to second homes and holiday homes collectively, as ‘irregularly occupied properties’. ‘Second homes’ can include properties used for work purposes, however this research focuses on second homes used for leisure, although it is not always possible to distinguish such use in all cases.

Second homes are understood to fall at the interface of multiple policy areas including leisure, planning and housing. Second homes therefore require examination in terms of the property, and with regard to the residents and interactions with neighbours, and the housing market in the second home’s locality (Gallent et al, 2005; Wallace et al 2005). Definitions of second homes have been collated and presented in second home literature reviews (Wallace et al, 2005; Oxley et al, 2008) generating both broad and narrow definitions of second homes, such as the following two examples:

“A static property which is the alternative residence of a household, the principal domicile of which is situated elsewhere and which is used primarily by members of that household for their recreation and leisure.” (Pardoe, 1974, in Gallent et al, 2005)

“A property which is the occasional residence of a household that usually lives elsewhere and which is primarily used for recreation purposes.” (Bielckus et al, 1972, in Wallace et al, 2005)

Both of these situate the second home in opposition to permanent residence, and as used primarily by the same household for leisure purposes. Reference to mobility has attempted to narrow the definition of second homes, such as Hall and Muller's (2004) focus on non-mobile second homes although they recognise that second homes may have mobile or semi-mobile characteristics. Wallace et al’s review included a series of definitions, some of which excluded and some included static caravans, touring boats, short-term tenancies and properties in major cities. Gallent et al (2005) more recently positioned mobile dwellings as distinct from second home discussion. Consequently, a second home appears to be a permanent structure, not used as a main residence, but primarily used by the owner household for residential purposes, and are also not considered to include purpose build holiday properties (Mottiar, 2006).

A distinction is often drawn between second homes and holiday homes, as it is suggested by many that these are materially different generating discrete impacts (Oxley et al, 2008). Research by Gallent et al (2003) refers to a
collective of second and holiday homes however, recognises that second homes are privately owned, used for vacation and no one’s main residence whereas holiday homes are let on a commercial basis. A Countryside Agency commissioned report presented potential differences between second and holiday homes, due to private and business owners potentially targeting different types of property, and different use of accommodation leading to alternative housing market and socio-economic influences (Gallent et al, 2002). While both can make economic contributions, and have a considerable role in the local tourist economy, the issue regarding second homes is their greater potential to be left empty for longer periods (Gallent et al, 2004; LDNPA, 2008).

The national census provides data specifically on second homes, distinguished from holiday homes in 1981 and 1991, but 2001 and 2011 census aggregated these properties and consequent data (Wallace et al, 2005:28). Council tax data has been regarded the most promising source for monitoring second homes (Wallace et al, 2005:29; Gallent et al, 2004). In 2004 local councils were given discretion to charge registered second homes up to 90% council tax, which in 2013 increased to 100%, raising tax revenue from second homes by up to 50%. The discount was contentious and open to exploitation through ‘flipping’ of properties where a second home is declared in the area the owner chooses. When previously available the discount provided an incentive for owners to register their properties as second homes as well as enabling a distinction between property types for monitoring through council tax data.

3.5.2 Second Homes And House Prices
Second home ownership is frequently perceived to relate to inflated house prices. The reported UK shortage of permanent dwelling properties, and associated difficulties individuals can face in affording housing (Section 3.2), have contributed to the notion that second homes directly compete with primary residents within local housing markets. Homebuyers considered ‘non local’ entering the local housing market are often blamed for pushing house prices beyond the reach of local buyers and painted as the ‘wreckers of communities’ (Gallent et al, 2008). This issue is exacerbated as the location of second homes often coincides with low average wages, more stringent planning control and low supply of new housing (ibid) all of which are experienced within North
Devon. Retirement often follows similar patterns to second home ownership, and suggestion that second home ownership is the sole cause of house price inflation somewhat overlooks that no housing market is a ‘closed’ market.

Second homes have been described as ‘adventitious purchases’ entering rural housing markets and distorting prices (Shucksmith, 1990 in Gallent and Robinson, 2011) reinforcing patterns of social exclusion (Phillips, 1993, 2000, 2002, in Gallent and Robinson, 2011). However, Wallace et al’s review of second home studies calls for greater context and to understand these properties as entwined with “wider societal and economic transformation affecting rural communities” and as such cannot be divorced and understood in isolation (2005:37). Oxley et al’s (2008:28) research model suggests that for a 1% increase in second homes, house prices would be 1.4% higher, all other things being equal. This statistic is qualified within a need to recognise the inherency of other influences and market conditions on house price and this research highlights difficulties in trying to isolate second homes, particularly as they are often found in locations where property has high amenity value (Oxley, 2008).

Second home ownership is understood to penetrate all types of property, age and size, within a geographical neighbourhood (Wallace et al, 2005). It is frequently perceived that there is a lack of first time buyer property due to leakage of existing stock, and a lack of new affordable purchase or rental housing, forcing young people away from the rural communities they grew up in. Research conducted into the reasons young people and young families leave the countryside suggest it is not because they are “forced out”, but due to positive opportunities such as careers available elsewhere (Leyshon and DiGiovanna, 2005, Wallace et al, 2005). The extent to which second homes push people out of communities is therefore debated, however high house prices are understood to be a limiting factor for some individuals. This chapter will now move on to review the economic contributions and influences second homes are perceived to have.

3.5.3 Economic Impacts Of Second Homes

The economic benefits second homes are understood to bring to the host economy are often the focus of positive influences. This primarily occurs
through contributing to the local tourist economy investing through the use of local business and patronage of local services (Rye, 2011). However, research by Williams and Shaw (1988) detailed that limited spend is retained at the very local level, although this increases as scale increases, and this figure varies between location. Potential economic benefits of the second home can depend upon whether the property would otherwise be unoccupied or used as a permanent residence and demands a need to compare spend between the second home and permanent residence. Research by Mottiar (2006) in Ireland detailed that that those who own holiday properties spend less daily but more annually than tourists staying in other types of holiday accommodation. Coupled with reduced seasonality, as 58% respondents claimed they were using their property ‘most weekends year round’, and the longevity of investment in the area demonstrating a commitment and vested interest in the locality suggests that second homes could economically be considered as a sustainable form of tourism. Spend varies considerably between households, Wallace et al (2005) highlight that visits and thus spend varies depending upon accessibility of property, whether the property is rented and whether the owners are retired. Second homes increased spending power has been suggested to have the negative impact of inflating the cost of local goods and services to all users (Hall and Muller, 2004).

Housing renovations can be of benefit to the local economy through generating employment and may improve the aesthetics of a property and its immediate vicinity (Gallent, 2005). This has been questioned as Oxley et al (2008) present a lack of evidence to support claims that second home purchase improves housing quality. Furthermore Wallace et al (2005) query the profitability to the local economy as they are likely to be one-off spends if conducted, and data are not available to offer comparison to similar lifetime expenditure by permanent residents, it is also debateable whether such improvements advantage local residents. Regular employment opportunities may be generated by second home ownership but these are often limited, low skilled and predominantly seasonal (for example, gardening, cleaning, catering) (Wallace et al, 2005).

The use of local services by different sectors of the community has been subject to much debate. While second home owners can be viewed as
contributing excess council tax through reduced demand on services, their contribution through limited service use can negatively impact service viability (Wallace et al, 2005). Research exploring second home owners' perceptions suggested they were unlikely to notice pressure or a decline in quality of community attributes and services in the second home locality (Girard and Gartner, 1993). The areas where second homes are predominant are often subject to a seasonal pattern of occupancy, which can be problematic for services such as water or refuse (Pyne, 1973 in Wallace et al, 2005). However, the alternative use of a second home property is unknown, in addition to external pressure contributing to the decline of viability of certain services. Research conducted by the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA, 2008) presents a falling school roll in areas where a high proportion of second homes are located, and this is felt to be due to a lack of housing turnover, affordable housing in particular, not encouraging families to move to the settlement. However, Gallent et al(2002) suggest the need to view school rolls within an education context as school rolls rise and fall within in the same area and this can relate to most recent Ofsted\(^5\) inspections for example.

3.5.4 Second Homes And Local Populations
Policy debate in the 1970s-90s focussed on the negative implications of second homes although this period witnessed rapid growth in second homes as disposable income increased and mobility eased (Williams et al in Hall and Muller, 2004). Concern rose about the replacement or displacement of traditional permanent population, and the potential for second home owners to seasonally or sporadically fill the gaps caused by rural out-migrants (Muller, 1999, 2001 cited in Hall and Muller, 2004). As such, a causal connection is often made between an increase in second homes and a 'thinning out' of permanent residents, but these properties also offer opportunity for permanent inward migration (Gallent et al, 2003). The potential 'loss of community' should not be confused with broader social change (Cloke and Milbourne, 1992; Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones, 2001.Section 2.5.1). A change in the literature occurred with Gallent et al's (2003) paper ‘Dispelling a myth?’ presenting

\(^5\) Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills who inspect and regulate services which care for children young people and those providing education and skills for learners of all ages (Ofsted, 2013)
second homes as a localised issue, where negative impacts can be experienced but not as a generic negative phenomenon. Similarly, Oxley et al (2008) demonstrate that negative social impacts have been based upon an assumption of a homogenous rural community.

The integration of second home owners within localities has been reported to generate friction in some localities, as incomers and established residents may have different social and economic backgrounds leading to a potential detrimental impact on community (Buller and Hoggart, 1994 in Hall and Muller, 2004; Gallent et al, 2004). This may be somewhat of a myth as conflicts will vary between communities, and relate to the personalities and socio-demographic profile of each settlement:

“social and cultural tensions [will] arise from the different visions and expectations people have about the same place, reflecting their separate life styles and livelihoods” (Marsden et al, 1993 in Rye, 2011).

Consequently second home owners cannot be assumed to generate community conflict.

A key participation issue for second home owners is that while tax is paid within the host area they lack any democratic means to influence local decisions and governance (Hall and Muller, 2004). New Zealand second home residents were provided the opportunity to vote in any district in which they paid rates but uptake was low and it was expensive to administer, which led to its withdrawal (Keen and Hall in Hall and Muller, 2004:184). The extent to which an individual can and does participate in the second home community may impact the responsibility felt towards the neighbourhood and the integration attempted and achieved.

Second home ownership can be understood to enhance a community through providing access to wider social networks; presented by Putnam et al (1993) not as a loss, but a ‘bridging’ of social capital to enhance community viability and resilience (Oxley et al, 2008; Rye, 2011). Hall and Muller’s (2004) extensive research also detailed potential positive enhancements to community through input of new ideas and knowledge. However, second homes were also found to provide stimulus for local antagonism in some instances, including a loss of cultural identity and seasonal influx causing overcrowding at peak times with
‘ghost towns’ out of season (ibid). This reinforces the need to review second homes within the local situation, as this strongly guides the perceived and actual impacts experienced.

3.5.5 Environmental Impacts Of Second Homes
Wallace et al’s (2005) review of literature found no studies addressing the broader environmental concerns of, for example, traffic, sewage or waste beyond stating that they were likely to be seasonally under additional pressure. Other sources suggest the most prominent environmental impact is likely to be travel between primary and secondary properties (Rye, 2011; Hall and Muller, 2004). An indirect impact suggested by Oxley et al (2008) is that a loss of housing stock may place demand for future housing, although this demand may be in place regardless of second home purchase. Research conducted into the opinions of second home owners discovered that second home owners are usually more conservative, and preservative being less positive towards change and development within the second home settlement (Hall and Muller, 2004). The ownership of two or more properties does raise broader concerns, including wider environmental effects, about the level of consumption in western societies (Rye, 2011) however, overall the literature regarding environmental impacts of second homes was limited.

3.5.6 Second Homes Governance And Policy
The UK governance structure places the responsibility of second homes within the realm of local government. This reflects a long-standing perception that second homes are best managed locally, due to the uniqueness of second homes within each location (Hall and Muller, 2004). However there is little guidance or second home policy even in those areas with high concentrations. The policy instruments and statements that directly reference second homes, as reported by Wallace et al (2005) have tended to centre on mitigation of ‘demand-led pressures’ presented in the following examples and proposals:

- Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority retracted a policy that allowed conversion of barns for holiday home but not for local purchase/use and now the sale of new homes and barns must respond to local need\(^6\).

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\(^6\)Definition of local varies between authorities but is most frequently determined in policy through having lived in the area for a defined period of time, or having
• Gwynedd Council’s Draft Unitary Development Plan included that if a second home acquisition were to increase second home proportions above 10% in a community it would be refused, but this was not implemented.

• Dartmoor National Park Authority views the change of use from holiday home to residential as positive.

• Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA) presented a proposal for submission of a ‘change of use’ if owners did not intend to use a property for more than 6 months a year. This was removed during consultation as discussion concluded such a policy would be difficult to monitor and enforce.

More recently the Lake District National Park Authority completed extensive research into second homes within the Park boundaries, with aspiration to locally trial a change of use class order (LDNPA, 2008).

ENPA’s example demonstrates common concerns as while planning perhaps lends itself to offer a second home solution through intending to balance opportunities and costs (Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones, 2001), it may not be the most appropriate place to situate policy responses. The complex management of second homes is summarised below:

> “the means of addressing second home demand are deeply problematic. Many of the planning tools proposed during the last three decades are likely to magnify housing problems” (Gallent et al, 2003)

This highlighted the potential knock on effects of policy that make potential management approaches deeply problematic. In an attempt to offer a feasible solution Gallent et al (2004:296) presented a planning framework for addressing second homes including the following components:

• Occupancy conditions;

• Increase in sites for affordable housing;

• Reviewing of planning permissions now out of step with current socio-economic conditions and policy objectives;

• Trialling of options such as creating a use class for second homes.

long standing connections to the community council area, or have a functional need to live in the area through work or due to live close to a long term resident in need.
The paper recognised the above measures were subject to various limitations and that planning is only one policy area that could influence second home impacts. It expressed the need for additional taxation and spending tools to be included within their framework for a more effective response programme.

3.6 Chapter Summary
This chapter has presented the housing context for the empirical understandings and perceptions of second home properties within host communities. It has also outlined existing research regarding second homes highlighting the gaps in research and presents the foundations of the empirical research.

Outlining the perceived housing shortage in the UK, partially as a result from the private purchase of social housing and dominance of owner-occupier tenancies, sets the scene for exploration of the presence of second homes within local housing markets. Rapid increases in house prices have not been accompanied by equal increases in salary generating an affordability issue in terms of both property purchase and rental. The housing shortage is not suggested to have been overcome by UK housing strategies, including the latest Coalition housing strategy which has been accused of lacking firm direction (Perry, 2012). This sets the foundations for exploring the perceptions of second home properties within host communities, and as an additional housing demand. The existing literature suggests there is a perceived relationship between second homes and inflated house prices, although it is acknowledged that there are many influences on the housing market.

Definitions of second homes in the literature suggest such properties are not purpose built holiday accommodation, or permanent residences, but are predominantly used for recreational purposes by the owner’s household. This research seeks to expand understandings of the nuanced uses of second homes. The existing second homes literature does not regard these properties as inherently bad, but rather to have potential to create problematic issues at the local scale (Gallent et al, 2003). The debate regarding the impacts second homes have within host communities is presented within the suggestion that communities are constantly evolving and responding to many pressures. While second homes can bring access to wider social networks, they can be
understood to cause conflict, although this can arise due to personalities rather
than second homes per se. The most frequently cited benefits of second homes
are economic, although there is debate as to whether second homes contribute
to or reduce seasonality. There are limited policy responses to second homes in
the UK due to the complexity of the issue. Planning offers one potential
management approach through its role of reconciling competing land uses
(Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones, 2001), but, in order to be most effective, would
need to be used in conjunction with other measures.

In New Zealand Keen and Hall's research suggests local governments view
second homes as ‘a curse and a blessing’, with a belief that planning should
deal with the negative implications and be used to “effectively gain the most
benefit now and in the future” (in Hall and Muller, 2004:194). Oxley et al’s
(2008) review recommended further research to be conducted into the positive
impacts of second homes. This chapter also highlighted another substantive
gap in second home research regarding the sustainability impact of second
homes on host communities in a more recent socio-economic landscape
(Wallace et al, 2005). This research in North Devon is situated to further
understanding of the current socio-economic influences as well as positive
contributions of second homes to host communities in a contemporary setting.
The next chapter outlines the methodological approach used to undertake this
research.
Chapter 4: Methodologies

4.1 Introduction To Chapter

Having used the existing literature to outline the concepts and framework for this research in the previous two chapters this chapter will outline the methods used to respond to the research aim, objectives and research questions (Chapter One). This chapter is split into two, firstly examining the influence of collaboration and partnership on the research process, forming a part of the methodology itself. Secondly, this chapter presents the methodological process through detailing the location of and approach to empirical data collection. It will consider approaches used in previous research in justifying the approach used in this research.

As a CASE studentship, this research was subject to some significant influence through partnership with the planning department at NDC. Examination of collaborative research will be presented before exploring both the benefits and limitations that the partnership brought to this research. Ultimately, working in collaboration framed the research through situating it firmly within statutory UK planning agendas. This provided the framework for focus on sustainability, participation and place-based communities and neighbourhood. The partnership required degrees of negotiation to ensure the research outputs met the requests of NDC, which was largely for data that could contribute to their evidence base.

The research seeks to meet the aim of the research through taking a mixed methods approach. The three main approaches used include, firstly, an examination of secondary data, predominantly provided by NDC in the form of council tax data and policy documents; used to establish the context for the research. Secondly, a large-scale quantitative survey collects data, from both permanent and second home residents, to enable the profiling of second home properties, and broad opinions of the contributions second homes make to the parish community. Thirdly, in-depth interviews examine the nuances present within the research concepts exploring both policy maker and resident opinions regarding communities, participation and second home ownership. The secondary data also includes the Egan Wheel, presented in ‘The Egan Review: Skills for Sustainable Communities’ (Egan, 2004). This is a tool for assessing the sustainability of communities, expressed to be used by NDC, and is critically
applied to this research as an analysis framework for examining how second homes both compromise and contribute to the attainment of sustainable communities. The chapter will conclude by detailing the data analysis framework and a brief evaluation of the methodological approach used, based upon the data collected and research response.

4.2 Collaborative Research In Practice

This is a collaborative piece of research generated within the ESRC CASE studentship programme. The growth of collaborative research is partly due to the wide reach that the term ‘collaboration’ encompasses. Katz and Martin (1997) outline that collaboration extends from providing any input into a piece of research to including only those who contribute directly to all the main research tasks. While still committed to collaborative research, this form of ESRC CASE Studentship competition has been discontinued. Its purpose was to “encourage greater interaction between organisations and academic research by providing opportunities...to carry out research in conjunction with private, public or third/voluntary sector organisations” (ESRC, 2011:online). Collaboration may generate initially over an informal conversation (Edge, 1979; Hastrom, 1965 in Smith 2001), however collaborative research is not necessarily such an organic process as it is often actively sought out and encouraged. This research proposal was generated through an existing research connection between the UoE and NDC, combined with the opportunity for this topic to be explored within the ESRC programme.

Economic and political drivers reshaping the landscape of research dominate the justifications for this approach. Collaborative research can open avenues for alternative sources of funding for research as both the economic downturn and the reduction of public spending in higher education place restrictions on available funding. Greater public scrutiny of public spending on research needs to be justified “in terms of its immediate relevance” (Demeritt and Lees, 2005:127) which can also be regarded as an influence. Direct connections to and partnerships with external bodies, especially governmental bodies, offer an explicit connection through which research outputs can be measured against policy objectives, and produce outcomes which demonstrate research relevance and purpose. Changing political and economic rationales of the
justification and location of research, whereby location is considered as its place within and between academic and other institutions, is what Ziman (2000 in Smith, 2001:136) distinguishes as ‘post-academic science’. Policy or applied research can be positioned as a dichotomy to ‘academic’, ‘scholarly’ or ‘pure’ research, with the former sometimes regarded as ‘second-rate research’ (Peck, 1999; Pollard et al, 2000). While this will not be fully explored here, Peck’s ‘grey geography’ (1999) reviews the relationship between geographical research and the policy process. It demonstrates the contrast between opinions that academic research is inaccessible to most, whereas the ‘deep’ policy crowd feel applied research offers an applicable sophisticated analysis. The ESRC CASE programme responded to the increased costs resulting from the complexity of ‘academic science’ research where the goal is to create new knowledge (Ziman, 2000 in Smith, 2001:136). The location of research is therefore spreading to institutions beyond the academic, as is done through CASE studentships, and Lees argues that geographers must “expand into public spaces – spaces where public discourse and social action can occur...to counter the vulnerability of our discipline” (1999:382). Lees (ibid) goes on to highlight the importance of communicating with the non-academic world more effectively without losing sight of the expertise and experience geographers provide. Collaborative research such as that conducted through the CASE programme can be argued to facilitate this approach.

Accompanying attempts to refine and define collaboration and establish the drivers of such research is the overriding acceptance of the belief “that collaboration in research is ‘a good thing’ and that it should be encouraged” (Katz and Martin, 1997:1). Their argument questions this belief through presenting that collaboration is assumed to be understood, a uniform phenomenon, can be measured and benchmarked, and delivers more effective research. Their paper highlights that collaboration cannot be generalised in such terms and the costs and benefits require assessment on a case-by-case basis rather than blindly sought after as a ‘good’ research practice. As such it is important to review both the positive influences and drawbacks working in collaboration with NDC brought to this research and the influence the partnership had on the methodological processes.
4.3 The Methodology Of Partnership With North Devon Council

The establishment of an ESRC Research Cluster (CSLTR) at UoE led to the availability of a series of CASE PhD research positions. Discussions between the UoE and NDC unearthed research interests that met the aims of the CSLTR and thus the collaborative nature of this research facilitated the proposal, application and funding. Discussion of the practicalities of CASE research has been considered by Macmillan and Scott (2003) and guided the five significant collaborative research issues understood to influence this research: gatekeepers, ownership, positionality and identity, negotiation and anonymity. Each will now be reviewed in terms of their specific relevance to collaborative research with reflections from this research process.

4.3.1 Gatekeepers

One significant benefit CASE projects bring, which was experienced during this project, is the key role of the partner as a gatekeeper of information and of further gatekeepers in order to conduct research with relevant people. The reliance of gatekeepers for information can bring negative effects such as the potential of bias through selection of information and participants, or reluctance of individuals to participate or provide information despite the organisation agreeing access. Finally, gatekeepers may not necessarily be a part of research team for the entire project (Mackelworth and Caric, 2010). While initial participants were selected and suggested by the NDC, this was not the sole method for recruiting in an attempt to overcome bias. In this research process a key gatekeeper was absent from the team when advice on research protocol was necessary; in comparison, access to the academic institution’s research protocol was readily available to the student. The partner’s gatekeeper role generally worked well with substantial relevant information provided to inform research at the project outset. Without the official partnership it is likely obtaining this information would have been more problematic. In working in partnership with NDC it was important to understand NDC’s role and to be aware of the kind information held that was necessary, useful and accessible.

In addition to the potential loss of gatekeepers, other problems may arise when guidance or assistance is required but partners have other priorities, as the project is not a priority in the context of their work. Macmillan and Scott (2003)
touched this on, however, it was found to be a significant issue during this research especially when working towards deadlines. It is important to be aware that the two different organisations may work under completely different annual timetables and to and account for deadlines and periods when the partner may be unable to efficiently communicate with the PhD student or facilitate work. This research experienced untimely communication of an embargo of postal communication with North Devon residents during the 2011 National Census, which caused the postal survey element of the research to be delayed. Had this been made known during earlier stages of the research the methodology timetable could have accounted for this. Therefore reliance on gatekeepers was experienced to bring both benefit and hinderance to the research.

4.3.2 Ownership
Ongoing discussions about the location and method of conducting research added to the holistic development of the research project but can create a hazy situation of ownership not experienced in non-collaborative work. Macmillan and Scott (2003) raised the issue of changing ownership as the student becomes the ‘expert’ in the subject having joined as the newest member of the team. NDC were included from the early stages of research development in a mutually beneficial relationship as readily available local knowledge provided by the partners highlighted information already in existence driving discussion about the research approach. While this research process has always involved a sense of participation and inclusion, decisions were not made independently but were ultimately left to the researcher’s lead. At one stage the UoE questioned whether the research was being steered too heavily by the partners, however those within the immediate research team felt that the project simply demonstrated the structure and process of a collaborative studentship. The flexibility of the CASE student will be limited to some extent due to the expectations of the partner although this will vary between studentships and partners. In this instance the project parameters were heavily guided by the location and ownership of the project within the planning department at the partner institution. Officers from other NDC departments questioned the focus of the project as they reviewed the topic from different perspectives. One summed up this situation during interview saying:
“I know you have been given specific objectives but for me I could have given you one or two rural parishes that would have given you different connotations in terms of your research” (PM5, 2011).7

The planning department’s ownership of the research therefore dictated the research to some extent but inclusion of other departments in the research process details how the council departments endeavour to work together. It also show that this research will extend beyond the planning department despite being framed around planning objectives. Collaborative research often involves negotiation and compromise as partner expectations are likely to infringe the research process resulting from multiple owners of the research.

Issues of ownership also crept into the practicalities of administering the research as NDC affiliation brought certain protocol to be observed. Early questionnaire discussion stages depicted specific approaches towards questions and sample size but then individuals were not forthcoming in providing detail of the specifics. Here ownership was claimed by NDC but information input was not at the same level leaving a difficult situation for the researcher. This is connected to the absence of a gatekeeper as mentioned in the previous section, but raises the lack of autonomy a collaborative researcher has to undertake the work.

4.3.3 Positionality And Identity

Positionality is an important element of all research, reviewing what researchers and participants as individuals bring to the research process and the values these consequently introduce (Rose, 1997). In collaborative research it is also necessary to consider the impact of the partnership on the researcher and research positionality, as the researcher works across at least two institutions with their own values, objectives and processes. The collaborative researcher is more likely to have a fluid positionality that varies between the institutions, based on the researcher’s position in each and how the institution and people within the organisations position the researcher. On the one hand a PhD student may be considered a prestigious asset whereas others may view the student as an outsider from the institution and their ‘real world’. In this example

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7Interview codes CM details ‘Community Member’; PM details ‘Policy Maker’ and number details the code assigned to each individual interviewee.
the researcher experienced both attitudes which were found to impact the research as it can affect opinions towards the status and purpose of the research. The researcher, in any research situation, collaborative or not, will always bring personal values to the research based on age, gender and in this case, birthplace came to be an influence as participants wished to know whether I was ‘local’. In this situation the researcher must remain as impartial and objective as possible, providing information where relevant and when asked while not suggesting that such queries or information should be considered as influential on the research process.

Assumptions can be made about research leading to the research to be positioned based on the involvement of the partner institutions the aim as a researcher is to remain objective within this partnership and for this to be relayed to participants. Knowledge of the partner institution can be of benefit to understanding and expressing the research partnership dynamics. Working with a local authority made use of my own experience of working in that structure, complemented by the project’s external supervisor at NDC having experience of working within the academic institution. Affiliation to partners may impact how research is facilitated (Macmillan and Scott, 2003) as it can either be ‘used’ or downplayed at specific times in order to assist the research process where connections can results in various implications. Community research participants were usually keen to understand who the research is being conducted for and why. One survey response was annotated with the response:

“It's cheeky to make this "official" looking when it is probably helping the student to attain a degree” (5/174)

This represents confusion over the source and location of the research, which had been explained in the questionnaire notes. Association with partners and the relevance of the partnership is an additional research identity and positionality factor to be considered that is not experienced when conducting more independent research.

4.3.4 Negotiation

Working in partnership is likely to require greater levels of negotiation than non-collaborative research. The partner institution has invested in the research so is

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8Coding for questionnaire comments: Parish number/survey number assigned individually in order of SPSS input.
likely to desire to be involved and may introduce certain stipulations or protocol to the project. The research was heavily shaped by this process of negotiation between the two institutions and also between key players involved in the process. Partnership and negotiation directed the location and size of the sample sites, the types of questions asked, the formatting of the questionnaire and therefore generated a complex and drawn out process. The nature and size of the partner institution meant that other departments had to be involved in the generation of methodology but were, at times, found to lack understanding of the position and purpose of social science research. The inclusion of many individuals can create a more holistic process and well considered outcomes but can also create a difficult situation of compromise between diverse viewpoints. Individuals from NDC challenged whether qualitative research and subjective concepts, which are of course central to social science research, should be pursued as they weren’t going to provide ‘hard facts’. On the other side, individuals from the UoE felt there was less benefit of collating a large quantitative dataset suggesting the concept should focus on exploring through qualitative means. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed as the best research approach. This approach provided broad understandings and quantitative data to contribute to NDC’s evidence base as well as foundations for exploring the more nuanced perceptions and experiences found at the individual scale through qualitative research. Furthermore, this mixed methods approach was a result of negotiation between partner institutions and fulfilling both research desires.

4.3.5 Anonymity
Anonymity of the participant is of course crucial to the ethics of conducting research. Presented by Macmillian and Scott (2003) as ‘Confidentiality in a small world’, they suggest the capacity to conceal specific identities has more scope in an academic setting. This was experienced as in contrast, discussions and presentations of research within in the partner organisation occasionally raised questions of “Who said that?” and similar second-guessing of the opinions of colleagues. This could occur in any research scenario, as similar comments were experienced when undertaking research within the parishes. This issue can be understood to have greater resonance in collaborative research when the partner introduces a ‘small world’ environment to the
research process, with which the researcher works closely over a relatively long period of time. Therefore anonymity within both the partner institutions is perhaps less easy to implement but this can be equally problematic within research and is therefore not synonymous with collaborative research.

This section has sought to provide the situational context for this research and the specific influence brought by the collaborative nature of this research. This has impacted the methodological approach used to undertake the research which will be explored in the next section following a recap of the research aim.

4.4 Research Aim, Objectives And Questions

Working in partnership with the planning department at NDC, who have the legal remit of implementing and delivering statutory planning functions within their local area, significantly directed this research. The overall research aim is to assess UK local planning authority delivery of statutory sustainability and participatory agendas through examining the contributions and apparent conflict that high concentrations of second homes in selected North Devon parishes pose. This will be explored through the following three key research objectives:

1. To explore popular understandings of second homes, and socio-economic impacts of second homes to host communities from North Devon resident and policy maker perspectives.

2. To further understandings of notions of community from policy maker and resident perceptions and review the role second homes and their occupants are perceived to have within host communities.

3. To explore citizen participation within communities and in a planning context, reviewing policy attempts to increase participation, personal motivations and the contributions of second home occupants through their semi-permanent presence within host communities.

These objectives will be used to guide the research, provide the framework for presenting the empirical analysis and will contribute to NDC’s policy evidence base. The research objectives will be achieved through answering the following research questions:
1. How are second homes conceptualised and to what extent do these properties and their occupants fit or conflict with planning’s sustainability agenda?

2. To what extent is place integral to understanding community? How is community understood and experienced by residents and how does semi-permanent presence brought about by second homes contribute and undermine community?

3. How do on-going processes of democratic renewal in planning seek to create increase citizen and community participation? How are these realised by practitioners and communities, and challenged by the presence of semi-permanent residents?

The research questions will be answered and research objectives fulfilled through the review of existing literature and secondary data alongside primary data collection. This will be attained through the methodological process and techniques outlined in the next section.

4.5 Methodological Process

This section details the triangulated methodological approach used to fulfil the research aim, drawing on quantitative and qualitative perspectives. This enabled two substantive pieces of data to be produced, however triangulation does not guarantee rigorous results (Baxter and Eyles, 1997). The mixed techniques were selected as they brought distinct approaches to data collection providing variant forms of data for analysis in order to “maximise understanding of a research question” (Clifford and Valentine, 2003:120). Triangulation in this instance facilitates both the verification and questioning of quantitative findings through further in-depth research, while also producing standardised data to present the broad context of the extent of the opinions and attitudes presented in qualitative data collection (Silverman, 2004). Furthermore, this approach satisfied both institutions approaches to researching this topic (Section 4.2.4) whereby the quantitative questionnaire provided numerical descriptions, and in-depth semi-structured interviews explored the more nuanced opinions that are inherent with emotive issues and concepts such as second homes and sustainable communities. The use of standardised data helps to ensure that the
policy maker is provided with data suitable for use within their evidence base for use in policy.

Broadly, the three key research methods are analysis of secondary data, a large scale quantitative survey and a series of qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviews. The primary data collection process is presented in figure 4.1 demonstrating that the quantitative questionnaire was distributed to all five case studies, with subsequent interviews in the three parishes with high proportions of second homes and policy maker interviews on-going throughout the empirical data collection period.

![Figure 4.1: Primary Data Methodological Process](image)

4.6 Research Location And Case Study Parishes
The District of North Devon is a predominantly rural district in the South West of England (Map 4.1) offering stunning natural assets but hounded by a lack of employment diversity and is generally a low wage area. This is largely owed to its relative isolation due to weak transport connections with other major centres and key national transport connections. The natural environment is understood
to be the key economic driver generating £417 million in 2007 and 11,764 related jobs in the Northern Devon economy (NDC and TDC, 2010:60) thus demonstrating the importance of this key sector. The North Devon and Torridge Joint Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) recognises its ‘World Class Environment’:

“The environment of North Devon and Torridge is one of the most unspoilt and tranquil in the UK. There are extensive Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coast, and a world-class UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, sections of National Park, and many impressive geological and wildlife sites... These are the primary assets that drive the economy and tourism, and that sustain traditional rural industries and communities.” (NDC and TDC, 2009:7-10)
This document goes on to recognise the importance and strength of the sense of ‘community’ within the region particularly within rural parishes. The area’s thriving opportunities and base for progression are understood to have their foundations in “strong communities, strong partnerships, low crime, a world class environment [and] increasing numbers of people accessing higher education in Barnstaple” (NDC, 2009:3).

The housing market in North Devon is intrinsically linked to the qualities outlined above. The North Devon and North Cornwall sub-regional housing market area is recognised as:

“rural in character with a settlement pattern based on villages and market towns, which vary in size and function. With no major centres of employment, the area is better described as comprising a series of local markets, all of which are subject to significant influence of in migration and second home purchase”. (Housing Vision Consultancy, 2008:1)

This recognises the presence of second homes in the housing market as well as the distinctive rural character and series of local markets and settlements which are of significance in developing understanding of the research area.

The severe shortage of affordable housing is raised in key policy documents including the Core Strategy, SCS and Affordable Housing Code of Practice. This is emphasised by the increasing polarisation of high and low wage households. North Devon has the second lowest median average household wage (£24,970) in Devon, 5% to 7% lower than the county average (NDC and Torridge, 2010:13). Mortgages are generally available on three to four times salary, equating to £75,000 to £100,000 whereas the average house price in North Devon was £217,974 (National Housing Federation, 2011) demonstrating the difficulties residents have in affording property. Halifax (2010) calculated that, the national average house price was 4.75 times the average buyers’ earnings. The figures about suggest North Devon housing is on average 8.7 times the average salary but other reports claim it to be up to 14.8 times (National Housing Federation, 2011).North Devon is ranked second (after South Hams) in the ratio of house price to earnings (National Housing Federation, 2011). At the parish level this is understood to rise and is explored within the research. North Devon was also second in the percentage of second homes,
behind South Hams, and was above Devon’s average of 3.32%. Both the National Housing Federation (2011) and data from NDC suggest second homes in North Devon to equate to 3.7% of housing stock in 2012, above the national average of 1.1% (Oxley et al, 2008) and as previously stated it is the tendency for second homes to concentrate in certain areas that justifies the significance and desire for this research to be undertaken.

The number of second home properties registered in council tax data has fluctuated during the period 2005-2012 (Graph 4.2). Within the 5 research parishes there was slight dip in the number of registered second homes in Brendon/Countisbury and Instow in 2012 whereas Georgeham has seen a gradual and continual rise in the percentage over the same period. These three locations have second home proportions far exceeding North Devon District’s average and during this timeframe there has been an overall increase of 187 properties registered as second homes, equating to 8.5% of all additional properties on the council tax register over the same period.

Graph 4.2: Comparison of percentage of second homes between locations over from 2005-to 2012.
The parish was selected to locate the research for two reasons; firstly because local authorities collect data at the parish level therefore in discussing data on the volume and proportions of second homes with NDC, the parish naturally presented itself as the most appropriate frame. Secondly, the ‘parish’ is the Coalition definition of rural neighbourhoods expected to undertake new neighbourhood planning functions. Three parishes were originally selected to provide the focus for study due to their proportionally high concentration of second homes. The specifics of these three parishes are detailed below:

**Brendon and Countisbury** – two adjacent parishes within Exmoor National Park, often reviewed together by NDC due to their small size with a joint population of 220 (population estimated from Devon County Council, 2011). NDC 2011/12 data detailed that these parishes contained 22 second home properties equating to 17.9% of parish housing stock.

**Georgeham** – this parish includes the coastal resort of Croyde and lies within the North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Georgeham parish contained 1,516 residents with 201 second homes in 2011/12 – 23.3% of the parish’s housing stock.

**Instow** – found on the Taw and Torridge Estuary, 6 miles from the major North Devon centre of Barnstaple. Instow contained 66 second home properties or 14.5% in 2011/12 and had a population of 748.

These sites were selected to provide three contrasting cases studies: a National Park, a coastal location and one within reasonable proximity to Barnstaple. As the methodology process evolved, the sample size increased to include two further parishes in the quantitative study although the focus of the qualitative research remained in the original three parishes. The inclusion of two additional parishes intended to increase representativeness of the questionnaire sample population. It also aided the capacity for comparison through sampling individuals from parishes with lower proportions of second homes that neighboured those with high proportions. In the partnership discussions outlined in the first section of this chapter an NDC officer proposed that capturing this information would require a district wide study, however the volume of such a
survey was beyond the scope of this PhD. The two parishes added are detailed below:

*Braunton* – neighbouring parish to Georgeham with 8,360 residents and 134 or 3.5% second homes, in line with the district average.

*Fremington* – adjacent to Instow, this parish has a very low number of second homes with 22 equating to 0.5% of the parish’s housing stock and a population of 10,766.

Having detailed the location of the research the next section will outline the methodological design and techniques used to collect the data.

### 4.7 Methodological Design

This study has been compiled to meet both academic aims - exploration of concepts of community, sustainability, participation and the role of second homes within this framework from a planning perspective; in addition to fulfilling applied policy aims whereby key data is utilised for policy recommendations and the local authority’s evidence base. As has been stated, in order to fulfil both academic and policy aims a triangulated method design was drawn upon and combined, and these research methods will now be reviewed in turn.

#### 4.7.1 Secondary Data

Secondary data refers to “information that has already been collected for another purpose but is available for others to use” (Clifford and Valentine, 2003:67). Secondary data in this thesis has been used in a contextual way to characterise the research and highlight research gaps as expressed within the literature review. Wallace et al (2005) in their ‘Systematic Literature Review’ of second homes refer to the use of secondary data in certain second homes studies. Partnership with NDC provided direct access to a number of key sources of relevant local secondary data, of advantage to both time and expense of this research (Bryman, 2008). This data was used to provide a profile of the local area and parishes, provide base information for the foundations of the research and as comparison to primary evidence unearthed. Secondary data in the form of policy documents and data sources have been referred to throughout this and the previous chapter.
Secondary data was also used in an analytical way to form a part of the empirical research in order to begin exploration into volumes of second homes and house prices, in considering the socio-economic impacts of second homes. Data on the numbers of second homes by parish within North Devon District was sourced from NDC and this approach to data collection guided this research to focus at the parish level in order to appropriately expand and enhance existing data. NDC’s figures on second homes represented properties registered as second homes; this was presented in a spreadsheet with the number of registered permanent dwelling properties within each parish. Council Tax data is regarded as the most reliable and comprehensive data source on second homes (LDNPA, 2010; Wallace et al, 2005). The timing of this research meant that the 2001 Census data was likely to be an underestimate being nearly ten years old and the 2011 Census data would not be available in time. Moreover Census data no longer distinguishes between ‘second’ and ‘holiday’ homes emphasising the relevance of council tax data.

In term of house prices guidance from NDC suggested the most reliable and up to date source of house sale prices should be taken from another secondary data source: www.nethouseprices.com using the postcode search facility. These sources of data facilitated a review of house prices and volumes of second homes across North Devon District by parish.

4.7.1.i Secondary Data Limitations
The limitations of secondary data, as raised by Clifford and Valentine (2003), include that someone else has collected the data for another purpose, therefore may not fit the optimum approach the researcher may have used if it had been collected as primary data. Further limitations relate explicitly to the nature of the data; due to difficulty divorcing the influence of second home factors from other housing market influences such studies can only go some of the way to assess house price impact (Wallace et al, 2005). Oxley et al (2008) suggest that to really understand this specific issue an extensive econometric study that can view second homes in isolation from other impacts would be required, and this is out of the scope of this project. Secondary data has provided extensive information to infer and characterise various aspects of this research and is presented alongside primary empirical data collected through the following methodological approaches.
4.7.2 Self Completion Questionnaire

The initial stage of primary data collection within the community involved a large-scale quantitative questionnaire. The purpose of this was to produce a substantive dataset to broadly outline opinions about second homes within the case study parishes and to profile households, second home households in particular and enable comparative studies to occur. The questionnaire consisted of a series of closed questions and two open questions to allow for elaboration in individual’s descriptions and understanding of the contribution of second homes to their parish and further comment.

Questionnaires have been extensively used in previous second home research and with the type of data to be collected for academic and applied purposes, the questionnaire method was pursued. Wallace et al (2005:30) refer to a number of second home studies from the 1970s that employed large-scale postal surveys of second home owners. These explored similar key themes to those featured in the survey for including use of property – frequency and length, expenditure and socio-economic status. Other studies such as Mottiar’s (2006) exploration into holiday homes as a sustainable form of tourism also completed face-to-face surveys on the street with both residents and holiday home owners collecting data on local expenditure. Second home owners have been surveyed through a postal questionnaire to investigate their perceptions about facilities and services in a community (Girard and Gartner, 1993). The examples referred to here, excluding Mottiar, focussed research on the second home owners themselves, rather than those permanently residing in the communities. In conducting this research the attitudes and opinions of the host community was of crucial importance and sought to complement and build upon these previous studies.

Initially two questionnaires were generated, reflective of Mottiar’s approach, one aimed at second home owners and one at permanent residences. As methodological discussions progressed this approach was decided to be difficult to administer as details of which properties were second homes were not available. To send both questionnaires to every household was considered both costly and confusing for the respondent, consequently one survey was developed for both participants to complete.
4.7.2.i Sample

The research was unable to sample North Devon District in its entirety therefore parish level case studies were utilised to target research in specific areas. Many previous studies investigated second homes through different case study areas such as nations, counties or National Parks; only one examined on a UK wide scale (Wallace et al, 2005). Multi area case studies have previously been employed to examine diversity in experience of second homes, as this research was designed to do.

The original three case study parishes formed a sample size of 1751 properties. Referring to information provided by NDC on average response rates to surveys this was raised to 2749, through the inclusion of a proportional sample of properties from the two additional parishes. A typical response rate for postal surveys is 20% to 30% (Kent, 2001; Clifford and Valentine, 2003). With the commitment to utilise a reminder letter agreed, the 2749 mail out was approved by NDC as appropriate as this process was predicted to generate a 20-25% minimum response rate and therefore yield a rigorous volume of responses for analysis. The properties were selected from the address gazetteer supplied by NDC and included all registered dwelling properties within the three original parishes and every 5th household on Fremington's and Braunton's address gazetteer lists. The latter supplied a random sample from the selected neighbouring parishes bringing an additional 1000 properties into the sample. Some commercial properties were included to ensure Business Tax rated holiday homes were included in the sample, other forms of business were avoided as the survey was not relevant for such properties.

4.7.2.ii Survey Strategy

There are a number of different techniques through which a self-completion large scale questionnaire can be administered, and the advantages and drawbacks of different approaches are reviewed by Clifford and Valentine (2003). This research required a method that would not be overly time consuming, as it was not the sole research method, but would enable a representative sample for analysis. A number of questionnaire approaches will now be considered in terms of their aptness for this research:
Face-to-face interviews would allow for more complex questions to be asked with the presence of the researcher ensuring clarification of the questions and exploration of responses. This approach is understood to deliver a high response rate but is resource intensive, as Bryman (2008) highlights, even with a team of interviewers it is possible to administer 1000 surveys by post in far less time than performing 1000 structured interviews. Another potential issue with this technique is interviewer bias or lack of consistency in the way the question is asked. The time required to use this method deemed it inappropriate, in addition to the next stage of research consisting of interviews designed to explore the depth of the complex research issues.

Telephone surveys include a number of the benefits expressed in the previous example and are less resource intensive through reducing the need to travel but are again subject to potential interviewer bias although this can be reduced through the distance the telephone brings. This approach also has a number of drawbacks as Bryman (2008) suggests response rates are slightly lower for this method, plus the ease of call rejection poses potential problems. Furthermore, issues are likely to arise in obtaining correct telephone numbers and names, and availability of the appropriate participant. Lack of participant access to telephones and researcher access to telephone numbers in order to contact people and difficulty with the logistics of this method ruled out its application in this instance.

Drop and collect surveys whereby the questionnaire is delivered in person and arranged to be collected at another time. This approach means the participant has personal contact with the researcher who can provide an introduction, simple instructions and clarify any initial questions. Response rates tend to be high for this method and it is less resource intensive than face-to-face interviews and allows the participant to complete the questionnaire at their convenience. This approach was still too resource demanding for the scale of the research being conducted so while this approach was considered initially, it was ruled inappropriate.

Email surveys are where the questionnaire is emailed to participants either as an attachment or embedded into the email. This is becoming an increasingly popular method, however technological limitations and lack of access to email
addresses ruled out this option. This technique would also exclude those without email addresses. However, it would reach second home owners more efficiently than establishing contact through their second home property.

*Online survey* is another increasingly popular method. Careful design can guide the participant through the process and can reduce missing answers by not allowing progression without answering. The data can be downloaded into an analysis programme reducing the amount of time required to code and input results. This approach was going to be used as an option in addition to the paper format through following a web link and using a code to access the survey. This would have reduced the cost of return postage and may have encouraged further responses by providing an additional response option. Online surveys are only suitable for those with access to the Internet and NDC is aware that many people in their district either don't have access to the Internet or it is a poor connection, the dual response option would have overcome this issue. This option was not used as NDC could not endorse use of programmes such as ‘Survey Monkey’ as data protection could not be guaranteed. NDC have their own system to administer online surveys, however resources were not available to facilitate use of the online survey programme nor did NDC have the capacity to generate the survey. Furthermore, the programme NDC use was not entirely compatible with SPSS, the preferred analysis method. While this was a very desirable and appropriate option, it was not used for this research.

*Postal surveys* were the chosen method for this research and commonly used to conduct this form of research in the existing literature. It is a method that enables the questionnaire to be sent to large number of people and can be completed at the respondent's convenience. The main expenses include envelope stuffing (and opening), printing, postage and reminder letters. The core weakness of postal surveys is a likely low response rate in comparison to other approaches and those who respond may not be representative of the sample population with responses less likely from those with lower levels of education or busy lives (Clifford and Valentine, 2003). Other issues include a lack of researcher presence to provide clarification or probe answers, increasing the likelihood of missing answers or partial answers in addition to potentially
being an inappropriate format for those with a language barrier or visual impairment, for example⁹. Nevertheless, indirect access to addresses within the parishes and the desire to survey a large number in an efficient method deemed this technique as the most appropriate. Contact details were provided so that clarification could be sought if necessary, and a reminder letter was to be sent to raise response levels in an attempt to address the main limitations.

4.6.2.iii The Envelope
The envelope posted to households contained three key items: 1) a cover letter, 2) an incentive to participate in the research and 3) the questionnaire. A cover letter (Appendix 1) was included to introduce the purpose and relevance of the research and explain how to complete the questionnaire. Logos from the UoE, NDC and ESRC were placed on the cover letter as well as the questionnaire pages to legitimise affiliation with these key institutions and highlight the official status of the research. The existence of the research as part of a PhD was not included in the information as it was believed to not be relevant and likely to disengage people, an example of downplaying elements of the research partnerships and research positionality. There were two key incentives, firstly supplying a freepost return envelope was hoped to ease the process of participating and secondly there was the option to enter into a prize draw by completing the survey. A further incentive was offered to encourage volunteering for interview participation for further research. These approaches are recognised by Bryman (2008) as a means of improving response rates to postal questionnaires.

The questionnaire technique was selected in order to broadly examine variables in line with the research aim: to assess UK local planning authority delivery of statutory sustainability and participatory agendas through examining the contributions and apparent conflict that high concentrations of second homes in selected North Devon parishes pose. The survey intended to predominantly provide data for the first research objective to develop understanding of the socio-economic impacts of second homes from community perspectives. To a lesser extent it also contributed to the second and third objectives through

⁹ NDC could provide a service for translation or large print on request.
providing data on community and participation that could be used as comparison between property types and location.

A copy of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix 2. In constructing the questionnaire, a number of studies that also used questionnaires (Section 4.6.2) were referred to, in addition to the Egan Wheel of Sustainability (figure 2.2) although it was not possible to cover all segments of the Egan Wheel in considering how second homes fit with planning’s sustainability agenda. The main intentions of the questionnaire were to profile households and property types, and collect broad opinions towards second homes, the parish community and to provide comparative data. Each parish had its own survey, this was to not only aid responses by detailing the response location without having to ask, it also personalised the questionnaire situating questions within parishes. The questionnaire was 5 pages in length, deliberately kept short to encourage completion. The reduced questionnaire length meant that exploration of the experiences of first time buyers and the forms of community and local government participation were removed, which helped to maintain a greater range relevance to those receiving the survey.

Section 1 requested information regarding the property the survey had been sent to, profiling the type of property, previous use of property, length of occupation and ownership and location of other properties. This section comprised entirely of closed questions with space to answer ‘other’ where relevant as it was not possible to supply an exhaustive list of responses for some questions.

Section two was only for properties that were not permanent residences, targeting second and holiday home owners. This section was important as little is known about how second home properties are used. Firstly, this section presented a frequency scale (‘solely’ through to ‘never’) to detail who uses the property, followed by another closed question about average annual occupation. Finally an open question was used to collect information to describe the frequency of property occupation; it was not felt this could be gathered through a closed question due to the likely variety of responses. The intended analysis of this question was to code responses to group answers categorising frequency of use, or demonstrate diversity of use.
Section three explored feelings about the parish community of the parish to which the survey was sent, detailing the pertinence of making the survey parish specific. Initially this section used likert style questions to detail the level of activity or positivity about the parish. The section then requests information about the number of people known and weekly spend within the parish. These enabled a review of the economic value of second home owners to the immediate parish locality in comparison to permanent dwellers and also the social interaction of individuals in different types of property. Finally this section used two closed questions to explore opinions about the contribution and volume of second homes within to the parish, before providing space to expand on answers regarding the contribution of second homes. This was to recognise the difficulty some respondents would have in answering complex questions through a closed response structure, which were seeking to obtain broad scale opinions about perceptions of second homes.

Section four concluded the survey with a series of socio-demographic questions to profile the household, enquiring about household income, number and age of people in the household, occupation type and highest level of qualification. Income, occupation and qualification were felt to be more sensitive questions and included the option of ‘rather not say’. This section was put to the back of the survey as it could be perceived to duplicate aspects of Census data, conducted in the months prior to this survey, and had it been at the front had potential to immediately disengage respondents. The survey ended with space for further comment, the participant was then thanked and offered the opportunity to enter into the prize draw.

4.7.2.iv Timeframe
The questionnaires were posted out on 7th and 8th July 2011 and collected until the end of August 2011. This stage of the research was delayed due to an NDC embargo on posting items to residents to encourage residents to focus on completing the National 2011 Census. This enforced revised date aptly situated the research as the survey timeframe now included the start of the school summer holidays and therefore was more likely to be picked up by second and holiday home owners. Furthermore, the revised survey implementation coincided with a period of heightened media interest and profiling of second
homes in the South West. Cornwall County Council had a series of press releases in June and July 2011 about the potential revenue that could be created through proposed legislation to remove the minimum 10% council tax reduction for second homes, which has now been approved.

The survey requested that responses be returned by August 1st 2011 to encourage a quick turnaround. This date was set with the expectance that a reminder letter would need to be sent and therefore encouraged a quick turnaround during which time this action would be decided. The initial response from a single mailshot yielded enough survey responses, removing the requirement for a reminder letter. The majority of responses were received within July and the low volume of responses that were received after the deadline were still accepted and included in analysis.

4.7.2.5 Questionnaire Limitations

In addition to the limitations of a self-completion questionnaire expressed above, further limitations are also acknowledged in utilising this method. The quantitative questionnaire only allows for a set level of agreement with a given statement based on a provided scale and the respondent’s interpretation of these (May, 1997). Nevertheless, the desire to obtain standardised data required this approach, as such data could not be obtained through open or qualitative approaches. This approach did produce a shallow exploration of complex issues expressed in a relatively simplified manner, as was intended. However, it did inevitably ignore a number of significant nuances. The next section of this chapter will explore the second stage of research seeking to overcome these limitations through employing in-depth semi-structured interviews in the research process.

4.7.3 Interviews

Interviews are a commonly used and effective method in geography for exploring complex issues (Clifford and Valentine, 2003), such as those under review in this research: second homes, communities and participation. Interviews allow greater individual interpretation and vocalisation of the issues than can be offered through the survey. The interviews were semi-structured acting as “verbal interchanges where one person, the interviewer, attempts to
elicit information from another person” (Dunn, 2005 in Clifford et al, 2010:105). Semi-structured interviews are focussed and in this research used a guide of questions based around key topics, this guide was not rigidly stuck to for each interview and questions were adapted to fit each conversation. Likewise the questions were not necessarily asked in order, the conversation was allowed to flow and at times was initiated by the interviewee rather than the researcher presenting a question. The schedule was referred to at the end of each interview to enable the researcher to check all topics had been covered. Schedules for policy makers were distinct from community interviews with some crossover such as their instinctive reaction to second homes, the positives and negatives second homes bring and how these could be managed. Policy makers were asked how second homes are managed by authorities and potential future management; their views about the role of the local authority in meeting local needs; their view on the sustainability of parishes as an outsider or their understanding based on their knowledge of or interaction with those who live there; and finally the importance and difficulties in participation from an implementation viewpoint. Similar questions were asked within the parish but were explored from an opposing viewpoint based on their understanding and experience of the presence of second home properties and owners; local authority and community participation, the extent to which they understand the parish is sustainable; personal experiences of community; and for answers to be exemplified with specific examples.

A researcher should be aware of their positionality (Rose, 1997; Section 4.2.3) and identity in conducting research and the ‘messiness’ (ibid) of research and how this can influence the knowledge created through interview research. In considering this, it is useful to review the approach being taken. Miller and Glassner (2004, in Silverman, 2004) present three key interview or research styles: firstly, ‘positivists’ seek a ‘mirror reflection’ of the reality existing in the social world critiqued in terms of feasibility and desirability and not felt by the researcher to be an appropriate epistemological position; secondly, ‘emotionalists’ unearth ‘authentic accounts’ but it is questioned whether these may simply be repetition of cultural tales; finally, ‘radical social constructionists’ suggest that the interview is solely a moment of interaction between the interviewer and interviewee in which both create narratives of the social world
providing no knowledge about the ‘out there’ social world. Miller and Glassner (2004) propose a viewpoint whereby the knowledge collected through interviews is understood to fall along a continuum and ultimately:

“All we sociologists have are stories. Some come from other people, some come from us, some from our interactions with others. What matters is to understand how and where the stories are produced, which sort of stories they are, and how we can put them to honest and intelligent use in theorizing about social life.”

(Miller and Glassner, 2004 in Silverman, 2004:138)

It is this standpoint that informs my epistemology whereby research is understood to collect ‘stories’ of social worlds and make sense of these. My position as a researcher also has groundings in previous employment within a local government institution which frames my critical ability to look at an issue, constraining issues in realism, especially in terms of the local government’s function and relationship with constituents. I perceive that my role is to generate knowledge based upon unearthing where the stories and narratives collected in data collection come from. In doing so it is important to recognise the many contributions and influences acting upon the data collected. I also acknowledge an element of the radical social constructionists viewpoint in acknowledging that the data represents a moment of interaction which contributes and influences the knowledge and story told. As such the ability to compare and connect personal social narratives to each other and to collective accounts permits the process of using these stories to generate, explain and inform understanding. In this research this approach is reflected through the combination of qualitative, personal accounts, to quantitative, which through data analysis represents collective accounts. The quote above also reflects the basis of conducting interviews within this research. A series of interactions with numerous people are used to understand the processes of communities and the role of second homes within these, from a range of perspectives. Due to the nature of the topics being researched, the interviews will inevitably draw out a multitude of potentially conflicting stories and the research will endeavour to draw out the sources of these stories to explore the research aim. The interviews were also performed and analysed within the context presented in the questionnaire where interviews were used to challenge or confirm survey outputs.
Consideration was made to the argument that “the interview site itself embodies and constitutes multiple scales of spatial relations and meaning, which construct the power and positionality of participants” (Elwood and Martin, 2000:649). Interviews with community members were planned to take place within the case study parishes, in public spaces for researcher safety, in places that were considered neutral ground, that were quiet so as to not disrupt recording and offered somewhere that was reasonably private so participants were not worrying about others listening in. In the initial contact with participants, places were suggested for the interview location but the choice was left with the interviewee as it can help the participant to feel more empowered in the process (Elwood and Martin, 2000) while also ensuring the interviewee is speaking in a location they are personally comfortable within. As such, it was often expressed that the interviewee’s home was the most desirable and accessible location for the interviewee. Interviews with policy makers were conducted at the personal offices or the ‘Councillors Lounge’ within the Civic Centre in Barnstaple.

These interviews focussed largely on the spoken content, but face-to-face interviews offer an opportunity for some participant observation reviewing how they react to comments. Additionally this approach was felt to be more conducive to encouraging a flowing conversation, and those interviews conducted over the phone were often shorter and conversation more frequently stilted. Using a dictaphone to record the interviews allowed greater focus on listening and responding rather than making notes, although it is necessary to ensure the interviewee is comfortable and willing to speak openly, and a recorder can act as a deterrent. Transcription occurred soon after the interview in order for annotations to be added on the tone of the interview and key themes or emphasis the emerged.

4.7.3.i Sample

Interviews have been used in previous second home studies for eliciting local residents views (Wallace et al, 2005). These studies tended to focus on using key informants such as the police, clergy or teachers reviewing such professionals as appropriate and able to talk on behalf of the community. These were the type of gatekeepers often suggested by NDC in this research, however as suggested by Wallace (2005) this sole approach was not deemed
appropriate for this research. Such gatekeepers were not considered to be able to truly represent the voices and opinions of individuals living in the parishes. The questionnaire therefore acted as a recruitment process to increase the representativeness of the interview sample.

A series of verbal interviews with 28 individuals was conducted between 18\textsuperscript{th} March 2011 and 10\textsuperscript{th} November 2011. The sample was broadly split into policy makers and community members selected with a focus around the research topic and the specifics of location – the three original parishes of Brendon/Countisbury, Georgeham and Instow. The policy maker interviews were selected through convenience sampling and use of gatekeepers at NDC through the collaborative research partnership. This approach to sampling enabled the research to explore the views of policy makers connected to policies regarding second homes and planning within NDC willing to participate in the research, again reflecting the collaborative nature of the project and locating the research within North Devon’s policies. The twelve policy maker interviewees were primarily NDC Officers and Councillors. Officers were selected for their connections with planning, housing or community. Councillors had similar affiliations to departments or were Councillors to the case study parishes. Interviews were also conducted with bodies that are connected to and have influence within the North Devon study area including DCC, Exmoor National Park and North Devon Plus (an organisation with focus on regeneration, business and tourism support in North Devon). This sample included:

- Policy and Community Manager, Exmoor National Park
- Planning Policy Officer, NDC
- Planning Lead Member, NDC
- Housing Lead Member, NDC
- Housing Strategy and Public Health Manager, NDC
- Head of Community and Leisure Services, NDC
- Chief Executive, North Devon Plus
- Assistant Director for Strategic Planning and Commissioning, Devon County Council

The dominance of NDC participants is representative of the collaborative nature of the research leading to the policy maker interview focus being situated within
NDC. The gatekeepers provided as ‘policy makers’ by NDC are representative of how NDC views those considered as integral to understanding and offering insight into the research being undertaken. This is another example of the CASE studentship positioning the methodology that was undertaken.

Interviews with individuals from within the parishes had to be conducted after the survey as this acted as a recruitment process through volunteering to participate in further research. The questionnaire page with the volunteers contact details was placed to one side as the questionnaire responses were opened on receipt. This page detailed which parish the respondent was from as the intention was to sample a range spanning the three core research sites of Brendon and Countisbury, Georgeham and Instow. Community interview recruitment also occurred through the snowballing technique via contacts at NDC and as individuals from the parishes were spoken with. Questionnaire recruitment intended to increase representativeness, displaying a cross section of the parishes rather than solely relying on the contacts provided. The methods used did rely on volunteerism and required the respondent to have an interest in, or reason to spend time, partaking in research, therefore had potential for producing skewed outputs. Sixteen verbal in-depth interviews were conducted with members from the community and one local estate agent, either in person or over the phone and all participants consented to the conversation being recorded. In addition to verbal interviews, written correspondence took place with local businesses and schools located within the case study parishes.

4.8 Ethical Considerations
It is necessary for all research to consider ethical implications and this research process was submitted to the Geography Ethics Committee and approved. While the research was not being conducted with vulnerable people it needed to be conducted in a transparent manner whereby participants were aware of the process, how to access outputs and consent to participate. Consent was written into the cover letter of the survey detailing that completion signifies willingness to participate, whereas prior to interview a letter of consent was signed by the interviewer and interviewee that detailed the research purpose, use of output and agreement to partake. Participants were provided with anonymity as no identifying features were present on the questionnaire pages. The page used to
enter the prize or volunteer for further research was detached from the questionnaire itself on receipt. Interviewees were advised that names were not going to be used in any documentation. Furthermore, the participants were informed that information would be kept confidentially and destroyed within two years of research completion, and that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any point.

4.9 Data Analysis Framework

In generating the methodological process it is important to consider the analysis process to ensure the data collection is appropriate. The quantitative methods used in this research were designed with the intention of using Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS Statistics for quantitative analysis of the closed proportion of the survey. Secondary data provided both quantitative and qualitative data. Objectives 2 and 3, exploring experiences to community and participation and the role of second homes within these was examined through descriptive, bivariate and multivariate statistics using quantitative data from the questionnaire in the first instance. Qualitative analysis employed content analysis of open questionnaire responses and interviews as a fluid and dynamic process of coding, whereby themes were built and refined around research questions, key concepts and locations. Interview recordings were transcribed into Microsoft Word then coded around the key research issues including community, participation and impact of second homes.

The Egan Wheel of Sustainability (2004) provides a framework for analysis as an apparatus of planning that NDC use to guide and progress their sustainable communities agenda. Egan’s proposed segments construct the outline structure for the presentation of results in order to develop understanding of the extent and means through which second homes were found to influence the sustainability of host communities. This tool therefore guides the approach to analysis in terms of evaluating the socio-economic impacts of second homes.

A secondary framework for analysis is provided through viewing the research through the lens of Foucault’s governmentality as was outlined in Chapter Two. Viewing planning as a governmental rationality and sustainability, community and participation as rationalities of planning make it possible to understand attempts to govern individuals through related governmental techniques such as
neighbourhood plans and the SCS. The non-sustainable and non-participating communities and individuals appear to have been problematised in this framework and this research examines the micro governance of individuals in this context. Governmentality, through its focus on the examination of populations, therefore provides a useful framework through which to review the crux of this thesis. The two main ways in which governmentality is used is firstly through identifying the key rationalities of planning, which has been done in the previous chapter, and to use these to view how democratic renewal, community and sustainability agendas are implemented and endeavour to guide populations. Secondly the discursive ways these are realised at the micro level is explored through examining and analysing the empirical evidence. This approach will enable understanding of how the multiple sources of power result in diverse outputs of government strategies.

Having presented a brief outline of the planned approach to analysis and prior to concluding this substantive methodology it is timely to reflect upon the research processes used in this research.

4.10 Evaluation Of The Methodological Approach

As has been discussed in section 4.2.4 the research was a process of negotiation due to the nature of the CASE studentship combining the standpoints of two different institutions. As with any research, different approaches could have been taken to explore the issues. The outcomes of these research processes have succeeded at producing relevant findings, both broad and in-depth, examining the research aim. Misunderstanding was presented as a potential weakness of the postal survey methodology (Section 4.6.2.ii). In some instances this was confirmed during the research process whereby certain responses included annotations of the survey demonstrating a misunderstanding such as:

“Section two only seems relevant for non-permanent residents.” (5/79)

Section two was only relevant for non-permanent residents and this was detailed in the cover letter reiterated at the beginning of section two. Further respondent questioning of the purpose and positioning of the research detailed how this research approach allows individuals to draw their own assumptions about the research and respond accordingly. Finally, there were many
comments regarding identity when the parish boundary includes more than one settlement such Georgeham parish containing Georgeham village, Croyde and Pickwell, for example:

“We live in Croyde not Georgeham and the village should be properly named in the survey.” (4/90)

Further discussion of place and boundaries goes beyond the scope of the research and the parish was the selected scale of research due to the ease of access of data and progression of existing data.

As has been presented, this survey did not experience the biggest potential weakness of a postal survey which is a low response rate. However, despite the extensive volume of data produced through a successful response, had the survey been the sole element of research it is likely the findings would be very different. For example, many written responses often appeared more vociferous than those expressed in person during interview. In one instance a respondent submitted email communication regarding the survey and topic, however during interview the same individual did not appear to express the same conviction in their responses. This highlights the influence the researcher and the research method can have in the outcomes of research. Similarly, at times, respondents appeared very defensive in their responses again emphasising potential for misinterpretation when a researcher is not present to provide greater context and clarification of questions. Many comments provided on the surveys referred to the difficulty in presenting their opinion about the complex issue of second homes through ticking a box and were wary of misrepresentation through this method which justifies the use of interviews to clarify and further explore themes that emerged from the survey. Finally, as with any research process the findings only present the opinions of the population who chose to engage in the research process and how the questions were answered. One respondent expressed concern that:

“Many second home owners will choose not to reply or to reply less than candidly.” (5/48)

This opinion could apply to any respondent, not solely second home owners, and accentuates the limitation of this research methodology in that it is based on received information that is based upon the respondent’s interpretation of the research (May, 1997) and potentially their own personal agenda. The
researcher's role here is to understand the ‘stories’ presented and to “put them to honest intelligent use” (Miller and Glassner, 2004 in Silverman, 2004:138). This sets the foundations for the presentation and interpretation of the research findings in line with the research objectives.

4.11 Chapter Conclusion
This chapter has detailed the methodological process through which this research will meet the aims and objectives set out in Chapter One. It has presented the significant methodological influence of working in collaboration, predominantly the negotiation required and the impact upon the positionality of the research through the NDC partnership. The partnership is understood to have brought benefit to the research, not least through access to secondary data sources and policy maker interview participants. The chapter detailed how three contrasting research case studies, with comparatively high proportions of second homes, were selected together with NDC to examine the contributions of second homes to the sustainability of host communities in different areas. A further two case studies were selected during the same process, with comparatively low proportions of second homes, to aid comparison of questionnaire results between areas.

The triangulated research method combines secondary data analysis, with a quantitative large-scale questionnaire and qualitative interviews. The use of a postal questionnaire is grounded through reviewing methodological literature and previous second home research. It responds to the research aims through providing a substantive data set outlining permanent residents and second home owners opinions towards second homes, the host community and participation in the host parish community. It also profiles households, particularly second home households to aid understandings of second homes and it facilitates comparison between second homes and permanent residences, as well as between case studies. The questionnaire predominantly responds to research objective 1 through examining the socio-economic impacts of second homes. Additionally it provides broad opinions on community and participation of relevance to objectives 2 and 3. The employment of the interview process is also grounded in methodological literature and previous research and enables in-depth exploration of the complex issues at the crux of
this research as well as examination and expression of nuanced opinions surrounding these. The interviews add context to the broad issues resulting from the survey and provide the basis for examining understandings of community and participation.

The evaluation of the research conducted at the end of this chapter highlighted that some limitations of the postal survey method came to fruition, but that the major limitation was overcome due to a high response rate. The inability of the survey to fully examine or enable expression of opinion justifies the use of the qualitative research, which sought clarification of some of the responses detailed in the survey. Having evaluated the research process, the thesis will now move on to analyse the primary data. As expressed in this chapter, the analysis framework includes the Egan Wheel (2004; Section 2.8.4) which is critically used to guide the results and analysis chapters, and is especially prominent in the next chapter. Chapter Five will begin with a review of the representativeness of the primary data collected in the quantitative survey, before presenting the data analysis with regards to the first research objective considering understandings of second homes, and their socio-economic contributions to host communities.
Chapter 5: Conceptualisations Of Second Homes And The Socio-Economic Contributions Of Second Homes To Host Communities

5.1 Introduction to Chapter

The analysis of empirical data is split into three chapters and this first chapter will examine the representativeness of the survey before presenting findings to explore the first research objective: To explore popular understandings of second homes, and socio-economic impacts of second homes to host communities from North Devon resident and policy maker perspectives. The chapter will detail that there are substantive difficulties in defining second homes, argue that there are similarities and differences between second and holiday homes, and justify the inclusion of holiday homes into the research analysis. It will also argue that second homes are perceived to bring both positive contributions, predominantly economic, and negative, especially social, implications influencing the host community. It will also suggest that the perceived relationship between second homes and house prices (Chapter Three) is confirmed in the empirical research.

The chapter is divided into five broad sections, starting with the representativeness of the research sample. Secondly, the problem of second home definition and nuances between second and holiday homes will be reviewed. Thirdly, it will present the broad opinions regarding the volume and contributions of second homes to the research parishes as host communities. Fourth, the relationship between proportions of second homes and house prices will be examined. Finally, six of the eight segments of Egan's Wheel of Sustainability (2004; Section 2.8.4), a toolkit for assessing sustainable communities used by NDC, will be used to examine the role of second homes. This will be used critically throughout the results chapters rather than suggesting it provides definitive guidelines for the sustainable community.

The analysis chapters are issue focussed, reflecting the triangulated methodological approach whereby the quantitative and qualitative research techniques were used together. In order to do this the analysis chapters will utilize relevant descriptive, bivariate and multivariate statistics in addition to qualitative textual and spoken data, where appropriate, in order for the presentation of findings to reflect the data collection process.
5.2 Research Representativeness

Prior to analysing the questionnaire data it was crucial to examine whether the data are representative of the wider population. This examined whether the response rate was high enough for analysis and whether responses are representative of the research parishes and of North Devon.

5.2.1 Sample Size

A total of 883 useable responses, out of 2749, were returned\(^{10}\). The response rate in this instance was a highly credible 32.1%; above the expected 20-30% postal survey response rate (Kent, 2001). Table 5.1 breaks down the responses by parish showing that there was an even and representative response from each, with the minimum response rate of 30.1% from Fremington.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Number sent</th>
<th>Number received</th>
<th>Response (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Braunton</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brendon &amp; Countisbury</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fremington</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgeham</td>
<td>1096</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instow</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1: Questionnaire Response Rate By Parish

5.2.2 Second Home Proportions: Survey And Tax Data

While the ‘property type’ depicted on the survey response cannot be guaranteed to align with the official tax registration of that property, a comparison with council tax data regarding properties registered as second homes detailed that the survey responses reflect this data. The percentage of responses from properties claiming to be second homes was 10.3% in the sample, therefore higher than the 3.7% North Devon District proportion, and also provides a useable sample size for analysis between property types. At the parish level the percentage of second home responses fell below the average provided by NDC tax data (Graph 5.1), except for Fremington, which can be accounted for as the survey responses did not always reflect the provided ‘property type’ definitions. Generally the sample’s results follow a similar trend to NDC’s data on the percentage of second homes within each parish.

\(^{10}\) A further 69 unusable questionnaires were received: 58 were undelivered due to errors with NDC’s address gazetteer, and 11 were returned partially or un-completed.
5.2.3 Demographic Profile

Graphs 5.2 to 5.7 compare the demographics of the sample population and DCC collated data and suggest they follow a similar distribution. Using the rationale provided by Oskamp et al (1991) that a representative survey sample must fall within 10% of another known source Table 5.2 demonstrates that the sample fulfils this criterion. The majority of the categories in all locations fall within 10% difference boundary. Only Brendon/Countisbury age group '55-74 years' had over 10% difference between DCC data and the sample. When placed in context, Brendon/Countisbury's slight skew reflects the small sample size of the parish in addition to the '55-74 years' age group being higher than the official average across the entire sample, perhaps unsurprising given the research approach (Section 4.6.2.ii).

Based on the information reviewed in this section the empirical data is therefore considered a reliable source, representative of the wider population the sample is taken from. The sample size, proportions of second homes and demographic distribution can be seen to have provided a sample suitable for valid analysis which will now be presented.
Graphs 5.2 to 5.7: Comparison of age profile of survey respondents and age profile from Devon County Council, by location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>0-18 yrs</th>
<th>18-39 yrs</th>
<th>40-54 yrs</th>
<th>55-74 yrs</th>
<th>75+ yrs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>5.98</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>-7.90</td>
<td>-3.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braunton</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>-7.25</td>
<td>-3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brendon &amp; Countisbury</td>
<td>9.38</td>
<td>7.33</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
<td>-15.76</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fremington</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>7.74</td>
<td>-0.90</td>
<td>-7.53</td>
<td>-5.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgeham</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>-4.65</td>
<td>-3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instow</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>6.43</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>-8.25</td>
<td>-4.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2: Percentage difference between DCC data and sample data for each age group. (Council data minus survey data)
5.3 Understandings And Experiences Of Second Homes And Holiday Homes
This section will present quantitative and qualitative findings in seeking to compare different property uses and pick out nuances between experiences of second and holiday homes. The results from the survey, which are largely quantitative, present the opinions of the research parish community members, which included permanent residents, second and holiday home owners. The interview data is from interviews with either community members (CM – quotes italicised) or policy makers (PM) and viewpoints from each group will be presented throughout. It firstly presents qualitative descriptions about second and holiday homes before comparing the demographics of the two types of property based upon survey data.

5.3.1 The Problem Of Second Home Definition
Attempting to define second homes (Chapter Three) developed to become a substantial part of the research. While, at the outset the intention was examine second homes as distinct from holiday homes, it soon became evident it was not realistic to study second homes in isolation but rather to study second homes in comparison with holiday homes. Conversely, in order to do this a distinction between properties needed to be devised which was based upon the literature and explained in the questionnaire cover letter and during interviews. Classification of a non-permanent residence as either a ‘second home’ or ‘holiday home’ in this research was grounded in property user and rental. Holiday home properties were distinguished as those primarily or more frequently used as full holiday rental let whereas second homes were not full holiday rental and predominantly used by the owner household or friends and family. Despite the problematic nature of attempting to define properties it was felt to be crucial to examine whether there were significant differences between these properties and thus determine the contributions of second homes. It was clear that some survey respondents judged whether their property was a second or holiday home based on their own semantics rather than the suggested descriptions reinforcing this problem of attempting to define second homes. For example, 9 ‘holiday home’ responses also claimed to ‘never’ be used for holiday rental despite the survey’s definition of holiday homes: ‘holiday home property should be available for short term holiday rent’. This response
was not unexpected not only due to the ‘problem of definition’ but also tax implications of property use despite survey responses being untraceable.

The nuances between these properties was recognised as important during policy maker interviews such as in this quote with an NDC Planning Officer discussing the differences and similarities between inactive permanent residents and active non-permanent residents:

PM3\textsuperscript{11}：“That’s part of the issue. If you’ve got some other properties where they are occupied, whether by the owner or by family, friends, let out throughout the year or a good part of the year, you will have much more all round spin offs in the local shops and facilities. It won’t necessarily have kids in the local school which a permanent resident could have so there are going to be potentially some differences, they won’t have the same pulls on the health service, so there will be differences, but it isn’t a straightforward black and white difference. It will depend on to what extent a range of services are used and also to what extent the second home is occupied during the year I think.”

The difficulty in being able to distinguish between these properties is presented by the very slight differences in use and consequent variations in impact and demand in services, for example. This instructs second homes to be partially reviewed on a case-by-case basis leading such properties to be perceived as falling along a continuum of housing. The problems of attempting to define property use were raised during interview with a permanent resident living next door to a holiday home in a small hamlet within one of the research parishes with high proportions of second homes. Interviewees were often keen to distinguish between and highlight a difference in impact of second and holiday homes:

Interviewer: “What is your instinctive reaction to second homes and holiday homes in the local area?”

CM12: “I feel very negative about them, but I think there’s a difference between second homes and holiday places. The place next door is a holiday place and it’s used probably about 6 months a year and I feel that it’s being used a lot, ok there isn’t somebody there all the time but, um, I think that’s different from places

\textsuperscript{11}Interview codes CM details ‘Community Member’; PM details ‘Policy Maker’ and number details the code assigned to each individual interviewee.
that..there’s another one just down the road where they just come every so often and the place is empty.”

Interviewer: “Is this one let next door or is it the owners using it?”

CM12: “Um, no, it has different people in each week. The owners are the farm and they let it out so they never stay in it themselves. The one down the road is only used by the people who own it, who live in London, so it’s empty lots of the time. So I feel quite negatively about second homes and less so about holiday homes. I think you’re bound to get holiday homes in places like this.”

Interviewer: “Some people have felt the other way in that its worse having lots of different people coming and going who don’t really care about the area.”

CM12: “Ah that’s interesting..”

Interviewer: “Who don’t respect noise levels and things like that. With the case where the same people are re-visiting they feel a bit more like they are a part of the village”

CM12: “I suppose where we are exactly here, we tend to get a particular type coming and staying there, they want to be quiet, they want to go for nice walks and down to the beach, and we’ve rarely had any trouble so it’s not .. it doesn’t feel negative to me to have that. I suppose they spend here, they spend money here and I wonder whether people with second homes do so much because I suspect they tend to bring stuff with them.”

The discussion here presented an opinion in favour of holiday homes due to an understanding of increased use, rather than a predominantly empty property, and suggested greater local spend than a second home although this lacks supporting evidence. Other interviewees also expressed this opinion however, as will be drawn out in this section there are those who feel that holiday homes are a fundamentally different use with significant and specific impact through a lack of user continuity.

During a policy maker interview, discussion about the number of second homes in a research parish drew out a likely underestimation of non-permanent dwelling properties within council tax data:

PM8: “That doesn’t include the houses which have paid business tax for holiday homes does it? So when you
add those two together that must be quite significant. I know they’re different, and they play different roles.”

Interviewer: “Yeah I’ve kind of..because it’s looking more at second homes than holiday homes I’ve just taken the 10% but obviously I’m acknowledging that doesn’t include holiday homes which..well everything is on this scale depending on how it’s used.”

PM8: “Exactly. Yeah I mean we always say there is a difference between the two, clearly, because if you’re renting out a holiday home and it’s mostly rented out, certainly key parts of the year, or rented all year around then they can provide a very useful service, tourist place to stay and visitors that sort of thing but it’s about the proportion of time that they are empty that’s the issue I think. Some second homes are well used and some really aren’t so..you’ve got those impacts.”

Here the nuanced implications of the subtle differences in property use are recognised, with understanding of impact focussing on the extent of property use. Furthermore the prioritisation of the economic contribution of holiday homes is again acknowledged. Different property uses such as buy-to-let can have similar implications and presents grounded difficulties examining the contributions of second homes specifically. The way in which people choose to define property is based in their own understanding of the property adding complication.

5.3.2 Occupiers And Occupation Rate Of Non-Permanent Dwelling Properties

The survey results detail a difference between the predominant users and length of use of ‘holiday’ and ‘second’ homes. While both types of property are most frequently occupied for an average of 13-24 weeks per year (Graph 5.8), three quarters of second homes reported occupation of 5-24 weeks per year. This suggests that second homes tend to be occupied for less than half the year with only a smaller proportion used for greater lengths throughout the year. In contrast, 80% of holiday homes claim to be occupied for at least 13 weeks per year with a higher number of responses than second homes suggesting at least 25 weeks occupation. Consequently, the survey results detail that a holiday home property is likely to be occupied for a greater proportion of the year than a second home.
This is confirmed in Table 5.3 where the mean occupation of holiday homes (weeks/year) is slightly higher than second homes. The latter displays an average of 2.89 (where ‘2’ is 5-12 weeks/year; see Table 5.4) whereas holiday homes have an average of 3.34 (where ‘3’ is 13-24 weeks/year; see Table 5.4). However while holiday home occupation appears slightly higher the mean occupation for both property types is under half a year.

Table 5.3 (left): Average rankings for use and length of occupation of second homes and holiday homes

Table 5.4 (right): Key explaining Table 5.3
These subtleties are further presented in the radar graphs 5.9 - 5.12 comparing the responses for ‘sole’, ‘main’, ‘occasional’ and ‘never’ uses of second and holiday homes. These visualise that second homes are predominantly used solely by the owner’s household (18.7%) whereas only 3.2% of holiday homes responded in this way. Furthermore 19% of holiday homes are solely used for holiday rental whereas 77% of second homes are never used for holiday rental. These findings are also displayed in Table 5.3 detailing that second homes are more frequently or ‘mainly’ used by the ‘household’ (mean 2.03) or ‘friends and family’ (mean 2.68); whereas holiday homes are only ‘occasionally’ used by the ‘household’ (mean 3.05) and ‘friends and family’ (mean 3.07). Second homes had a mean of 3.76 or ‘occasional’ use for holiday rental, whereas this was a ‘main’ use for holiday homes (mean 2.25). While these results may be guided to some degree by the suggested uses in the cover letter they reveal a depth of information in suggesting a distinct difference between the frequencies properties are occupied and by who.

The survey had an open question asking second home owners to detail when the property is used (Appendix 2). These responses were then grouped and two very different patterns of use were found to be the most frequent, with 32% of responses used predominantly for weekends and school holidays and 31% used at any time throughout the year not solely at weekends. The perception that second homes are only occupied at weekends is not necessarily reflected in these results as only 11% claim to mainly be occupied only at weekends and for some this was every weekend. 16% claim to mainly be occupied during school holidays or holiday seasons, with 3% used for longer periods of occupation and 7% other uses, such as recently bought or under renovation. The patterns of use appear difficult to generalise although 59% of second homes are used for weekends, peak holiday periods and school holidays suggesting the majority are not used throughout the year or necessarily across the week.
Graphs 5.9 (‘sole’) - 5.10 (‘main’): Radar graphs comparing holiday home and second home use based on frequency of response for ‘sole’ and ‘main’ use.
Another issue regarding holiday homes was raised in qualitative research, specifically the potential to create a ‘party’ house presence in residential areas, summarised in the following quote from a permanent resident:
CM9: “The owners have gone OTT, you can go on the website and see. These properties are let for parties and stag dos. Well who would like to be living next door to that? Not very nice, and on more than one occasion in the summer you’re outside in your little street sweeping up vomit. Would you like to be doing that? And as I say the owners of these properties need to step back and say ‘we need to be a little bit more responsible and we need to be..pay up and play the game’ and if you’re due to pay for services then pay them!”

The issue of increased occupancy capacity of holiday homes was raised as problematic in some instances and highlights the issue of the freedom for a dwelling property to convert to this fundamentally different use of property. While holiday homes are at times a preferential use due to increased frequency of occupancy, as expressed by CM12, this chapter and the next will reveal that the presence of such properties on residential streets is not as well accepted.

These findings detail that differences exist between property types whereas despite difficulty defining, second homes are more likely to be used by the owner and/or friends and family rather than holiday rental whereas holiday homes suggest opposite tendencies but are likely to have greater occupation throughout the year. These nuances between holiday homes and second homes will continue to be expressed through further discussion and presentation of research findings. Understanding and expression of these two similar yet distinct property uses will be grounded in the findings detailed in this section where use and impact is understood to fall along a housing continuum lacking in distinct boundaries. The next section will continue to review these properties through examining the demographic profile of survey respondents.

5.3.3 Demographic Comparison Between Property Types And Location
5.3.3.i Household Age And Size
As has previously been noted there is a dominance of the ‘55-74 years’ age group across the sample. The break down in graph 5.13 details there to be a higher percentage of under 18 year olds associated with second and holiday homes than permanent residences. Fewer second and holiday homes are occupied by 25-39 years and over 75 age ranges. When comparing ages between parishes and property types, Georgeham has a greater proportion of under 18 year olds (22%) whereas Instow comprises 40% 55-74 year olds and
Brendon/Countisbury 65% over 55 years. The permanent resident demographic mirrors the entire sample; however when looking at second homes there are a greater mix of ages in both Georgeham and Instow. Braunton and Brendon/Countisbury’s second home population was largely over 55 years. Fremington’s second home population comprises of only 3 responses therefore is not representative. In this sample, holiday homes appear to be occupied by greater numbers of under 18’s and 40-54 years, with fewer over 55 years than second homes. No further statistical tests could be run on this data due to its multiple response collection method.

Graph 5.13: Percentage comparison of household age by property type

Differences between household size, location and property description were examined through running the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis (H) test. Unless stated otherwise, all further tests used to examine the survey data are non-parametric as the data is not normally distributed\textsuperscript{12}. While non-parametric tests are less powerful than their parametric counterparts these are less likely to make type 1 errors whereby a significant result is displayed where there is no real difference or relationship. The Kruskal-Wallis test of difference for data on an ordinal scale where there are 3 or more groups ranks the data to test whether there is a difference between population medians (Rogerson, 2010). A statistically significant difference (H=26.063; p=<0.05) was revealed between household size and location detailing that Georgeham and Fremington tended to have larger households whereas Instow and Brendon/Countisbury have

\textsuperscript{12} Data tested for normality through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test on SPSS.
smaller. There was also a statistically significant difference between household size and property description (H=59.253; p=<0.05) whereby permanent resident households tend to be smaller than second homes and holiday homes. This difference was reflected in Georgeham and Instow but not the other locations when examined individually. Therefore second and holiday home properties, especially in Georgeham and Instow, are more likely to be larger household sizes, with more under 18 year olds than permanent residences.

5.3.3.ii Household Income
Examining income between location, the majority of £100,000 - £150,000 household incomes were Georgeham parish respondents; this parish also had the most even distribution across household income categories. Fremington had a slightly higher proportion of household incomes under £20,000 in addition to fewer £30,000+ household incomes, also evident in Braunton. Brendon/Countisbury, Georgeham and Instow appear to have a greater percentage of higher earners than Fremington and Braunton, this was found to be statistically significant (H=12.061 p=<0.05).

In comparing the income of different property types the most frequent response for permanent residents was a household income of £20,000 - £29,000, with few responses over £50,000. In contrast no second home owners have a household income of below £15,000. The trend for second and holiday homes to have higher incomes than permanent residents is illustrated in graphs 5.14 – 5.17. Second home household incomes were predominantly £50,000 - £75,000 or over £150,000. 61% of permanent residents earn under £30,000 in comparison to 12% of second home owners and only 6% of permanent residents as opposed to 54% of second homes owners earn over £75,000. This difference between second homes having highest incomes and permanent residents the lowest is statistically significant (H=35.345 p=<0.05). When each location was examined individually this pattern was also found to be statistically significant in Georgeham and Instow.
Graphs 5.14 – 5.17: Comparison of percentages of responses per income bracket by property description

5.3.3.iii. Household Highest Education Qualification

A trend for second and holiday homes to be more likely to have a Higher Education qualification than permanent residents is suggested in graphs 5.18 – 5.20. Over 60% of respondents from second and holiday homes have a Bachelor’s or Higher Degree as their highest qualification in comparison to 35% of permanent residents. Around 10% more permanent residents than second or holiday home owners’ highest qualification is at CSE/O-Level/GCSE level. No compelling variations between parishes were displayed for the ‘qualification’ variable. As with the collection of age data no statistical tests were run on qualification data as it was a multiple response collection technique.
Graphs 5.18 – 5.20: Comparison of highest qualification by property type
5.3.3.iv. Property Tenure

Across the whole sample the majority of responses displayed the property to be ‘owned outright’ or ‘owned with mortgage’. Interestingly, a high proportion of second homes were ‘owned outright’ rather than mortgaged. A test of difference (two-way Chi-square analysis) cross-tabulated property type with property ownership (selecting only two variables: ‘owned outright’ and ‘owned with mortgage’) detailed a small significant difference ($X^2=6.913; \ p<0.05$). Examination of expected and observed counts detailed more second homes but fewer holiday homes were owned outright than expected.

Graph 5.21: Comparison of property tenure (number of responses) by property type.

5.3.3.v. Property Occupation And Expected Future Occupation

For all property types, except holiday homes, the property was most likely to have been occupied for over twenty years. There is a significant difference ($H=20.836 \ p<0.05$) between the length of ownership and property type with
permanent residents having a higher ranking than second or holiday homes suggesting a longer occupation. When questioned about expected future length of property occupation the majority of responses for all property types detail that the current occupants plan to be there for at least five years. Graphs 5.22 – 5.24 compare the current occupation and expected future occupation between property types and while second and holiday homes may have been occupied for less time than permanent residences they suggest a long term expected occupancy, as do the majority of permanent residences. This research was not exploring whether the resident would choose to stay in the area and only enquired about the current property, however it is interesting to note that 53% of second homes plan to occupy their property for over twenty years. This is the highest percentage response for the future occupation of any property type and coupled with 55% of second homes being occupied for at least five years initially suggested that second homes have a long term commitment to an area. However, no significant difference between ‘expected future length of ownership’ and ‘property type’ was found to exist nor was there a significant relationship between second home owner’s ‘current length of occupation’ and ‘expected future length of occupation’ using Spearman’s Correlation Coefficient. Although, a small positive relationship \( (r_s=0.243; p=<0.05) \) was found between the same variables for permanent residences therefore as one variable increases so does the other. While statistically significant, it is important to recognise this is a relatively low coefficient and as has been illustrated in this section there is limited evidence for relationships between ‘current occupation’ and ‘expected future occupation’ nor difference between these variables and ‘property type’.
Graphs 5.22 – 5.24: Comparison between length of occupation and expected future length of occupation by property type.
5.3.3.vi. Previous Use of a Non-Permanent Dwelling Property

The previous use of a non-permanent dwelling property raised some interesting results as the majority (62%) of second homes were reported to have previously been permanent residential dwelling properties. Only 8% of second homes claimed to have previously been ‘empty’ suggesting that second homes rarely make use of an empty property, a potential positive proposed by Wallace et al (2005). Furthermore, there appears to be a low conversion of second or holiday homes to permanent residences (1.7%). For those claiming to be used as holiday homes 29% were purpose built, 34% were previously permanent residences and 11% empty. It is also interesting to note that 14% of second homes and 10% of holiday homes were new build, although not necessarily built for the purpose of non-permanent use. This data confirms the leaking of dwelling properties into non-permanent use that NDC suspected. This is a substantial finding that NDC needs to be aware of and ideally account for in housing policy and delivery.

5.3.3.vii. Additional Property Ownership

Only 15% \((n=105)\) of permanent resident responses claimed to own or rent other properties, of which 60% were long-term rental properties and 58% were within 10 miles of their property. Only 14% were holiday homes however a few properties detailed a distinct use not falling into the offered categories again inferential of the difficulty in typifying property use. For example, some properties classed as primary residences were annotated to detail that the owners live away for work or that it is a dwelling property in winter and holiday let during summer. The latter property use was described as a ‘local habit’ in the following quote when asked about the volume of properties used as second home rather than holiday lets:

CM10: “If you go up the road, apart from that one which is a business anyway, um, there’s the next one across which is let out in the summer, they move out into a caravan, which is another local habit. Then you’ve got two – one of them was lived in permanently by someone who then couldn’t get a job here so had to go back to Oxfordshire to work but still maintain the house and lets it out. You don’t just leave them empty here you let them out, quite honestly.”
The feeling from this interviewee was that very few properties were not let out, despite the survey results suggesting otherwise. The quote reiterates the need the viewing of properties on a ‘housing continuum’ to account for the difficulties in trying to define second homes, as all properties are used differently and may change frequently. This section has highlighted further nuanced uses of property and the demographic profile of survey respondents by property type. Permanent residences show tendency to be older, smaller households with fewer under 18 year olds than second or holiday homes. Permanent residents also have comparably lower incomes, fewer Higher Education qualifications and have occupied their property for longer. All properties are likely to be owned outright or with a mortgage except for holiday homes where fewer are owned outright. All property types suggest a long-term expected occupancy.

Having presented the variations in property use and attempted to draw together some differences between second homes, holiday homes and permanent residences the next section will review the broad opinions about second homes. It will review the perceptions of volume in and contributions to parish communities.

5.4 Opinions About Second Homes

In this section variables relating to the perceived volume and contribution of second homes will be examined predominantly using quantitative data comparing opinions between location and between property types.

5.4.1 Property Volume

Over half (52%) of responses felt there to be ‘too many’ second homes in their parish, with 46.8% claiming there to be a ‘sustainable amount’ (Graph 5.30) although this was often annotated with comments such as “for now” suggesting a concern for the future. Only 1.2% responded with the belief that there were ‘not enough’ and these were mostly second or holiday home owners in Georgeham, Fremington or Braunton. Fremington, which only has 0.45% second homes, had the lowest percentage (38.8%) of people feeling there are ‘too many’ second homes whereas Brendon/Countisbury had the highest percentage (55.6%) for ‘too many’. No statistical difference between opinions about the volume of second homes and location and the small differences in perceptions of volume between location are presented in graphs 5.25 – 5.30.
Graphs 5.25 - 5.30: percentage response of perception of the volume of second homes by location.
Reviewing responses by property type it is perhaps unsurprising to note that permanent residences were less positive than second or holiday home owners with very few second home owners (7.7%) suggesting there to be ‘too many’ (Graph 5.31). A higher percentage (17%) of holiday homes responded in this way which was often qualified with an understanding that holiday homes are more frequently used and supply greater income than second homes suggesting a more productive use of property. Most permanent residents (61.6%) felt there to be ‘too many’ with only 0.7% claiming ‘not enough’. There was a large disparity between property type and those claiming a ‘sustainable amount’: 37.7% of permanent residents compared to 89.7% of second home owners. This difference was confirmed statistically through a relatively large significant difference ($X^2=105.398; \ p=<0.05$) between property type and variables: ‘sustainable amount’ and ‘too many’ (there were too few ‘not enough’ responses to include that variable in this test).

Graph 5.31: Comparison of percentage response of the perception of volumes of second homes by property type.
Despite the intention of this survey question to detail *perceived* understanding of the volume of second homes, respondents often expressed difficulty answering without being supplied figures detailing the exact number of second homes in their parish. Had this specific information been provided as part of the question it is likely it would have altered the intended outcome of this question but the perception would have then been based upon figures provided.

Other criteria found to statistically differentiate with opinions about the volume of second homes are detailed in Tables 5.5 and 5.6. The variables: ‘expected future length of occupation’ and ‘previous property use’ were not found to be significant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Length of ownership</td>
<td>24.753*</td>
<td>Longer occupation more likely to suggest ‘too many’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active member of community</td>
<td>15.795*</td>
<td>More active more likely to claim ‘too many’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positivity about community (present)</td>
<td>20.671*</td>
<td>Less positive more likely to claim ‘too many’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positivity about community (future)</td>
<td>32.685*</td>
<td>Less positive more likely to claim ‘too many’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many people known in parish</td>
<td>31.330*</td>
<td>Those claiming to know more people more likely to claim ‘too many’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local spend/week</td>
<td>14.194*</td>
<td>Lower spenders more likely to claim ‘too many’. Higher spenders likely to claim ‘sustainable amount’ or ‘not enough’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>9.020*</td>
<td>Lower earners more likely to claim ‘too many’. Higher earners more likely claim ‘not enough’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.5: Variables with statistical difference using the variable ‘opinion about the volume of second homes’ (Kruskal-Wallis statistical test).

*: details statistic is significant at 0.05 probability.
Table 5.6: Variables with statistical difference using the variable ‘opinion about the volume of second homes’ (Chi-Square statistical test run excluding variable ‘not enough second homes’ to ensure test validity through ensuring ‘expected counts’ were high enough).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Statistic*</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Future use of property</td>
<td>19.790*</td>
<td>No difference between expected and observed counts for those likely to sell. Limited difference between ‘no plan to move’, slight sway to ‘too many’. Holiday rental future: claim a ‘sustainable amount’. Don’t know/don’t own property: claim ‘too many’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional property owned</td>
<td>71.013*</td>
<td>If own additional property more likely to say ‘sustainable amount’ and less likely to claim ‘too many’. No additional property owned more likely to claim ‘too many’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property ownership circumstances</td>
<td>20.206*</td>
<td>‘Owned outright’ property more likely to be a ‘sustainable amount’ and less likely ‘too many’. Rental properties more likely to claim ‘too many’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Therefore permanent residents are more likely to claim there are ‘too many’ second homes than a ‘sustainable amount’ although there is minimal difference of opinion between locations. The results in the tables demonstrate that those claiming there are ‘too many’ second homes in their parish are more likely to rent their property, have lived in the area longer, be active but not positive about the community, spend and earn less, and not own additional property when compared to those suggesting a ‘sustainable amount’ or ‘too many’. In addition to asking respondents to consider the volume of second homes within their parish, the contribution second homes make to the parish was also questioned and these responses will now be explored.

5.4.2 Local Contribution Of Second Homes

Most respondents (35.6%) claimed that second homes brought ‘both positive and negative contributions’ to their local community (Graph 5.35). 23.4% of all responses understood second homes to bring ‘solely negative’ contributions
and 9.8% ‘solely positive’. The latter comprised of 42% second homes and 36% permanent residents. Graphs 5.32 – 5.35 illustrate that permanent residents were generally less positive about second homes than second home owners, with 28% of permanent residents feeling that second homes contribute solely negatively compared to only 1.1% of second home owners. The graphs illustrate that second and holiday home owners’ opinions are distinct from the collective opinions of the whole sample. This difference was found to be large and statistically significant ($X^2=201.618; p=<0.05$). An examination of the expected and observed counts revealed that permanent residents have fewer ‘both’ and ‘positive’ opinions than expected, with higher counts for ‘negative’, ‘not aware’ or ‘unsure’, whereas second homes were the opposite.

Graphs 5.32 – 5.35: Percentage of responses about perceived contribution of second homes by property type.
Comparison by location shows Fremington had the highest percentage (52.6%) of respondents 'not aware' of any contribution, representative of the low proportion of second homes in this parish. In contrast very few (8.7%) of people in Georgeham felt this way. Graphs 5.36 – 5.41 demonstrate difference of opinion by location showing the trend for most locations, except Fremington, to believe second homes contribute 'both positively and negatively' and few 'solely positive' responses. The graphs also demonstrate that Braunton and Fremington, the parishes with lower proportions of second homes are distinctly different from the whole sample, Georgeham and Instow in particular. This difference was found to be significant between location and opinion regarding contribution ($X^2=127.998; p<0.05$) reiterating the relationship presented above.
Graphs 5.36 – 5.41: Percentage perceived contribution of second homes by location.
Further statistical analysis into differences between the perceived contribution of second homes was conducted using Kruskal-Wallis and Chi-Square tests. The variables found to have statistically significant differences with opinions about the contribution of second homes to the parish is detailed in Tables 5.7 – 5.8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Length of ownership</td>
<td>12.968*</td>
<td>Longer occupation more likely to suggest solely negative contribution, or ‘unsure’ or ‘not aware’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active member of community</td>
<td>26.993*</td>
<td>More active more likely to claim ‘negative’ or ‘both’; less active more likely to be ‘unaware’ or believe ‘solely positive’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positivity about community (current)</td>
<td>47.406*</td>
<td>Negative more likely to claim second homes have ‘solely negative’ contribution or ‘unaware’. Those more positive about community are also ‘positive’ about second home contributions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positivity about community (future)</td>
<td>73.197*</td>
<td>Negative more likely to claim second homes have ‘solely negative’ contribution or ‘unaware’. Those more positive about community are also ‘positive’ about second home contributions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How well know people</td>
<td>31.266*</td>
<td>Those who know more, likely to claim solely ‘negative’, ‘unsure’ or ‘both’ but not ‘solely positive’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local spend/week</td>
<td>26.024*</td>
<td>Higher spenders more likely to suggest positive contributions; lower spenders more likely to be ‘negative’ or ‘unaware’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household size</td>
<td>55.676*</td>
<td>Larger households more likely to claim ‘both’ or ‘positive’ contributions; Smaller households ‘not aware’ or ‘unsure’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>30.673*</td>
<td>Higher incomes more positive and lower incomes more negative.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.7: Variables with statistical difference using the variable ‘perception about the contribution of second homes’ (Kruskal-Wallis statistical test).

*: details statistic is significant at 0.05 probability
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Statistic*</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Future use</td>
<td>31.310*</td>
<td>Holiday rental future use show higher than expected count for ‘both’ and ‘positive’ contribution and lower count for ‘negative’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional property</td>
<td>1.553*</td>
<td>If own additional property higher than expected counts for ‘both’ and ‘positive’; no additional property higher than expected for ‘not aware’, ‘unsure’ and ‘negative’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td>29.545*</td>
<td>Those renting higher than expected for ‘negative’ and ‘not aware’; own outright slightly lower than expected for ‘negative’; own with mortgage slightly higher for ‘both’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.8: Variables with statistical difference using the variable ‘opinion about the perceived contribution of second homes’ (Chi-Square statistical test)

*: Larger statistic details larger difference.

*: details statistic is significant at 0.05 probability

To summarise the results presented in these tables, those more likely to claim positive contributions of second homes are likely to be less active in the community but more positive about it; they have a higher spend and income (although these are also more likely to be second or holiday home owners), own additional property, suggest holiday rental as future property use and be from larger households. Those more negative are likely to have occupied their current property for longer, be more active in but more negative about the community, know more people in the parish, have lower spend and income, rent their current property and not own any additional property. Furthermore, the majority of respondents believe second homes bring both positive and negative contributions to the local community, although permanent residents are more likely to be less positive. Between locations those parishes with lower proportions of second homes have higher response rates for ‘not aware’ and all parishes have higher levels of responses for ‘solely negative’ than ‘solely positive’ contributions.

Further multivariate analysis into the contributions second homes make to local communities will be explored in Chapter Six. The next section in this chapter will examine the, at times, vociferous perceptions of relationships between second
homes and local house prices and includes attempts to objectively examine this suggested relationship.

5.5 Relationships And Perceived Relationships Between Second Home Ownership And House Prices

Examination of the relationships and perceived relationships between proportions of second homes and house prices was primarily completed through the analysis of secondary resources in addition to comments written on the survey or spoken during interview. Section 3.4.2 expressed the difficulties in examining any direct impact second homes may have on house prices. Of the existing literature regarding this specific issue only one document expressed that this relationship existed with great conviction of causality (LDNPA, 2008). However, examination of the reference cited in this statement revealed misuse of Oxley et al's (2008) research and claim that their model suggested a certain relationship between the two factors. Oxley et al’s (2008) model however requires all other factors to be equal in a controlled environment, which does not mirror the reality of the housing market. Nevertheless this model offers one of the best assessments available and does suggest a likeliness that second homes lead to an increase in local house price. Having reviewed the relevant literature, relationships between house prices and second homes within North Devon District were explored using secondary data. This was done to perform an indicative review of this topic rather than a comprehensive study due to the known limitations expressed in the existing literature. The first part of this section will present the quantitative secondary data findings before examining perceptions raised by research respondents.

5.5.1 House Prices in North Devon

In considering the potential relationship between second homes and house prices a review of secondary sources of data presents housing affordability

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13Oxley et al's (2008:28) research model suggests that for a 1% increase in second homes, house prices are 1.4% higher, all other things being equal, and this is likely to be due to additional demand.
ratios at the parish level. Using salary data from DCC and the 2010\textsuperscript{14} median sale price of properties taken from www.nethouseprices.com (Graph 5.42)

Graph 5.42: Comparison of case study parish housing affordability to North Devon and national statistics. details the parish affordability ratios and reinforces that North Devon’s house price ratio (9.95) is above the national average of 4.75 (Halifax, 2010). Instow’s 2010 median house price is 15.6 times the 2009 median parish salary (median house sale price: £430,000), Georgeham’s median ratio is 13.3 (median house sale price: £370,500) and Brendon/Countisbury 8.5\textsuperscript{15} (median house sale price: £195,800). The high figures of Instow and Georgeham’s ratios reveal the

\textsuperscript{14}Including additional years in this analysis would have accounted for annual rates in house price change, which was not deemed necessary for the indicative study of house prices examined in this research.

\textsuperscript{15}Brendon/Countisbury is a small sample site and therefore as few houses were sold in 2010 the statistic is not very representative.
magnitude of the affordability issue at the parish level. Comparing Instow and Georgeham, with high proportions of second homes\textsuperscript{16}, to Fremington (affordability ratio 6.8 and median house price £189,950) and Braunton (affordability ratio 8.5 and median house price £225,500) with lower proportions shows that the latter have slightly lower housing affordability ratios. This could relate to second home demands but it likely to be due to a series of factors including the larger size of Braunton and Fremington settlements\textsuperscript{17}. Considering the median house price data follows a similar pattern but reduces the ratios slightly in all but Instow suggesting a greater volume of higher priced housing was sold in 2010. The data was not available to undertake further review of the availability and need for affordable housing in these parishes. However data on house prices and numbers of second homes was available and while inflated house prices are known to not result solely from second homes the research examined whether a relationship exists.

This element of the research was extended to use data from across North Devon District in order to obtain a more representative sample. Parishes that contained 10 or more sold properties in 2010 were included in a review of the relationship between 2010 property sale price and number of second homes. This data was normally distributed therefore the parametric Pearson Correlation Coefficient test examined the relationship between these variables. The test revealed a significant moderate strength positive correlation between the proportion of second homes and both the mean house price ($r=0.607 \ p=<0.05$) and median ($r=0.531 \ p=<0.05$). The relationship between mean house price was slightly stronger and higher than median (Graph 5.43). The moderate relationship is due to parishes with lower proportions of second homes having potential to have higher house prices. A causal relationship between higher house prices and higher proportions of second homes cannot be deduced from this test but the relationship between these variables in the parishes in this research sample was found to be statistically significant.

\textsuperscript{16}Brendon/Countisbury excluded from this comparison due to the small dataset and limited representativeness of sample.

\textsuperscript{17}Number of households: Braunton: 3799; Brendon/Countisbury: 123; Fremington: 4651; Georgeham: 864; Instow: 457
Graph 5.43: Relationship between the proportion of second homes and mean and median house prices by parish using data from 2010.

5.5.2 Resident Perceptions Of House Prices

The survey exposed a perceived connection between house prices and second homes with a total of 96 survey comments referencing house prices in the open questions about ‘second home contribution’ and ‘further comment’. The majority of these comments expressed a belief that second homes influence on house prices was negative with only one comment suggesting it was a positive impact:

“Increases demand for property and therefore beneficial to house prices/value” (3/29)

Other comments placed house prices within a wider context including the influence of buy-to-let in the third example, and additional benefits second home tourism can bring:

“Whilst the high level of house prices is negative for locals wanting to live locally second homes, rental homes etc do bring extra revenue that might go elsewhere. I think tourism is generally good for the region and second homes encourage people to use this area as one of their main areas of holiday” (3/189)

“Although house prices are high this is not confined to Instow & the retirement market is equally high second home owners tend to

18Coding for questionnaire comments: Parish number/survey number assigned individually in order of SPSS input.
spend locally in the pubs and restaurants and supermarkets and this generates employment.” (5/184)

“I do not believe in second homeship or in people buying properties to let out to others. I believe they distort the housing market and push up the value of houses, thus making them unaffordable to younger people who would like to buy their own properties.” (6/5)

Here the contribution of second homes to the region’s tourist economy, as well as benefit to the local economy and local services, is highlighted. Reference is also made to house price influences such as retirement and rental properties, acknowledging the inability to precisely identify the effects of second home purchase as distinct. These comments also detail opinions that house prices are out of the reach of ‘locals’. These effects on the ‘local’ and ‘young’ potential house buyers include comment from the following quotes, with the first being from a second home owner:

“I feel sad that young people can’t afford to buy in this area” (3/53)

“If there were not so many second homes, holiday lets the prices would not be so high & perhaps local young people might get a chance to buy or rent.” (1/28)

“Unfairly increase the property prices to such an extent local people on average income employment stand no chance ever of buying and having security. And our children have to leave in the hope of making enough money to one day return to their birthplace that they love and are part of.” (3/183)

“We are a family desperate to buy a home in Georgeham - we currently rent and are being priced out of the village due to high cost of property and lack of property on market due to amount of holiday and SHs.” (3/198)

These comments present an understanding that second homes contribute to the out pricing of ‘local’ people from being able to buy and live within their parishes. These comments raise further questions about attitudes towards those included in the ‘local’ community to be further discussed in the next chapter. The general negative perception towards second homes and house price inflation suggested in survey comments was also expressed throughout interviews, but these discussions displayed greater context and acknowledgment of other influences. In Georgeham it is suggested there is an
historical existence of high house prices and influence on younger people not living in the area:

CM10:  “I don’t think second homes here is what keeps younger people out of the area because they were expensive really. When the agricultural labourers moved out in the 60s, as they did cos instead of employing twenty they got one you know, they were all taken by elderly retirees from up country and that put the prices up quite a lot and the only ones that were left were things like these two; which before they were redone would have gone for about £60,000 in 1985 but they would have killed anybody that would have taken them on. There was no cheap reasonable accommodation – ever.”

Here housing is presented as being a long-standing unaffordable commodity rather than a new phenomenon, and emphasises the influence of retirement migration on house prices. A historical understanding of Instow’s high house prices was also suggested in a separate interview suggesting price relates to size and many properties are large houses previously owned by the estate. This again details a need to consider wider spatial and temporal contexts in any house price review. Nevertheless despite the influence of housing type and other factors raising house prices, for many individuals living in parishes with high proportions of second homes there is understood to be a clear connection between second homes and the lack of both affordable housing and young people. This first interview quote is another from Georgeham:

CM14:  “I think the population’s getting older and as the old people pass on houses are being sold as second homes; and I know when I sell here, ultimately, I’m sorry to say it won’t be a local person who buys it, it will be somebody from upcountry. So whilst we’ve lived here now for 27 years, it’s been a family home, I live here on my own now cos my husband has died and my children have gone, but for many years it was a family home, and it won’t be from now on and I know that. And I think it’s very sad, that it’s killing the community, and that these homes are not now available for young people they are just too expensive. It’s pushed the price of the houses up way too high; and you’ve heard this all before I’m sure.”
The last point of this quote shows that this interviewee believes her viewpoint is widespread and alongside resignation that her house will become a second home and believes it will contribute to house price inflation.

Further west in Instow the opinion that there are few child residents was blamed on the presence of second homes:

Interviewer: “So the big issue for you is there are not enough young people?”

CM8: “Yeah there’s not enough young people for him to mix with, and because there are not enough young people there’s no support, or resources, or youth club or anything for them to do here either. They’ve got to either travel into Bideford or go into Fremington to find any...you know...life for him and I think that’s quite sad.”

Interviewer: “Yeah..do you think second homes are to blame?”

CM8: “Yeah..yeah I do, because, um, one, they put up the property price, the local property price and erm so young families can’t afford to live in Instow. There was a house for sale over the summer I think and it said “The most reasonably priced house in Instow” and it was up for £199,000 and that’s not a family home, so that’s a big problem...I can’t afford to buy in Instow. I can just rent in Instow.”

The age data from DCC (Graph 5.7) does show that Instow has a higher percentage of 55-74 years and fewer under 18 year olds when compared with the whole sample combined and all other research parishes except Brendon/Countisbury. The quote also personally qualifies affordability in Instow and expresses the opinion of someone unable to afford to buy. It is unclear whether the following quote refers to the same property as above but this Instow interviewee holds many of the same values about the apparent inability of local people to purchase property. It also refers to the limited presence of the occupants of certain properties which will be further examined in the next chapter:

CM4: “There were a number of local people who were bidding for this house along the front here because it was an affordable house really. But none of the locals could stay in the auction long enough to buy it, and the chap who bought it already owns the house next door, which he’s never been to since he bought it two years
ago, and he bought this house basically because it had parking.”

These comments detail resident experiences of house sales within Instow identifying the realities facing certain house buyers in areas with low property turnover and high house prices to average salary ratios. However, there are also individuals with the opposite opinion about house prices within the same parish:

CM5: “But to me Instow is not expensive because compare it with Rock, and they’ve got a zero on the end there: £400,000 is £4 million and there’s no reason. It’s a better place, it’s a community, and it’s a very strong community despite the second homes. Everything at the village hall is well attended; the church is pretty well attended isn’t it?”

CM6: “Mmm.”

CM5: “So I don’t think it’s suffering too badly, if the proportion goes too far..and it’s not that unaffordable, but that may be expensive for young people, but in the little conurbation of Barnstaple and Bideford there’s lots of reasonably priced housing isn’t there? And people can aspire to Instow later.”

While this interviewee recognises that young people may find property in Instow expensive it accentuates that affordability is contextualised personally through detailing the difference of opinion between a couple who could afford to buy in Instow and the following individual who cannot. The opinion expressed below should be read in contrast to the comment from CM5 above about aspiring to live in Instow later in life:

CM8: “I moved up to London for twenty years and I’ve come back recently, so I suppose I’m as much of a grockle as anybody else..um..but um. When we were coming back we looked over the whole of North Devon and...to not be able to buy anything that, you know. I’m quite a...I’ve got a good professional career, I’m on a reasonable salary and I can’t afford to buy anything apart from if I want to live opposite a drugs den in Barnstaple..and that’s just a ridiculous state to be in. And would we be in that state if it wasn’t for second homes?”

While this interview tended to elicit explicit connections between second homes and the experience of unaffordable price of property the interviewee also
highlighted a different property use: buy-to-let, which was also raised at the beginning of this section:

CM8:  “I should say I actually live in a second home. I live in someone’s second home. They had it as a second home for about a year and a half and then they tried to holiday let it but it didn’t really work out, they didn’t make their money back on it, so then they started letting it as a full time let. And it’s a couple who live in Leicester who are about seven years off retirement and they’re waiting to retire down here and making me pay their mortgage until then.”

This type of property has similar housing market impact in terms of removing a property from the owner-occupier market, although buy-to-let properties are understood to have different social implications as there is someone living there temporarily but full time (expanded on in Chapter Six). The removal of a permanent dwelling property whether for buy-to-let or as a second home was also raised by a policy maker during interview:

PM2:  “You know if lots of people want ‘Mars’ bars the price of ‘Mars’ bars doesn’t go up they just make more, you know, but you can’t do that with houses. So if people are buying houses, as buy-to-lets as well, and again I have a slight uncomfortable about that, but on the other hand you would wouldn’t you if you’ve got no guarantee of a pension it’s a pension scheme.”

Interviewer:  “Yeah and cos there’s such a demand for rent anyway cos people can’t afford..” [interrupted]

PM2:  “Cos the people can’t afford them! Actually the buy-to-let-ers are probably the equivalent of what were the first time buyers cos it’ll be in that market that they’re buying, predominantly. But they also add to that problem of keeping the prices high cos if there wasn’t those people who were buying second homes and there wasn’t those people buying buy-to-lets then the prices would perhaps drop..I don’t know if they would but in, the last time there was an economic crisis, in the late 80s house prices did drop, they went down by nearly 50% in some cases. We haven’t seen that kind of drop and that’s because it’s being artificially inflated or kept afloat, partly by government interventions and partly by buy-to-let. That’s my view.”
This summarises the general understanding that such property uses, through increasing demand, contribute to house prices rising above what a person on the average local salary in north Devon can afford to buy. Another policy maker interview adds to this debate when asked their instinctive reaction to second home ownership in North Devon they gave this response:

PM1\textsuperscript{19}: “Oddly enough I don’t think second homes are the problem. They’re a small part of the problem but the fundamental problem is the lack of affordable supply of housing in a low wage area. Second homes don’t help, particularly in some communities.”

This perception has been drawn out throughout this discussion although this excerpt perhaps downplays the impact of second homes to some extent as this interviewee did express concern about parishes with high proportions of second homes that are “on the verge of unsustainability”. Other NDC Officers made similar comments regarding the presence of low wages intensifying the lack of affordability of housing when asked the impact of second homes:

PM6: “So we’ve got really low incomes. At the same time in other places, in Northern cities and things, where you’ve got low incomes you’ve got low house prices but we haven’t cos we’ve got.. Houses are bid up by people coming in from London, or wherever, to have a holiday home so that local people.. If you look at the demographics there’s a big narrowing – when people hit 20 they bugger off to someplace either where they can study or get a job, and they can’t afford to live here. So it takes the working age population away because it drives up house prices [...] And also second home owners then having had a second home and popping down for weekends and things, and summer holidays, often retire down here and they open a tea shop or something to keep their hand in and have a few quid, and pay somebody minimum wage which continues to depress the local economy. So I think second homes have this very short term impact of buying somebody’s house..which is a beneficial

\textsuperscript{19}A former senior NDC Officer and the current at time Chief Executive of North Devon+ which provides a primary focus for regeneration, business support and tourism across Northern Devon. It is the economic delivery agency for the area working with local councils and the private sector to deliver projects and initiatives that encourage and support business growth, improve quality of life, and address social and economic inequalities.
economic impact, but over the long term it does drive down wage levels.”

Here second homes are perceived to generate inflated house prices which are in turn seen to contribute to an aging population. Furthermore tourism is considered to bring initial economic benefit but ultimately has a tendency to reproduce low salaries associated with the tourist industry (discussed further in Section 5.5.6).

A synopsis of housing affordability in North Devon is provided by the following NDC Officer’s instinctive reaction to second homes:

PM2: “When you look at the increase in housing over the last several years, and if you take that number and take out of it the number of increase in second homes getting 10% discount, it’s about one in four properties which if for every four properties that are built one you might as well have not bothered building. That’s going to have a knock on effect in terms of a) house prices and b) availability. Obviously being able to afford to buy houses in this area is also affected by the economic downturn, but even when the economy was good there were a lot of people who couldn’t buy a house.”

This details that the leak of a proportion of housing stock to second home properties delivers additional complexity in trying to deliver housing. Plus it reiterates the common connection that increased demand from second homes contributes to inflating house prices. Having been discussing that individuals have a legal entitlement to own a second home should they wish, PM8 recognised the influence of personal purchase power and personal finances determining the capacity to purchase property and perception of affordability. However this is not solely dependent upon personal finance, as there are significant house price variations between locations on a very small scale. A Braunton based estate agent acknowledged this:

Estate Agent: “Price differentials between Croyde and say Barnstaple are pretty significant. A bog standard bungalow in Barnstaple could easily sell at £180-£200,000; the same thing in Croyde probably would be £300,000 maybe £350,000. So there’s a big difference there.”
The review of house prices used above also suggested that house prices in Croyde (within Georgeham parish) were on average £100,000 higher than the average house price in Georgeham village. The house price uplift of being within proximity to water has been confirmed by research conducted by Knight Frank which suggests that “prime waterfront properties in the UK are worth an average of 54% more than their inland counterparts (Knight Frank, 2013). In addition to the influence of location the estate agent interviewed also detailed that house prices can be due to personal decisions and finances:

**Estate Agent:** “I sold a house that was purchased almost exactly two years previously at a figure just short of £600,000 - a second home/holiday home. I went to inspect it this week and had to report to the owner that if he was intent on selling it within a month or two or three the sale price would have been £400,000. That’s not because the market’s dropped hugely, that’s because he paid barking mad stupid money for it in the first place and wouldn’t have been advised by anybody with any experience of what a realistic price was for that sort of style and size of property. So if one is irrational enough to leap off a cliff without a parachute there’s usually a bit of a consequence with that.”

Personal purchasing power determined the price of this property but this is likely to have had a wider knock-on impact of paying above market value for this property.

The final estate agent quote regarding second home connection to house prices suggests second home sales do not directly compete with first time buyer properties:

**Estate Agent:** “The reality of the impact, with regard to the rest of the market, and people will always try to point the finger: ‘what about first time buyers and their inability to get into the market because of property prices.’ Well it’s true the acquisition of a second home does take an available property out of the market place, but in my experience it is seldom the sort of properties that first time buyers will ever be likely to buy,
so they’re not directly competing with first time buyers on that basis.”

The extent to which this may be true is perhaps a source for further research. The quote refers to the lack of implications for first time buyers based on the type of property rather than the issue regarding the removal of a property that could be used as a permanent dwelling property and knock on effects. Furthermore this view overlooks the social implications of second home properties on neighbouring houses (Chapter Six).

The findings in this section regarding the relationship between second homes and house prices reinforce the argument expressed in the existing literature (Chapter Three) that there are many nuanced influences on the housing market and housing affordability. For the majority of research participants it is perceived that second homes place an additional pressure on the property market, as expressed in the literature, and are therefore likely to contribute to house price inflation. This relationship is reinforced through the significant correlation between 2010 sold house prices and the number of second homes across North Devon District. However, this relationship cannot be determined as causal as there are many other pressures influencing house prices. This study did not have the scope to attempt to examine second homes either in isolation or as a collective but rather attempted an indicative study of the relationship and perceived relationships between house prices and presence of second homes. The purchase of a ‘home’ in contrast to a ‘property’ is often an emotional process, especially when there is a desire to buy but inability to do so. This has mingled with the purchase of property from a business perspective and therefore discussions during research regarding house prices contrasted from being emotionally loaded to pragmatic depending on personal circumstances. Nevertheless these examples offer empirical demonstrations of the opinions and experiences regarding relationships between house prices and second homes within the research locations.

5.6 Second Homes and Sustainable Communities

The final section of this chapter will begin to review the implications of second homes framed in terms of their role within Egan’s approach to sustainable communities. The Egan Wheel of Sustainability (2004) has eight segments
understood to facilitate judging the sustainability of communities and is used by NDC’s planning department (Section 2.8.4). The presence of second homes will be reviewed within the context of each segment\(^\text{20}\) in order to further examine socio-economic impacts in line with sustainable community attainment. NDC’s planning department acknowledges there are difficulties in using strategies such as the Egan Wheel, not least because the guidelines may not fit with local circumstances. This is demonstrated in the following quote describing the planning department’s sustainable community vision:

PM3: “The policies that we’ve got emerging, we would certainly support them where it would make a community more sustainable. What that means would be different for different communities: a bit of growth might help them keep the village school open; in other areas what they really need is affordable housing, to help enable let’s say a more balanced age profile[...] So there are a whole load of things that could make a village more sustainable, it isn’t necessarily about low carbon sustainability, it’s about enabling, effectively enabling, the community or village to survive, to continue to evolve. It’s not about being static cos sustainability isn’t about stopping anything.”

This quote raises a lot of important points for how sustainable communities are viewed within the local council and planning policy makers in North Devon. It suggests that communities all differ as to what enables the community to be sustainable. The interviewee also demonstrated how planning can endeavour to encourage people to act in a certain way, viewed through the lens of governmentality these endeavour to draw individual behaviour in line with national policy objectives:

PM3: “Obviously there are other sustainability issues, we’ve looked at, for example, which villages have got what facilities in them and in practice there’ll be some settlements with nothing and I can think of a few locally: Ashford is quite big but it’s got a church and nothing else and you have to argue in terms of sustainable communities is it appropriate to put more housing there if everyone’s just going to drive. Whereas other villages with the key facilities, so it would be an obvious place to put growth. Not just to help the community grow and evolve but because it will also reduce the need to travel.”

\(^\text{20}\)The ‘social and cultural’ segment will be reviewed in Chapter Six, and ‘governance’ in Chapter Seven.
The positioning of affordable housing in a location that would endeavour to change behaviour through reducing the need to travel would fulfil two objectives. However, the planning department also recognises that the outcomes may not be as planned because people, understandably, do not act rationally in line with policy. Similarly the need to consider sustainability in terms of each settlement alludes to the discursive implementation of policy through local interpretation. While reference was made to reducing the need to travel the quote also raises that sustainability should not be seen as intrinsically linked to ‘low carbon’, something that was repeatedly raised by policy makers during interviews.

This idea that a sustainable community should not be normative but developed as specific to each settlement based on individual circumstances is a theme recognised in the literature (Section 2.7.1). It also fundamentally questions the practicality of use of the Egan Wheel despite the acceptance of it within the planning policy team. This viewpoint highlights the positioning of the Egan Wheel as mere guidelines and that as a ‘technology of government’ its delivery is challenged by both local circumstances and the local government and local population. Acceptance of the Egan Wheel as a sustainability standard would render many communities fundamentally unsustainable rather than considering the means through which each community could move towards sustainability. Egan’s segments are all central sustainability considerations but in terms of delivering sustainability it is natural that some segments will preside over others depending upon location, as well as the stance from which sustainability is being viewed within location. The Egan Wheel perhaps therefore offers an approach of a sustainable community vision from which ‘backcasting’ can occur whereby the community strategy is based around working out how and to what extent this vision can be attained.

The remainder of this section critically evaluates six of the eight Egan Wheel segments while recognising that some issues are more relevant to some communities than others. The segments are not presented in any significant order as Egan’s Wheel suggests equal input from all in generating the sustainable community, nor are the issues discussed within each to be considered in isolation or excluded from other segments.
5.6.1 Housing and Built Environment: “A quality built and natural environment.”
This segment has strong connections with ‘Social and Cultural’ and realises the role of planning in creating a sense of place and of community (see also Section 5.5.3) and providing opportunities for all to live in an area. Egan suggests the sustainable community should foster a sense of place, this perhaps overlooks that communities foster multiple connections to and experiences of place through suggesting that there can be “a sense of place”. Within the framework of second homes this is a very relevant segment, although the responses available within this research sample vary between parishes. To examine the extent to which Egan’s desired “balanced housing market” (2004) is met within the research areas it is crucial to explore the relationship between the volume of second home and affordable units within parishes. Graph 5.44 illustrates that the three parishes with high proportions of second homes have a comparatively very small proportion of affordable units, suggesting an imbalance in the housing available within these parishes. This pattern is not found in the two parishes with smaller volumes of second homes nor across North Devon district as a whole. While second homes may not cause this imbalance it is likely to be a contributing factor through increasing demand. These three locations do however also suffer from development constraints including topographical, such as the coast or land gradient, or legislation due to the designation of protected landscapes. Consequently opportunities to develop new affordable housing in these parishes are limited, to some degree, by the landscape and natural features that attract the second home owners.
The use of a property and the availability of affordable units affect the housing balance in a community. Second homes remove a potential dwelling property from the community but this alone does not determine whether or not a community's sustainability is affected as it may bring some social positives (Chapter Six). The freedom of individuals to spend and invest money as they wish is raised in the quote below:

CM3: “You can’t legislate on how people spend their hard earned money, if they want to buy a second house and they’ve earned their money and can afford to do it well good luck to them. But I do think just to come along and take a property and say ‘it is now no longer a residential property, it’s now a holiday let and I’m going to put it into Business Rates’ I feel very strongly that that should be a planning matter and should be Change of Use, and that way we would get the matter under some sort of control. For instance – where’s all the parking for these places?”

This quote also continues the deep-set discussion of disparity between second and holiday homes, especially in comparison to permanent dwelling properties, whereby second and holiday homes are often considered to be a fundamentally different use of property altering the housing balance. The freedom to be able to
introduce a non-permanent dwelling with either semi-permanent residents or tourists again disrupts this balance within the community population detailing the relevance of housing to sustainability.

Egan’s ‘housing’ segment description also suggests that buildings within the sustainable community should be ‘attractive’. With specific reference to second homes there is a potential positive influence on the aesthetics of an area and the perception that in some cases second homes have higher property maintenance and renovation standards:

PM5: “There are some properties, to be honest with you, that have been bought up by people, in terms of second homes, that have put that property back into a repair state that it wasn’t before. They’ve invested serious amounts of money.”

This issue was also raised as positive by members of the community in the survey’s open questions (n=35 comments) detailing an understanding that second homes perform higher levels of maintenance on properties. In contrast, there were only two suggestions that second homes do not regularly maintain their property or gardens with one response claiming property maintenance was ‘variable’. Ten of these positive responses also referenced other negative impacts such as a belief that local workmen were not used or that the property is still empty for part of the year and not fully contributing to the community. Positive contributions through enhanced upkeep were drawn out through interviews including a couple who had moved into Instow from Cornwall and had invested significant amounts in renovating their own property but recognised others who have acted similarly:

CM5: “You were saying about spending money locally: we employed some local builders and they went away, between them with window people and what not, with £100,000; and that’s happening all over the place here because the properties are being put into good order and that’s another, I think, plus. That the people who’ve got second homes want them to be nice, can afford for them to be nice. A lot of property, like the Estate, unfortunately is not well looked after because they haven’t got the funding, and the tenants tend to therefore not look after as well as they might. So you know there are positives about second homes and the housing stock is in good order.”
Property renovation is therefore understood by this couple to occur simultaneously with second home ownership and providing investment to the local area. This second example from Brendon/Countisbury made similar suggestions about the upkeep of properties by second home owners:

CM1: “It also spruces up the area, as it were, because you tend to find the local farmers don’t tend to bother too much with the aesthetics and they think it’s a waste of money spending money in improving properties.”

Both quotes suggest that there is a comparative lack of care for aesthetics and property from certain individuals living locally. The evidence presented for this segment on housing suggests it receives a strong influence from the presence of second home owners. The use of property, and in particular, the high conversion of dwelling property to second homes (Section 5.2.3vi) directly affects the housing composition of a locality. While this has potential to improve the aesthetics of an area, it is also a fundamentally different use of property and alters the balance of housing availability locally. Housing is a significant issue in considering the sustainability of a community but the ability of a community to overcome some of these housing challenges is often limited. The quality of the natural environment, which is included in the title of this segment, is further examined in the next section as the presence of refuse was raised as a significant issue presented by second homes.

5.6.2 Environmental: “Providing places for people to live in an environmentally friendly way.”

The need to protect natural resources is reviewed as fundamental but not a sole sustainability consideration. The suggestion from Egan that the sustainable community should actively seek the minimisation of climate change and create greener neighbourhoods attempts to spatially connect the local with global issues. It places a degree of responsibility on the community despite the community having potentially limited scope to control. Furthermore, environment actions requiring personal behaviour change, are also placed as the responsibility of the community. In terms of second homes there were few specific references to environmental concerns in the survey comments especially in comparison to reference to social and economic contributions. This is not unexpected as environmental factors do not feature heavily in the existing
literature (Section 3.4.5). Of the environmental comments that were made in the survey the focus was on refuse \((n=4)\) and observations that holiday homes tend to generate more rubbish, leave bins out for extended periods, and were less likely to recycle therefore not contributing to the community or district’s recycling credentials and targets. There were some positive comments \((n=3)\) that suggested that second home owners have a positive influence on and heightened concern about the local environment.

Personal refuse bins were suggested to be a significant issue, mainly in Georgeham, with interviewees discussing business rated properties using the domestic refuse collection cycle rather than paying for the commercial collection:

PM12: “Second homes are a big discussion point in my area at the moment. Most of them do not make provision to have their rubbish collected. So if they are Business Rates they should be on business collection for waste and rubbish, and it started off by all the rubbish being left out on the streets for days; and in Croyde it’s annoying cos it’s a pretty village and .. and it’d just been left out on the main road for days on end. Anyway, getting to the bottom of this there’s more people now on Business Rates, second home owners in our area than there’s ever been before, and of course the district council and the tax payer here is having to foot the bill for collecting their rubbish cos we have to collect it. You can’t just leave somebody’s rubbish. We’re just going through a process now trying to get hold of all these people to tell them to go and pay for it!”

In addition to the concern that rubbish is left on the streets for prolonged periods which is generated by second and holiday homes, it is also suggested here that there are properties free riding local council refuse services. While the interviewee refers to ‘second homes’ the issue actually regards business rated properties which are considered holiday homes. Therefore this particular issue suggests the increased burden on the refuse service delivery from holiday homes rather than second homes.

The second environmental issue that was raised will be examined in the next section on ‘Transport and Connectivity’ as travel between the primary and
secondary residence is understood to be a particular environmental issue directly related to second home ownership.

5.6.3 Transport and Connectivity: “Good transport services and communication linking people to jobs, schools, health and other services.”

For Egan the sustainable community’s priority is to reduce car dependency, which has already been discussed as highly problematic for rural areas and therefore has limited potential in some areas. Second home ownership also appears to challenge this as the survey data details that 40% of second home owners travel 101-200 miles to their property and 28% travel 201-300 miles and for 69% of these respondents this is the travel between primary and secondary residences. Understanding based upon residents’ observations, conversations with second home owners and local transport knowledge suggests that the majority of these are car journeys. However, one example was provided detailing a couple that travel to their second homes in Instow on public transport:

**CM6:**
“You get people like us that have got time, and people like them in particular, they go back and forth to London totally on public transport, which they pay for, they’re not into free tickets. They buy the bus ticket, they buy the train ticket from Barnstaple and train to London and back and they do it on a point of principle not to do so, and we find here that we don’t use the car so much. We’re fortunate that we can have a bus pass so it’s a bit..”

{Laughter}

**CM5:**
“A bus pass in West Devon isn’t much use cos there aren’t any buses.”

However, this was not understood to be the norm and the particular example was a result of people who have the extra time to travel by public transport. There were suggestive comments (n=7) on the survey that referred to parking issues and/or heavy traffic at peak times due to the additional cars that non-dwelling properties tend to attract, which was also raised in interviews. North Devon is not situated well for the provision of good public transport links connecting people and services. These difficulties were articulated during an interview with a couple in Brendon/Countisbury:
CM2: “In this day and age everybody wants a car to be able to go anywhere because nobody is content to sit here all day long, every day of the whole year or walk to Lynton to do shopping and walk back again. So you’ve got to have cars. Therefore if you haven’t got a car you don’t live here.”

CM1: “There’s no buses.”

CM2: “There’s no buses.”

CM1: “When we first moved in which was almost eleven years ago, there was a bus once and week in the summer.”

CM2: “Then it went to once a fortnight on a Wednesday in the summer. Then it went.”

CM1: “[...] Somerset County Council started to invest in a ‘dial-a-taxi’ service … We got it all set up and local people could get taxi from here to Minehead return for a fiver. They would be taken from their home, to Minehead, dropped off at Tesco or wherever they wanted, picked up whenever they wanted and brought back for a fiver which is fantastic value for money. Erm, and 1 or 2 people used it once or twice and then it disintegrated because of lack of use.”

CM2: “It’s the same with the library – we used to have a mobile library but the only person who ever used it was a lady outside whose house it parked, and she did it on principle to sort of keep it going. And in fact another elderly lady, she used to go, on principle, into Minehead and back on the bus, but the ridiculous thing was you got half an hour in Minehead, because there was only one bus each way, and there was absolutely no point in going to Minehead for half an hour. It wasn’t a shopping bus.”

Therefore the agenda to reduce car dependency runs parallel to the provision and viability of rural public transport depicting two competing rationalities that leave the individual with little option but to be car dependent.

In addition to available alternatives to car dependency the design of the built environment can also influence how people choose to travel. An example was provided during interview of a housing site outside of the research area that was very close to the village centre but the connecting pathway was a long walk so people tended to drive. It was reported that people living here had little
opportunity to meet neighbours as the tendency was for residents to get in their cars. Here planning has influenced travel choices and the experience of community at the very local scale and negatively impacted sustainability goals. As has been demonstrated the sustainability of rural public transport is under pressure and subject to funding cuts. Second homes restricted use of such services may contribute to reduced demand for and therefore viability of these services (Section 5.5.4). Issues regarding parking and traffic may be as much tourism related as the results of second home owners. On the other hand one resident suggested that:

“If all properties were fully occupied the roads would be too busy and there would be more parking problems. Partial occupancy keeps it quieter with fewer disputes but SH owners should pay the full community charge.” (3/59)

A comparison of the volume of traffic that holiday homes, second homes and permanent residents contribute to an area is an area for further research. The research suggested only one example of a second home owner using public transport to travel between properties rather than this appearing widespread. While transport is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions and a sustainable community should review car dependency and travel patterns the ease to which this can be addressed within rural North Devon parishes is limited.

The availability of local services also impacts the need to travel and the level of demand that second home owners place upon other local services will be examined in the next section.

5.6.4 Services: “A full range of appropriate, accessible public, private, community and voluntary services.”

The availability of local services varied between parishes (see also Section 5.5.6). This therefore suggests that Egan’s sustainable community must be a certain size and one which is large enough to support the viability of ‘high quality services’, which renders many small and rural communities in particular intrinsically unsustainable. For example, the size of Brendon in particular does not enable it to support a wide array of parish services, therefore increases resident need to travel. This issue of sustainability is something NDC planning department are conscious of, as was suggested in the planning officer’s quote
at the start of this section: that sustainability needs to be appropriate and have meaning for each community. Connections between second home owners and services were often made in survey comments in terms of second homes contribution, or lack of, to council tax. Survey comments (n=4) regarding the scarcity of services available in the local community were mostly (n=3) from Brendon/Countisbury. Second homes were occasionally described in survey comments (n=6) as the cause for a lack of local services, or used the description ‘ghost town’.

There were a few (n=3) suggestions that second homes lead to fewer families and reduced potential students for schools. However, this was not confirmed during communication with Georgeham Primary School\(^2\) as their response included the following:

“I don’t think second homes impact on us at all. If they were available and cheaper for local new buyers (presuming they’re young and will start families) then maybe this would be an issue.”

(Headteacher, Georgeham Primary School)

This correspondence expresses difficulty in assessing the issues as it is impossible to know how a property would be occupied if it weren’t a second home, nevertheless the high proportion of second homes in Georgeham was not perceived to be impacting the parish Primary School. The headteacher detailed that the school roll was currently high, forecasted to be high with intake coming mainly from Georgeham and Croyde villages. This contrasts with comments suggesting that in Instow (n=7) the local school does have a majority intake from surrounding villages rather than Instow itself. The lower proportions of under 18s within Instow’s age profile (Graph 5.7) perhaps reinforces this however no further information was received from the school. During a Georgeham interview factors influencing school roll and school catchment areas were further discussed including a comment previous to the quote that Ofsted rates Georgeham Primary School ‘Outstanding’:

CM12: “I know Georgeham reasonably well, and I’d say it is oversubscribed because there are people from outside the catchment area trying to get in. But because of the new building in Georgeham: Glebefield, there are quite a few new young families in the area. This area can

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\(^2\)All schools within the parishes were contacted however only Georgeham participated in the research.
sustain it anyway but, but...if there are more people coming in and buying second homes, or be it places being used as holiday homes, yeah that sort of thing.”

The interviewee was referring to Georgeham School not being under threat from semi-permanent second home residents but that many parish schools may not be so fortunate. Georgeham School has a viable existence despite the current volume of second homes within this parish, suggesting in this instance second homes do not appear to pose a substantial threat. However, as has already been discussed the provision of services in rural areas are under various pressures that impact their sustainability.

Comments regarding the positive contributions that second homes make to services include reference to the belief that second homes help to sustain services (n=4), although explanation as to how wasn’t detailed. There was an additional belief that second homes taxes create a net benefit through the amount of tax paid exceeding their demand on services (n=7). This cannot be verified through this research and the dominant opinion from permanent residents was that they should receive a discount, including this strong opinion:

Interviewer: “The argument from some second homes owners is that while they do get a 10% reduction on council tax..
[interrupted]"

CM12: “It’s outrageous that they get a reduction at all!”

Interviewer: “But their argument is that they barely use the services because they are barely here, so they overpay.”

CM12: “They want to live here without paying for it – that’s what I feel. This area still needs bin collections and schools and roads and whatever.”

Here the attitude is that reduced tax rates created a burden for permanent residents by not contributing the same 100% rates. While there were some positive comments in the survey regarding second homes and tax contributions these were predominantly negative (n=43). Most comments centred on the opinion that second homes should be charged full rate including this response from a previous a non-permanent resident:

“Before we lived in Instow we had a holiday cottage here and could never understand why we were given a reduction in council tax. We would have been quite happy to pay full rate.” (5/180)
While this respondent would have been happy to pay the full rate others felt that they their use of services doesn’t demand a full tax payment. Furthermore any council tax payment, even at the reduced rate, was often recognised as a benefit \((n=21)\). Assessing the cost of second home owners use of services would depend upon the level of use of the property which could not be generalised therefore making this assessment highly complex.

Further concern was expressed in interviews and the survey \((n=5)\) about Business Tax Rated holiday homes, and despite the potential tourist economy and employment opportunities previously discussed, these properties were also viewed as a potential cause of leak of local tax revenue:

PM5: “No that’s the big issue [name removed] is worried about at the moment. In fact the figures are showing that if the business rates come back to us it’s about a 7-8% shortfall which is actually quite a lot of money, which we’re obviously concerned about who’s going to pay that.”

This raises a significant difference between tax revenue impacts of second homes and Business Rated holiday homes, which is connected to the refuse issue (Section 5.5.2). This section has concentrated on second homes impact on services through council tax provision, schools and connects with the discussion about public transport, which also referenced the mobile library. The frequency of references to council tax funds by individuals and policy makers in this research is to be expected at this time of heavy public service cuts especially as removing the second home discount could increase revenue. The potential cost or benefit that second homes with their supposed reduced demand on services, and Business Rated holiday homes have on local council revenue and expenditure is unclear and a provides an avenue for further research. Further examination of local private services is presented in ‘Economy’ (Section 5.5.6). The extent to which community members participate in certain services and opportunities provided in the local parish will be further examined in Chapter Seven. This issue of equity, has been touched upon in this section regarding differences of opinion surrounding the level of tax people should pay, and is to be reviewed in the next section.
5.6.5 Equity: “People of all ages, races, cultures, sexes and abilities are given access to services, jobs and education in the community.”

Considering social justice and minimal levels of access to various basic needs should be available to all spatially and temporally within the sustainable community, echoing the Brundtland Report’s sustainability principles of intra and intergenerational equity. Disparity of opinions regarding the rate of council tax second home owners pay features heavily in when considering equity and second homes. Equity is also considered as second home owners cannot vote in their second home area and can therefore have little formal governance input. However, during interview a second home owner acknowledged that they didn’t feel they should vote in their second home locality in North Devon:

CM11: “Well we vote in Birmingham and we could vote in Devon, if we chose to not vote in Birmingham we could vote in Devon, so I understand entirely why we can’t vote in two places. My husband worked in local government for about 40 years and I’m still working, I work for Birmingham Children’s Hospital so at the moment it is logical for us to vote in Birmingham as we’ve got more of a stake, if you like, in Birmingham than we have in Devon at the moment. But when we’re fully retired we could easily spend more time in Devon and then it would be logical to vote there.”

This respondent has a very pragmatic understanding and approach to voting rights although others may debate that as tax rates are paid an input into local governance should be permitted. However, there are also those who feel that second home owners’ limited presence delimits their rights to participate in formal governance decisions.

A third equity issue relating to second homes is that there are some individuals who don’t or can’t own a single property to live in whereas others own multiple:

PM2: “I think there’s something intrinsically wrong with people owning two houses when some people can’t afford to own one, and whatever you might think about “well I want somewhere to go”. And I know people who own two houses but I still can’t get over that because of the very fact that some people can afford two houses and some people can’t even afford one seems wrong, and if the people who had two houses only had one, the prices would drop.”
This is a very emotive topic as it compares those who are looking for a property to live in and those wishing to use the property sporadically, and emphasises wealth inequality in the UK. This issue connects with discussions about house prices (Section 5.4) and their perceived relationship with second homes due to increasing housing demand and removing a permanent dwelling property from housing stock. However, as has been discussed (Section 5.5.1) individuals have the liberty to invest their money as they desire which may be in property. Other equity issues include accessibility difficulties for those reliant upon public transport and challenges presented by the lack of local facilities in some rural parishes, which is further examined in the next section on the local economy.

5.6.6 Economy: “A flourishing and diverse local economy.”

The economy is one of the three original primary tenets of sustainable development. Egan’s sustainable community economy is somewhat naïve appearing to suggest it can be isolated and overlooking competition presented by larger businesses and corporations. Furthermore, it fails to acknowledge that not all communities will contain the critical mass of population needed to support Egan’s local sustainable economy in addition to the role of personal choice within the free market to shop, for example, wherever the individual desires. The economic contribution from second homes was recognised in the literature as one of the most likely positive benefits to the local community, although variable between locations (Section 3.4.3). This was reflected through positive comments referencing economic contributions \( n=154 \) in the survey outweighing negative \( n=24 \). Positive comments include the understanding that second home owners, and holiday home tourists are perceived to contribute to the local economy through having an increased disposable income that they spend locally, eating meals out for instance. However, examples of negative contributions were also perceived to include the following:

“Very little indeed. The people who own the house next to me never use the village shop when they come down they have all their food etc delivered.” (3/287)

“Apart from odd meal out most spend no money in village or even local town. Supermarkets do well.” (5/55)
Here second home owners were not thought to use local shops, rather using supermarkets. Alongside this, permanent residents often admitted that they do not support their local businesses as much as they could:

CM7: “It’s circumstances: if I had the time, I would go in to Barnstaple and use ‘Butcher’s Row’ and the ‘Pannier Market’ for my vegetables and get fresh food. But I suppose I could make the time but I don’t choose to because the amount of time I do at work I want to enjoy the free time I have got. I do use ‘Johns’ but not as much as, well definitely less than when I first came to live here.”

Instow has its own supermarket: ‘Johns’ but this resident is not in the minority in detailing that they choose to use a chain supermarket over an independent store, even though there is a feeling they should support local businesses. However, this action is considered to be additionally detrimental if the action is completed by second home owners. This briefly highlights the mix of opinion regarding the financial contribution of second homes, which is often juxtaposed with the same actions creating the same impacts undertaken by permanent residents’. Nevertheless, there is an overall recognition that second homes bring a degree of positive economic impact. The same attitude was offered by local businesses that participated in the research with the following two responses:

“*We do have a lot of holiday homes in our village, but this doesn’t seem to affect our trade to much during the winter months. Over the years we have built up a good evening trade and find that we are supported by the local people. It probably helps that we are born and bred in the area, and know a lot of people. Having said that we do tend to rely on visitors for our trade during the day, and find that if the weather is good then we do well, so again during the winter months trade is not so good.*”

(The Wayfarer Inn, Instow)

“Yes we are indeed a seasonal business however we have a very good local following allowing us to continue trading through the winter months. We rely heavily on a good summer in terms of volume of visitors to the area. It’s all about storing enough nuts for the quieter period.”

(The Rock Inn, Georgeham)
Here reliance upon the peak seasons is acknowledged as necessary for survival, but both suggest they receive good support from residents, and the periods of heavier trade sustains the business through quieter winter months.

Section 3 of the survey enabled a comparison of the economic contribution of second home owners to permanent residents through asking respondents to suggest how much individuals claim to spend within the parish per week, not on taxes or rent but in local goods or services. The results show that 62% of all responses spend under £50 per week and a higher proportion (26%) of second home owners spend £101-200 a week compared with 10% of permanent residents. Further comparison through a grand mean of each household’s declared spend was calculated and cross-referenced with the length of occupation per year for non-permanent residents. The results show that permanent residents are estimated to spend between £1603 and £3719 annually within their parish whereas second homes are estimated to spend between £1104 and £4276. Holiday homes have a lower spend range of £807 to £2920 although the tourist residents renting the property are likely to increase the economic contribution of such a property. Second homes therefore appear to have a greater potential spend value than permanent residents but a lower minimum spend, suggesting that the guaranteed income from permanent residents across the year is worth more to the parish economy than second home spend.

This was reiterated through the statistical difference between spend per week and property description that was found for the whole sample (H=26.203; p=<0.05) where second homes have the highest spend and permanent residents the lowest. This pattern was reflected in Braunton (H=8.127; p=<0.05), Georgeham (H=142.32; p=<0.05) and Instow (H=82.56; p=<0.05) (Graph 5.45) but no other locations. When examined for difference in spend between locations the results showed a statistical difference for the whole sample (H=100.987; p=<0.05) and permanent residents (H=109.053; p=<0.05) but no difference between the weekly spend of second home properties and location. Permanent residents have the lowest spend in Fremington and highest in Braunton, the latter could be due to Braunton’s larger shopping centre providing a greater number opportunities than the other areas.
Spend on renovation was often expressed as a source economic benefit but whether completed by permanent residents or second homes these are one-off spends and are not guaranteed to occur in every property. An expression of understanding that second home owners have a higher spend was reflected during interview with a community member in discussing whether second homes pose a threat to the local community:

CM11: “Equally quite a lot of those coastal local communities would struggle, probably, without the sort of earning power and the contribution towards the economy of the area that second home owners make. You know because ours is quite a long way away from the major employer, Barnstaple is the nearest place for substantial employment and there would be limited people who would be prepared probably to travel further afield than Barnstaple to work.”

Here it is suggested that second home owners help sustain some local community economies through providing employment opportunities. The level of economic contribution of holiday homes is presented in this second example from a section of interview with two permanent residents discussing the differences between second homes and commercially let holiday homes:
Interviewer: “Do you think there is a difference between ones that are let and ones that are used purely as second homes by the owners? Do you think they have a different effect?”

CM1: “On the community?”

Interviewer: “Yeah.”

CM1: “Err..”

CM2: “They have a different effect but I wouldn’t say it’s..”

CM1: “It’s marginal.”

CM2: “It is different.”

CM1: “I think the ones that are let on a commercial basis for holiday makers, they are bringing money into the area on a consistent basis, week in week out and of course around here people come down in the winter to walk so there’s a bit of a rollover of business into the winter as well. It’s not dead. And these people come on holiday for a week, they don’t want to cook at home, they go and spend their money in the pubs and so on. I see it as a good thing.”

The spending power of holiday home users therefore appears to be welcomed by this respondent, in addition to suggesting that holiday homes can help reduce seasonality through full year availability, which was raised in the literature (Mottiar, 2006). Furthermore, commercially let holiday homes were recognised as a form of local business resulting from a diversification of rural economies:

CM14: “I’ve nothing against people having, people in the village buying a second property to let it because that’s their business that’s how they make their money. But I am concerned that if it’s what I would describe as a ‘dead property’ because it’s just used by perhaps a few holiday makers and the owners who live miles away that does worry me.”

While helping diversify and provide employment opportunities, tourism is not seen as entirely beneficial as it often generates predominantly low skilled and seasonal work depressing wages:

PM6: “Yeah if there wasn’t any tourism in North Devon we’d be much wealthier I reckon. People don’t agree with me on this, but I think if we didn’t have any tourism. If we, if..if Hinkley Point power station had gone up like the Japanese one, no no maybe that’s a bad..”
PM5: “That’s a bad example surely...we don’t want that! Christ.”

PM6: “But it’s tourism that drives down wages because it’s a low wage sector.”

PM5: “And farming. That’s not highly paid either.”

Therefore while second and holiday home owners’ spend power can be of benefit to the service provider it can have a negative and repressive impact on the economy and employment. Furthermore tourism was suggested to impact other service users, for example by pushing up the prices of local services in Georgeham parish:

CM15: “And it is interesting that going into the village and some of the pubs in the winter it’s so nice because it’s time when people can actually find the time to come out and afford to eat. And it’s quite a nice community spirit but whether that’s fair or not because in the summer the prices are more expensive. And even down to things like hot chocolates – a special offer will be a ‘Winter Warmer Hot Chocolate’ just cos there’s nobody here with that money to spend and the only way they’ll keep the trade is to make it affordable for more local people to come in.”

This not only suggests that commodity prices are inflated by tourists with increased spending power but also that residents don’t have the time or opportunity to use services within the village during peak times. In contrast while the effects of second homes are acknowledged, Instow is understood by this policy maker and resident of Instow, to be thriving throughout the year due to support from both residents and tourists:

Interviewer: “So what is your instinctive reaction to second homes in local communities?”

PM10: {sigh} “I’ve been thinking about that...it's quite difficult. Second homes as we all know does have its problems in terms of people coming in and the way it affects communities. But on the other hand the economy; let's take Instow for instance we have thriving businesses in terms of restaurants and err pubs and so on, and a shop which relies heavily, not just upon the community but also people who come down for holidays, either they themselves or whoever they may let the house to for whatever period of time. And so it’s a balance, and of course the downside is obviously the properties
As this quote demonstrates North Devon suffers a series of pressures on the economy (Section 4.5). Both of these interview quotes reinforce the suggestions from the two pubs that business is managed well, but from a resident’s perspective the business perhaps succeeds at the expense of the local resident’s capacity to use the service. Second homes can bring significant economic benefit although the results do not demonstrate this is necessarily greater than that of a permanent resident or is able to differentiate the spend rate of second home owners and holiday home users, another avenue for further research. To conform to Egan’s description, all residents should ‘be encouraged to spend their wages locally’ but more importantly ‘successful businesses should create better standards of living for more people in the community’ (2004). The examples here suggest that in economic terms second homes both contribute and detract from this and the level of spend may depend on the level of involvement with the local community (Chapter Six).

In terms of the segments reviewed so far the equity of owning a second home was questionable, especially when there are others unable to own a primary home. The issue of transport related to access to the car or availability of public transport which is heavily influenced by the rural research location generating a degree of car dependency for both permanent and second home resident. Second homes naturally fit into debates within the housing segment through considering the justness of the removal of a potential permanent dwelling property from housing stock through using it as a second home. Furthermore, there are potential relationships between proportions of second homes and inflated house prices, although this is also subject to a series of market influences. There were few comments regarding the environmental influence of second homes reflecting the literature. These focussed on the potential for an increased volume of refuse following occupancy to be left out and the potential for second home properties to be better maintained. The services available in a community often depend upon the size and location of the community and are seen to be a limiting factor in terms of achieving Egan’ vision. There was a debate within the research as to whether second homes relieved pressure on
services or contributed to their demise through lack of presence to support, and whether their council tax contributions were a net benefit or cost to the provision of local services. This links into the final segment reviewed in this chapter as the economic contribution of second homes was often expressed to be the most positive contribution although this was not unanimously accepted. Second homes appear to present a potential for higher spend in the parish community but there is no guarantee this is retained within the parish nor is it certain than this is of higher monetary value than the spend of a permanent resident. The evidence so far is not suggesting second homes positively contribute to sustainability, or that they can be solely implicated in contributing to unsustainability, however they are perceived to play a role in the latter in conjunction with other factors.

5.7 Chapter Summary
This chapter established that the survey data was representative and then used quantitative and qualitative data to consider the socio-economic implications of second home ownership to the sustainability of host communities. It has suggested that there are differences between second and holiday homes but the similarities and nuanced property uses place these properties as viewed along a ‘housing continuum’. This reinforces the difficulties in defining second homes but offers an enhanced understanding of second and holiday homes will contribute to potential management approaches of these properties. Viewed broadly there are significant differences in the frequency of use, type of users and type of tax paid between these properties. Second homes tend to offer greater continuity of occupants than holiday homes and the latter also run potential for becoming ‘party’ houses within residential streets. However, both types of property are likely to occupied for less than six months per year, and contribute varying degrees of sporadic semi-permanent residents to their host communities. The nuanced differences between each property, and the occupants, detailed the problematic nature of attempting to define types of property and generalising about the impacts relating to different property uses. However, second and holiday home properties are both considered to present a materially different use of property to that of a permanent dwelling property, which is something that is not currently recognised in policy.
The research results confirmed that residents believe second homes bring ‘both positive and negative’ benefits to the host parish, with a higher proportion claiming ‘solely negative’ contributions than ‘solely positive’. The significant presence of second homes within communities is confirmed as a large proportion of respondents, slightly over half, feel there are too many second homes in their parish; but nearly as many feel there are a sustainable amount, for now. The research confirmed the literature in presenting a strong perception from the qualitative research that second homes place additional demand on housing that contributes towards inflated house prices. This finding was also presented in the positive correlation between numbers of second homes and house prices in parishes across North Devon. This is accompanied by a higher average house price to average salary housing affordability ratio in parishes with higher proportions of second homes The research outlined second homes leak permanent dwelling properties from a community, as this was the most common previous use of a second home property. However, the research also recognised that there are a range of market influences impacting house prices, and that the impact of available housing and inequity of those who own multiple properties and those who own none was found to be a significant.

There appear to be significant differences between the demographic profiles of permanent residents and second home owners as the latter are likely to have higher incomes, are more likely to have a Higher Education qualification and be larger households with more under 18 year olds. More generally opinions about second homes include the likelihood for permanent residents to suggest there are ‘too many’ second homes in their parish. While the majority of responses suggest an understanding of both positive and negative contributions from second homes, those who are less positive about the contribution are also less positive about the volume of second homes, more likely to be permanent residents and are generally less positive about the community. Across all locations there was a higher level of responses for ‘solely negative’ contributions than ‘solely positive’ suggesting that while second homes are perceived to bring both positive and negative contributions, there is a more negative reception of second homes.

In order to assess the contribution of second homes to the sustainability of host communities this chapter critically used six of the eight segments of the Egan
Wheel (2004) sustainable community toolkit. The use of this toolkit remains problematic as it consists of a series of assumptions about communities, particularly regarding the size of a community, inadvertently rendering certain communities unsustainable, and the suggestion that it is place-based, to be further explored in the next chapter. In terms of Egan’s segments reviewed in this chapter second homes have potential to generate negative impacts within all, but this is combined with some positive influences. The research revealed that economic contributions were predominantly perceived to be the biggest positive contribution to the parish community, again confirming the literature. This was confirmed through the proportions of references to economic contributions and the survey results suggesting potential for higher spend within the parish than permanent residents, although the latter may offer a greater minimum guaranteed spend within the local community. The sustainability contributions are understood to vary between parishes making some segments more relevant than others in different locations. Furthermore, second home impacts can be household specific making complicating making generalisations about the contributions of second homes.

Second homes exist within a range of community influences but can be considered as positively and negatively contributing to the sustainability of host communities. Second homes were suggested to have significant social influences on the host community and these will be reviewed in the next chapter.
Chapter 6: Notions Of Community And The Contributions Second Homes

6.1 Introduction To Chapter

This chapter presents the empirical research that explores the second research objective: ‘To further understandings of notions of community from policy maker and resident perceptions and review the role second homes and their occupants are perceived to have within host communities.’ The notions of community outlined in existing literature have been presented in Chapter Two. This chapter will examine articulations of community as expressed by research participants, alongside the influence of second homes through generating semi-permanent presences, and in line with this literature. This chapter examines the role of place in understanding community arguing that it is important to residents’ conceptions of community but not necessary. It also presents the notion that individuals play a significant role in their experience of community, and of the individuals they interact with. Finally, it assesses differences between different property users, and the influence of semi-permanent residents on the community, which was often raised as a significant issue in research participants' experience of community and the social sustainability of host communities.

As with the previous chapter this chapter will present both qualitative and quantitative results based around research objective two as this reflects the data collection process. It will use qualitative data to build on the broad understandings of community taken from the survey data. The chapter is split into five sections: firstly, examination of the empirical understandings of community and feelings of community. Secondly, it will consider the influence and importance of place and the 'local' within community and related policy, as well as reviewing associated problems with attempts to define community boundaries. Thirdly, it will examine the individual’s symbiosis with community through using multivariate statistical analysis of survey data. This will examine the characteristics of groups of respondents who gave similar responses to community based variables in the survey. Two distinct groups were identified of those more positive and more negative about their parish community and this chapter will detail that these groups share similar characteristics. Fourth, it will examine notions of community in terms of the sustainable community. Finally, it
explores the specific role of second homes and their occupants within the social sustainability of host communities.

6.2 Empirical Understandings Of Community
This chapter will begin by presenting some broad understandings of community that were raised through interviews to examine how this concept tended to be portrayed in the empirical research. These findings will be examined in line with the literature presented in Chapter Two and the expression of community in policy. Before detailing some of the empirical findings this section will briefly recap how community is presented in the Egan Wheel (2004) tool for assessing sustainable communities which is used throughout this thesis to frame the presentation of results. The Egan Wheel’s role as a governing technology for sustainable communities within NDC planning department makes it relevant as a tool for analysis. With regard to this chapter on community Egan's segment for ‘Social & Cultural’ in which the vision is for “Vibrant, harmonious and inclusive communities” (ibid) is the key reference point. The description includes a series of factors that the document suggests a sustainable community should strive for whereby the first is detailed as “a sense of community identity and belonging” (ibid). The literature review presented the argument for understanding community as a multiplicity making Egan's approach intrinsically problematic. Egan’s suggestion of a singular sense of community identity as both desirable and attainable does not acknowledge the likely existence of a community of communities.

6.2.1 A Sense Of Community
North Devon’s ‘Sustainable Community Strategy’ (2009) recognises the importance and strength of the region’s sense of ‘community’ particularly within rural parishes, which is reflective of a governmental rationality suggesting a narrative for the role of community in terms of the “needs and problems in society” (Fischer, 2003 in Barnes and Prior, 2009:18). This opinion was reflected in conversation with policy makers and community members; however whether a sense of community was important to the individual, or due to its situation as a planning rationality will be explored throughout this chapter. Considering first an interview with two policy makers, the following was added to conversation about permanent residents participating in ‘community’: 
PM6: “I think that the community ties in places around North Devon are generally quite strong, there’s always some outliers and antisocial people but that’s life. Generally the communities tend to be quite cohesive. There might be two cohesive factions fighting each other but at least they’re cohesive.”

Here the strength of the heterogeneous community is presented in contrast to the suggestion that community cohesiveness requires a homogenous community. This is important as diversity within a community is understood to help facilitate community resilience (section 2.6.1).

The sense of community understood to be experienced in North Devon was also raised by a community member in contrasting their current location of residence to previous locations:

CM13: “I grew up somewhere not dissimilar from this in South Wales where there was what you’re describing as the ‘1950s’ kind of community. A lot of the people I would naturally come across through the course of a normal day were actually relatives cos it was that kind of community. And I think that it’s pie in the sky to believe that you could recreate that again cos people don’t run around, except on some of the bigger estates maybe. Having then lived in the Midlands for a number of years, very much in the suburbs, where nobody talks to anybody else, there is a real sense in the villages here still. And I think it is perhaps, it depends what your family make up is, and what you use locally, but I think people who use the church or the shop or have got primary aged children would definitely say there’s a sense of community; and you do get to know people and you do have a shared focus around events and everybody’s genuinely interested in whether somebody develops the village green. All those kind of things so it definitely does feel like there’s a shared responsibility and interest.”

While the contrast between place that this respondent offers will be discussed at greater depth in the next section, here focus is on understandings of community. At this juncture in the interview the discussion had been around avoiding the suggestion of a ‘golden era’ of community (Schofield, 2002), which often arose during interviews when individuals responded to explain what they feel makes a community.
6.2.2 A Perceived ‘Loss’ Of Community

The review of the literature highlighted notions of ‘imagined’ community not reliant on face-to-face contact as well a perceived ‘loss’ of community, which can be interpreted both as subjective and a result of ‘general societal change’ (Anderson, 1991; Cloke and Milbourne, 1992; Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones, 2001; Gilchrist, 2000 in Barton, 2000). The interview respondents fell into three broad categories; firstly those who felt there was local place-community and were a part of it, such as CM13 above. Secondly, those who felt local community existed to an extent but their own community and participation occurred mainly outside of their residential parish. Finally, there were those who felt the local community had diminished and there was little to participate in locally and were reliant on wider networks for participation in community activities. However, while these groups appeared, inevitably these were not distinct categorisations and there was some cross over between them. The following quotes from two policy makers are representative of the third group of those who felt community had diminished. Through referring to relatively long term changes in the parishes these policy makers live in, the two respondents detail what they believe makes community:

PM7: “Um...I think a community that cares about its, um, area, its streets, its general look and well being and you know, erm, cares. The sort of community that if things are going wrong they sort of, um get together and try and put it right. It just...just seems absolutely ages since we had any sort of local local meeting where you know, we...I remember when they wanted to put sewage works down on the manor and the pub was sort of packed to the gunnels with an irate community saying “oh no you don’t”, you know.
{smiling}
Oh yes they did!
{laughter}
It’s ages since we’ve had that sort of community spirit that, you know...I don’t know people seem to shut their doors these days. I think...I think to me a community is where you know you get together to do things, we used to get together to have Whist Drives and Beetle Drives and all sorts of things like that, I mean you’d never see that happening now.”
Here there is an understanding that the settlement has fewer residents who are also leading more isolated and privatised lives, leading to this individual’s perception that there is ‘less’ community than there used to be. This is understood to be due to fewer activities to bring parish residents together therefore less very geographically local social activity. Furthermore, they highlight a change in the type of social activities taking place within the village. This next quote is similarly suggesting in detailing a series of events that used to be well attended that the individual understands to have dwindled without replacement:

PM11: “The community spirit gets severely knocked. I’ll give you an example here. I can’t remember how long back but probably 20-25 years ago know I put in place and ran an inter-village, cos we’ve got twin villages, sports week and it started up as a Mortehoe versus Woolacombe football match. And it didn’t go like that at all..it ran for ten years, solid, for the whole week we had rugby, football, netball, swimming gala, darts, skittle, pool – the whole lot, quiz, car treasure hunt. And it was packed and we’d have a hundred plus doing the village run and all ages. I don’t know whether that would happen now, it may well do but I don’t know. The community spirit then was terrific.”

Again there is a comparison to community spirit being generated by very locally centred activities that are not understood to occur anymore, placing their understanding of community firmly in the local realm. The above quote contrasts with the opinions of other community members, including CM13 above who feels that community is still strong, representing the role of personal interpretations in both understanding and experiencing community. Those who feel there has been a loss of community over time demonstrates how individuals can often be reminiscent when talking about community, however this perception was recognised and critiqued by an individual in Brendon:

CM2: “But my point is but it..yes there’s a death of the village as it used to be but now it is people who have, a certain amount of money, who have certain tastes, who have mobility, their own vehicles etc and they like going into towns and so on because most of them have come from towns. They like the tranquillity and they want to join in village activities but..and for most of them in order to do that you’ve got to have earned a
certain amount of money therefore you’re going to be a certain age, therefore you’re not going to have small children … Now if you’re thinking of coming here with children: the children are going to go ‘I don’t want to go here. What a dump. Nothing to do’ Etc. And the children that we have had over the time we’ve lived here, they’ve all moved back into Lynton, at least because at least the kids they go to school with are around and it’s easier to get to school. It’s an off-put for children; they don’t want to live here. So all this ‘we used to have all these children, a Sunday School, and the kids would sit in a field’. Kids do not want to sit in a field making daisy chains en masse.”

Two key issues are raised here; firstly, it emphasises the notion of a ‘personal community’ (Pahl and Spencer, 2004), which will be discussed below, and how increased mobility often leads people to choose their residential location based on personal criteria, such as employment elsewhere, rather than remaining where the individual was born. Secondly, it suggests the notion that community has changed rather than diminished and the current community mould may not appeal or necessarily be accessible to all, which is an inevitability, but, nevertheless, the local community is felt to function successfully. The quote is somewhat pragmatic in opinion, and is likely to be viewed differently from an individual who do not fit the “certain type” mould suggested above. It does however recognise the role of social change that alters but does not necessarily diminish community. This notion was raised by Cloke and Milbourne (1992:369) as one of four potential causes of the potential loss of community experienced in their research areas. Here respondents suggested such things as improved transport and communications and increasing personal independence had roles in reducing community feeling. Similarly, Woods refers to the impacts of social and economic change on villages and recounts how villagers’ stories often feature the idea of the loss of community spirit as a “device for describing the way on which the pattern of social interaction has changed from inward-looking, collective activity within the parish, to more expansive, outward-looking and individualistic lifestyles” (2005: 226). These interpretations and understanding of community and community processes reinforce suggestions of ‘personal communities’ assembled through personal perspective and ‘situated knowledges’ (Hanson, 1992 in Woods, 2005:226). Socio-economic changes,
which were referenced in the previous chapter in particular with regard to local services and economy, can be understood to affect the extent of the inward-looking collective community that rural parishes are often understood to have once been.

6.2.3 The ‘Personal Community’
The notion of community being personal was a continual theme throughout the interviews, whereby respondents tended to ground their understanding of community in personal experience. The following quote is again representative of the third group of respondents whereby they understand the present community to be diminished and needed to travel in order to socialise. They described their situation as:

CM14: “We’ve lived here now for 27 Years, it’s been a family home, I live here on my own now cos my husband has died and my children have gone but for many years it was a family home and it won’t be from now on and I know that.”

Living alone without children, while not decisive, appears to significantly influence the community outlook of some respondents. For reference PM7 and PM11, quoted above who felt community was diminished, were individuals with either grown-up or no children. This perception arose later during CM14’s interview when asked about if they had ever felt there was a greater sense of community or felt part of the community in Georgeham parish:

CM14: “I have to think back actually to the time when my kids were at school, so of course I was much more involved cos I knew a lot more of the families and was back and forth to school every day, we were involved with things going on at school.”

The necessity or accessibility to be ‘involved’ appears to be the crux of feeling a sense of community through participating in activities and having opportunities to socialise. The capacity for an individual’s sense of community to alter over a life course is suggested through the comparison of the previous quote to the next, with a woman who has school age children in Georgeham. She identifies that young children provide an easy although not assumed link to aide both participating in and feeling part of a community:

CM13: “I’ve got 4 children and it’s largely been around their lives and their schools so wanting there to be a sense
of the village school and support the community that way so that you inadvertently get involved in fundraising, school fete, village fete, things the church and get to know people but I think there is a sense that you want to look out for the more vulnerable people in the locality so if you know there’s an old person living on their own it’s nice to know who they are and what support networks they’ve got and if you should be concerned about them if you don’t see them for a few days- that kind of thing.”

Here a snowball effect appears to enable a community feeling, in this case connection with the school, leads a person to familiarise, support and participate with others and the surrounding place-community. The interviews reviewed so far have focussed around the Georgeham and Brendon/Countisbury research areas. The following interview was conducted in Instow where they felt that the parish was lacking in young people and activities for her son. This respondent is more representative of the second group whereby community understood to exist but the individual does not feel a part of it.

CM8: “Yeah there’s not enough young people for him to mix with and because there are not enough young people there’s no support or resources or youth club or anything for them to do here either. They’ve got to either travel into Bideford or go into Fremington to find any..you know..life for him and I think that’s quite sad.”

The importance of the very local community is drawn out here as this respondent feels that her son should not have to travel three miles to Fremington or four miles to Bideford to ‘find a life’. As has been demonstrated in the previous chapter, Georgeham has a larger younger population than Instow and Brendon/Countisbury. The age distribution of parishes can therefore influence the community feeling but again interpretation comes to the fore as opinions can depend upon the age of the respondent and these ‘situated knowledges’. This is demonstrated by a policy maker who personally feels their community is sustainable but offered the following:

PM2: “I don’t know, I mean you might get a different answer if you were to ask younger people so cos I know the younger people of where I live tended to congregate at the village hall in the car park. Park the cars up and have a chat, and they’re coming from miles away cos
they have to! And then the bloody neighbours started to complain and even called the police to disperse them and you just think..[tailed off]

So they’d probably tell you that it’s a community of old codgers!”

These differences of opinion towards community reveal the “messy empirical realities of governing” (McKee, 2011:1) and enhance understanding as to why the outcomes of government strategies do not always deliver as desired. The influences of multiple rationalities and insertions of power result in the discursive output of ‘community’ and this output is in turn subject to individual experiences.

In contrast to CM14 interviewee’s opinion that “I don’t feel the village is unified – it’s not a unit anymore”, those respondents who appeared to be more involved in various community groups and activities within the parish also seemed more positive about the community in general. This next quote represents the first group of respondents who feel there is a local community and they are a part of it. The quote is from the same parish as CM14 and draws on the importance of local interaction to the personal social development and inclusion in local community spirit, as well as an understanding that a level of unity through place is engendered to enhance the community feeling:

Interviewer: “Community is discussed in terms of social change and people living more privatised lives alongside community as people going out and being on the Parish Council, taking part in groups. And also people make their own communities cos you choose who you communicate with and how – Skype, for example. But for you, do you still feel that it’s more about participating locally?”

CM15: “Hugely..hugely I mean we’re part of, our family are part of Croyde Lifesaving Club and that’s a..there couldn’t have been anything much better for us than the community spirit that’s brought to our family for our children’s confidence and they can go to different. Here very much the school has a very good system, and when children leave this particular area and go to the next town for their education they mix so well. And I would imagine you could probably ask any parent who’s got a child who’s gone into this year’s intake and they will say’ well it wasn’t like that for me when I was
Here, alongside personality influencing opinions and understanding about community, the personal importance of young people’s interaction with a range of people is raised. This is understood to assist in equipping children with the skills and opportunities to interact diverse groups of people, skills which can be taken further afield and throughout life as personal communities widen. The interviewee then went on to relate the personal benefits their children have received to discuss the strong feeling of community experienced within the village:

CM15: “and I think there’s a really strong community element here. And I wonder if it’s cos we’re almost fighting against the fact that we know that we’re all in this, so everybody makes quite an effort and a lot of us have chosen to live here because it’s a place that for most of us it’s had some sort of draw. Therefore we’ve already got something in common anyway, whether it’s the sea, or the countryside, or horses..so I think there’s a huge community spirit here and I don’t think there’s as many people here who use things like Facebook, and things like that to try and widen their community. I think their community is very much in their parish which they then extend to when they go on to do other things, you know – like going into Barnstaple for college or whatever their sport takes them on to do.”

CM15 expresses a feeling of a strong presence of this inward looking community that has been felt by others to be diminished. CM15 understands their locality to intrinsically generate common ground and interest which is turn draws individuals together to create a feeling of community. In understanding community the importance of the availability and access to social encounters was a strong theme throughout the majority of interviews as has been demonstrated above. This interviewee’s focus on “high quality social interactions” (Woods, 2005: 91) falls in line with the literature (Chapter Two) and the suggestion of community is enduring life together through cooperation (Harris, 2001).
6.2.4 A Community Of Overlapping Communities

The quote below, another example of a group one respondent, emphasises how community develops pragmatically through the necessity to work together as a means to an end. It details a series of opportunities for community engagement and suggests that there are a series of communities that function independently, alongside and overlapping with one another within Georgeham:

CM10: “There’s a great core of locals – always locals, there’s another reasonable core of people like myself who are semi-local. My family always lived here but we didn’t, cos there were no jobs here, obviously, so you don’t live here and you retire here instead. And then there’s incomers, there’s quite a lot of young mums, and you end up with a lot of overlapping circle. The church serves both villages, if you don’t like Morning Prayer you go up to this one which is a bit Evangelic, and if you do like Prayer Book you go to Croyde, you know how it works. There’s the school circles, there’s the surfing circle, the life saving circle, and they live all over the place. So there’s quite a hefty sporting thing, there’s a football team, the Parish Council is purely practical … So it works like a community really but whether it’s because there are so many who’ve sort of always been here then the hangers-on, then newer hangers-on, then the sporty stuff then the fact that there’s a village shop, which is a good centre for gossip to find out what’s going on, an hourly bus service so you don’t actually have to have a car and there’s the school so it all works quite well together!”

Here the interviewee suggests the need for a collection of local, or ‘semi-local’, people in the making of community. In considering who is ‘local’ (section 6.2.3) it is this mix of people residing, or partaking in overlapping groups within Georgeham that is felt to generate community. In some respects this does reiterate that Georgeham is not a “singular unit” as CM14 stated above but rather it is functioning as a ‘community of communities’ (section 2.5.1). CM10 presents their understanding to be of a diverse community, of diverse people and opportunities that works well together, and again represents this enduring life together through cooperation (Harris, 2001). CM10 had a positive outlook towards the community but did not have school aged children and these relationships between community variables and activity and positivity will be further examined in section 6.3. Explanations of community from the majority of
interviewees, regardless of whether it was being currently experienced, included knowing and/or acknowledging people you see within your locality. However, interviewee references to the ‘local’ were rarely defined, referring sometimes to neighbours and at others the wider parish locality, although the research was situated at the parish level so can be understood to guide this to some extent. Nevertheless, the importance of place to community members understanding of community is summed up by the following quote when asked to describe what ‘makes community’:

CM13: “Having neighbours that you get along with. Not so much now because my children are older, but when they were primary ages and they went to the local school just having people as your immediate neighbours that you can walk to school with, that you can take the dog for a walk and see people that you know. And having a sense of shared responsibility for what happens and looking after the environment that kind of stuff.”

In summary, the making or feeling of community for those interviewed tended to focus on and refer to the ‘local’ and ‘place’ community as well as getting involved, getting to know or at least to recognise people they see within their residential locality. The availability and use of local facilities is felt to foster a shared sense of responsibility and interest, and enable social encounters to occur through providing opportunities to meet. While this is often and easily fostered or enabled through children and school involvement it can also develop through a snowballing impact of local involvement in activity regardless of whether there are young children in the household. Rather than suggesting the experience and understanding of community is somehow grounded in the household age profile, it is more appropriate to suggest individuals have their own ‘personal community’ developed through ‘situated knowledges’. It appears that the depth of a sense of community experienced depends upon the individual’s outlook, level of involvement and desire to be involved and interaction with others in their locality. Further examination of the presence of common attitudinal factors being associated with a more positive community outlook will occur in section 6.3.

Other core themes that have emerged in this first stage of analysis into community reveals an enduring perception of community to have an element of
inward looking focus (Woods, 2005). References to ‘the’ community and a ‘core of locals’ are suggestive of a centricity to community, however, community members were also keen to recognise there are many circles that contribute to this core and displaying an understanding of a community of communities. It appears that while place is often referred to in describing understanding and feeling of community, it is the social element that fosters a feeling of community, as it is the interaction with, knowing and acknowledging people within place that seems to define community. There are the more static and grounded physical variables, or structures, such as the school, shop or availability of activities in which to partake that facilitate the human interaction element of community, but it is the latter that makes the individual feel a part of the community or feeling of community. The interview data presented above suggests that it the social interaction output that defines an individual’s interpretation and experience of community, however there are numerous factors that contribute to this feeling. The interviewees’ focus of situating community within ‘place’ and the ‘local’ highlights this as one of these influential variables. The next section will further unpick and explore the role of, and variation between, ‘place’ and the ‘local’ in planning policy and experience of community.

6.3 The Influence Of ‘Local’ And ‘Place’ In Community

As demonstrated in Section 2.5.2 the importance and emphasis of place-community and the ‘neighbourhood’ endures within UK planning and community policy. The ‘neighbourhood’ has been the most recent location for governmental action in terms of the community being used as a means of government and increasing individual responsibility on behalf of the community (Rose, 1996 in Herbert-Cheshire, 2000). However, despite the importance of local community within Government policy, these documents display the confusion of the term (Section 2.5.2). The Coalition focus on neighbourhood reaffirms the political importance placed upon ‘proximity of residence’ and ‘geographically local people’ (Curry, 2012; Hale, 2006; Illsey and McCarthy, 1998). This importance of the ‘local’ to community appears as a rationality of planning as well as seemingly important to many North Devon residents, although the rationality cannot be assumed to generate this. Interviewees frequently referenced the ‘local’ in describing what they understand makes community but tended portray a similarly nebulous understanding when locating the local. While this local
importance sits neatly with the Coalition’s Localism agenda (DCLG, 2011a) and neighbourhood planning policies, it is important to be aware of its presence as it offers only one element in understanding community. Despite the perceived importance of situating the community in place, the individuals within that place do not tend to act rationally within their immediate locality. For example, as has been detailed in section 5.5 individuals won’t always choose to use facilities or employment at the very local level, such as the interviewee in the previous chapter who used the supermarket rather than independent parish stores as they felt their free time was limited and precious. Another disparity emerged as a community member detailed their feeling that non-permanent residents should buy locally but then realised that many residents probably didn’t support the local shop as best they could:

**CM12:** “I think it’s important that people who come here ought to spend in these communities. And I feel that if I go somewhere else that I shouldn’t load up with Sainsbury’s stuff, I shouldn’t load up with stuff from here but I should buy there.”

Interviewer: “It is difficult with the dominance of the supermarket.”

**CM12:** “Yeah I realised I was going down a dead end with that one. People who live here – we all go off to Sainsbury’s or Tesco or wherever but we do also go to the shop, but I suppose there are people who live here who don’t use the village shop very much. Perhaps you don’t need legal restrictions – you need a questionnaire..not a questionnaire a: ‘Do you promise to use the village shop’. It’s a truism but a village shop really is the centre as people do meet in there and have a chat and find out what’s going on.”

Here the respondent becomes aware of the importance of placing the same level of expectation upon second or holiday home owners and permanent residents to support and facilitate the survival of local services. The dichotomy between desire for a variety of local services for their role in generating a small-scale community and the level of real support is evident as these are subject to choice and competition from larger scale sources. While local facilities act as a hub for social interaction these do not exist in isolation from wider influences. While the vision is for community to be independent and resilient (Section 2.6.1) it inevitably suffers and benefits from a series of networks and links with other communities at various scales. These connections enable expansion of
‘personal communities’ beyond the local realm, which can both enable and undermine the local. The need to recognise the specifics of time and place (McKee, 2009) again becomes prominent in analysis of the local community.

6.3.1 The Differences In Community Experiences Between Case Study Parishes

While it is problematic to consider community solely as a place-based entity it is also crucial to acknowledge that substantive differences occur between places, as evidence from the research locations demonstrates. These have begun to be drawn out in demonstrating that differences in the facilities available, population size and demographics can create or stifle opportunities for individuals to engage in their understanding and creation of community.

While this thesis will not go into depth regarding this, the rural location of the research area rural location was presented to contribute to community interaction and something which was not felt to be experienced in other urban or suburban areas. Drawing on personal experiences, interviewees expressed that the small size of settlements and the rural domain fostered a sense of community in itself:

Interviewer: “What makes the community for you?”

CM12 “Erm..it’s partly the knowing people. There are 8 households in Pickwell and I know all of them. The sense that if..that those people will help. Some people who live in cities or whatever would say ‘I hate the idea that everybody would know what I was up to’ but I don’t feel that, I don’t feel like everybody knows what everybody is up to, but I do feel that if somebody here saw one of my kids knocked off their bike or whatever they’d do something about it because they’d know them. But also an involvement in what’s going on here – sending your children to the school, going to church, joining flower and vegetable society or whatever, you know.”

Pickwell is a small hamlet within Georgeham parish and the size is regarded to deliver a sense of familiarity, leading people to know their neighbours and because individuals know each other they look out for each other. There are further implications to be considered here as community can still be experienced in larger settlements and reflects the
opinions and life experiences of the interviewees. Nevertheless, the size of population was again raised, in this research, as an important factor in fostering a situation whereby you get to know your neighbours and feel a greater sense of geographical community because there is less opportunity to choose who you socialise with due to a reduced population within close proximity. This was suggested in the following interview in comparing their current residence in North Devon to their previous residence in Oxford:

CM12: “We moved here from a city, from Oxford and I think that when you live in a city you tend...the people you know tend to be the people who are like you and living in the countryside it’s very different because the people who are like you are going to be far more spread out and far fewer of them. So the people you tend to know are the people who live here. So they might be older or younger or different lifestyles or whatever but you know them and that’s a really big part of it for me.”

These quotes detail the importance of the location of this research, being conducted in smaller rural areas in North Devon, as having influence on the findings. However, the finding is that a less dense rural population is understood to deliver a situation where proximity of residence and smaller population helps to foster a sense of community. Furthermore, the following interviewee suggests that living in a village has led them to not use the car to travel to school for instance which provides a space for social interaction:

CM13: “I think living in a village it’s something about walking more because when I’d previously lived in the suburbs with people with children the same age, because you immediately get out and get in the car and drive you don’t come across people you build up a relationship with.”

This links to the role planning can have in creating residential areas that facilitate social interaction through providing spaces where people can meet and opportunities to walk, as suggested in the quote above. Nevertheless these comments are as much place dependent as they are relational to the rural setting as facilities may be within a neighbouring village, or the individual’s property may be away from the village centre and therefore require car use. Furthermore, it cannot be assumed that all people walk more in rural
settlements. A sustainable community in a rural location tends to be problematised as the rural struggles to conform to reducing car dependency in addition to having a population density above a critical mass for sustained support of very local services and facilities.

Moving away from the role of the rural and on to the role of place in geographical and parish terms, the final part of this section will detail some statistical differences between locations. Using the Kruskal-Wallis test of difference and certain survey variables that relate to the criteria described in the interview data that are felt to foster a sense of community, statistical differences were found to exist between these and study locations. Results that were found to statistically differ between location for permanent residents are visualised in graph 6.1. There is a difference between location and ‘activity in community’ (H=45.553, p=<0.05) detailing responses from Georgeham claim to be the most active. The difference in feeling about the ‘present’ (H=20.058, p=<0.05) and ‘future community’ (H=27.93, p=<0.05) followed the same trend of Fremington was the most negative followed by Brendon/Countisbury, Braunton and Georgeham which were roughly the same and Instow was the most positive. There was a difference in ‘people known’ (H=51.257, p=<0.05) where Brendon/Countisbury claim to know more people in the parish although this is a small parish, and Fremington respondents claim to know the fewest people in their parish. There was also a statistical difference for second home owners between place and volume of people known (H=12.497, p=<0.05), where fewer people were known in Fremington and the most in Instow. These differences provide further suggestion of the role and influence place can have in determining this feeling of a sense of community although the next section will explore the problems in defining places through the use of administrative boundaries.
6.3.2 Drawing Boundaries

This research was situated within administrative and political boundaries due to the availability of data through partners at NDC. However, this approach was subject to criticism demonstrating a disparity between policy and personal understanding of community as well as the challenge of generating data and policies within a community multiplicity framework. Such issues were raised in survey annotations whereby respondents from Croyde, a coastal resort village within Georgeham parish, were keen to be recognised as distinct from both the village and parish of Georgeham. Croyde residents often felt that Croyde village was subject to stronger effects from second homes containing a greater density of second homes than both Georgeham village and parish. While this research is working on the local scale, and the parish level was selected due to the availability of parish level data from NDC, there are inevitably further nuances experienced on a smaller scale. These scalar difficulties are experienced and redefined regularly throughout governance, policymaking and implementation. This was discussed in a policy maker interview suggesting a Unitary approach
to local government facilitates greater local distinctiveness and the problems in defining community boundaries:

PM4: “We would have devolved far more to the local towns and parishes to have a much more localist approach than the District Council boundaries achieve. And they’re Administrative boundaries, they’re meaningless. The Devon boundary is meaningless in the sense of a natural community it just happens to be where you draw an administrative line on the map. So our view is the natural communities are around the market towns and their hinterlands, or the coastal towns and their hinterlands and that if you organise and think yourself around ‘what do those places need that are different from one another’ and you organise your delivery accordingly you can be incredibly local [...] I think now the critical thing is thinking about where people naturally live and where they conceive of themselves as a community.”

This reflects much of the literature in conceptualising communities beyond place and acknowledging the realities of individual lives. The interviewee goes on to address that wherever boundaries lie people will not conduct all of their activities within them and that individuals are members of a multitude of communities reiterating difficulties of attempting to situate community in place. The discussions raised by community members about place and scale are of the same vein as attempts to rescale governance, and the level at which these issues are viewed and dealt with. PM4’s opinion resonates with use of the lens of governmentality through referring to the governing of populations rather than territory (McKee, 2009). It is also suggestive of notions of bioregional principles whereby areas are defined around issues rather than for the issue to fit the selected political boundary. This approach reinforces Bailey and Pill’s (2011:930) concern over assumptions made about individuals’ dependency on their immediate neighbours and vicinity. While the empirical data presented the neighbourhood as important to community it does not suggest dependence. Interviewees, including CM8 and CM14, that had more negative feelings towards their local community were keen to detail the existence and importance of their social interactions and involvements beyond the local.

The availability of choice was recognised as often undermining the capacity of the local vicinity and is not explicitly acknowledged in current policy that
emphasis the role of the neighbourhood. This chapter has repeatedly expressed the development of personal communities and networks that span outside of local boundaries, detailing the difficulty recognising what the local is, despite relative importance to both policy and North Devon residents.

6.3.3 ‘Local’ Housing For ‘Local’ People
The importance of the local in addition to being presented in terms of developing community also grounded itself in housing debates. The inability of choice for some people in terms of housing also presented to undermine the capacity of some individuals to be able to live where they are born or in close vicinity of familial relations. The debate that ensued regarding local housing contained some polarised views with regard to having choice over where to live:

PM12: “Nobody has a god given right to stay anywhere, I don’t think. I really do not, I suppose it’s a very unpopular view and I’m sure it’s a lovely concept, that you have your family and they all manage to stay around you for your whole life and it all carries on like this, but I don’t think that happens in this day and age at all.”

This quote details the difficulty faced in policy and personally with regard to housing, as you may have a desire to live somewhere but not a right. However this quote supposes that you don’t have the right to live somewhere without acknowledging that it is the lack of choice available to some individuals who cannot afford to live near relatives but desire to. Debate regarding the social, political and financial implications of living within close proximity to family cannot be discussed here but is acknowledged as having relevance.

In considering notions of local housing inevitably led to debates around who could be classed as local whereby it is not just the second home owner who is considered an ‘outsider’.

CM12: “There was, and to some extent there still is, that: ‘well your grandfather wasn’t born here so you’re not local’, that sort of thing but there are lots of people who have moved here from somewhere else.”

Difficulties in defining who was local were drawn out through the research as demonstrated above. The length of time and individual has been connected to an area through either the length of time the person or family has had a
permanent residence in the area. This however is complicated by second homes that may have been a permanent residence and is now used by the same family but on a semi-permanent basis. The ‘localness’ description offered by interview participants tended to centre on house prices and local residents not being able to afford local property, which was discussed throughout previous chapters. Here the local resident is classed as someone on an average, or below, local salary rather than considering family background or length of residence. Nevertheless, there is a certain parochialism exposed and acknowledged to exist within areas in North Devon.

The apparent lack of choice open to some residents when deciding where to live has been problematised. It is considered as something planners and housing policy decision makers need to address and is acknowledged in the following quote:

PM8: “For me, I think the short answer would be, as a planner you’re looking at new development and land use so it’s prioritising the land use for use which enables people to still stay within an area if they choose to and work in an area. You don’t have a divine right to stay no matter what, but I think we have to do something that makes or at least gives some kind of choice to people. So I suppose when we look at our policies, which only look at an aspect of life: only looking at new development and changes of use, it’s about new housing being for those who need it most, trying to hold on to service facilities, trying to encourage more sustainable forms of travel (but being realistic about that in an area like this) allowing diversification of farming to, appropriate diversification, we don’t do this directly but I think underpinning all this is an attempt to make places more self contained and have a better stronger local economy so that money stays within the area.”

This recognises the distinction between the apparent lack of housing and the divine right of ‘local’ residents to be entitled to housing. This planning officer acknowledged limits to planning’s sphere of influence and suggests that the priority needs to be a move towards a sustainable settlement and provide housing for those who need it most. The system can always be manipulated
due to difficulties in recognising who is 'local' however the following quote suggests the following regarding key workers in the area:

CM15: “You can't expect just because you were brought up somewhere to live in that area. But if you're working and if you give your time, a voluntary coast guard, retained fireman, I sort of feel you should have some right to at least be on the bottom of the ladder with hope for progression. But even getting on the bottom rung for a lot of people is just not possible because the houses are too expensive.”

Here the understanding is that if an individual offers their time either voluntarily or paid they should be entitled to live locally, not least to be within reasonable proximity to respond when needed. The empirical research recognises the importance of place on influencing community and bringing potential distinctions, however it does not suggest it is necessary for creating community. The place-community is positioned as the site of intervention in policy and the neighbourhood is placed with the responsibility of generating this feeling of community. However, the multiple communities existing within and alongside place-communities cut across these, dividing and connecting place communities that have been sited to deliver community objectives. Nevertheless, while it does not appear to be residents’ sole source of community, the empirical data suggests a desire to be a part of a 'local' neighbourhood community. While this section has detailed the variations between community experience and place the next section offers further analysis into the individual's own influence on their community experience.

6.4 The Individual’s Symbiosis With Community

In further considering McKee’s (2009) suggestion of a need for greater exploration of the role of the individual in contributing to the delivery of the messy and discursive outcomes of governing, this section will explore common characteristics found to exist with community positivity. This approach is reflective of Fischer's suggestion that “[i]t is through personal ties that society makes its mark on us, and vice versa” (1982:3). In understanding community this research has exposed the relevance of personal subjectivities and personal communities in understanding community, bringing together recognition of the many sources of power delivering governmental outputs. While multiple
subjectivities have been found to influence community experiences, the presence of commonalities between some community attitudes will be presented in this section. This analysis details how there appears to be some similar characteristics between respondents who are more, or less, positive about community based upon the quantitative data collected through the survey.

Multivariate statistical tests enable groups of variables to be considered together rather than in isolation. Therefore multivariate variable examination explores relationships between groups which can be useful for large datasets such as the one collected in this research. The method of analysis used to examine whether groups of similar observations exist between the level of reported community activity and positivity was cluster analysis. The objective of this test is to pair cases with similar or same scores for selected survey variables, and sequentially join these to group similar observations (Barr et al, 2010; Rogerson, 2010). Cluster analysis seeks to refine data to aid examination of general characteristics to explore whether there are sets of people that can be grouped by specific attitudes or perceptions (Wheeler et al, 2004). Hierarchical cluster analysis of the data revealed two dominant clusters based on reported community activity and opinion, although it should be recognised that selection of an appropriate number of cluster for analysis makes cluster analysis more subjective than other methods (Wheeler et al, 2004). In this instance, while a higher number of less distinctive clusters could have been selected two were selected due to their dominance on the dendrogram at this level. Two clusters offered the most useful and relevant analysis for this research, offering comparison between those more positive and active in local community to those who were less. A greater number of cluster groups would add little value to this research supplying increasingly blurred boundaries between level of positivity and activity in community.

The two clusters have substantial differences between the mean rankings for the two questions regarding feelings about the present and future parish community whereby Cluster 1’s responses scored higher detailing less positive responses to these questions on the likert scale survey question. The difference between the ranking for ‘activity in the parish community’ was less distinct, but Cluster 2’s score was lower therefore detailing this group provided survey
responses that suggest greater activity within the community. Table 6.1 details the characteristics of each cluster that were found to be significantly different statistically using Mann-Whitney and Chi Square tests but the broad descriptions are as follows:

**Cluster 1: Less Positive And Active Community Members**
Fewer responses overall; very likely to be permanent residents from any location but more likely to be from Fremington than Cluster 2. Likely to have lived in the area for longer than Cluster 2. Predominantly lower spenders with very few over £100 per week. May not know as many people, tend to respond more negatively about the contribution and believe there are too many second homes and more likely to be one or two person households.

**Cluster 2: More Positive And Active Community Members**
More responses in total from all locations but more likely to be from Georgeham than Cluster 1. While also likely to be permanent residents Cluster 2 has a higher chance of being a second or holiday home owner. They are more likely to have lived in the area for less than ten years, have a higher proportion of over £100 per week spend and may know more people in the community (less likely to claim to know no one or few people). This cluster has more positive responses about the contribution of second homes, with the majority likely to claim they bring both positive and negative contributions, and that there is a sustainable amount of second homes. They are likely to be from one or two person households but also have a greater tendency to be a three or four person household than Cluster 1.
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<tr>
<td>Fremington 19%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fremington 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length of occupation</strong></td>
<td>Over 10 years 51%</td>
<td>Over 10 years 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$(u= 72794.500; p=&gt;0.05)$</td>
<td>Under 10 years 49%</td>
<td>Under 10 years 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spend/week</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$(u= 64318.000; p=&gt;0.05)$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under £50 70%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Under £50 57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over £100 8%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Over £100 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Property description</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$(X^2= 35.922; p=&lt;0.05)$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perm. resident</td>
<td>91.8%</td>
<td>Perm. resident 75.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second home</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>Second home 15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday home</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>Holiday home 9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(These figures equate to 87% of all second homes and 77% of all holiday home responses)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of people known</strong></td>
<td>No one/neighbours/few 36%</td>
<td>No one/neighbours/few 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$(X^2= 14.369; p&lt;=0.05)$</td>
<td>Several/half/most 64%</td>
<td>Several/half/most 75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contribution of second homes</strong></td>
<td>Negative 35%</td>
<td>Negative16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$(X^2= 59.819; p&lt;=0.05)$</td>
<td>Positive 4%</td>
<td>Positive 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both 28%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Both 41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure 10%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unsure 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not aware 24%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not aware 17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volume of second homes</strong></td>
<td>Sustainable 33%</td>
<td>Sustainable 54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$(X^2= 29.176; p&lt;=0.05)$</td>
<td>Too many 66%</td>
<td>Too many 45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough 1%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not enough 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household size (people)</strong></td>
<td>1 30%</td>
<td>1 24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$(X^2= 11.570; p&lt;=0.05)$</td>
<td>1 -2 77%</td>
<td>1-2 67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 17%</td>
<td></td>
<td>3-4 26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+ 7%</td>
<td></td>
<td>5+ 8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1: Significantly difference variables between Cluster 1 and 2
Non Significant Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>u</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Future length of occupation</td>
<td>74866.500;</td>
<td>=&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>65849.500;</td>
<td>=&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future use of property</td>
<td>0.801;</td>
<td>=&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property circumstances</td>
<td>5.043;</td>
<td>=&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior occupation</td>
<td>5.230;</td>
<td>=&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2: Non significantly different variables between Cluster 1 and 2

On the basis of this analysis, the individuals in Cluster 1 appear to be more negative in general. In addition to being less active within the parish, individuals in this group are likely to be more negative about the current and future community and the contributions second homes make to the community. Those in Cluster 1 claim to have lived in the area longer, spend less locally and may know fewer people as well as being more likely to be a one or two person household. Cluster 2 contains those more positive about the community who are also more positive about the contribution of second homes; they are slightly more likely to know more people despite having potential to have lived in the area for a shorter period, although these differences are reasonably small. They may be a larger household and spend more per week in the local community, however, it should also be noted that this second group contains 87% of all second home owners who are more likely to be higher earners in addition to being more positive about second home contributions (Sections 5.2 and 5.3).

These profiles detail some interesting data implying potential for those responding more positively about the local community present a more positive outlook on a wider range of issues. While those more positive are also likely to be more active in the parish community the research was undertaken within, this difference between the two clusters was less pronounced. However, this is likely to be due to the volume of second home owners in Cluster 2 who were found to be less active in the community than permanent residents (K-W:18.018; p=<0.05). Those more positive about the community appear to also be more positive about the contributions of second homes in their community, however Cluster 2 contains a high proportion of second home owners who were the main survey respondents claiming that second homes have solely positive contributions. There was a high volume (41%) of Cluster 2 members claiming
second homes bring both positive and negative contributions to the parish; higher than Cluster 1 (28%). Equally, Cluster 1’s highest response rate was for solely negative contributions (35%) which was at 16% in Cluster 2. These nuances between respondents and opinions towards second homes have been explored using bivariate statistics to examine differences between second home owners and permanent residents, as well as differences between location. The presence of clusters formed around the level of community positivity and the subsequent differences of opinions and responses to other variables between these clusters adds an interesting dimension in suggesting there are further psychological and personal factors influencing an individual’s life perspective.

6.4.1 Analysis Of Community Variables Profiling Permanent Residents And Second Home Owners

The second part of this section reviews the key variables understood to determine the feeling and creation of community, and whether there is a difference between these and other variables. The statistically significant differences are presented in Tables 6.3 and 6.4 however the details of these differences will now be reviewed.

For permanent residents, the rankings of the variables found to be statistically different confirmed the suggestion in the cluster analysis that those who are more positive about the community, both at present and in the future, are more active in the community. The differences presented detail that those more active and positive are also likely to spend more within the parish, although this difference was less pronounced. Nuances emerged when examining the number of people known and household size and the three community criteria. The difference between the number of people known and the feeling about the future of community was found to be small and those who know more could either be very positive or very negative, however they were more positive about the current community and more active. In relation to household size smaller households were found to be less active in the community and four or five person households the most active. This reiterates the suggestions above that larger households, that are likely to have children, have greater interaction with the local community and are therefore more likely to have a positive attitude towards the community.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grouping Variable</th>
<th>Activity in community</th>
<th>Present community</th>
<th>Future Community</th>
<th>Volume of people known</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Length of occupation</td>
<td>6.610</td>
<td>8.345</td>
<td>6.151*</td>
<td>18.768*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity in community</td>
<td>44.347*</td>
<td>24.067*</td>
<td>141.710*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present community</td>
<td>34.876*</td>
<td>389.237*</td>
<td>22.594*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Community</td>
<td>22.927*</td>
<td>390.009*</td>
<td>24.378*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume of people known</td>
<td>140.019*</td>
<td>22.169*</td>
<td>15.603*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local spend</td>
<td>21.223*</td>
<td>18.282*</td>
<td>15.555*</td>
<td>39.192*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Household size | 14.400* | 5.228 | 3.862 | 6.729 |

Table 6.3: Permanent Residents - H values detailing statistically significant differences between the community variables and other factors (Kruskal-Wallis statistical test).

*: details statistic is significant at 0.05 probability.

In terms of second home owners, there were fewer significant differences in the data than for permanent residents. The main differences around the key variables suggest that those more positive about the current and future community were likely to be slightly more active and those more active and with longer occupation length know more people. Interestingly those who know more people were found to be less positive about the future than those who knew fewer parishioners. Those more positive about the future community were also more positive about the current. The more active were likely to know more people, as well as three or four person households knowing fewer people than one, two or over five person households. The volume of local spend was not found to result in significant differences between the community variables.
Having examined further differences between community variables, permanent residences and second homes it is possible to make certain inferences about some of the differences between the two clusters. The small differences between the length of occupation and number of people known between the two clusters reflects that permanent residents are likely to have lived in the parish longer and are more likely to know more people. This was also reflected in the results for second home owners however the difference is not as large as it is for permanent residents and the difference was not as obvious due to the majority of responses suggesting they know ‘half’ of the residents but the second highest response rate was for ‘immediate neighbours’. This result therefore suggests that rather than centring on the level of positivity towards the community, that the length of residence is a more influential factor in determining the number of people known.

The results displayed in this section detail the larger amount of statistical differences found between community and other variables for permanent residents. One factor affecting this is likely to be the larger sample size of permanent residents. Nevertheless the findings detail trends in community opinions and other factors that generally resonate with the findings presented in
the cluster analysis. It does however detail that the opinions regarding the future of the community become more polarised but only with regard to permanent residents household size and number of people known. This details the difficulty in generalising about subjective concepts and the need to consider the influence the individual brings to an outcome.

This chapter, so far, has presented resident and policy maker understandings of community and the various influences that affect the experiences and sense of community at the individual level. The role of place and grounding of community in a local understanding has remained of key importance, although not of dominance in understanding community throughout the empirical research. While these appear important to understanding community in North Devon, the difficulties in defining ‘place’ and the ‘local’ have been detailed as problematic. The chapter has also considered what the individual brings to the creation of community through their own outlook and how this influences the perceptions of community outwardly offered. Having detailed the complexities of local community, this chapter will go on to review an extension of the community through examining empirical data obtained on the sustainable community, to examine the delivery of this prominent planning agenda. The chapter will then conclude by drawing together the analysis formed around communities and sustainable communities to assess the empirical data collected with regard to the influence of second homes upon and within these understandings.

6.5 Reflexive Sustainable Communities Of North Devon
The interviews with community members did not discuss the sustainable community in broad or strategic terms in depth, therefore this section will focus on policy maker interviews. While community members discussed the sustainable community either discreetly as presented in the first part of this section, or directly in terms of second homes which will be presented in the last section of this chapter. The absence of strategic sustainable community discussions is significant and will feature in the next chapter in discussing the role of the neighbourhood in policy and decision-making. The absence is also suggestive of the presence of alternative rationalities guiding residents and policy makers or alternative interpretations, although this research can only refer to the actions and opinions presented in the latter’s professional rather
than personal capacity. Section 5.5 detailed NDC Planning Department’s viewpoint that sustainability is fundamental to planning and each community will need its own assessment, vision and motivation to become sustainable rather than seeking to create and pursue wider definitions. A broad range of sustainability criteria is referred to by the planning officer interviewed, which is understood to enable each community to consider what sustainability means to them. This process also serves as an example of the notion that the community has become a *means* of government (Rose, 1996 in Herbert-Cheshire, 2000).

The rationality of sustainable community is actualised through technologies such as sustainable community toolkit assessments and parish plans that are completed by residents themselves appearing to be their own product and creation. The process of creating these plans and the community participation will be discussed in the next chapter. The practicality of this reflexive approach was echoed by ENPA planning department, in addition to positioning sustainability firmly in the community domain:

PM8: “I can’t imagine we’re ever going to come out with a definition of what we consider to be the totality of the sustainable community cos it will vary, and part of it will come from what that community considers itself is sustainable for it.”

This approach to sustainability appears representative of McKee’s (2009) understanding of governmentality analysis whereby a move away from viewing national governmental discourses is needed to recognise the geographies of power through a more local analysis. The reflexive approach has also been suggested to have potential to render the term meaningless through it becoming place and population specific potentially less compliant with wider scale intentions (Kelly et al, 2004; Davidson, 2010). Nevertheless, current sustainability guidelines along with any future attempts to normalise sustainability understanding would always be open to and subject to influence by local governance. Policy interpretation and delivery fuses attempts of codification with discursive implementation as multiple sources of power [re]create meanings and experiences.

As demonstrated in the literature review in addition calling for a reflexive approach, there are broad understandings of sustainability centred on the ‘three pillar’ approach to sustainability and the process of governance. While most
policy maker interviews concentrated on ideals of sustainability in terms of social sustainability or a balance of social, environmental, economic and governance issues, one interview revealed contrasting opinion from a policy maker towards the role of the social. The interviewee here is talking specifically about the role of second homes and ‘tipping points’ within a sustainable community but places importance on the economics of a community:

PM9: “Some places: Treons Bay – I can’t remember when – I was in there one winter walking around the coast and I looked at these places, enormous houses, 5 bedroomed houses closed up and a shop which was quite a big shop but closed, obviously existed on the summer trade. So almost the whole place seemed to have closed down but it was still functioning, and so tip from what into what – that’s what I have to ask. What you mean is stops functioning – not even if there’s 100% second homes and it came to life in Spring and switched off in October that is still a functioning economic unit. It isn’t necessarily economically bad, socially bad...well there’s nobody there anyway so it doesn’t matter, morally bad – I don’t know.”

This viewpoint was not common and interviewees from each of the three research areas tended to pride themselves on the persistence of community feeling despite the presence of second homes rather than focussing on the economics of a settlement. The above quote about emphasising the community’s role as a functioning economic unit appears at odds with the literature reviewed (Chapter Two) through seeming to fail to sustainably balance objectives through dominance on the economics. However, it perhaps recognises the suggestion that sustainability policy has legitimised economic growth alongside narrow environmental and social objectives (Allmendinger and Haughton, 2010: 808). It also represents the current priority given to economic development in the ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ in the NPPF.

The discussions surrounding sustainable communities were as individual as the understandings of community. The following sustainable community definition came in answer to a direct question of how to define a sustainable community during interview and is quite different to the previous quote. Here the focus lies around the availability of facilities and opportunities to work, and while
reasonably comprehensive again, it overlooks that not all communities are capable of providing job opportunities for residents:

PM1: “That’s a cracking question...I’ve got an all day parking ticket [...] Definition of a sustainable community...a lot of it relates to work and the ability to work. An unsustainable community is one where the larger part of the community commutes out of the community every day...where there aren’t work opportunities within the community, and where the kids all have to be bussed out to a school 3-4 miles away and so forth. So a sustainable community is a community like Bratton Fleming in North Devon [...] That for me is a sustainable community cos it’s got the primary school and preschool, it’s got work opportunities, open space, allotments, it’s own village recycling scheme which it gets recycling credits for and some of what I’ve talked about was paid for by the recycling credits – they run their own composting scheme. Sport club, things for the kids to do, things for all generations to do, a good mix. Enough open market and affordable housing for there to be young families and for it to be a viable community with young families.”

The example referred to offers a comprehensive vision of a sustainable community but overlooks the capacity of all communities to achieve similar goals. In contrast the following quote comes from another policy maker in reference to the community where they live when asked if they believe a sustainable community is possible:

PM2: “I don’t know. I think it sounds good but it means different things to different people. Where I live seems to be a nice sustainable community but it’s only based on social events it hasn’t got a school, a shop or anything. It’s a very large dispersed bunch of houses but there’s a certain amount of feeling of community there that even I feel part of even if I don’t go and do anything but I know my neighbours and we know each other to say hello to and if we have a problem go to if we needed to but to somebody else...say a planner it might mean it’s got a school, a shop, public transport and they’re unrealistic in an area like this.”

Here a sustainable community is felt even without the facilities mentioned in the previous quote, again identifying the influence of personal understanding.
Moreover, this quote suggests the importance of situating understandings of sustainability within place-based circumstances. This situation of policy has been referenced in previous chapters as NDC’s planning policy makers regularly refer to the need for sustainability to move away from synonymous association with low carbon, especially in rural areas. This again suggests that despite the difficulties presented by multiple [re]creations of sustainable communities by communities it offers a more pragmatic approach as demonstrated in this interview with ENPA:

PM8: “I can’t imagine we’re ever going to come out with a definition of what we consider to be the totality of the sustainable community cos it will vary, and part of it will come from what that community considers itself is sustainable for it. I think, cos the Matthew Taylor Report picked up aspects and I think the first thing is that it moves away, and we moved away from it some time ago, from this idea that it’s about reducing the need to travel, and all about being on a bus or public transport route. Because even when there are buses and transport routes people don’t always choose to use them so you can’t control the way that people travel […] So I think it’s about enabling communities to live and work in their area and to keep that social cohesiveness that goes with it. And on Exmoor we’re lucky, we’ve still got communities that function, I think. It’s hard to quantify how they function but they do and there’s a lot of support that goes on between families and friends and help and other activities that go on, sporting or fundraising and people pull together and make things happen. And I think that’s probably what a lot of other areas are looking to achieve, we’re lucky we’ve still got that. It’s on a bit of a knife-edge though in some places.”

The focus from this respondent focussed slightly more on social sustainability and described sustainability in terms of a functioning community but the interviewee struggled to establish a definitive for ‘functioning’. This section has endeavoured to identify through the use of empirical data that identifying and experiencing community is subject to a series of expectations from numerous rationalities as well as personal understanding, and similarly the meaning of sustainable community becomes specific to each community. There appears to be a disparity between two dominant sustainable community visions, firstly
there is a policy driven approach that includes extensive facilities, employment opportunities and participating community members, in line with the Egan Wheel toolkit. Secondly, is the vision that communities need to be individually reflexive towards their approach to sustainability whereby each defines self-meaning alongside realistic and appropriate measures to become more sustainable. The latter more closely reflects the approach reviewed in the literature (Chapter Two) rather than a prescriptive approach towards itemising the sustainable community, although both can be problematic.

Variation between place and between individuals makes normalising these concepts difficult as well as undesirable from a theoretical and practitioner viewpoint. The desire to create community specific terms of sustainability appears to be understood as the most appropriate at the NDC policy maker level, while at the same time adhering to national policy and guidelines, to be discussed at greater depth in the next chapter. The community existing primarily as a social entity featured heavily in interviews and was acknowledged in a later discussion with NDC Planning Department through commenting on a requisite for focus on ‘community planning’ rather than ‘land use planning’. The variation of the dominance of second homes between parishes also suggests reason for the need to have a reflexive approach to sustainability. The next section will examine how second homes are understood to contribute and influence the social element of a sustainable community at a local level.

6.6 Second Homes And Social Sustainability In Host Communities

Having extensively reviewed the empirical understandings of community in this chapter and considered these in line with the reviewed literature, this chapter will conclude by aligning these with the Egan Wheel toolkit for sustainable communities and the role of second homes. Examination of how second homes are understood to influence the social element of the sustainable community with reference to the empirical data will now be presented.

The social and cultural segment of the Egan Wheel is described as:

“Active, inclusive and safe – a community spirit is created. People are always welcome to join in events (e.g. sports, fundraising, festivals). Neighbours look out for one another and respect each other. All people are treated fairly. There are low levels of crime,
drugs, and antisocial behaviour with viable effective and community friendly policing.” (Egan, 2004)

Firstly, it is important to recognise that Egan’s description above is problematic when considered in line with the understanding of community that has been drawn out of the literature and the empirical research. While these have detailed an understanding of a multiple communities or a community of communities, Egan appears to suggest generation of a singular community identity or spirit to emerge. It does however appear to acknowledge the non-compulsory nature of participation in events while also suggesting a community needs such activities to be sustainable. Egan problematises crime, drugs and antisocial behaviour suggestive of a technique through which the community is encouraged to act in certain ways which would guide actions of the self and others as they are ‘encouraged’ to not act subversively. The description is, as has previously been discussed, another example of a place-based approach to community with reference to neighbours and therefore is intending to foster this community spirit in the geographically local domain.

The presence of high proportions of second homes is understood to present difficulties in the achievement of some of the elements in this description, which will be argued throughout the final section of this chapter. The premise of ‘all people are treated fairly’ has already been explored in discussing the ‘equity’ of second homes (Section 5.5.5). This section will focus on other areas of the description for example, using examples to highlight that the capacity for neighbours to ‘look out for one another’ could be compromised by the presence of non-permanent residents. Nevertheless, the presence of second homes is not understood to be solely negative and this chapter will also present examples of a degree of inclusivity and positive benefits that second home owners can bring to the community.

The interviews often revealed the suggestion that in order to foster a sense of community and be a part of the community an individual needs to interact with others and potentially with activities in the community but more importantly that they should want to:

CM15:  
“I think I made effort to move to somewhere that I wanted to move to but I didn’t move to it to change it, I moved to it to be a part of it and to harmonise with it.
And those things to me are natural things to do if I was to walk up the street and see somebody I would say good morning to them, or talk to them, which is probably one of the reasons people move to somewhere like here because it has that holiday feel. And it’s when you’re on holiday you have time to give to people, and I’d like that feeling to be here all year that you do converse with people.”

This individual wanted to live somewhere with a high level of interaction and to be a part of that community. Previously in the interview they had referenced the presence of seasonality that was present in their parish and a feeling that second home owners diminished the interaction available to permanent residents on a year-round basis. More generally this resident expressed a lack of understanding of people not wanting to engage with their surroundings, whether permanent or non-permanent resident.

The effect of seasonality cannot be deduced to result from second home owners entirely as the research areas contain a degree of tourist resort, therefore at times the focus of discussions regarding second homes specifically seemed to digress. Similarly the nuances of community impact between second homes and holiday home was met with some disparity between residents. While, as was presented in the previous chapter, holiday home properties were felt by some to bring issues of heavily increased occupancy and a conflict of use mixing tourism and residential dwellings on the same street, the opposite opinion was drawn out in other interviews. Two interviewees who strongly opposed second homes were less opposed to holiday homes as the properties were used to make a living and were therefore someone’s business (this is also considered in Section 5.2.1). Some respondents felt that a holiday home is of more economic benefit to the area than a second home and even though the property is usually completely empty during winter they feel it is used quite a lot. However, the effect of seasonality where experienced was not usually understood to be conducive with fostering community spirit, as suggested by this policy maker:

PM2: “Personally that’s not what I think is a community, I don’t think it’s a community if it’s only got people there in the summer. But you know..I don’t know what is right and what is wrong.”
While the interviewee details the personal understanding of what makes a community, the lack of year round presence was felt as an issue. This policy maker felt strongly about the immorality surrounding unequal distribution of housing and that everyone should have access to a home therefore the opinion above is grounded in this understanding. Counter arguments towards the effect of seasonality were also presented in both Instow and Georgeham as these parishes were felt to be thriving year-round rather than under threat even. It was however acknowledged that these locations perhaps had a different focus at different times of year. However there was still felt to be a feeling that second homes take from the community more than they offer within the street the property is on and the wider village:

CM15: “Yeah definitely cos you haven’t got so much community in your street, erm it has an effect on the whole infrastructure of the village because at the moment the playgroup hasn’t got many numbers. Playgroup’s based in Georgeham, they’ve got particularly low number at the moment. Before there might have been people actually living in these houses and their children were therefore supporting the playgroup. Equally it will be the same scenario with the school and our shops and the Post Office and I don’t think people with second homes can expect to turn up here and have all our pubs serving nice food by well qualified chefs and well trained waiters and waitresses when actually there’s no homes for those young people to live in and be part of this community. You can’t just take all of these young people out of the woodwork in the Spring to work in community to serve second home owners. So I think because a lot of the second home people are pushing younger people out of the community you’re losing the whole emphasis of community.”

While this is somewhat speculative, as it could not be guaranteed that a young family would be residing in the property were it not a second home, the use of the property as a second home is felt to remove an opportunity. This interviewee went on to suggest affordable housing was “insulting” and properties of all price ranges should be available to enable choice over where to live and enhance the community diversity. This refers back to the wider housing debate of which second homes are a contributor but not a sole cause whereby
the availability of property purchase is not open to everyone. This has been discussed in previous chapters and this section will focus on the very immediate contributions of second homes within the neighbourhood community.

The sporadic presence of non-permanent residents was regularly raised as delivering a compromised ability for neighbours to look out for one another. There were two themes that emerged with this understanding; firstly that second homes were suggested to impact ‘neighbourliness’ through the temporality of someone to talk to day to day and secondly, as someone to rely on. In considering the presence of second home owners within Instow the resident offered the following opinion:

Interviewer: “So do you know second home owners in this street? You’ve got to know them?”
CM7: “Yes but not particularly well. I think we make more of an effort to get to know people who live here. The people who live here.. yeah you make more of an effort for, I think. There is a little bit of ‘Us and Them’ there’s me suffering, it feels like I’m out working and I can’t afford for all the house to be double glazed. And then they come down to their second home with all their money, and their big 4 wheel drives and it’s like next minute the builder’s there, knocked it down and spent £1000 on a new kitchen and new roofing and I’m sort of struggling to pay the bills. So that doesn’t seem fair.”

They went on to suggest that the presence of a second home on the street meant it didn't feel as ‘friendly’. The resident also raises the disparity and somewhat inequity between the neighbour who can afford multiple properties and the other who can afford to live, this is notion of envy is suggested again later on in another interview. A resident in another interview implied that a second home owner could not offer as much as a permanent resident even if they were willing:

CM12: “I’m not sure you could get involved in the same way. I think part of it is that you’re here all the time. Little stuff. I deliver the Parish Magazine in Pickwell. You can’t do that if you’re only here in school holidays or 5 times a year or whatever you do.”
This highlights a fundamental difference between the permanent resident and second home owner, which will be returned to later in this section. It is this difference that generates such strong feelings such as the following:

CM14: “Because they can’t be part of the community – they’re not part of the community.”

While this opinion was not often expressed quite so vociferously, it highlights an important divide that a restricted presence brings. The following quote highlights the second issue raised above as distinct from the debate about and a positive impact on trust and reliance:

CM15: “I think its people looking out for each other, knowing each other. Just the small things like: it’s a day and the bins need putting out and somebody drives off to work and you think ‘oh no they’ve forgotten to put their bin out’ you might just put their bin out. The holiday people in holiday homes or people in second homes who’ve got a second home that’s sitting there empty but the gardeners been and filled their bin up with rubbish. It’ll be the person who lives there permanently, like me, who just out of the goodness of their heart might think: ‘oh I’d better put their bin out for them’. But there’s nobody to reciprocate that for me, not that I’m doing it to receive it back but it’s just you know, there’s nobody looking out for you or for your children.”

While it is detailed that such actions are not completed with selfish motive, there is a desire in feeling part of a community for a reciprocal relationship, and to not only have a presence but for that presence to develop into a sense of trust and reliance. These impacts were acknowledged but somewhat dismissed during an interview with a second home owner who suggested they were just as integrated and active within their second home community as their primary residency:

CM11: “I like being neighbourly. We have a very good relationship with our immediate next door neighbours, who in fact used to live in our property, they used to own both properties and ran a B&B so they sold off half of what they own. So we get on extremely well with them and they’ve been to one of our family weddings, we’ve been to one of theirs so we enjoy their company and meeting the people that they know well in the area.”
This reiterates the need to consider these issues and concepts somewhat ethnographically, in viewing what the individual brings to a situation through personality. This interviewee elaborated to say that they felt there is less potential for a second home owner to be as involved in the community but felt that the important issue was for the individual to ‘give’ as much as possible in any situation.

In addition to the potential for second home owners to offer the same level of community activity as the above, the main other community enhancement surrounded diversity or as was annotated on a survey response:

“They bring fresh blood” (5/104)

Referring back to the literature, it has been suggested that the resilient community needs diversity as well as stability. Furthermore, Egan suggests that the sustainable community should enable “tolerance, respect and engagement with people from different cultures, backgrounds and beliefs” (2004). However, despite the potential for a second home owner to provide this diversity they were not seen as the only source of diversity:

CM12: “There are lots of people who have moved here from somewhere else. I think they’ll bring differences and diversity in without it being a second home.”

Similarly there is a desire for diversity, in line with not wanting a homogenous community:

CM4: “I’ve never been a social animal, she’s trying to train me since we came here and we’ve got to know lots of interesting people who’ve done all sorts of things in their lives. And if you had the purely ‘local’, whatever that means, community it’d be a lot less interesting place cos they’d all be terribly introverted.”

The different skills, expertise, knowledge and experiences that individuals bring to a community seem to be welcomed however it was not seen as necessary for a second home owner to bring these to a community due to the overriding desire, given the choice, to have a permanent resident as a neighbour rather than a second home owner.

The interviews regularly raised this notion of while participation and integration was appreciated and welcome, it is not this formal involvement that is key to the
community but the reliability of presence. The following policy maker who was talking as a resident identified this:

PM2: “But then I don’t get involved and I live in a community so maybe..what’s the difference..I don’t know. But on the other hand I am there and when it was snowing I did say to my neighbour who’s a bit older ‘if you need something from town I’m going in’ and that’s a big difference. There is somebody there if something happens.”

The second home owner does not have the ability to offer this depth to the community in which they dwell in their second home, because of a lack of permanent presence. This fundamental lack of presence appears to be quite strongly felt with regard to the role of the second home owners within the community. This issue was reiterated by this policy maker, also speaking as a resident:

PM8: “Yeah I think there is a difference, when push comes to shove someone is there. And even if they’re not out and about raising money for the village hall, or playing cricket or whatever it is, you can knock on their door and someone actually lives there and there’s a light on at night. There isn’t that sort of dead feeling that you get with streets where every other house isn’t lived in […] it’s a quality of life thing.”

This opinion was also reflected in the interviews with community members from the research locations. The following resident gave the this response when asked whether they would rather have a permanent or non-permanent neighbour:

CM7: “Rather have someone living next door permanently so have someone to be friends with or leave key with.”

This interviewee described the issue in terms of second homes negatively impacting the friendliness of the street and raising issues of a desire for daily contact with neighbours as well as someone to trust and depend upon when needed. These issues were felt by the interviewee to influence their neighbourhood community and in terms is something the next chapter will examine through reviewing the extent of participation of semi-permanent residents.
In terms of place-community and neighbourhood, the empirical research reveals that second home ownership is understood to compromise the community socially, although the extent of this did depend upon how the property was used and the specific individual(s) generating the social dynamics. Their lack of permanency means that non-permanent property owners appear to be inherently unable to partake and contribute to the community in the same way or as much as a permanent resident.

6.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the empirical findings in relation to understandings about community. This contributes to knowledge about community through analysis of understandings of community from both community members and policy makers. This knowledge has potential to be used to assist policy makers in formulating and implementing community policy.

In terms of understanding the contribution of second homes to host communities, the social impacts reviewed in this chapter are considered to be some of the most significant. Egan's (2004) perception of community is considered problematic as it takes a singular and place-based approach to community, as is common in policy, rather than acknowledging what this research and existing literature expresses: that multiple communities exist within and across spaces. The presence of high proportions of second homes is understood to present difficulties in the achievement of some of the elements in Egan’s description within the social and cultural segment. It does not imply that ‘all people are treated fairly’ nor do they contribute to the enabling of neighbours to ‘look out for one another’ (Egan, 2004). On the other hand, the research did not suggest that the presence of second homes is solely negative as they have potential to contribute to community diversity and heighten tolerance. However, this also has potential to occur from other sources.

Permanent residents almost unanimously chose the option to have a permanent resident as a neighbour rather than a second home when given the choice during interview. This details the tendency for more negative perceptions to be attached to second homes. This opinion also related to the desire for individuals to be neighbourly and to have regular face-to-face social interactions with neighbours. While relationships are dependent upon personality, to a degree, it
was often expressed that second home occupants’ semi-permanent presence limits the social contributions they can offer to host communities. This sporadic residency was portrayed to generate a more one-sided relationship than a permanent resident, and limit the development of trust and reliance relationships that people desire within a neighbourhood and place-based communities. This is understood to compromise capabilities to foster trust relationships with neighbours that deliver balance and security, and are understood to be necessary for sustainable and resilient communities to thrive (Beratan et al, 2004; Gilchrist, 2000, in Barton, 2000; Raco, 2007; Smith et al 1999).

The research argues that multiple notions of community tend to be reflected in respondents understandings of community, however there is a strong affiliation to place-community within the rural parishes where the research was conducted. The boundaries of place-based communities are not defined and have potential to fluctuate between and across spaces and scales. Furthermore, place-based communities are prioritised and focussed upon in policy, however, overcoming this through acknowledging place communities as existing alongside and within other forms of community within policy is problematic. The research respondents often expressed the presence of multiple communities existing within a geographical area, existing within the ebb and flow of day-to-day life, rather than in need of policy intervention. Similarly, residents appeared conscious of their role and influence through their interactions with neighbours, the place-based community as well as adjacent and interlocking communities. This represents the competing rationalities influencing communities, the many forms of community and the combination of many sources of power and influence that combine and as populations recreate governing mentalities.

The research argues that the individual has a reflexive relationship with the community whereby the community appears to influence the individual just as the individual influences the community and community outputs (McKee,2009). Experiences of community appear grounded in the individual, their personalities and opportunities for interactions and these may alter and vary throughout life. As such an understanding of the ‘personal community’ (Pahl and Spencer, 2004) remains pertinent in understanding community whereby community is
assembled through personal connections, perspectives and ‘situated knowledges’ (Hanson, 1992 in Woods, 2005:226). The research suggested that the experience of community relates to personality as the survey respondents claiming to be more active in their parish community tended to also be more positive about their parish community, which is something that will be further examined in the next chapter. Chapter Seven reviews the repeated rounds of democratic renewal within planning and the role of semi-permanent residents within communities with increasing responsibilities and expectations to partake in formal and informal participation. The next chapter examines the empirical evidence relating to motivations to participate and the extent to which participation is perceived to fulfil a government rationality or suffice a personal gain.
Chapter 7: Citizen Participation - Personal Motivations And The Contribution Of Semi-Permanent Residents.

7.1 Introduction to Chapter
This final analysis chapter will present empirical results in relation to the third research objective: ‘To explore citizen participation within communities and in a planning context, reviewing policy attempts to increase participation, personal motivations and the contributions of second home occupants through their semi-permanent presence within host communities.’ Notions surrounding the concept of participation within planning have been explored in Chapter Two, including an examination of the UK Government’s repeated drives for democratic renewal. The heightened emphasis on community input has been also been most recently articulated through the Coalition’s ‘Localism Agenda’, strive for the ‘Big Society’, and ‘Neighbourhood Planning’ (DCLG, 2011a). This has led the Coalition to be accused of bypassing local governments in favour of the neighbourhood’s role in planning decisions, as well as associated funding cuts to local government (DCLG, 2011a; Wilks-Heeg, 2011).

This chapter will examine the role of communities within planning and how Government seeks to connect with and include individuals, as well as resident reactions to these processes. While local government is not understood as unproblematic, this chapter will refer to primary data in suggesting the LPA has a more purposeful role. It will argue that there is reluctance for neighbourhoods to take on increased responsibility suggesting there is a dichotomy between this and the neighbourhood’s desire for power. It will also examine the suggestion that as the Coalition’s Localism Agenda seeks to shift responsibility on to individuals and neighbourhoods, there is great potential to reinforce inequalities as ‘technologies of the self’ and self-help resources are unevenly distributed (Curry, 2012; Lowndes and Pratchett, 2012). Furthermore, while there is a shift of responsibility, this chapter will demonstrate that in addition to the uneven distribution of resources, individuals do not necessarily conform to participation programmes. Non-participation has been perceived as a problem in policy, and this chapter will debate the barriers and motivations, and mismatches in power and responsibility that encourage, facilitate and impede participation. This will deliver a greater depth of understanding of NDC planning participatory approaches and resident uptake.
This chapter is split into six sections; firstly it will detail the importance and role of participation within the sustainable community, referring to Egan’s sustainable community planning tool and the on-going processes of democratic renewal within planning. Secondly, the chapter will examine empirical understanding and reaction to the Coalition’s Localism Agenda primarily using interview data collected in the early stages of the Coalition elective period. The third section will critique the pragmatics of mass inclusion in participation, considering the capacity to motivate, as well as suggesting an apparent dichotomy between the desire for community responsibility and the voluntary delivery of this. In the fourth section the participants will be detailed, looking into who is perceived to get involved, the elevated position of the Parish Council as the link between local Government and individuals, and the right to not participate. This connects to the fifth section which examines individual motivation to participate, to further examine suggestions of the ‘same few faces’ participating, and barriers to increasing the extent of participants. Finally, the sixth part of the chapter will detail the level of participation and activity of second home owners, in order to examine the nuanced contributions non-permanent residents make.

This chapter makes greater reference to qualitative empirical data, excluding the last section which will incorporate some quantitative analysis. The chapter will include reference to literature analysing the Coalition’s Localism Agenda that was emerging during the course of the research. This will be presented alongside empirical data. Due to the PhD being developed under the previous Labour Government this was not the context that was available in the planning stages of the PhD.

7.2 The “Participatory Sustainable Community”

The perceived role of citizen inclusion and participation in decision-making as central to sustainability and to planning (Section 2.7.1) is reaffirmed through the sustainable communities planning tool, the Egan Wheel (2004). More recently planning has been presented as providing opportunity to disperse power more widely (DCLG, 2011a), however collaborative planning and citizen participation is not understood to counter uneven distribution of power and resources (Buser, 2013). The apparent confused rhetoric and outcomes of participation will be
examined throughout this chapter and will begin by detailing the perceived role of formal and informal participation within the sustainable community. The role of participation is emphasised by this quote from a policy maker who details how participation, through creating social networks creates a base for the sustainable community:

PM1: “So a sustainable community, at base, is a community where the social networks are strong enough to drive provision for the community and make sure that things happen, and make sure that there is a consensus around growth and change, and provision. And the village isn’t just driven by the ‘pull up the drawbridge we’ve arrived’ mentality. That’s a sustainable community, that’s as much, probably more, to do with the people and social networks it is to do with facilities because if you’ve got social networks you can create the facilities.”

This quote more explicitly refers to participation and interactions in the sustainable community that extend beyond the local place community however this interviewee also recognised the importance of within community participation. It highlights the significance of interactions, as identified in the previous chapter, as a form of participation and in terms of creating networks.

The Egan Wheel toolkit for sustainable communities places participation into the ‘Governance’ section of Egan wheel: “When decisions are made about a community, local people are included in the decision-making process. The community enjoys a sense of civic values, responsibility and pride” (Egan, 2004). Participation also falls within Egan’s Social and Cultural segment which refers to an “active” community (ibid). Here, it is not just citizen inclusion in policy decision-making that is considered but also participation in the local community through interaction with others and partaking in local events using the key descriptors of ‘inclusive’ and ‘strong’ community (ibid). The previous chapter addressed some of these issues referring to the strength of community and sense of community. The inclusive element will be reviewed throughout this chapter in examining who does and does not participate. Egan’s view of sustainable governance also refers to leadership and partnership as crucial and with regard to the community as well as government. The processes through which this community leadership and partnership occurs, through bodies such
as the Parish Council, will be examined throughout this chapter as well as the role and positioning of the District Council.

The inclusion of governance into Egan’s sustainable communities toolkit is demonstrative of how policies and strategies echo the long standing processes of democratic renewal desired by Government seeking to raise levels of participation and overcome civic disenchantment with representative democracy (Bucek and Smith, 2000; Michels and De Graaf, 2010; Gallent and Robinson, 2012). Similarly it reflects the inclusion of participation within a conceptual understanding of sustainable communities enabling programmes to be more sustainable (Rogers and Ryan, 2001; Smith et al, 1999). The previous chapter revealed how the empirical data suggests the importance of social interaction in understanding and experiencing community, fulfilled partly through participation in community activities and events. This chapter begins with focusing on discussions surrounding the processes through which individual and community participation is sought within policy creation and decision-making.

Participation as a key planning function understands non-participation as problematised from a governmentality perspective, however recognises the resistance generated through personal choice. A lack of participation is perceived as suggestive of a lack of responsibility, remedied by participation understood to promote “personal morality” and a “positive form of life” (Marinetto, 2003:109). Such benefits of participation are presented through the underlying mentality of Localism and the Big Society through an intention to create a true sense of participation on which democracy should thrive, and to generate a sense of social responsibility (Conservatives, 2010; DCLG, 2011a). Furthermore, thinking about participation within a governmental approach enables recognition of the many and dispersed sources of governing throughout society, emphasising the idea of decentred government. It recognises the ways in which top-down policy and Government attempts to shape actions but does not assume these actions determine outputs. The Localism Agenda (DCLG, 2011a) framework and associated mechanisms to increase community input and representation will be examined throughout this chapter alongside the realisation of these within communities. Through a focus on who is participating and the resources and motivations acting to implement participation
programmes, an examination of widening participation from both a policy maker and community member perspective will occur.

Egan’s approach to governance and the active community within the sustainable community contains more detailed guidance of which some are referred to here:

“Strategic, visionary, representative, accountable governance systems that enable inclusive, active and effective participation by individuals and organisations.” (2004)

This vision is reflected in the Coalition’s drive for Localism but this chapter will detail resistances from individuals and the neighbourhood bodies that the Coalition appear to valorise through their policy in response to an increased participatory role. The apparent dichotomy between a community desire for inclusion but resistance to increased responsibility will be explored.

Egan also suggests the governance of a sustainable community should engage the following:

“Strong, inclusive, community and voluntary sector (e.g. resident’s associations, neighbourhood watch)” (2004)

Here there is a direction towards neighbourhood bodies and emphasis on the voluntary which is reminiscent of the Coalition’s governance approach. Egan proposes a need for leadership to occur through partnerships from government, business and community. Here the emphasis of responsibility appears to be spread across different sectors, potentially fulfilling duel aims of reducing the need for state input and endeavouring to become more inclusionary. Similarly Egan suggests that the sustainable community through including people in the decision-making process should foster “a sense of civic values, responsibility and pride” (2004) which is also something the Coalition seems to believe the Big Society can develop (Conservatives, 2010). The Egan vision for participation and governance therefore appears to be echoed in Coalition policy but the practicalities and actualisation of these appears to be diffused by input from other sources leading to variation. This chapter will examine the ways in which this national rationality is pursued, interpreted and challenged on the ground. The next section will review how this governance vision is approached in current policy.
7.3 Interpretations Of Localism At Policy Delivery Level

The persistent localist vision that has been pursued by recent UK Governments has been presented in greater detail in section 2.4.2. Most recently the Coalition Government has presented their Localism Agenda as new, although throughout interviews conducted for this research it was regularly expressed to already be in existence, reinforcing the literature outlining persistent government policies for democratic renewal. Interviews took place in the early stages of the Coalition’s elective period when policy and strategies were emerging. While policy maker interviewees acknowledged subtle changes in national policy approaches and verbal rhetoric they tended to suggest the localism that was being referred to was already occurring within North Devon, as the following policy maker suggests:

PM1: “OK there’s one or two things coming through in the Localism Bill that actually confirm, you know, that local authorities have the power to do frankly what the better local authorities have been doing for years… We’ve done localism because we didn’t have much alternative, so there’s been a lot of local community activism…. In an area like North Devon you do it cos there’s nobody else out there to do it for you, and because there are people locally who are motivated and driven and skilled to do it, not everywhere, but there is a lot of localism around.”

Here there is an understanding of the pre-existence of localism in North Devon and this is suggested to be partially due to location and idea that there is ‘nobody else out there to do it for you’ making a localist response the only appropriate approach to take. This may not be the same in other areas, however this policy maker in the case of North Devon appears quite dismissive of the suggestion that localism is new. This viewpoint also recognises that top-down policy is not representative of each situation. It presents presence of alternative rationalities and sources of power contributing to NDC and North Devon’s communities, working to deliver policy and actions in the most productive and efficient way rather than suggesting national prescription. Localism in this instance was felt to be in existence rather than offering a solution to overcome certain issues such as concentration of power in national Government, which is how the Coalition presents this agenda.
To situate the Coalition’s Localism agenda, the Conservatives prior to the 2010 general election were suggestive that the elected Labour Government was providing power with one hand and taking away with another (Gallent and Robinson, 2012). The Conservatives response was to present a seemingly radical drive to disperse power presented in the green paper ‘Control Shift: Returning Power to Local Communities’ (2009). The green paper’s proposals were then taken forward through the Coalition’s Localism agenda. They were presented with the intention to overcome the perceived frustration with the existing political decision-making system as well as using community based planning as a means of realising the Big Society (Gallent and Robinson, 2012). However, the actual dispersal of power has been subject to similar criticism to that which the Conservatives dealt Labour whereby it has been suggested localism is driving a redistribution of responsibility but not power or resources (Bailey & Pill 2011; Featherstone et al, 2012).

Localism, as the most recent round of democratic renewal, repositions the LPA’s role to advise and support the qualifying local body, such as Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum. This intends to transfer responsibility, to some extent, from the LPA to these bodies expected to undertake neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood Plans must conform to the Core Strategy or Local Plan, and LPA support is determined by each LPA and can come in the form of providing evidence, finance, or a venue for facilitation proportionate to the task in hand. The changes proposed in Coalition policy appeared to create a somewhat defensive reaction as the following interview with an NDC planning officer endeavours to reassert their necessary and expert role in the planning process. This interview took place as Neighbourhood Planning policy was beginning to emerge and when there was uncertainty regarding these changes. Interviewee comments made regarding Coalition policy were often speculative awaiting more detail, implementation and realisation. The quote below suggests some challenges that neighbourhoods could face in the most radical and independent form of plan development under proposed Neighbourhood Planning changes:

PM3: “The Localism Bill will give the communities a lot more apparent power and influence but again we’ve always gone to the communities to find out what they want so we can help to deliver it. But most of them can’t see
more than a couple of years ahead and we’re trying to look 15-20 years ahead. They don’t know what they want next week let alone further ahead. So it’s very hard to plan or provide. The Parish Plan typically was about five years which is great when it’s up to date but a lot of the stuff they ask for is a wish list which isn’t necessarily all planning as a lot of it will be Highways: “we want a footpath..new traffic lights..or pedestrian crossing”.

This quote once again highlights an understanding that effective community participation, albeit largely through a consultative approach with communities, already occurs in NDC. In addition to highlighting the potential for the parish to produce a less strategic plan and more of a ‘wish list’ it was suggested there are likely to be difficulties in conformity and compliance with wider strategies, the goals of planning and the timeframe to consider. This experience appears to drive their understanding of a need to reinforce the role of the planning department in an era of increased community input.

PM3: “There are also certain rules and laws that need to be followed and we wouldn’t expect the Parish Council to be familiar with them. Things like sustainability appraisals and habitat regulations, and some of the national and international rules that we have to follow. We can provide advice to communities but thinking that they can go ahead and do it on their own isn’t really realistic.”

These duties of compliance reinforce the notion that Localism has centralism entrenched and that Government gives power and responsibility with one hand but is taking with another (Buser, 2013). The opinion presented by this planning officer also suggests scepticism about the expectation placed upon communities due to their perception of planners holding an expert position.

So far this section has considered the suggestion that localism is not a new concept as it is claimed to already be in existence in North Devon as the most appropriate course of action. Although change is recognised in Coalition policy it is felt that greater obligation and expectation of the community could be problematic. Policy maker interviews also detailed that alongside the necessary compliance there is scope and purpose for local interpretation of national objectives. The influence of local factors and adaptation of policy to fit local
purpose identifies the ways in which discursive policy outcomes occur as a combination of rationalities deliver policy outcomes. Referring to the interview with the same planning officer as above, they describe the role of Local Government policy delivery, whereby the needs and inputs from both national policy and communities are met:

PM3: “Provided that we can show conformity, we can then vary it to meet local circumstances. In fact if we’re just doing exactly what national policy says then we shouldn’t be saying it cos it’s just repeating what’s already there. Our role is to interpret national policy at a local level and most of it is so woolly it can be interpreted, at a spatial, what it means to North Devon. So that’s very much a conformity issue. In terms of the community telling us what they want, there will be some things that are in conflict with national policy for a variety of reasons, and it may be a case of saying we can’t do that or we can’t do it in that way. However there will be a lot of aspirations that we can deliver on the back of our interpretation or locally adjusted interpreted policies, I think that’s really where the two bits meet in the middle.”

Here it is evident there are multiple spatial rationalities guiding national and local policy and policy actualisations based within national, district and community scale interpretations and needs. While the capacity for local influence can work as a positive for the local area, whereby policy can be interpreted to best meet local needs, it is also understood to generate problematic situations. The policy maker below highlights two rationalities guiding current Government:

PM1: “Government policy has to shape our work, it’s the context within which we all work so the government at the moment has two very broad policy strands. One is rapid reduction in the budget deficit, and the other is localism …

Everything the government does is driven by those two agendas basically. It actually makes it fairly simple to understand what the government is doing, even if you don’t agree with it at least you know why they’re doing it.”
The redistribution of power and reduction of the budget deficit are suggested to be two guiding agendas reflecting literature reviewed in Chapter Two (Bailey and Pill, 2011; Featherstone et al, 2012; Lowndes and Pratchett, 2012). These two rationalities appeared to be commonly, but not naively, accepted throughout the interviews with both policy makers and community members and that localism was perceived as a form of potential budget reduction. The same interviewee as above had discussed positive implications of local freedoms as well as suggesting the more pessimistic side of localism in terms of trying to get more people back into work to boost the economy:

PM1: “When the employer has got the opportunity to choose [...] people coming from long term unemployment incapacity benefit are going to be at the very bottom of the pile for employers. National policy: local implications – and the government is saying ‘It’s localism it’s your problem’ and that is a classic example where the cynics are probably right. The Government is saying ‘we’ve given you the powers. Not our fault it doesn't work’”.

The Coalition Government claims to be responding to a perceived dissatisfaction with concentration of power within central government. The opinion expressed above is perhaps reflective of the disparity between distributing the power, and problems, without providing realistic capacity and resources to adapt to overcome these issues. In this example the volume of jobs required for the number of job seekers does not match, but this issue was described as being unsupported out of the local sphere. Similarly within the communities, an interviewee discussed how the Parish Council’s consultation process in generating the 5 yearly Parish Plan has been subject to reduced support but with the same expectation:

CM10: “Next time we do it will not go out by mail cos we’re going to do it for free next time. We had a local Government grant next time £4500 but that won’t be forthcoming so we’ve got to devise a way of doing it for free.”

The Parish Council here expressed the increasing difficulties being faced and additional expectations and demands being placed upon parish volunteers. However, to some extent the parish and individuals also desire this very local input, therefore the Parish Plan process is a response to one rationality, while
the decrease in financial resources available to complete the process is representative of another as outlined above.

The community member interviewee below presents the common feeling that the inclusion of community in governance is more representative of the community scale unlike larger scale Government agendas:

CM12: “I’m a believer in small stuff, in green ways of looking at things because I think when people are involved because it’s about their own community and their own concerns and whatever, then it’s going to be better and maybe the bigger the Government get the more different the agenda is.”

A dichotomy appears to exist between a desire for responsibility and the resources to fulfil such responsibilities. This inevitably becomes a limiting factor towards participation in such processes and is somewhat reminiscent of Lowndes and Pratchett’s (2012) understanding of the Big Society ‘sink or swim’ approach to communities depending on whether they have or have not got resources to fulfil functions.

This section has intended to recap the Localism agenda and outline some of the broader issues such as increased responsibilities for communities but a decrease in resources, especially funding, to deliver these. The next section will expand on the notions that were emerging through the last two quotes in this section that began to consider the apparent desire to include and represent individuals and communities. The perceived mismatch of power, responsibility and duty (Holman and Rydin, 2013) will be further examined through exploring the means of inclusion in decision-making in local government and beyond.

7.4 The Pragmatics Of “Participatory Inclusion”

The drive for a highly inclusive and representative range of participants in addition to producing a representative account of those who did participate has been considered problematic. The potential for participatory processes to result in “organizational paralysis” (Williams, 2002:201) and the need to balance outcomes and delivery with inclusivity and processes was raised in the literature (Bailey and Pill, 2011; section 2.11.1). These issues were also raised during interviews, largely with policy makers, when discussing the mechanisms, and extent of representation of participation programmes in North Devon. ENPA
detailed an exercise whereby each settlement in the Park was visited and consulted and described to have generated an “absolutely huge amount of information” (PM8). The capacity to represent each comment in the consequent report, used as part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework, was not feasible. The output of this process saw comments grouped, summarised and proportions represented demonstrating the reality of multiple individuals’ input into such processes. ENPA felt it had been an effective consultation exercise and the most logical approach to communicating a vast array of input into a useable and concise report, despite the issue that specifics of many comments inevitably disappear.

Generally policy makers expressed that they felt that the council did the best it could with the resources available to deliver effective consultation and participation exercises. Effective participation was deemed to include adaptable approaches which alter for different exercises as summarised by the following interview excerpt:

PM1: “Consultation has to be in-depth, and real, and timely, and properly resourced. The top rung of the ladder can be done well and can be appropriate in certain circumstances, consultation being a proper listening mode resource it..well, make sure the whole process is accessible to people. But when it comes to what the community needs in terms of its own local, individual cares then it’s better done bottom up. Participatory. Bottom rung of the participation ladder where the community brings its own solution forward: social housing or some other infrastructure need or whatever, a village hall, a playgroup.”

This approach recognises the difference between consultation and participation whereby both are appropriate in different situations therefore making a need to be adaptable in order to create an effective and appropriate programme (Section 2.9.1). The capacity for such exercises to be properly resourced and in-depth, as suggested above, was felt by many policy makers to compromise the process. While NDC’s planning department felt it had a comprehensive engagement programme in place it was suggested they were somewhat confined by available resources:
PM3: “In terms of the planning department obviously we engage quite extensively with local communities in preparing plans…

We would love the resources to be able to be more radical in participation. Resources is the key, whether it’s time or money or staff that is always the constraint. What you need to do is just make the best you can with the resources you’ve got.”

This policy maker was maintaining a realistic view, setting out to achieve what was possible within the conditions including the boundaries and opportunities set by national policy and regular changes in such guidance, detailed in the following quote:

PM3: “I think for ever changing planning legislation, which the current and previous Government are doing is making it difficult cos they keep moving the goalposts of what you’ve got to do and how you do it, and when. If they just stick with one system we’d be able to get it embedded and start to deliver it better. It’s not the lack of ability to do it, not the lack of ideas, it’s much more about capacity and also I think that the community knowing how and when they can get involved in the process.”

The quote also raised the issue that certain elements are out of the control of local government. The final point in this quote touches on the role and responsibility of the community and the individual to participate, which will be further examined in the next section of this chapter.

While the planning department’s approach was internally understood to be extensive and realistic given the resources available, the extent to which it was understood as a process of power redistribution was raised in this next policy maker interview:

PM9: “The higher authority will want to retain as much power as possible and will not be prepared to delegate because if you keep control you avoid mistakes. Delegation is a dangerous thing, delegation by its very nature involves allowing people to get on with it, to make the mistakes and to learn from the mistakes, the nature of a bureaucratic upper is to resist this.”
The understanding appeared to be that if the higher authority, whether that be national or local government, were to delegate power it is ‘dangerous’ which reflects the understanding of participation in the UK as weak or tokenistic (Bucek and Smith, 2000; Smith, 2000). The policy maker justifies this view with the perception that without retaining such control, mayhem would ensue.

PM9: “There are two pressures of people on the ground doing what they want to do, and an overview preventing mayhem from breaking out; and that is the two which have to be balanced against each other.”

This perceived issue of trying to organise or guide numerous individuals who are creating mayhem is a crucial point in understanding planning processes from a governmentality perspective. This interviewee did however suggest that the planning department had successfully developed and increased engagement programmes reflecting many of the understood ideals of localism that were emerging in the early stages of the Coalition elective. Fewer policy makers were critical of NDC’s approach in terms of including and representing North Devon residents. However the following policy maker felt, quite strongly, that not enough was taking place:

PM11: “It did worry me about the rebranding about two years ago. The previous North Devon District Council logo had under it “close to the community” and that was removed, and I was really quite sad about that because as I said earlier my job is to represent the people. I don’t give a monkey’s about what goes on in here [civic centre] really. I’m here to represent the people that voted me in to my place as a District Councillor, and I think we need to refer back to them and the planners don’t liaise enough; not just with the parish but with other organisations like the Residents Association, the Chambers of Commerce that need the schools that should have inputs.”

This policy maker in their role as councillor felt that they personally represent ‘the people’ in policy making and that this was not occurring as best it could. It was not clear whether they felt this was due to a lack of willpower or capacity, only that the current process was not achieving enough resident liaisons.

Finally, the following policy maker felt that the LPA’s capacity to lead effective participation programmes relied upon willpower rather than being dependent upon or constrained by available resources:
“Actually local government has all the freedom it needs if it’s got the will to do it. OK there’s one or two things coming through in the Localism Bill that actually confirm, you know, that local authorities have the power to do frankly what the better local authorities have been doing for years. It goes back to the seek forgiveness and not permission, a council like North Devon Council for instance at times it has said ‘we know what we need to do, we’re going to do it but we’ll find out the powers and the capacities as we go’. Um so...although the Localism Bill is handy in confirming those powers frankly it hasn’t stopped local authorities who’ve been entrepreneurial in their approach.”

While this interviewee is referring to localism and the inclusion of residents more broadly it demonstrates the positive proactive attitude of this individual. Often within local government institutions the attitude, as well as the capacity to act, is often limited by protocol and resources, as was referred to in the interview with PM3. While most felt NDC did well with the resources available this section has sought to display the diversity of opinions about how NDC pursues and succeeds at increasing participation and delivering participation effectively.

To conclude this section a review of such participation and engagement programmes, and the aims of the localism agenda will be considered from the perceptions of North Devon residents. To begin with, a planning policy maker’s opinion of their experience of community response, the following quote details the approach taken to attempt to overcome identified barriers, as well as suggesting both long standing barriers and motivations to respond:

PM3: “In terms of accessibility, we try to write the document so there’s not lots of technical jargon so it’s not a case of them not being able to read or understand it. And everything’s on the website so anyone who’s got a computer can potentially access the documents. I think to some extent it’s more of an education issue of people being aware of what’s going on and knowing where to find things, what they can influence and when. We can try to engage people until we’re blue in the face from the initial stages: so in trying to find a development site, we have a few responses, then when the application goes in we have 150 saying ‘we don’t want it there’. You know if they’d told us that to
This quote raises issues of accessibility to documents as well as knowledge of when and how to respond as deterministic to the success and appropriateness of engagement. Interestingly, the anecdotal reflection about an inflated belated level of response during the process of siting a development is something that the Coalition’s neighbourhood planning seeks to address. Through bringing in governmental technologies such as ‘Neighbourhood Development Orders’ the ‘neighbourhood’ is identified to represent the ‘community’. The neighbourhood is requested to detail development that is permitted or desired, whereby objection at later stages is attempted to be reduced. However, this process assumes a positive response from ‘the neighbourhood’. It ignores the likely potential for disagreement within ‘the neighbourhood’, largely through failing to acknowledge the rare existence of a homogenous and consensual neighbourhood. The neighbourhood planning ideology intends to overcome the process of objection whereby planning development is, at minimum, stalled and citizens feel disengaged with the process. Gallent and Robinson (2012) describe Neighbourhood Development Plans to be a point of departure from previous governments, as they have been assigned a definite place within the planning process, as a means of encouraging greater participation appearing less “tokenistic “than previous approaches (Bucek and Smith, 2000:14). However, in addition to the diversity of opinions found within neighbourhoods, the difficulties in representation and engaging the neighbourhood also faces challenges and constraints from competing national agendas and the need for compliance (Gallent and Robinson, 2012). These issues are set to undermine the intended capabilities for neighbourhood representation, in some instances but not necessarily all, and to reassert the notion that centralism is at the heart of localism (Buser, 2013).

The latest round of democratic renewal aims to increase representativeness and the role of participation which appears to have been received warily by members of the community, particularly those with Parish Council responsibilities. The empirical data appeared to present this previously suggested dichotomy between community desire for local power and the reality
of the responsibility to deliver these objectives. The following resident refers to their perception of their Parish Council in its current capacity:

CM1: “I think it’s working well as it is and I think if you were to shove a lot more money and responsibility onto the tin pot Parish Council, it will be too much for it.”

Here, the understanding is that increasing responsibility will ultimately lead to a potential collapse of the Parish Council in current format. Similarly this interviewee gave the same opinion about their personal role within the Parish Council:

CM1: “But to try and push anything more on us, they pay me £450 a year..um for about probably about ¾ of a day’s work a week so it’s a fair amount of work I put in, not that I’m complaining but I’d do it willingly for nothing … But shove another couple of days work a week onto me and I..probably I wouldn’t do it but the rational person would say hang a minute, you’re asking me to quadruple the amount of hours: I want some more money.”

This interviewee claimed to value their freedom too much to invest more time than they already do in community planning. Based on the suggestions emerging at the early stages of the localism agenda they believe it suffers flaws as residents are unlikely to volunteer more time than they already do. A Parish Councillor from a separate research parish expressed a similar view when considering duties expected to be conducted by the Parish Council:

CM9: “Well we’re a Parish Council for goodness sake, we’re lay people we’re not even paid for what we do, the District Authority can very easily access a list for any given parish.”

The example being referred to here was not directly referencing Localism but the issue of Business Rated properties free-riding on the domestic refuse collection and the District Council asking the Parish Council to provide full details. Nevertheless it details, as did the previous quote, that those who already volunteer their time to represent their community are sceptical and reluctant to take on increased responsibility at the community level.

This section has presented some empirical findings in relation to the difficulties of implementing and processing information generated through extensive participation in decision-making. It has reviewed perceptions of NDC’s approach
to participation and constraints and barriers including the need for an issue to affect an individual to motivate participation and problems with individuals effectively planning for the long-term. While one individual felt barriers could be overcome with willpower, it was generally felt by policy makers that NDC achieves the best in can in terms of participation, given the available resources. This section also presented an apparent dichotomy whereby communities appear to desire greater control but not the responsibility without greater resources to implement. There appears to be a level of reluctance from the community to invest greater volumes of time to deliver such programmes. Both the empirical data and literature support the view that there are deeply embedded constraints in the Localism Agenda including the high expectation of community uptake and constraints placed through national agendas. The next section in this chapter will expand on the issue that citizens tend to participate when an issue directly affects them and present examination of the empirical data in terms of who participates. It will review the role and members of representative bodies, predominantly the Parish Council to assess the motivations, disposition and impetus that draw individuals to participate.

7.5 The Participants

Persistent programmes of democratic renewal demonstrate national government’s desire to seek increased participation (section 2.10) in terms of numbers and diversity of participants, especially those considered ‘hard to reach’. ‘Hard to reach’ groups are defined by North Devon Council’s Statement of Community Involvement in the following statement:

“There are particular sections of the community that the Council wishes to ensure are involved in the planning process due to their specific needs or because traditionally they have been under represented – these are the so-called ‘hard to reach’ groups. The Council has identified the hard to reach groups in North Devon as including: inactive older people, rural groups, disabled people, ethnic minority groups, young people, parents with young children, the homeless and people on low-incomes.” (2006:15)

Therefore participation programmes intend to target these groups with the intention of increasing their representativeness. Those not mentioned are understood to be represented already and are participating such as active older people. This section will consider approaches to widening participation from
both policy maker and resident viewpoints. It will also examine who is understood to participate, particularly in decision-making and community leadership and will include consideration of the role and representativeness of the Parish Council.

The way in which community is thought about has been considered in both chapters two and six. Recognising the multiple communities that are present within place is also important when considering participation. This is represented through Atkinson and Cope’s suggestion of the need to understand “the constitution of the community, the weight attached to different views from the community, and the power relations between the state and its public” (1997:207 in Edwards et al, 2003, in Imrie and Raco, 2003). The Coalition’s neighbourhood planning process places responsibility upon the neighbourhood in the form of the Parish Council or elected Neighbourhood Forum (DCLG, 2011a) reaffirming their perception of the elevated position of these bodies within the community and within the process of community participation. The representation of the neighbourhood through such local bodies has been viewed as problematic not least due to issues with grounding community in place, but also and of greater relevance to this chapter, is the consideration that local bodies such as the Parish Council can be dominated by local ‘elite’ individuals (Edwards et al, 2003). The District Council perceives the Parish Council as a crucial pathway to communicating with communities and fulfilling participatory and engagement obligations. This was suggested during the following policy maker interview:

PM1: “If you’ve still got the basis of a viable community: if you’ve got either a good residents groups or Parish Council or a good, actually the Parish Council is often key to it in this neck of the woods. Parish Council’s can be an absolute dead hand on things or they can be a means of getting community cohesion and means of getting the whole community organised. Sometimes you get a Parish Plan group that sets themselves up from the Parish Council independently because they want to get something done without the Parish Councillors in the way, sometimes you have to go around the Parish Council, and we’ve seen that happen.”
Here it is suggested that the Parish Council is often key to a ‘viable community’ in North Devon but is not understood to be a generic approach to community participation and functioning. The Parish Council role was presented to be dependent upon issue as there are instances when the Parish Council may not be the most appropriate body or may be best avoided. Similar priority, but not exclusivity, of communication was placed upon the Parish Council in the following interview:

PM3: “We’ve got a ‘Statement of Community Involvement’ which is saying how we’re going to engage and who we’re going to engage along the way. Part of it is through elected Ward Members and District Councillors, we’ve always had good working relationships with different Parish and Town Councils but it’s still difficult, we may get to the active few in those communities but the typical man or woman in the street hasn’t got time, isn’t particularly interested. And even when we’ve done mailshots through every door – colour, glossy “this is your community” we still don’t get a big enough turn out because it isn’t immediately and directly seen to be affecting them. We need to improve, we’re not the only council it is a fairly standard problem reaching the ‘hard to reach’ groups or engaging them.”

This highlights that the Parish Council is not the sole method of community engagement but has an important role. This stems from ease for NDC but also reaction to experience of community responses, reiterating the understanding of difficulty in wider engagement including ‘hard to reach’ groups. The above policy maker suggests they have trialled different mechanisms to engage residents but these have not promoted a greater turnout or response. Speculative comments were made about this being due to a lack of time and/or interest. Due to these issues public engagement appears to focus time and resources on community participation through the Parish Council as was identified later in the same interview:

PM3: “The Parish Council’s we will engage and train and work with on a regular basis, the idea, we would hope, is that they go back and represent their communities. But again it’s the same few faces that always appear and how representative is a Parish Council of the wider community – well they’re elected by them so that’s what their democratic role is, to reflect the community
but it could be argued that they only represent those that actually can be bothered to vote.”

Here, some of the fundamental issues regarding the role and position of the Parish Council are raised. The extent to which the Parish Council is representative of the wider community and the issues of elections only representing those who vote are raised in this quote. Throughout interviews, repeated reference to the ‘same few individuals’ being involved in community activity were made, questioning representativeness. Furthermore, as this next quote identifies, a minority of people in the Parish Council are tasked with resolving issues that the majority of the community raise:

CM3: "It’s the majority that say things aren’t right and it’s the minority that will actually identify what’s not right and try to find ways of resolving it. It’s the busy people that actually tend to do the most. But that’s typical for most communities but there are a lot of active groups…

They tend to become part of the wheel that does those things that are required to be done in Instow…

but if you look amongst all the different groups there’s usually a spattering of the same people in the groups.”

This reiterates the suggestion of the presence of a core of active locals within communities as well as reinforcing the apparent importance of the Parish Council to respond to the needs of the community and liaise with the District Council. While the Parish Council has been placed in an elevated position for community engagement by NDC and through the apparent limited response and participation from residents, it cannot be understood as entirely representative. Parish Council governance identifies some of the critiques of representative democracy dominant in the UK (section 2.9), something the continual democratic renewal processes are endeavouring to overcome. Such parish bodies are reported to contain the ‘same few faces’ questioning their representativeness, in addition to the elective process representing only those that vote. Furthermore, voting has been suggested to further promote individuality rather than building relationships between people or connecting individuals to wider communities (Sen, 1994 in Sanderson, 1999). This questions their position as representative of the community and the privileged position these bodies are given by National and District Government. Previous rounds of democratic renewal from this policy maker’s viewpoint did not appear
to have overcome issues of limited participation and suggest that a wider cultural shift rather than policy alterations may be required to overcome such participation limitations.

The representative democratic processes connecting the District Council and residents through Councillors and Parish Councils was praised by some interviewees, although these were largely but not solely those involved in relevant processes. However, the success of these lines of communication was understood to rely upon the individuals involved. The quote below details that the some of the Parish Council’s achievements were the result of an active County Councillor:

CM1:  “Well I would say that we as a parish have a good line of communication..our County Councillor is excellent and she is the County Councillor and our District Councillor who is North Devon comes to every single Parish Council meeting…

The County Councillor knows more people at the Council than I do and she knows where to go to get a favour to get something done, which I don’t know. I would say that’s excellent.”

This demonstrates the direction and power that individuals can bring to each situation and guide the outcomes of policy and governance and actions of individuals and collections of people. The example here is how the lines of communication work effectively, in order to ensure the Parish Council is represented at the District level. This parish is very small which was felt to work in favour of the Parish Council’s capabilities, and benefit the community. The issue of participation was also raised in the same interview reporting that very few people turn up to regular Parish Council meetings unless an item such as housing is on the agenda. This is a resident reiteration of the policy maker’s viewpoint about individuals often not getting involved unless they are felt to be directly affected, something which will be revisited later in this section. The suggestion that community activity varies and is dependent on the individuals and collective of individuals that can be mobilised is presented in the literature (Edwards et al, 2003). This does not necessarily work as a positive force as the following quote details how individuals can be a ‘vocal minority’ and sway the
opinions and actions of the Parish Council away from representing the dominant opinion of the community:

PM2: “If the problem is political - with a small ‘p’ - the local ward members or local Parish Council can very often be swayed by that vocal minority because if they want to get elected they will immediately see this vocal group, they may assume they are speaking for the majority so they take up their case.”

These discursive outcomes make the Parish Council process difficult to assess and is a body that can work well dependent upon the individuals and issues being dealt with. This is perhaps representative of Crang’s emphasis that “even relatively powerful actors do not have perfect access to information” (2002:649). While the Parish Council is in a position of leadership it does not necessarily have access to or can be assured to represent the views of everyone, or of the community majority.

Similarly, Edwards et al (2003) revealed that Chairs of meetings admitted ‘cherry picking’ to ensure outputs and create their perception of a more cohesive working group despite generating a somewhat biased group of apparent representatives. During the research interviews this process of ‘cherry picking’ was identified as having been used during certain meetings:

PM2 “Luckily one of the Parish Councillors had persuaded somebody to stand up and this person stood up and said.. I think first someone stood up and said they wanted the scheme to go ahead because it was going to give housing to their children, or their children had opportunity. And then somebody else stood up and said ‘I want to live here and I can’t afford to buy so I want one of these houses.’ And then the whole dynamic of that meeting changed because those people who were anti suddenly started to see that they weren’t in the majority, and that they were actually condemning their neighbours. Because when it’s some anonymous person that’s potentially going to be housed it’s easy to go ‘nnnnhhhh’ [gestures] but when it’s the bloke you’re drinking with in the pub, his daughter, it’s not quite so easy to sort of have a pop is it?”

In this example the Parish Councillor had selected someone to stand up in support of a housing scheme in an area where the Parish Council was
suggesting the community was not in need and effectively trying to block the scheme. The quote questions processes of engagement and community interaction, particularly the change in dynamic regarding direct face-to-face interaction, as well as the challenges some quieter individuals face in braving the vocal and apparent majority. In the same interview the policy maker discussed the conditions they felt were required for the situation above to occur and the motivation to speak up and potentially alter the dynamics and outputs of a meeting:

PM2: “I think it’s about feeling safe. If you were able to say to somebody who was in housing need who wanted one of the properties ‘would you stand up in this public meeting?’ They’d probably say yes if they knew that somebody else would do it too or somebody would make sure they clapped them, if you could guarantee that they wouldn’t have a negative thing. I suppose it’s like any of us we wouldn’t want to go somewhere we’d feel ostracised, and I think that’s the danger.”

This again details how some participation, most likely in public meetings, needs to be set up rather than relying on spontaneous actions. Individuals heavily influence such situations, as can the dominance and strength of opinions put forward by bodies in a position of leadership such as the Parish Council. Any autonomous or collective individuals can therefore endeavour to resist dominant government rationalities or technologies as these are acted out on the ground. Personal motivations to participate will be examined in the concluding part of this section. The example above intended to highlight the potential for manipulations within Parish Councils or selected meetings to potentially suppress or liberate certain opinions rather than functioning as entirely representative of the community. However, despite the apparent existence of such bias the following resident offered the following opinion and trust in the Parish Council through the belief that the scale of the Parish Council enables appropriate representation:

CM12: “The more decisions that can be made at Parish Council type level the better I think. Because it is more representative of us, and it is more about the people that live here, and what it feels like to live here and um I think that’s for the better. And even if the Parish Council is composed of people who are going to say ‘second homes are terrible’ or they’re going to say ‘I’ve
got lots of second homes, holiday homes and it’s my income and it’s a good thing’ then at least you’re getting a local representation about it. I believe in small, local Government..I think.”

This understanding is perhaps based on a series of assumptions that individuals will choose to participate and express their opinion at the parish scale, in addition to the Parish Council then being trusted to appropriately represent the majority. However, Edwards et al’s (2003) research concluded that community participation does not appear easier or more representative at a smaller scale. Therefore while the smaller scale and closeness to residents is felt to offer greater representation this is not guaranteed. This chapter will conclude by examining motivations to participate which will further explore the issue raised above, that those represented are only those who choose to participate.

While CM12’s understanding is critiqued above, it is, however, representative of how Parish Councils are supposed to function. A similar opinion has been expressed by Parish Councillors in other research locations who detailed the appropriateness and relevance of the Parish Council. The apparent general level of support for Parish Councils perhaps reiterates that the Parish Council is important within North Devon:

CM3: “Yeah its..its strength is the fact that it’s non political; nobody’s in there wearing any party hat, they’re independent, they’re there cos they want to work and support and do things for Instow and they all work together as a team, erm with the odd exception. But by and large they are totally and utterly a corporate group working for Instow and nothing else, no other agenda.”

Here the purpose of the Parish Council and this Parish Councillor’s role is strongly represented in being to work for and support the parish of Instow, although also highlights the reality that there may be members that disrupt the group. Similarly in Georgeham the following Parish Councillor sees the Parish Council role as working for the parish community:

CM10: “The Parish Council is purely practical, we don’t allow either religion or politics in it ever and it confines itself to purely practical matters and getting what it wants out the District and County Council. Not terribly successful
cos they always say ‘we haven’t got any money, do it yourself’ so you do it yourself and then they complain. Then there are the farmers that are very good, the bank needs cutting so they dispatch someone to do that one as well, they charge but you know. Getting them all together to find out what they’d like to do next is an absolute impossibility but apart from that.”

The quote reiterates the difficulty of getting the community together, participating and providing information as a barrier to widening participation and representation. In addition to the difficulty of the Parish Council not being a homogenous consensual group, as raised by CM3, CM10 highlights that while there is a good line of communication with the District and County Council action and implementation is not always straightforward reflective of McKee’s “messiness” (2009:465).

In order for the District Council to respond to residents, there are often certain pathways that need to be pursued, and policy makers in previous quotes have expressed the difficulty of getting individuals to act and participate along these pathways. This issue was also expressed by the following Parish Councillor who also claims that individuals, despite having access to information to the relevant pathways to seek assistance and access to affordable housing, haven’t completed the appropriate measures to do so:

CM9: “As a parish we are not at the moment recognised with a need for local needs or social housing. We don’t have enough people on the local needs register. That’s another difficult issue. I have families that talk to me, and our District Councillor will tell you the same: ‘my daughter, my granddaughter, my niece whatever wants to be here and they can’t get a home’ so we say ‘have you got yourselves on the housing register?’ and a lot of the times they’ll say ‘oh no we haven’t had time to do that yet’, and you do think ‘oh for goodness sake help yourself a little bit please, because unless you’re on the housing register you will not be a local needs house’”.

Such uncertainty or unawareness of a course of action to undertake appears to create an apparent barrier to effective action and participation by individuals. Despite the District Council’s self-perception of making information and pathways available and accessible it would appear that some residents remain unsure of the processes or options available to them. Knowledge is presented
by Curry (2012) to act as a form of self-control which can limit the success of communities and in this instance, while it is unclear why the individual lacks knowledge, it leads them to not act effectively. The personal motivations for opting to participate will be examined to conclude this section in order to enhance the understanding of effective participation as a reflexive process of knowledge availability and individual action.

Policy makers often expressed their understanding that personal attitude is one of the limitations to participation programmes. The availability of options and access to information acts to place responsibility with the individual as is suggested in the following policy maker quote:

PM1: “You can’t make it [participation] compulsory...you have to have the right not to participate.”

As much as the responsibility lies with the individual to choose to participate, they also have the right to choose not to participate, which effectively works against the ambitions of greater participation programmes. However, the issue of choice remains prudent as it removes some responsibility of inclusion in decision-making as outlined during the same interview as above. On discussing participation an example of a local vote to raise business rate taxes to increase local spending was provided:

PM1: “The minute the business rate invoices started arriving from the council, the town centre manager’s phone was red hot with businesses saying: ‘What’s this?...I haven’t agreed to this.’

Town centre manager: ‘Did you vote?’
‘No.’
‘Well that’s your fault then, if you don’t like it you should have voted.’

Call 2:
‘What’s this?’
‘Did you vote?’
‘Yeah, I voted no.’
‘Well sorry the majority voted yes.’

Call 3:
‘What’s this?’
‘Did you vote for it?’
‘Yeah, I voted for it.’
‘Well that’s what you were voting for.’

But it’s the ones who didn’t vote who have the least excuse for complaining, they had the opportunity, the publicity, they ignored it.”
This example explicitly details this desire for transfer of responsibility to participate to the individual, something that has also been construed as an intention of the Localism agenda (Lowndes and Pratchett, 2012). This transfer is perceived to assist overcoming challenges the implementation of extensive participation programmes face whereby participation rates are not as high or as inclusive as ideally desired. However, in this example, voting was the participation mechanism, and in some respects voting enables only the majority of those who vote to have their opinion recognised. The issues of mass participation have been previously discussed and voting provides a simple consultation method to obtain the input of those who choose to vote and negates the deciding body of responsibility for the outgoing decision. Section 2.9.2 discusses the process of voting as the most common form of participation for many and the extent to which planning repeatedly attempts to become a more democratic process. This research firmly suggests that as participation opportunities are consistently available, personal choice depicts a situation of self-responsibility to act accordingly with the participation rationality if desired. A Parish Councillor, in reference to non-permanent resident participation, further expressed the suggestion of self-responsibility in displaying their opinion that it was not the obligation of the resident community to ensure each individual has been consulted and has responded:

CM10: “I think if we’re going to be honest the feeling is if they want to know about it and they’re here often enough they’ll jolly well find out about it. If they don’t care we don’t either sort of thing.”

This opinion is compounded by the difficulty the Parish Council faces in needing to consult the community and seek information but having reduced financial support, which was outlined during the same interview.

This section has detailed who the participants appear to be in the process of community engagement and national and local Government prioritisation of the Parish Council in reaching and representing the community. It has emphasised the importance of the Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum in the Coalition’s perception of community and community participation. The Parish Council has been presented to provide an important link between the District Council and their constituents in North Devon, something that may not be experienced in other areas. Nevertheless, the importance of the Parish Council has also been
critiqued through exploring the broader critique of democratic representative methods. It has also recognised the mass of individuals that are acting under their own personal choices but, within guidance through various governance mechanisms such as the various duties the District and Parish Council has to fulfil in involving the community. The power that individuals bring to each situation has been recognised as well as the difficulties these multiple inputs bring in collating participatory programmes. However, these processes also generate policy action gaps understood to be part of the process when considering these issues through the lens of governmentality. The next section will further discuss these motivations and influences that each individual brings through participating.

7.6 Individual Motivation To Participate
This section will assess the motivation to participate in both decision-making and community activities. It will also further review the suggestion that there is a perpetual existence of a small number of active people within a community (Edwards et al, 2003) or whether greater representation is being achieved. The Parish Council in the previous section was suggested to be representative of those who vote and containing the ‘same few’ and this section will detail the motivations of these participants to act.

Gallent and Robinson suggest that “some people have a propensity to participate that is greater than that of their neighbours” (2012:35) which reiterates comments about the ‘same few faces’, made in both policy maker and community member interviews. This personal propensity to participate is a reality of implementing the Government’s continual drive and rationality to increase the extent of public participation. Buser (2013:10) presents a Big Society critique in that it fails to work within the framework of what is understood to motivate individuals to take part in community engagement initiatives. Coote (2010:3 in Buser 2013:10) outlines a misalignment between personal participation motivations of “small-scale, convivial and life-enhancing” and Government plans of “conditional, formalised, complicated and hard-graft”. Personal choice over whether to participate and to what degree personal involvement impacts the outcomes of such programmes ultimately determines the degree of engagement, however, the localism agenda seeks to place the
individual as accountable to participate. Local governance is faced with a centrally driven agenda placing an obligation on the community to respond and often issue specific motivations from individuals. This quote from a policy maker outlines some difficulties in engaging the community in policy plan making:

PM3: “In terms of actually coming up with a draft Local Plan or draft planning document, most people.. It’s been very hard to get them engaged in the process, simply because they don’t see that 1: they are only interested if it’s going to affect them or their house, and trying to ask what you want to happen to your community over future years – they haven’t got an opinion, probably cos they’ve never thought about it. And actually getting people to look ahead and come up with a more strategic view than ‘how is it going to affect me now?’ has been a challenge. But it’s not just planning in that regard we have certainly tried to engage communities, the council as a whole not just planning, and look at aspirations but it has been hard work.”

This emphasises Buser’s (ibid) issue with the ambitions of the Localism Agenda whereby the community is obliged to consider a long-term strategic plan but evidence to date suggests participation centres around impact on the individual in the short-term. The Coalition approach to increasing civic engagement does not seem to align with known successful voluntary participation processes and in creating obligations to participate reiterates Lowndes and Pratchett’s suggestion of the Coalition’s “sink or swim” (2012:37) approach to communities.

The motivation to act based upon perceived personal impact was reinforced in speaking with community members. In responding to whether this individual chooses to engage with planning consultations the following response was given:

CM13: “Yeah yeah. In two incidences. One where it’s immediately in my locality like I mean close enough to see out of my window that kind of thing, or if I think it’s just wrong, it could be.. We live in Georgeham, if it’s a development in Croyde that you drive past and think no way should that be allowed it just looks ridiculous then in those situations yes I would and I have done..signed petitions and things like that.”
Here the motivation to act and participate in local governance issues and consultation depended upon personal proximity to the proposed issue or development or upon their opinion regarding appropriateness, which was also expressed during policy maker interviews.

Aside from the motivation of direct effect generating response often to specific issues, there are individuals who choose to be active within the community more consistently and long-term, largely through Parish Councillor roles. The following interviewee describes their motivation to participate within the community and local governance through the Parish Council:

CM10: “Well I retired – you have to do something when your retired don’t you! I was a school teacher so you’re used to people all about and organising things and that sort of lark. And I knew quite a bit, cos I’m sort of semi local, I knew people who were on the Parish Council and it seemed quite a good idea.”

The motivation in this instance appears to be related to contacts and personality, or habit, connected to their previous employment as a teacher, as well as retirement freeing up time to offer to such activities. Later in the same interview discussion around whether non-retired community members choose to get involved in activities within the parish, not just Parish Council issues, outlined the following:

CM10: “Some of them do but it’s difficult. They’ve nearly always got 1 or possibly 2 jobs um, they’ve got little kids, they both work it doesn’t leave a lot of spare time for getting involved in communities but some of them do, particularly in the sporting thing. They’re quite deeply into that and obviously they’ll be involved with the church and chapel up the road which is used as a youth club meeting centre and what have you. That’s run by the youngsters; and the young mums all get together and do things – Pilates and all sorts of things they get up to. So there are lots of things going on and I would think that most people are involved in something or other particularly because it’s difficult to avoid.”

While this interviewee remains confident that those of working age have a restricted volume of time available to offer to the community due to work and life demands, they also feel that it is difficult to avoid being involved in something
within the community. As such they believe that individuals participate in whichever way they can, although this same interviewee detailed difficulty from a Parish Councillor perspective, in attaining community participation to find out what the community desires. It would therefore seem that difficulties arise when more formal participation is required.

Other residents detailed their motivation to participate being grounded in their personality, as was suggested above:

CM8: 

“I teach primary kids I love kids company and it’s just kind of..I want to be able to make a difference without sounding like David Cameron’s fan! But I do I want to be able to say that I’ve made a bit of difference towards people and taken part in my community. And also if I don’t help, nobody..if everybody takes the attitude of someone else will do it then nothing gets done so..I would rather stand up and say ‘I’ll do that’. And I look at Scouts and the mums who drop them off then go home and they’ve been at home all day and I’m like ‘hold on a minute I’ve just done a 60 hour week and I’m still here.’”

Furthermore this resident feels a sense of responsibility and desire to help, to make a difference through ‘taking part in their community’, voluntarily running Scouts for example. This resident went on to express their desire to take part in the community has roots in the social support a community can offer, as well as finding it provides personal benefits:

CM8: 

“My Mum and Dad moved out to Spain about five years ago so I don’t have any family here but I want to feel rooted in the community – I want to be a part of it even though I can’t afford to be here I want to feel part of the community, that’s where I get a lot of my erm self-esteem from almost. Some people get it from themselves some people get it from the things they do and I’m a ‘things they do’ kinda person.”

This individual therefore uses participation as a connection to people and to help their self-esteem, however both of these motivations relate to the individual and personal situation. While participation can and does relate to personal choice both of these traits were expressed in other interviews with community members. This first response was given following questioning regarding their motivation to get to know people within the neighbourhood:
CM7: “It’s just to feel part of a community isn’t it. It’s to feel that there’s always somebody there, I’ve lived here for fourteen years, and I wouldn’t say I know everybody in the village because there’s the village up behind as well so I don’t know very many people from there, but I’ve worked in The Boathouse, we come over here and drink umm you know. I generally know everybody but it’s nice to feel part of a community, a bit more belonging and you take a bit more pride so I would be tempted to if I saw rubbish in the street I’d pick it up and put it in a bin whereas maybe if I was on holiday I wouldn’t have that pride.”

This respondent has made the effort to interact with others from the parish neighbourhood to enable them to feel part of a community, as examined in the previous chapter. They also detail that feeling a part of a community through interacting with others and participating in the parish community fosters a sense of belonging and pride in the area that they felt those on holiday don’t necessarily develop. The importance of place was raised by the two individuals in the next quote as a motivation to be involved in community activities, as well as reiterating that such involvement reaps personal benefits through facilitating social integration:

CM1: “My motivation? Errm pretty sort of basic really...um I like the area, I like the people, it matters to me and I want to try and do my bit to try and help it. Simple really”

CM2: “Also helps in integration.”

CM1: “Yes! Let’s be fair there was possibly a selfish, which I didn’t realise at the time, but in retrospect I volunteered to be Clerk to Parish Council and it meant I met a lot of people very quickly. Which when you’re coming into a place like this from where we were living in Surrey, values are completely totally different. It enabled us to make friends quickly.”

Therefore as someone who was new to the area participation enabled connections and acquaintances to be made alongside a sense of being part of a collective which was represented through the individual’s feeling they should ‘do my bit to try and help’. Social integration seems to act as a personal motivator to participate alongside facilitating a sense of a connection to the physical place.
in which they reside, through interacting with others and place-based institutions.

This section has sought to develop understanding of personal motivations to participate in formal decision-making and locally strategic governance roles as well as more informal community participation. As with the conclusions drawn in the previous chapter about individuals’ perceptions of community, the motivations and propensity to participate appears to relate strongly to personality. This can be through having a desire to be active, or through a perception of personal gain through doing so, although this is should not be simplified as this personal gain often appeared to have altruistic motivation. An event or development perceived to cause personal impact was raised as a motivation to participate by both policy makers and residents in this section. This impact may be personal or collective, in that the individual believes something will have a substantial impact personally or on the neighbourhood community. Motivations discussed related to life stages, in that retirement frees the time an individual has to offer to such causes, or personality and the need to be active or to participate, or finally the potential for personal gain or increased social interaction. This links strongly to the sense of community that is understood to be experienced through social interactions, reiterating the connection between community and participation as referred to in the previous chapter. Understanding these motivations should be key to delivering appropriate approaches to participation, pursuing known avenues of successful engagement. This research relied upon those willing to engage with and participate in the research process, therefore is likely to represent the views of the more active members of the community rather than being able to identify why individuals choose not to participate. Processes of democratic renewal could benefit from further understanding the reasons for lack of involvement but could utilise this enhanced understanding of who does participate and why.

The focus of the research however, was to identify why individuals choose to participate and perceptions of the role of participation within sustainable communities, in addition to the contribution of non-permanent residents within this framework. This section identified the opinion that knowing local people fostered a sense of belonging and feelings of pride and respect for place that a tourist perhaps wouldn’t have in an area (CM7) detailing differences between
permanent and non-permanent residents. The final section of this chapter will examine the extent of similar perceptions and examine the questionnaire data to explore the presence of any differences in the activity levels of permanent residents and second homes owners.

7.7 The Participation Of Non-Permanent Residents
The importance of the participating individual and community to sustainability has been expressed in the literature (Chapter Two; Macnaghten and Jacobs, 1997; Counsell and Haughton, 2006). Furthermore, Chapter Six detailed the importance of informal participation in community in fostering integration and feeling of community. As such, the influence of the presence of high proportions of second homes and the non-permanency of their inhabitants and potential participation within neighbourhoods will be examined in this section. It will present quantitative empirical data collected in the questionnaire to examine levels of suggested activity by property type before using qualitative interview data to further review these perceptions. It will conclude by referring to interview data regarding the engagement of second home owners in the parish community and in local governance decision-making.

Question 3.1 in the survey asked respondents how active they felt they were within their parish community. The Kruskal-Wallis test of difference suggested there is a statistically significant difference ($H=10.018; p=<0.05$) between property type\(^{22}\) and level of suggested activity within the community across the entire survey sample. The difference is that permanent residents responded to claim they are more active than both second home owners and holiday home owners. Cross-examining the level of activity expressed by property type, only 1% of second homes claim to be ‘very active’ whereas 12% of permanent residents claim this. While similar proportions (37% second homes and 34% permanent residents) claim to be ‘active’ it is a higher proportion of permanent residents that claim to be ‘very active’. A lower (39%) comparative proportion of ‘not very’ or ‘not at all active’ permanent resident responses compared to 58% second homes details this difference. This variation was found to be statistically significant using a two-way Chi-Square test ($X^2=25.140; p=<0.05$) whereby permanent residents do have higher ‘very’ and ‘quite’ active counts and lower

\(^{22}\)Using three property types: Permanent residence, second home and holiday home.
‘not very’ or ‘not at all’ active than expected, and second homes display the opposite. The quantitative data therefore suggests that while non-permanent residents can be active within the community, they are predominantly less active than permanent residents. This supports statements made in the previous chapter (Section 6.5) where resident CM12 felt the lack of permanent presence of second home occupants intrinsically limits their capacity for community activity.

Section 6.5 also detailed a preference for a permanent resident as a neighbour rather than a non-permanent, which largely related to trust and reliance on a presence. However, many references were made to the individual nature of each inhabitant, as was expressed in Chapter Five in recognising that each second home is different. The following quote from a resident identifies the difficulty in generalising about the contributions second homes and second home owners can make to the community and to immediate neighbours:

CM13: “I can think of both in our village: second home owners who make an effort, pop over have a cup of tea and ring me to check whether the pipes have frozen over in bad weather, and similarly they’ll do you a favour when they can and people who live there permanently who don’t wanna know.”

Therefore, while it was generally expressed that a permanent resident was a preferred neighbour, there are instances where the non-permanent resident offers more social interaction.

Similarly, the following interviewee was a second home owner and identified that they considered themselves to be quite active within the parish surrounding their second home, just as they are at their permanent residence:

CM11: “I like being neighbourly, we have a very good relationship with our immediate next door neighbours [...]. What else motivates us? Keeping fit, we like eating out, we like to support the businesses in the area in the hope that they will continue to thrive. And when we’re down there with our family we do all the usual touristy things like for instance I know my husband and grandchildren are at the Quince Farm in South Molton as you and I speak. So the obvious things motivate us to get out and about and to mix in, just the same things that motivate us in Birmingham I guess.”
Alongside the more general impacts that second home owners, as tourists, can bring to the economy this respondent also detailed they make a conscious effort to support local businesses. This included businesses in the parish but spread to the wider district identifying the difficulty in containing and measuring impact of investment on a small scale. The motivations suggested were again reflective of their personality through the suggestion they ‘like being neighbourly’. The same interviewee went on to identify that they had more interaction and close kinship with their adjoining neighbours in Devon than the permanent residents living on the other side of their neighbours:

CM11: “They make no effort in the neighbourhood at all and yet they’ve lived there 20 years. So I think you can’t stereotype people really. There are people who get involved and people that don’t, and I agree with you there are less opportunities for second home owners to be involved because they’re not there all the time but I’d rather have a second home owner who makes an effort than a first home owner who doesn’t. I’m a great believer in this world that there are people that do and people that don’t aren’t there?”

This interviewee’s family have become close acquaintances with their neighbours (unlike other neighbours) but this outcome is understood to be due to the personalities of the individuals involved. Their overall opinion was that second home owners did not necessarily bring negative social implications to the neighbourhood especially if they were an active resident when present in the second home. The influence to community can come from personality rather than the type of resident to some extent, however temporary presence is generally perceived as a limiting factor. The suggestion that a variety of levels of interaction occur from both permanent residents and second home owners was widespread. Opinions inevitably form around the experiences individuals have undergone.

In this next example further issues regarding second home occupants integration with the community that can emerge when employees, rather than owners or residents maintain the property, are detailed:

CM13: “I think it depends on the individual. So I’ve got one set of neighbours where it’s a second home where they have people who come and do their work for them so...they obviously don’t have a commitment and
perhaps are not so caring about what they do because they have employees coming in so employees will do things like, I’ve seen this from my bedroom window, so he comes to mow the lawn and if he finds things like dog excrement he’ll just tip it over into our garden because he doesn’t care who he upsets he’s just turning up to do a job. Same for the cleaner who comes and puts the bins out she doesn’t care if they’re slightly too much in road and in the way of traffic. Whereas the people on the other side of us, also second home owners have gone out of their way to be friendly and for every favour they’ve asked me to do for them there’s been something reciprocal so it depends entirely on the people concerned I think.”

The issues presented here are perhaps more to do with the employees rather than the second home owners themselves. However, the suggestion is that through having employees to maintain the property, in addition to a lack of consistent presence, the owner is somewhat removed from a connection with the area and with neighbours. The actions of those connected to the second home therefore appear to affect the way in which the second home connection with the neighbourhood is perceived. This is crucial as the level of participation and interaction appears fundamental to permanent residents’ opinions of a second home. The exact use of a second home property presents complications in attempting to understand the impact and integration of the property and owners into the parish community.

There was a diversity of opinion as to whether NDC does enough to promote engagement of second home owners or whether responsibility should lie with the individual to take part. There is one opinion that perceives the resident to have a different outlook towards the community as expressed by the following Parish Councillor:

CM3: “Well I suppose the difference is…that there isn’t that feeling of ownership and being a part of the parish in which they live and reside in, I think. If you reside in a parish the majority of people want to become involved in that parish and want to participate in that parish, want to be proactive. People that come to spend two weeks or a week in a holiday home want to come and relax and get away from all that structure of being involved in community life and just enjoy themselves
and enjoy the scenery and the food and enjoy the sport and then go back home again to their life and work.”

However, this refers to a tourist rather than the second home owner but anecdotally suggests that residency instils a sense of desire for participation not felt by non-residents. A policy maker offered the same opinion of those who engage in some community interaction but are ultimately there to holiday, although potentially as a second home tourist. The same interviewee went on to suggest that perhaps NDC didn’t do enough to target second home owners in engagement programmes:

PM5: “Maybe we don’t do enough from the second home owner perspective. We assume these people are who we assume they are [...] actually what we probably should...the engagement side provides some of the solution, I think, may be a whole part of your answer..”

Here it is acknowledged that there are assumptions placed upon understandings of second home owners at the local council level and such typification of these properties may not be the most appropriate guidance for action. In doing so, certain notions about how the property is used by whom and the level of involvement of the inhabitant in community activity are placed upon the property and owners. However, despite recognising potential for greater use of programmes of engagement for second home owners, the interviewee returns to suggest responsibility fundamentally lies with the individual to ensure they are included and integrated locally:

PM5: “There must be something that can be done from the second home owner perspective cos surely they would want to be more integrated with and not considered to be a second home – it’s a bit like being a leper isn’t it, to a certain extent.”

Here the interviewee assumes that the second home owner should want to and make an effort to integrate with the communities found in the location of the second home. Their justification for this is to avoid being labelled and typified as a second home owner, considered as a negative existence and differentiated from a permanent resident. While making appropriate suggestions about the potential benefit of second home engagement programmes, as second homes are viewed more positively when owners engage in greater levels of interaction, the interviewee demonstrates their clear negative perception and assumption about second homes and their owners and inhabitants.
In terms of perceptions as to whether second home owners tend to get involved in community activities there was a mix of opinion, which has already been touched upon in exploring second homes owners’ roles within the community (Chapter Six). This policy maker interviewee regards community as something that has to be worked hard at to create and sustain, including provision of activities and opportunities for involvement which second home owners do get involved in:

PM12: “I think there’s so much that you can do to help keep the community together – there’s lots of organisations – obviously the Parish Council, and the Residents Associations and the Village Hall Association, there’s all these. They might seem quite petty but actually there’s quite a lot going on behind that and you keep a community together and keep it going and vibrant by doing that I think. And second home owners can come along and help.”

Interviewer: “Do they come and help in your experience?”

PM12: “Yeah they love it – if you get them involved, obviously there are people who just want to draw up the bridge and that’s it but that’s fine but there are people that want.”

Here the experience is that second home owners do tend to get involved with the various activities open to them within the parish community. While reference is also made to those who ‘draw up the bridge’ this chapter has sought to emphasise this can occur regardless of whether they are second home owners or permanent residents and reiterates the influence of personality. However, there is also an emphasis on ‘getting them involved’ which appears to suggest a degree of responsibility lies with the community to seek out and invite second home occupants rather than it being their responsibility. In contrast, the resident in this next quote suggests it is up to the individual to find out what is going on locally and despite referencing the same research area, claims second home owners do not tend to get involved in local activities:

CM14: “it’s like anybody moving to a new community – it’s for that person moving to the new community to try and find out what’s going on there. Who’s there and get to know their neighbours and certainly I would reciprocate if I knew who these people were but I could pass them in the village and I wouldn’t know who they were. But I
think that just backs up what I’ve said earlier. The involvement in the village is becoming less and less because clearly these people are not involving themselves with what is going on in the village. It’s not real, it’s not a real...this is my home, this is real, this is where I live. To them I don’t think it can be, it’s just somewhere they have that they can go where they want to...

If they want to be friendly and participate and make it a richer community that’s great but in my experience that’s not happening.”

The experience of this resident varies from others in their belief that second home owners do not socialise within the parish community. This resident throughout the interview suggested local community was lacking and their involvement and capacity for involvement had become compromised over time. It is possible that their disconnection from the parish community exacerbates their feeling towards second home owners in addition to their opinion being impacted by the presence of second homes. This interviewee’s community outlook links to the connections made between variables identified through the cluster analysis that respondents were often more positive or negative about a series of issues. During the interview, this resident, displayed a series of negative outlooks with regard to the community, over which second home owners were believed to have a strong influence. Their opinion is that there is a distinct difference between a permanent resident and a second home owner through their perception that the second home owner’s existence in the parish is not as ‘real’ as a permanent resident. The variation in opinion regarding the contribution of second home owners links to personal experience and perception as well as an individual’s outlook, which is in turn influenced by the personality of the second home owner. Together these factors deliver the nuanced experiences and receptions presented in this section.

In terms of formal participation, the incapacity of the second home owner to vote in elective decision-making processes was understood and accepted by the following second home owner interviewee:

CM11:  “Well we vote in Birmingham and we could vote in Devon, if we chose to not vote in Birmingham we could vote in Devon so I understand entirely why we can’t vote in two places…”
So at the moment it is logical for us to vote in Birmingham as we’ve got more of a stake, if you like, in Birmingham than we have in Devon at the moment. But when we’re fully retired we could easily spend more time in Devon and then it would be logical to vote there.”

In addition to their decision on where to vote depending upon where more time is spent and where more of a ‘stake’ is found for the individuals, an acceptance that individuals cannot vote in more than one place is expressed. From a second home perspective they did not feel their situation was compromised through their incapacity to vote in their second home location, due to an acceptance and appreciation of the ‘rules’ of voting.

Similarly, the following interview excerpt outlines a situation where second home owners were motivated to engage in the planning process in their second home location to appeal against a planning application. This example details a response to a development that was perceived to have influence on their immediate surroundings, identified as a motivator to act in previous section:

CM15: “There’s a big hotel proposed up there and most of those people who live in that particular area are second home owners and yet they’ve all really pulled together to be one voice against the planning. And yet when it went to the village hall Parish Council a lot of the Parish Council were really antagonistic towards these people – nothing to do with the planning but just cos they wanted to be against second home owners.”

Having identified an issue that united and motivated second home owners to act, it appears that the body representing the community then acted against the second home owners. It details the many different agendas, powers and influences at play in planning decisions and located within geographical communities. The interviewee revealed that the majority of the parish opposed the hotel proposal, yet the Parish Council’s response appeared to disregard the proposal and focus on forming a united front against second home owners. This perhaps suggests barriers that need to be overcome in residents’ perception of the second home owner as they appear to create divisions within a parish community. It is also unclear what impact this reception has upon second home owners’ future desires to participate in either formal or informal community events.
As this research has revealed, the nuanced existences of second home properties and range of personalities who occupy these properties complicates generalising about the level of involvement second homes undertake within host communities. While a permanent resident was often expressed as the preferred neighbour when given the choice, there were many reported incidences of issues with permanent resident neighbours. The following resident, when explaining their mixed views about second home ownership in their parish, provides an example of the difficulties in generalising about types of property:

CM13: “I think one of the reasons I’ve got mixed views about it myself is that we’ve been unlucky enough to have some very difficult neighbours and in three cases their houses have been sold off to people using them as second homes. So we’ve gone from having lots of trouble with neighbours to having empty houses around us which has been a blessing personally because it’s taken the difficult people away.”

This epitomises the issues expressed throughout this section: that the outcomes depend upon the individuals involved in each situation. The extent to which the occupants of a second home can engage in community activity is understood to be compromised by their intermittent presence and potential disparity of occupants. This was suggested in interviews as well as presented in the survey results as permanent residents claimed a higher level of activity than second home owners. Despite this fundamental issue this section has suggested a need to avoid stereotypes and generate a deeper understanding of the role second homes play in community activity, something this research has both identified and undertaken. It has acknowledged that second homes don’t necessarily bring negative social impacts when the inhabitants are present; although there is still a common stigma attached to second homes expressed by some individuals in general terms when referring to second homes. While in principle a permanent residence is preferred, it ultimately depends upon the individuals in each instance. A heightened level of acceptance appears to occur when second home owners make an effort to integrate with neighbours and other parish community activities. It was also suggested that these could be enhanced through an NDC led form of engagement programme for second home owners.
7.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has sought to demonstrate how community involvement is perceived to be a form of government believed to bring about personal responsibility and morality for communities and individuals (Marinetto, 2003:109). In the UK the Government actively promotes and seeks to raise levels of citizen participation, particularly in planning policy. These processes of democratic renewal situate community action firmly within geographically local communities. This has been most recently emphasised as the neighbourhood, considering such bodies as Parish Councils, as the site for action. This lack of acknowledgement of multiple communities (Chapter Six) leaves local councils with the complex task of reconciling policy with the reality of implementing effective participation programmes.

The difficulties that are faced in efforts to increase citizen participation include various barriers, such as the funding and resources available to deliver programmes. Furthermore, individuals tend to have a finite amount of time available and willing to offer to both formal and informal community activities. The research confirmed that fewer people are propelled to participate when they are not directly impacted by something, or it is not issue specific. Those who do participate in more strategic and formal modes of participation often detailed specific motivations such as retirement, or as providing an opportunity to get to know people, or was demonstrative of an individual having a more active personality.

The shift from voluntary to obligatory participation under the Coalition seems to create a mismatch between desire to participate, conditioned as a personal benefit, and the presence of conditional and formalised approaches to participation (Buser, 2013). Adhering to proven approaches to participation and recognition of known barriers appears to be overlooked in the continual national drive for democratic renewal. Furthermore, the increased responsibility placed upon the neighbourhood removes support for those neighbourhoods who may need it. Rather it is understood to benefit only those who have the resources, time and motivation available. Concern over the recent heightened expectation of community input was expressed during interviews, detailing a degree of
unwillingness for residents to commit more time than they already do to complete some of the new formal participation requirements. This also revealed a dichotomy between residents desire to have a greater role in decision-making within their geographically local community, and being in receipt of the responsibility to do so. However, this is predominantly due to this responsibility not currently occurring with a simultaneous availability of resources to undertake these duties.

This chapter has argued that people do indeed have the right to not participate, and as much as increasing levels of participation is desired it can never be enforced. In terms of participation in a more informal sense, there will also always be residents who choose to limit their level of involvement. Comparatively, second homes owners could intermittently be ‘more active’ within the parish community, yet it is the lack of consistent presence that leads to the general opinion that permanent residents can contribute more to the parish community. However, there does appear to be greater tolerance of second home occupants who opt to be more engaged and involved with neighbours and the community when they are present.

Participation as a rationality of planning intends to increase the breadth and depth of citizen participation in planning processes. However, the most recent round of democratic renewal reveals there to be a lack of understanding of how to generate effective participation, in addition to displaying a mismatch of power, responsibility and duty (Holman and Rydin, 2013). Future participation policy approaches need to understand and respond to the known participation motivations, and realign these in order to have greater potential in attaining citizen participation. However, as this chapter identified, this needs to go through an appropriate representation approach as mass participation also presents potential issues due to the bulk of information generated.

Planning practitioners seek to reconcile community and national policy, and are ultimately trying to complete their duties and role as a planner on a day-to-day scale. National changes take time to trickle down and provide guidance to local government, as was demonstrated in this chapter through interviewees comments expressing uncertainty regarding the changes in policy that were to affect planners further into the Coalition elective period. The role participation
has within the sustainable community is viewed by NDC through guidance suggested in the Egan Wheel (2004) focussing on the inclusion of local people in community governance to instigate a feeling of community, civic values, responsibility and pride. This is echoed in the Coalition approach to localism and neighbourhood planning. However, as this chapter has argued, the capacity of practitioners to achieve the policy intentions of participation programmes is diffused by local government policy interpretation and the powers and influences that individuals and communities bring to each situation. This diffusion can include the presence and influence of semi-permanent second home residents, unable to offer a full time commitment to the host community. The impact these have on the outcomes that are achieved provide another dimension that local government bodies must act with, and respond to, in addition to complying with and delivering national policy aims. Understanding participation policy through a governmentality framework endeavour to highlight how discursive outcomes occur due to competing rationalities, and the significant and potentially subversive impact of individuals involved within each situation.
Chapter 8: Conclusions

This chapter presents a summary of the research, and an overview of the thesis. It revisits the research aims, and research questions, to draw together research findings with the wider literature. This chapter refers to the concepts, themes and findings which are found within the chapters of the thesis that will be reviewed at the beginning of this chapter. Having recapped the thesis structure, this chapter will then respond to the three research questions set out in Chapter One. These provided the framework for exploring second homes and sustainability, and the role of semi-permanent presences within place-based communities and in terms of participation. The importance and relevance of these is highlighted in Chapter One, but also recapped in the relevant sections below. The next three sections examine the research questions and introduce the theoretical framework however, the following section outlines the theoretical contribution of the research at greater depth, with reference to concepts introduced in Chapter Two and Four. The chapter then considers tangible ways in which the research can be applied to policy through, firstly, outlining a policy response that acts as a vision for change, and secondly, policy responses that align with the current political landscape. This concluding chapter then outlines some areas for future research before, finally, recapping what the research has achieved.

8.1 Thesis Summary

This thesis has examined the impact and contribution of second homes to communities in North Devon with regard to the endeavours of UK planning to deliver sustainable and participatory communities. Through generating original empirical data on individual and collective perceptions and experiences, the thesis has unpacked popular understandings of second homes. This has enhanced understanding of these properties and contributed to second home knowledge. The research has also brought together geography and planning, examining issues of place, and of scales of governance, within the geographies of second home framework. It has progressed understandings of notions of community and participation, taking a unique approach through grounding these in empirical research regarding second home properties and the semi-permanent presence second home occupants generate within host communities. It has reviewed the relationships and connections between
national and local governments, and communities. Through an examination of the new UK planning agendas and obligations that have been placed upon communities, this thesis has revealed a dichotomy between community desire for power, and the reality associated with increased responsibility.

Chapter One introduced the research, including the origins of the research project and the aims and objectives of the research. In the initial stages of this research the aim was to examine the contributions of second homes and their owners, as distinct from other property uses, and without including other property types in the research analysis. However, following discussion with NDC, and as conversations within the research parishes occurred, and questionnaire responses were received, it soon became apparent that holiday homes needed to be included in the analysis. The inclusion of holiday homes enabled extraction of the information regarding the contributions of second homes through comparing and examining the nuances between these properties.

Chapter Two set out the conceptual framework of the research. The focus on planning and sustainability came about through the research partnership with the planning department at NDC and their desire for the research to centre around planning’s sustainability agenda. To this end, Chapter Two provided an overview of British planning, sustainability policy and its goal of reconciling conflicting land use interests which arise as “different interests are rationally seeking different objectives” (Cullingworth and Nadin, 2002:1). Post 2004 planning has had an increased governance role and statutory sustainability duty (Gallent et al, 2008), which further justifies the reviewing of second homes within this framework. Repeated rounds of democratic renewal have sought greater involvement of individuals in decision-making planning processes, partially in pursuit of sustainability. Furthermore, planning policy also considers participation in the less formal sense of participating in community, for example the current NPPF sets a UK planning goal to facilitate social interaction and create inclusive communities (DCLG, 2012a). The extent to which semi-permanent second home residents and residences are understood to conflict or contribute to this agenda therefore provided the framework for empirical examination of the concepts outlined above. Furthermore, the research questions the extent to which these goals of planning are delivered and the...
realities of realising policy at the local level, whereby subversive and messy outcomes and experiences occur. The research analysis (Chapters Five, Six and Seven) position the findings in line with the existing literature and respond to the research objectives set out in Chapter One. This concluding chapter draws together a summary of the findings, presented in Chapters Five to Seven, through providing responses to the three research questions (Chapter One) in the next three sections of this chapter.

This research was conducted over a change in UK Government, therefore, while the research proposal and early stages of research occurred under a Labour leadership, it concludes under the Conservative – Liberal Democrat Coalition government. The research has recognised the changes in policy and governing ideology however, the primary research was conducted during the very early stages of the Coalition period when Coalition policy was being written and the realities of this policy delivery were largely unknown. This emphasises the lag time between a change in national government policy and change at the delivery level. This is partially due to local practitioners having to complete their day-to-day roles under existing guidance in the post-election period while new policies are written. During this time guidance and policy can be uncertain and limited discussion with practitioners at NDC revealed that post election 2010 they continued to use existing documents, including the Egan Wheel of Sustainability (2004). The Coalition has substantially reduced the volume of planning policy documents, for example through condensing existing planning policy in producing the NPPF. This has been presented as an attempt to ‘allow people and communities back into planning’ (DCLG, 2012a) through reducing planning policy guidance to reduce bureaucratic nature of planning. While existing documents were initially referred to by practitioners post election as an interim measure, the absence of replacement guidelines has led to their perseverance. As this was occurring within NDC, the use of the Egan Wheel (2004) as a means of judging the sustainability of communities was used critically within the research, particularly in framing the first research question, which is responded to in the next section.
8.2 Second Homes and The Sustainability Agenda

Having summarised the research aim and thesis chapters, this section draws together findings from existing literature, as well as the primary data and analysis, to respond to the first research question. This question sought to examine understandings of second homes and their relationship to sustainability. This section will highlight why it was pertinent to examine the nuanced understandings and existences of second homes and how it connected to sustainability. The relevance of sustainability was due to the research partnership with the planning department at NDC and the statutory role of sustainability within UK planning. The first research question asks:

i. How are second homes conceptualised and to what extent do these properties and their occupants fit or conflict with planning’s sustainability agenda?

The research illustrated the difficulties in defining and categorising second homes, and as such reinforces the existing literature (Chapter Three). The ‘problem of definition’ of second homes has been examined at greater depth throughout the analysis chapters (predominantly Chapter Five) which responded to the three research objectives. The research contributes to expanding the debate surrounding the socio-economic impacts of second homes, and provides an original case study in a contemporary socio-economic setting, which was raised as a gap within the geographies of second home literature (Wallace et al, 2005). This socio-economic empirical data is significant to the UK planning’s statutory pursuit of the sustainability agenda through enhancing understanding of the role of second homes within host communities.

Avoiding stereotypes of second homes enables a greater understanding of the nuanced existences and roles that second homes can play within their host location and is something that needs to be incorporated into potential management approaches. The diverse and unique ways that permanent and non-permanent dwelling properties were detailed to be used within the research led to the suggestion that second and holiday homes fall along a ‘housing continuum’. This proposes that there are substantially different uses of property along the continuum, including distinct differences between holiday and second homes, such as holiday homes commonly existing as full holiday rental
businesses whereas the owner’s friends and family predominantly use second homes. However, the proportion of properties falling exactly into such categories was limited. Furthermore, while there are certain issues specific to either holiday or second home properties there were also similar implications, for example that both property types often result in the removal of a potential permanent dwelling property. The “housing continuum” notion therefore conceptualises how this research revealed that these properties were found to have similarities and differences and are most appropriately reviewed as unique but connected.

The research reinforces existing themes from wider literature (Chapter Three) in suggesting that second homes can contribute both positively and negatively within their host communities. The largest percentage (36%) of survey respondents suggested that second homes make both positive and negative contributions to their parish, however a higher proportion (23%) suggest they bring solely negative contributions as opposed to solely positive (10%). Comments regarding positive contributions included increasing social diversity, patronage of local services/local investment and upkeep of property. However, these were nearly always qualified with counter arguments and, overall, second homes do not appear to be considered a locally desired form of housing consumption.

Consideration of second homes within the notion of the sustainable community was framed through Egan’s Wheel of Sustainability (2004). This technique, used by government, attempts to normalise the sustainable community, and is regarded as problematic within this research, which views the sustainable community to be a reflexive concept. Furthermore, there appears to be a disparity between the approach to the sustainable community in policy, and the approach reviewed in the literature (Chapter Two). The approach in policy appears fairly prescriptive with focus on place, and desire for extensive facilities, employment opportunities and participating community members. The latter expresses that communities should be individually reflexive towards sustainability ensuring it has meaning and relevance to the specific circumstances (Counsell and Haughton, 2003; Gibbs and Jonas, 2001; Rogers and Ryan, 2001), although, both approaches can be viewed as problematic. Egan also appears to give equal weighting to all segments of the Wheel,
whereas some may be either more important or less achievable in some communities than others, therefore community responses are unlikely to be able to respond with equal importance. However, while NDC advocated and actively uses the Egan Wheel as a guidance tool, an interviewee from the planning department expressed their understanding of sustainability as something that needs to be relevant for each community, and may potentially have different meanings within each community. This understanding reinforces both the understanding of sustainability pursued in the research, as based on the understanding in the wider literature rather than policy, and suggests there is local interpretation and discursive implementation of this tool. The use of Egan’s toolkit has persisted, but it appears to be used as less prescriptive within NDC, rather it is used to suggest skills that may be relevant to a sustainable community as guidance for considering ways in which a specific community could move towards sustainability.

The role of second homes within the sustainable community, as described by Egan (2004), was considered to vary between locations and between segments of the Egan Wheel. The varying degree of influence is grounded in the strength and frequency of opinions about second homes that were expressed by research respondents. The segments have clear overlap between them and while segments were reviewed separately in this research analysis, they were not considered in isolation. Issues regarding environmental impact and transport received limited reference within the empirical research and existing literature, suggesting that the relationship between second homes, sustainability and these sectors is limited. The most significant positive benefits appeared to be the perception of economic input into the host parish, for example, through patronage of services. However, the semi-permanent presence of second home occupants is understood to limit this economic contribution, and it is uncertain how much of this investment is retained at the very local level. Other benefits included the potential for heightened level of property upkeep and maintenance, and an increased diversity of residents, which can contribute to social resilience. However, these benefits are not guaranteed, nor are second homes considered the only potential source of such benefits.

The more emotive and moral issues regarding the ability of some individuals to own multiple properties while others have none, and the removal of a potential
permanent dwelling property from the housing market were also raised as significant. In particular, the research revealed that a high level (62%) of second homes were previously dwelling properties whereas a low proportion (8%) made use of an empty property. Furthermore, quantitative results confirmed a relationship between second homes and higher house prices, which was also a common perception within the research area. However, this statistical relationship cannot be viewed as causal as there are many influences on the housing market, and examination of the impact of second homes in isolation is far beyond the scope of this research.

Egan’s vision views the services available as important to community sustainability, although services often depend upon the size and location of the community. There was a debate within the research as to whether second homes relieved pressure on services or contributed to their demise through a lack of permanent presence and use. Furthermore, it was debated whether second home property council tax contributions, which at the time of research were subject to 10% discount, were a net benefit or a cost to the council’s provision of local services. The impact of the second home in creating a semi-permanent presence is further reviewed in the following two sections. However, in terms of the sustainable community, a lack of permanent presence was expressed to considerably limit the capability of occupants to contribute to and participate within the parish community. The evidence, so far, does not suggest that second homes positively contribute to the sustainability of the host community, nor that they can be solely implicated in contributing to unsustainability. Nevertheless, this research has revealed that host communities do perceive that second homes can play a significant role in their community, both positive and negative, and generate unsustainable traits in host communities, especially when found in higher proportions, but that these impacts can be in conjunction with a series of other factors.

The following quote offers a synopsis of the debate regarding the sustainability influence of second homes to host communities, as while they can pose a threat this is not a certain outcome. The interviewee expresses how the lack of permanency of residents reduces the feeling of neighbourliness and can make areas very quiet, although this wasn’t felt as entirely negative by this individual. Despite second homes being portrayed to be a potential threat to the
sustainability of Georgeham parish, the quotes expresses how the presence of second homes is suggested to be sustainable at present, but are felt to make their part of Georgeham sparse:

CM13: “Again it’s a mixture isn’t it because it does make our bit of Georgeham, which is kind of on the outskirts of Georgeham, it makes it very quiet, which in some ways is very good. But I guess, for example, if I was an elderly person living on my own and had chosen my house because it is part of a village and then found that lots and lots of nights of the year actually there’s nobody there to ring in a crisis or something. I think it does make you feel you haven’t got any neighbours or anybody to call on in a crisis so that’s not so good. At the moment I think it’s just about sustainable in Georgeham with having the school, there’s enough of a community to keep the school going, and the church and the shop and all the rest of it but if the balance tips any more towards second home owners then those things...we’ll start to lose them.”

This quotation illustrates that second homes have potential to contribute unsustainable traits within a community, predominantly social implications, and details the common fear of a ‘balance’ being tipped regarding an increase in the proportion of second homes. It also summarises the opinion that second homes cannot be solely accused of generating unsustainable communities per se. However, there are substantial variations of this opinion that occur between places, and in terms of different scales including parish and individual property scale. Exploration of this research question throughout the research analysis has enabled the socio-economic impacts of second homes to be examined in a contemporary landscape, responding to a gap in the existing literature (Wallace et al, 2005). This research question pursued the broad aim of the research through questioning the contributions of second homes to the sustainability of host communities, and the statutory UK planning agenda. It contributes to understandings of second homes through providing original empirical data based within North Devon, detailing the nuanced existences and experiences of
second homes in host communities from resident perspectives. In addition to second home impacts varying between each property the impact is also perceived to be influenced by personalities, personal perceptions and interpretations of situations, which is viewed as significant in examining the second research question, detailed in the next section.

8.3 The Role of Semi-Permanent Presences in Place-Based Communities
This section responds to the second research question, which considers the occupants of second homes, rather than the second home as a property. It examines the role of individuals, and semi-permanent residents in particular, within notions of community. This was highly relevant to UK planning policy, which has a stated desire to facilitate community development as the basis for planning. The following section consequently examines the ways in which community is portrayed and understood in and through policy. In answering the following question, this section refers mainly to the empirical data in Chapter Six, and existing literature (Chapter Two):

ii. To what extent is place integral to understanding notions of community?
   How is community understood and experienced by residents and how do semi-permanent presences brought about by second homes contribute to and undermine community?

In examining this research question, understandings of notions of community were enhanced, particularly through considering the contributions semi-permanent members make to place communities. UK policy is understood to emphasise the situating of community in place, which drove this research question to examine the extent to which place is necessary in understanding community. The research provided further evidence to that found in the existing literature (Chapter Two) in suggesting that place can facilitate understanding and experience of community, but it is not necessary in generating a feeling of community, nor is place the only source of this. A territorial source of community is understood to need to be accompanied by relational feelings of community. This was reflected by research respondents who tended to refer to face-to-face interaction, and having relationships with neighbours, when describing their understanding of community, and what they feel fosters a feeling of community. This understanding also connects with the wider literature which describes the
need for trust relationships and social interaction to be present within community (Gilchrist in Barton, 2000; Raco, 2007; Smith et al, 1999; Woods, 2005).

Despite place not being essential to understanding community, the research did suggest that place-based community is prioritised in policy, as well as considered important to the residents in North Devon. However, the place that fostered a feeling of community, as expressed by residents who were interviewed, was not necessarily generated in the place in which they reside. Furthermore, the research revealed that within parishes and place-based communities there are a series of overlapping communities that exist, rather than understanding of a singular community grounded within the parish boundary. Despite multiple existences of community, most North Devon residents interviewed latched on to place when describing their experiences of community. Furthermore, those individuals who claimed their main source of community feeling came from sources, and places, other than their residential location often desired to experience community from the place in which they reside. Therefore, despite identifying the many and overlapping communities that are felt to exist, the research reinforces the perception that place can, and frequently does, have a role in experiencing community.

Research participants appeared to consider their personal role within communities, recognising their reflexive existence within the experience of community whereby the community appears to influence the individual, just as the individual influences the community (McKee, 2009). The experience of community appears grounded in personal opportunities for interactions, and these may vary throughout life. As such, an understanding of the ‘personal community’ (Pahl and Spencer, 2004) remains pertinent in understanding notions of community, whereby community is assembled through personal connections, perspectives and “situated knowledges” (Hanson, 1992 in Woods, 2005:226; introduced in Chapter Two). Experience of community can also relate to personality, as survey respondents claiming to be more active in their parish community tended to also be more positive about their parish community. This highlights the difficulties in understanding notions of community, and in generating community related policy, as there are multiple influences that lead to the discursive experiences and understandings of community. Competing
rationalities are understood to impact experiences of communities; these include planning’s drive to build place-based communities, the existence of multiple communities experienced within, and across place, as well as current cuts to resources undermining the capabilities of communities (Raco, 2007). Therefore, while certain outcomes are pursued under one agenda, they are often restricted by another, complicating experiences of community and highlighting the difficulty in prioritising community as a place-based entity.

The influence second homes have on experiences of community was generally considered as negative, with a unanimous response from permanent residents desiring to have a permanent resident neighbour rather than second home neighbour, if given the choice. This predominantly related to the feeling that the semi-permanent presence of second home owners means that they embody an intrinsically limited contribution to the community. This does not necessarily refer to involvement in specific activities, but rather a desire to have a neighbour present as someone to rely on, to provide neighbourly roles and social interaction. The potential positive social contributions of second homes include raising social tolerance through increasing the social diversity of an area. However, it was recognised that second homes were not the only source of this, or other mentioned potential benefits. Ultimately, the semi-permanent and sporadic presence of second home occupants was felt, by research respondents, to limit the experience of place-based community. This, in turn, limits the capacity to develop trust and reliance relationships that respondents claimed to desire from a place-based community and are felt to generate community feeling. These trust relationships are also considered crucial to the sustainable community within the existing literature (Gilchrist, 2000, in Barton, 2000; Raco, 2007; Smith et al 1999). However, the exact relationships that emerge within any forms of community are dependent upon, and influenced by, the personalities involved in each situation. Therefore, place is not understood to be central to experiencing community, but it can, and does, play a significant role in some instances within the research, and provides grounding for one notion of community.

By reviewing second homes within the exploration of notions of community, this research argues place-based communities are where second homes are considered to have the most significant community impact. Connecting this
outcome to planning objectives, and the previous research question, it is the negative contribution to social sustainability that is considered the most detrimental impact of second homes to host community sustainability. Second homes were predominantly expressed to compromise the social sustainability of host communities and neighbourhoods through sporadic and non-permanent residency of occupants. This detrimental social impact was not considered to be overridden when second home occupants brought significant social benefits to neighbours when in residence, which was acknowledged as a potential positive contribution by research respondents. The degree to which this occurs was explained and understood to be dependent upon the individual and the level of participation of individual second home occupants, which links to the final research question regarding participation.

8.4 Citizen Participation in Communities and Semi-Permanent Residents

This section refers to the third research question linking to the second through referring to understandings of community to examine participation in community. In particular, it questions the role of semi-permanent second home occupants in terms of both participation in community, and formal participation required for neighbourhood governance and decision-making. The relevance of this research question relates to the repeated rounds of democratic renewal within policy, and the desire for increased volume and diversity of participants in decision-making, as well as in terms of facilitating a feeling of community (see Section 8.2). Evidence from the existing literature (Chapter Two), and analysis predominantly from Chapter Seven, are drawn together in order to answer the final research question:

iii. How do on-going processes of democratic renewal in planning seek to create increase citizen and community participation? How are these realised by practitioners and communities, and challenged by the presence of semi-permanent residents?

Citizen participation has been viewed as a prominent rationality of planning in this research, intending to increase the breadth and depth of citizen participation in planning processes. It facilitated examination of the connections between national government, local governments and communities in the governance process. Participation in both the formal sense, and more informally
in terms of partaking in community activities, is perceived to be a means of
government believed to instigate personal responsibility and morality for
communities and individuals (DCLG, 2011a; Marinetto, 2003:109). However,
the research revealed a dichotomy between community and individual desire for
increased power and responsibility, and the uptake and willingness to complete
tasks under new planning obligations. However, increases in responsibility have
been accompanied by reductions to the resources available to support
communities in undertaking these tasks, and this contributes to the responses
expressed in the research. The research findings did not suggest that the shift
to oblige communities to complete certain government functions was acting to
enhance responsibility and morality, described as an aim of this policy. Rather,
it is questioned whether the Coalition’s democratic renewal is guided by a
rationality to ‘open up’ planning, or to help facilitate reducing budget deficit. The
notion of the former acting as rhetoric, and the latter being motivation has been
coinced “austerity localism” (Featherstone et al, 2012:177).

The democratic renewal of UK planning processes situate community action
firmly within place-based communities, most recently emphasising the
neighbourhood, through such bodies as Parish Councils, as required to
undertake new neighbourhood planning obligations (DCLG, 2011a). The use of
representation processes for participation is common in the UK but cannot
assume to represent the views of all individuals. However, the capacity to truly
account for individuals through mass participation presents potential issues of
‘organisational paralysis’ (Williams, 2002) due to excessive inputs and
information. As such, representative techniques tend to dominate participation
approaches which have the potential to stifle the extent to which planning
processes can be ‘opened up’ to involve more people and participation
increased. This research suggested that the same few people had a tendency
to participate within communities, thereby questioning the extent to which the
processes of democratic renewal have increased the volume and diversity of
participants.

The shift to obligatory participation under the Coalition seems to create a
mismatch of power, responsibility and duty (Holman and Rydin, 2013). A further
mismatch is considered to exist between the known participation motivation of
personal gain, and the conditional and formalised approaches to participation
available (Buser, 2013). In order to have greater potential in engaging individuals in participation processes future participation policy needs to understand and respond to the known motivations and barriers to participation, and realign participation duties accordingly. The current increased responsibility placed upon neighbourhoods is seen to benefit only those who have the resources, time and motivation available. Concern over the recent heightened expectation of community input was expressed during interviews, detailing a degree of unwillingness for residents to commit more time than they already do to some of the formal participation requirements now expected of communities. This therefore suggests a dichotomy between residents suggesting they desire to have a greater role in decision-making within their place-based communities, and being in receipt of such responsibility. However, the increased responsibility provided through Coalition policy has not occurred with simultaneous availability of resources to undertake these duties.

The aspiration of planners and the planning system to increase participation also faces the challenge of individuals having the right to not participate, as participation cannot be enforced. Efforts to increase citizen participation are confronted by various barriers, ranging from the availability of funding and resources to deliver programmes, to the finite time individuals have available to offer to both formal and informal community activities. The research confirmed that fewer people are propelled to participate when they are not directly impacted by something, or it is not issue specific. Those who do participate in more strategic and formal modes of participation often detailed personal situations to be motivations, such as retirement freeing available time, or as a way to get to know people, or having a disposition to participate through their personality and character. There will also always be residents who choose to limit their level of involvement, and consequently some second homes owners could intermittently be ‘more active’ within the parish community than other permanent residents. Yet it is the lack of consistent presence that leads to the general opinion that permanent residents can contribute more, in terms of participation, to the parish community. The research suggested residents have a greater tolerance of second home occupants who opt to be more engaged and involved with neighbours and the community when in residence, highlighting the importance of community presence and involvement. The
interviews also revealed that the sporadic presence of second home occupants places increased responsibility on permanent residents to participate in, and facilitate, local governance and local community functions.

The capacity of practitioners to achieve the policy intentions of participation programmes is diffused by local government policy interpretation, and the powers and influences that individuals and communities bring to each situation. This can include the presence and influence of semi-permanent second home residents, as they are unable to offer a full time commitment to the parish community and to the participatory agenda. The impact second homes have on participation outcomes provide another dimension that local government bodies must act with, and respond to, in addition to complying with and delivering national policy aims. This thesis has understood participation policy through a governmentality framework in order to highlight the competing rationalities shaping the deliberation of practitioners and the significant, and potentially subversive, impact of individuals involved within each specific situation. Governmentality framework will be further discussed in the next section which outlines the theoretical contribution of the research.

8.5 Theoretical contribution
This research set out to make sense of stories, collected in the research, through reviewing the planning system through the lens of governmentality. This enabled examination of how planning has a role in promoting community, participation and citizenship, and how it seeks to act upon people. The research used second homes as a framework, and North Devon as a locating device to provide data insights about people as individuals, notions of what constitutes community, the relationship between community and the planning systems, and the control mechanisms the planning system exerts. It considers power, and the way planning is used and perceived to exercise power, using instruments to control, for example, people and housing.

My personal interest and intellectual background, combined with existing knowledge and experience frame my understanding and assumptions within the research. This background inevitably constituted my positionality, as well as constraining and framing the research within the realism of working within local government processes and protocol. From the outset, this was considered as a
potential benefit to the research due to it being a CASE Studentship partnered with a local council, as it meant I could easily speak with partners and employees at NDC, and relate to local government processes. Equally, this familiarity prevented me from being able to completely distance myself, and the research, from the framework of local government, and this therefore framed my critical ability to view the issues.

The research partnership with a local planning authority, due to the PhD scholarship being awarded under the ESRC’s CASE scheme, acted as a considerable research frame, and raised some critical and interesting research factors. The very issue that the planning system is in charge of delivering sustainability is interesting in itself, as it highlights that the government believes planning should lead the sustainability agenda. Furthermore, the research was conducted over a change in government; it was initiated under New Labour terminology and processes, but was subject to change when the Conservative – Liberal Democrat Coalition came to power. This highlights the very transient nature of policy based research, and this research in particular, and is something that has been considered throughout the thesis as being integral to understanding and explaining the stories that are told in the research.

The lens of governmentality seeks to explain these stories through exploring the rationalities of planning, sustainability, community and participation. Governmentality was the most appropriate approach for this as it provides an analytical framework with focus on populations and micro scale processes of governing within communities, thinking beyond governance by the state. It provides a way of connecting macro scale norms and rationalities to every day behaviours, but these connections are understood to exist without consciousness. Governance is understood to be occurring at a number of scales, from household to neighbourhood to nation. Elden (2006) also proposes that it is well known within Foucault’s work that spatial strategy is required to enable discipline. As such, governmentality seeks to question assumed processes of governing, asking how locales are constituted as powerful, how they are governable, and reveal how governing is entrenched in social, political, economic and cultural contexts (Rutherford, 2007). Furthermore McKee (2009) claims a need for the decentred geographies of power, understood within governmentality framework, to be examined through a local analysis. It is these
connections with the concepts of space, spatiality and scale that can inform geography, and express the appeal of governmentality to geographers in providing a way of understanding how populations are governed. Planning grounds policies in place, and it is through this that planning seeks to govern populations; most recently it is the neighbourhood that has been identified and mobilised as a subject of government in planning policy.

Governmentality analysis of planning considers planning’s location at a nexus of power and knowledge, where knowledge is reinforced through power being carried through strategy and discourse (McGuirk, 2001). However, governmentality also enables analysis of how this is challenged through other non hierarchical sources of power, including individual’s own agendas. These are based upon their own set of meanings, power and knowledge, and are understood to have significant impact on the outputs of planning (Pløger, 2001). In this research the ways in which sustainability, community and participation are reinforced through planning policies, and the ways these rationalities seek to govern populations but are discursively realised spatially, are explained through the governmentality framework outlined above.

The influence of space on governing, and multiple sources of power leading to many different outcomes of policy, is viewed as positive and a part of the governing process within a governmentality analysis. Applying this analysis to understanding planning policy reinforces the need for policies to be generated with flexibility in order to allow and account for the influences of space, scale, context and multiple sources of power. Despite governmentality recognising the many sources of power, a hierarchy appears to be maintained through planning laws and policies, even within the Localism agenda. Various planning governmental techniques ensure power is centrally retained; however governmentality analysis questions why this occurs and whether it is the best course. This research presented the potential role of the community, individuals and place within planning policy through recognising alternative sources of non hierarchical power. However, it recognised that while planning policy claims to intend to increase participation, it appears to be very tokenistic, and power appears to be maintained within planning authorities. In order to bring about the real change and devolution of power from central government, as expressed in
the ideology of Coalition planning policy, a greater recognition of governing beyond the state and non hierarchical, multiple sources of power is required.

Planning was detailed to be a calculable process (Section 2.9.2); collecting numbers to make populations visible to experts, and therefore able to be acted upon. This process is felt to bring aspects of civil society, such as community, sustainability and participation, into a position of political regulation. As Murdoch and Ward were quoted in Section 2.9.2, the process of ‘counting’ lead to the articulation of ‘norms’ (1997:317) and they perceive people will desire to then conform to these characteristics, which are detailed through statistics to become presented as norms. The process of collecting quantitative data with regard to second homes and community involvement was intended by NDC to attempt to generate a definition of second homes. However, the research suggests that while this process does intend to exert power through defining property uses, the actual ability to define property was limited. The diverse use of properties, and second homes in particular, meant that the definition needed to include a potential range of uses and users of properties. Therefore, the use of these data to inform policy and provide a second home definition confirmed the difficulty in generalising property types in policy. The use of quantitative data did, however, act to contribute to explaining the stories being told, in qualitative data, through detailing the frequency of opinions expressed. The data produced can be used by NDC to advise policy through presenting host community opinions, and as such becomes a form of exerting power over the populations the policy relates to.

Planning is understood to exercise power through the use of calculations, as set out above, but also through the generation of visions in policy. In this thesis the vision of the sustainable community was critiqued through the Egan Wheel. Conformity to this governmental tool is believed to promote sustainable communities, and the guidance it provides has been used to frame the design and generation of plans and policies for communities in North Devon. However, this thesis also acknowledged how individual policies are only one source of power, and that the outcomes experienced within communities were subject to many more influences. Therefore, in the research the actions of individuals were examined in order to explore planning policies and the experiences of
community and sustainability. This reinforces the argument that there is power present in every human act (Pløger, 2001), which can then influence situations.

The previous sections of this chapter have outlined the contributions of this thesis to understandings of sustainability; community and participation. Understandings of community were used to consider the role of community in planning, the relationship between these two, and the processes of participation. The ways in which people are encouraged to participate, and populations are guided to act in a certain way through planning policies has formed a large part of this thesis. This understanding can be used to contribute to future debates regarding democracy, the control and relinquishing of power in planning, and community planning approaches. The next section is the first of two sections that consider tangible ways in which the research can be applied to policy.

8.6 Policy Response
In considering the application of this research to policy, this section sets out a vision that intends to have potential to inspire change. Firstly, it refers to wider second home literature that has previously outlined potential policy responses. Secondly, it refers to research findings, and the wider literature, to present a series of visionary responses and approaches to neighbourhood governance, and second home ownership, that could help inspire change. The next section (8.7) outlines policy responses that align with the current policy landscape.

In the existing literature, Gallent et al (2004) presented extensive policy recommendations, and a planning framework for addressing second homes, complete with limitations. These include occupancy conditions, increasing affordable housing, updating planning permissions, and trialling a change of use class for second homes which would require a planning application to be submitted for a property to be used as a second home. However, it also argued that planning is only one response and should be used in conjunction with other approaches in order to be effective. Utilising the findings of this research, the following policy responses overlook the implementation limitations to outline the policy vision whereby the negative contributions of second homes to host communities are minimised and the potential positives maximised. This section sets out a series of recommendations, that provide visionary policy responses
to participation, governance, housing and second home issues which were raised in the research. The intention of this section is to set out a vision, with potential to instigate change, through overlooking limitations that often restrict responses.

i. *Neighbourhood decision-making*

The research identified that the diversity and volume of people participating in decision-making is limited by both the processes in place, and the desires of individuals. Furthermore, the potential for current participation mechanisms to truly influence the neighbourhood is somewhat restricted. Neighbourhood decision-making, in this recommendation, responds to these issues and also reflects much of the current localist political ideology; however, the vision is for this process to effectively support the neighbourhood with both expertise and resources to enable them to fulfil their duties. This responds to the current feeling, as expressed by research participants, that neighbourhoods lack the support to fulfil their expected governance roles. This approach will ensure neighbourhoods receive the autonomy and the support to deliver their needs, while also meeting broader national policies and targets.

This approach acknowledges the challenges of neighbourhood representation, identified in the research, and endeavours to ensure that those neighbourhoods who desire a greater governing role have this opportunity to have more power in order to influence outcomes. A process of neighbourhood representation will undertake decision-making, as, inevitably, not all individual opinions and desires will be able to be taken into consideration. Mass participation has been shown to be ineffective and problematic (Chapters Two and Seven); therefore, representation seems the most appropriate approach. The neighbourhood will decide on the most appropriate method of decision-making and how to represent the neighbourhood. This may reflect the current dominant Parish Council model, or may result in a new neighbourhood body. The format of the representative body will be decided by those members of the neighbourhood that are interested and choose to be involved in the process.
If the neighbourhood lacks the capacity or interest to fulfil this decision-making role they will elect to delegate decision-making to the local government. This recommendation recognises the desire for some residents and parishes to have more autonomy and to have greater influence in meeting their neighbourhood needs. It also fulfils the desire for local opinion to be recognised, and responded to, whilst also accounting for those neighbourhoods unable to complete these functions for various reasons.

**ii. Change of use class**

Due to the potential for non-permanent dwelling properties to have significant social impacts on the host communities, second homes and holiday homes should both be subject to a change of use class in planning terms. This would ensure the properties are subject to more stringent planning regulations and a permanent dwelling property could not become a non-permanent dwelling property without consultation. The neighbourhood should make the decision (see recommendation i) as to whether or not this application for such a change of use should go ahead, and will be based upon local circumstances and local consensus. The neighbourhood will have access to planning guidance and planning expertise, provided by the local government and other bodies, to advise the decision-making (see recommendation i).

The justification for this is grounded in the host community suggesting throughout the research that second and holiday homes in general have a negative social impact. The impact of a second or holiday home may be very localised, for example street level, therefore the local knowledge, possessed by residents, regarding the impact such a property may have on the dynamic of the street should be taken into account in the decision-making. Such knowledge can only be used if the neighbourhood is included and recognised in decision-making processes.

**iii. Tighter regulations to ensure second homes are registered**

Effective mechanisms need to be developed, and in place, to ensure that house owners cannot avoid the change of use class regulation through
not registering the property as a second home. This is essential to ensuring the change of use class, outlined above, is effectively implemented and that a property use is properly recorded.

iv. Planning restrictions
If a second or holiday home is approved, the property would then be subject to planning restrictions to ensure that the occupancy is not significantly increased. This responds to the fear of ‘party houses’ developing on residential streets, and the parking issues that ensue when occupancy is increased. Again, the neighbourhood would be the deciding body regarding the planning applications based upon planning regulations and engaging with planning expertise.

v. Local housing priority
A priority for all housing, not just new properties, to be included in having potential to meet local need is required. This would not require the property to be sold to someone in local housing need but it should be assessed for potential to meet local housing need before being available to the wider market. This would endeavour to meet the demand produced by those in local housing need, and reduce the apparent feeling of conflict between properties used as for permanent residences and second homes. Local residents would be defined as those meeting the criteria set out by the local authority, based upon an applicant having a long standing connection or residence period in the area, dependents living in the area, or working locally (paid or voluntarily) in a key service.

vi. Tighter regulations for tax payment and redistribution
More stringent mechanisms are needed to ensure that the correct taxes and fees are paid and distributed. This responds to the issue of Business Rated Tax properties free riding on the domestic refuse cycle, rather than paying Commercial Refuse Fees, as well as the issue of Business Tax redistribution generating a financial loss to North Devon. These need to be overcome to better balance the public service finance sheet, and ensure less antagonism regarding tax payment and service provision between permanent residents, and second and holiday homes. Mechanisms to greater control the fees paid and allocated need to be
developed and implemented. This will also aim to overcome the feeling that second and holiday homes generate a strain on local services.

vii. Programme to increase engagement with and spend in local services and businesses

Finally, a programme to endeavour to increase support for local services, activities and businesses, and consequent investment in such businesses from permanent residents, semi-permanent residents and tourists needs to occur. This will help the local economy to become more sustainable and aim to overcome the feeling that semi-permanent residents can restrict the patronage of local services, while also intending to encourage all to support these facilities. The engagement programme will also intend to ensure residents of all description are included in community activity, particularly responding to the greater tolerance and acceptance of second home residents who are more sociable and engaged in the community. It also responds to the research finding that permanent residents are more welcoming and tolerant to semi-permanent residents when they have the opportunity to get to know them and are more involved in the community. Furthermore, it responds to the finding that second and holiday homes have potential to input a greater volume of spend to the local area by proposing a mechanism to attempt to ensure that this contribution is maximised. This approach also has relevance to permanent residences as it will encourage involvement in the local community, and will encourage support for local services and businesses financially.

These responses are all grounded in the research findings expressed through the research respondent opinions and experiences of the presence second homes and second home occupants in host communities. The responses intend to set a vision for overcoming the commonly perceived negative implications and conflicts that were raised within the research. While it is important to have this vision, there are various limitations to the implementation of these, particularly within the current policy and social context. The next section outlines responses that may be feasible and realistic in achieving outcomes based upon the research findings and current policy framework. These suggestions are the result of conversations with NDC, and knowledge from the
researcher's own framework, which is based upon their experiences of working in a local government organisation, and within NDC during the course of this research.

8.6.1 Policy Responses Within the Current Policy Framework
Within current national government rationale many of Gallent et al's (2004) suggestions, and those set out above are unlikely to have great potential for effective implementation. With this in mind, this section suggests responses that align with the current policy framework, although some are particular to North Devon and specific research findings. While a change in use class would reflect that second homes, and holiday homes in particular, are a fundamentally different use of dwelling property to that of permanent dwelling properties, the Coalition is looking to reduce the number of use class orders as part of the reduction in planning policy (DCLG, 2012a; 2011b). Furthermore, the results of this research were not considered to provide strong enough evidence that second homes compromise the sustainability of communities to support NDC pursuing such an agenda. Finally, while S106 agreements offer potential revenue for community investment or affordable properties, this is only available for new developments rather than existing properties and its existence has also been questioned by the Coalition as believed to have potential to stifle new developments (DCLG, 2012b). Therefore, the recommendations for policy response based upon this empirical research regarding North Devon, and discussions with NDC, point to softer measures with responses that are often issue and/or location specific, based upon the case study parishes. However, the findings of this research are also relevant on a broader scale and some policy responses will have potential for wider applicability. As stated, this research set out to review the influence of second homes as opposed to, and distinct from, holiday homes however, this was not possible. As such, some recommended policy responses in this section (such as response vi) refer to issues raised that predominantly result from holiday homes, although have potential to relate to second home properties.

Areas raised for potential policy response in this section are not solely focused at planning responses, rather, as in line with Gallent et al’s (2004) suggestion, it proposes wider responses from across the local council’s departments:
i. *Community Planning*
Due to the extensive social implications of the presence of second homes to host communities, planning needs to consider community planning objectives, in line with the increasing understandings of the notions of community, rather than focus on second homes in terms of land use planning.

ii. *Response to consultation*
This research has acted as an extensive consultation exercise asking a range of North Devon residents to express their opinion and concerns regarding second homes within their parish communities. Repeated rounds of democratic renewal of planning have endeavoured to include citizens, and the literature proposes that in order for individuals to be motivated to participate they need to believe they are making a difference (Kambites, 2010). Therefore, a council response to this research, that recognises some of the more significant and frequent issues and concerns raised by residents, would be pertinent.

iii. *Contributions to evidence base*
The research offers a substantial contribution to NDC’s evidence base in an era of planning policy being based upon evidence that details the characteristics of an area. It provides greater understanding of second homes and communities, reinforces existing understanding of sustainability, in addition to increasing knowledge on the role of second homes within communities. This will assist NDC in generating planning policy that is relevant to the local circumstances. It also contributes to housing strategy which has previously recognised the influence of second homes on the housing market in North Devon, suggesting that reducing the numbers of these properties will enable easier access to the housing ladder, and help relieve pressure on house prices. This research provides evidence to support the understood link between proportions of second homes and house prices, to be viewed in conjunction with other market influences. It also provides strong evidence regarding the loss of permanent dwelling properties. The figures on the previous use of second home properties complement the current housing strategy in confirming a loss of dwelling properties, rather than a use of empty
properties, and therefore are understood to contribute to an additional housing demand. This research underpins the argument already set out by the housing department in highlighting the significant social impact of second homes to host communities.

iv. Engagement Programme
The research suggested that permanent residents tend to have an increased tolerance towards second home owners who are known to their neighbours. Therefore, a potential engagement programme focusing on ensuring second home owners know the services, facilities and activities available to them within their host community could aid integration. Such a programme could help maximise some potential positive benefits that second homes can bring through ensuring second home occupants are aware of local businesses, and this could assist attempts to retain money locally. An engagement programme could help overcome the common feeling that second home owners and occupants are not a part of the community. However, it would not address that given the choice most residents would rather a permanent resident neighbour than a second home. Ultimately, presence is desired and expected within a community to ensure its social sustainability.

v. Refuse
Refuse was predominantly raised as an issue in Georgeham parish and appeared to be widespread within this parish. This included the increased volume of rubbish tending to be generated through tourist related properties, and the length of time that bins tend to be left out for. While NDC provides guidelines for appropriate times for bins to be on the street for refuse collection, these are difficult to enforce. Furthermore, neighbours are often relied upon to assist second home owners in ensuring bins are out for collection, detailing the potential one-way reliance of such properties on their neighbours. Policing this issue would overcome some of these issues but could generate an additional cost to NDC at a time when it is trying to make cost savings.

A secondary issue regarding refuse applies specifically to Business Tax rated holiday homes. These properties should be paying an additional
levy for commercial refuse collection, however it was reported that a series of properties are known to be free riding on the domestic refuse collection cycle. Better coordination is needed to ensure that those not entitled for domestic refuse collection are paying the appropriate fees for this service.

vi. Occupancy and Extensions

An issue relating predominantly to holiday homes, but also to second homes that are let out, is the ease at which occupancy of a property can dramatically increase. This can create impacts such as demand for parking and the presence of a ‘party house’ in a residential street. The planning department perhaps needs to have greater consideration regarding planning applications received from properties known to be non-permanent dwelling properties that are seeking to extend their property size. Discussions with NDC regarding this also suggested the potential for removal of permitted development rights\(^\text{23}\) of a property becoming a second or holiday home if it is perceived to be a threat to the area.

This section underpins the notion that despite second homes not being considered as inherently unsustainable, they have potential to create significant issues. This section has sought to highlight some areas which NDC could act upon in order to respond to the consultation exercise this research performed; as well as detailing potential measures to minimise some of the more significant negative influences and harness potential positive contributions. While these recommendations have been drawn from the findings of the research conducted, they also highlighted areas for further research and these will be highlighted in the next section.

8.7 Future Research Avenues

In drawing together research conclusions, addressing the core research themes, questions and responses, areas for further research were highlighted.

\(^{23}\) Removal of permitted development rights occurs through issuing an Article 4 direction (made when the character of an area of importance would be threatened). A planning application then needs submitting for work which does not normally need one.
It is now pertinent to present a collection of potential future second home research avenues that include the following areas:

- Further investigation into whether second home spend in the local community is necessarily greater than that of a permanent resident. This research suggested second homes bring some positive benefits to the community, economic contributions in particular. However, there is scope for further comparison of the local spend of permanent residents, second home users and holiday home users.

- Research could explore whether second homes directly compete with first time buyers and those in housing need, or contribute in a more latent sense to increasing property demand.

- Further research could compare the volume of traffic that holiday homes, second homes and permanent residents contribute to an area.

- Research could examine the potential cost or benefit that second homes pose through the limited presence of occupants and whether this reduces local service demand, or impacts service viability.

- There is potential to further review the revenue from tax contributions of second homes, particularly in the aftermath of the removal of the minimum 10% council tax discount.

- Research could investigate the impact of Business Rated holiday homes (not purpose built holiday properties) on local council revenue.

Rather than concluding by detailing items that this research did not answer, these final comments will summarise what the research has achieved. The research underpins previous literature in suggesting that sustainability should not attempt to be normalised, but rather, developed as relevant to specific communities or situations. Furthermore, this reveals that both the translation of ‘nationally led’ policies are understood to be messy, subject to diffusion through local interpretation, and subversive and submissive actions by individuals. The research has outlined the difficulties in situating community in place, but nevertheless, recognises the potential importance of place to understanding community, and is recognised as one of many notions of community. Empirical findings in the research suggest that the governance of places, and existence of
multiple communities, cut across and between place. Diverse experiences of community are understood to be grounded in an understanding of ‘personal community’ (Pahl and Spencer, 2004) whereby each individual creates their own collection of connections, which can influence their experience of community, especially the parish place-based community, as examined in this research. Ultimately, community was felt to require direct social interactions, and semi-permanent residents compromise the availability of these.

The need to enhance understandings of second homes, and to avoid stereotypes, was emphasised through the empirical research revealing nuanced uses of second home properties. Furthermore, this revealed that second homes are understood to be of limited benefit to place-based communities. Equally, they cannot be directly blamed for a series of issues and threats that result from the presence of second homes in combination with a series of other, potentially external, factors. In terms of sustainability attainment, second homes were detailed to have significant influence on the social sustainability of host communities. While this needs greater recognition and management, the mechanisms through which this can be achieved are limited (Gallent et al, 2004), and there was scepticism regarding potential to actually reduce the numbers of second homes when this was expressed as desirable by research participants. The recommendations for policy response result from the empirical data and situation experienced within North Devon, although they may be relevant to a wider domain. They focus on softer measures intending to minimise negative influences, harness positive impacts, as well as respond to specific issues raised. The research revealed potential for second homes to bring positive benefits to host communities, but these were not often considered to outweigh the negatives. Ultimately, there is preference for a permanent resident neighbour, despite recognising that relationships are often decided through the personalities involved.

Semi-permanent second home occupants have been perceived to impact community through contributing to a lack of neighbourliness, and having limited opportunities to partake in the formal and informal activities within communities. Furthermore, it was suggested that these properties contribute to limiting the volume of population available to undertake community governance and activities. Nevertheless, there are permanent residents who choose to not
participate, and the research revealed a degree of reluctance from currently active permanent residents to undertake an increased voluntary role in community governance without a proportional provision of resources. This emphasises the agency of individuals in producing discursive outcomes, challenging a top-down mentality of rule which is also challenged by local interpretations and competing rationalities guiding decisions and actions.

The change in UK Government during the course of this research, being a policy based project through partnership with NDC, added a degree of complication and generated subtle changes within the research as it progressed. Ultimately, while the research has been conducted and written during a period of rapidly changing governmental policies and periods of substantial uncertainty regarding the realities of policy rhetoric, this is understood to complement the understanding of the planning and governance processes and relationships under examination. It has revealed how a change in national leadership presents a lag time for practitioners who latch on to existing policy guidelines in the absence of other options and the need to fulfil tasks of employment. The research detailed how local government practitioners and communities adopt a degree of resilience and perseverance to complete necessary tasks taking a ‘wait and see’ approach to the changes proposed under a new Government administration. It also suggested that at the local scale, in North Devon at least, the desired policy outcomes of localism were perceived to be already in place through existing local interpretation of policy. The role of individuals was depicted as being potentially significant in outcomes, rather than a reliance on policy or higher-level guidance and leadership per se. Ultimately, there was a strong sense of self-preservation within both the policy maker and resident research arenas, whereby there were certain rules to be followed but there are also individuals acting discursively within these. The dichotomy between a desire to attain and to receive greater local power emphasises the difficulty in delivering and running participation programmes that truly devolve power, and while this is something that the latest government policies have set out to do, this research suggests that it does not appear to have been achieved.
“I may not have gone where I intended to go, but I think I have ended up where I intended to be.”

(Douglas Adams, 1988)
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Appendix 1 – Questionnaire Cover Letter

THE VALUE OF SECOND HOMES TO YOUR COMMUNITY

Who should complete this survey?
This survey should be completed by an adult connected with the property this survey has been sent to. It should not be completed by someone who is on holiday in this property unless you are the property owner.

What is this survey about?
This survey is part of research seeking an objective look at the value of second home tourism to local communities (see over page for definition of terms). The survey is primarily concerned with questions relating to your connections with your local community and your understanding of the contribution second homes make to your community.

Who is the research being done by?
This research is being conducted by Jenny Barnett in collaboration with the University of Exeter, North Devon Council and the Economic and Social Research Council.

Why is this research being done?
The results of this survey, and the research project, will be of great value to those interested in better understanding second home tourism. North Devon Council is keen to use this research to provide and plan appropriately for local residents, to obtain greater understanding of the contribution second homes have on local communities to feed into future policy.

✔ Please note that all responses are anonymous.

✔ Please complete all sections of the survey except for Section 2 – only complete this if this property is not a permanent residence.

It is hoped that the results of this survey will contribute towards North Devon Council more effectively meeting the local community’s needs. I therefore hope that you are able to take part in the research.

If you require further information about the survey or project please contact Jenny Barnett at the University of Exeter on J.E.Barnett@exeter.ac.uk.
Complete and return your questionnaire to be entered into the prize draw!

Please turn over for prize details and notes to help you complete the survey.

**IMPORTANT - Notes To Help You Complete The Survey**

- This survey should be completed by an adult connected with the property this survey has been sent to. It should not be completed by someone who is on holiday in this property unless you are the property owner.

- Please answer the questions about the property this letter has been sent to and the community it is located within, excluding questions that specifically ask about an alternative property or your household.

- Please answer all the questions in all sections but only answer Section 2 if it is relevant to you.

- Please read each question carefully and indicate your answer clearly.

- Most questions will require answering by ticking or numbering the appropriate box, circling a number or writing a brief response. Please read each question carefully as this will explain how you are to answer each question.

- If you answer a question by selecting ‘Other’ please write your answer in the space provided.

- **Property descriptions:**

  **Permanent or Primary Residence:** The property where you spend all or most of your time.

  **Second Home:** The property is owned or long lease rented in addition to a permanent or primary residence. It is for occasional, not permanent, use; you may be registered to have 10% reduction on council tax for this property. It should not be rented out for more than 140 days per year.

  **Holiday Home:** The property is owned or long lease rented in addition to a permanent or primary residence. It may be classed as a commercial property or rented commercially. It is available for
short term rental for a minimum 70 days per year and may be registered Business Rate tax.

**Empty House:** A property that has no overnight residents.

- This questionnaire consists of 5 pages and should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete.

Please return the completed questionnaire in the prepaid envelope supplied. If you cannot find, or did not receive the envelope please contact Jenny Barnett at [J.E.Barnett@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:J.E.Barnett@exeter.ac.uk) or send to:

Second Homes Project, Planning Policy Team,
North Devon Council, Civic Centre, North Walk, Barnstaple, EX31 1EA

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**PRIZE DRAW!**

**Luxury local food hamper or £20 Amazon gift vouchers**

Complete and return your questionnaire and provide your contact details on the last page to be entered into our prize draw where three winning entries will receive one of the prizes above.

*Thank you again in advance for your time.*
### SECTION 1: About This Property

This section is concerned with finding out about the property this survey has been sent to. Please indicate your answer to each question by ticking one box only per question unless otherwise directed.

#### 1.1 How would you describe this property?
*(Please tick one box only and refer to descriptions on back of cover letter)*

- [ ] Permanent / primary residence
- [ ] Second home
- [ ] Holiday home
- [ ] Empty
- [ ] Other *(Please specify)*

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#### 1.2 How would you describe the circumstances of this property?
*(Please tick one box only)*

- [ ] Property owned outright
- [ ] Property owned with mortgage
- [ ] Rented from private landlord
- [ ] Property tied to job
- [ ] Rented from housing association or local authority
- [ ] Shared ownership property
- [ ] Other *(Please specify)*

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#### 1.3 Before you owned or rented this property was this property a new build?

- [ ] Yes *(Go to 1.4)*
- [ ] No

---

#### 1.3.1 If no, which of the following best describes the property prior your occupation?

- [ ] Dwelling property
- [ ] Empty
- [ ] Commercial building converted for residential use
- [ ] Purpose built holiday property
- [ ] Don’t know
- [ ] Other *(please specify)*

---

#### 1.4 How long have you owned or rented this property? *(Please tick one box or leave blank if the property is empty or you are a holiday maker)*

- [ ] Less than 1 year
- [ ] 1-3 years
- [ ] 3-5 years
- [ ] 5-10 years
- [ ] 10-15 years
- [ ] 15-20 years
- [ ] 20+ years

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For help completing the survey please refer to the notes found on the back of the cover letter.
1.5 How long do you believe you will own or rent this property?
(Please tick one box or leave blank if the property is empty)
☐ Less than 1 year
☐ 1-3 years
☐ 3-5 years
☐ 5-10 years
☐ 10-15 years
☐ 15-20 yrs
☐ 20+ yrs

1.6 Which of the following describes the most likely future for this property?
☐ Sell
☐ Rent
☐ Holiday rental
☐ I don’t own this property
☐ I don’t plan to move
☐ I don’t know

1.7 Do you own or rent any additional properties to this one?
☐ Yes I rent other property
☐ Yes I own other property
☐ No (Go to 1.8)

1.7.1 If yes how many?
☐ How many properties are rented?
☐ How many properties are owned?

1.8 What is the distance of you other property from this property?
(Please indicate your answer by placing a number in the box based on how many properties are owned or rented in that location)
☐ Less than 1 mile
☐ 1 - 10 miles
☐ 11 - 50 miles
☐ 51 – 100 miles
☐ 101 – 200 miles
☐ 201 – 300 miles
☐ Over 300 but within the UK
☐ International

1.9 How is your other property used?
(Please indicate your answer by placing a number in the box based on how many properties are used in that way)
☐ Your primary residence
☐ Rented (private long term lease)
☐ Rented (housing association or equivalent)
☐ Second home
☐ Holiday home (rented short term)
☐ Empty
☐ Other (please specify)
**SECOND HOME TOURISM IN GEORGEHAM**

**SECTION 2: If this property is not a permanent residence**
Please complete this section only if this property is not used as a permanent residence, it is concerned with identifying how the property is used.

2.1 Please outline how often this property is used for each of these descriptions?

*Please circle the appropriate number on each line. The numbers represent the following descriptions:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solely</th>
<th>Mainly</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) Members of your household 1 2 3 4
b) Friends and family 1 2 3 4
c) Holiday rental 1 2 3 4
d) Rented (Long term lease) 1 2 3 4
e) Other (please detail) 1 2 3 4

2.2 On average, how many weeks per year is this property occupied?
(Please tick one box only)

- [ ] 1-4 weeks
- [ ] 5-12 weeks
- [ ] 13-24 weeks
- [ ] 25-36 weeks
- [ ] 37-48 weeks
- [ ] 49-52 weeks

2.3 If this property is not rented on a long term lease please use the space at the top of the next column to describe the frequency of the occupation of this property:

For example: identify whether the property tends to be used at weekends, or during school holidays, or outside of school holidays, or for regular or occasional week long, fortnight or month long stays etc.

**SECTION 3: About Georgeham**

3.1 Would you describe yourself as an active member of the community?

On a scale of 1-5 where 1 is ‘Very active’ and 5 is ‘Not at all active’ please circle the number that best describes your community activity.

V. Active 1 2 3 4 5 Not at all active

3.2 How do you feel about Georgeham at present?

On a scale of 1-5 where 1 is ‘Very positive’ 3 is ‘Indifferent’ and 5 is ‘Very Negative’ please circle the number that best describes how you feel about Georgeham at present.

V. Positive 1 2 3 4 5 V. Negative

3.3 How do you feel about the future of Georgeham?

On a scale of 1-5 where 1 is ‘Very positive’ 3 is ‘Indifferent’ and 5 is ‘Very Negative’ please circle the number that best describes how you feel about the future of Georgeham.

V. Positive 1 2 3 4 5 V. Negative
3.4 Which of the following best describes how well you know people in Georgeham?  
(Please tick one box only)
- I don’t know anyone
- I know my immediate neighbours
- I know a few
- I know several
- I know about half
- I know most/everyone

3.5 On average, how much do you spend locally in Georgeham per week?  
(For example: on food, eating out, cleaner or gardener etc. NOT on property rent or tax)
- Less than £25 a week
- £26
- 0 a week
- £51 – 100 a week
- £101 – 200 a week
- £201 – 500 a week
- £501 – 1000 a week
- £1000+ a week
- Rather not say

3.6 Which one of the following best describes your understanding of the contribution second homes make to Georgeham? (Please read each of the 5 options carefully and tick one box only)

a) I am not aware that second homes make any contribution (positive or negative) to Georgeham.  
   (If you tick this answer please go to Section 4)

b) I believe second homes make a contribution to Georgeham but I am not sure whether the contribution is positive or negative.

c) I believe second homes contribute both positively and negatively to Georgeham.

d) I believe second homes positively contribute to Georgeham.

e) I believe second homes negatively contribute to Georgeham.

3.7 Which of the following best describes your feelings about second homes? (Please tick one box only)

a) There are a sustainable amount of second homes in Georgeham.

b) There are too many second homes in Georgeham.

c) There are not enough second homes in Georgeham.

3.8 Please use the space below to outline the contribution you believe second homes make to Georgeham:

Question continued in next column
SECTION 4: You and Your Household
This section asks for information about you and your household. ‘Your household’ refers to your primary residence household. This is needed purely for research purposes.

4.1 How many people live in your household, including children? 
(Please write the appropriate number in the box)

4.2 Please indicate how many people in your household fall within each age bracket by writing the appropriate number in the relevant box. (Leave blank if no one of that age category)

- Under 18 years
- 18 – 24 years
- 25 – 39 years
- 40 – 54 years
- 55 – 74 years
- 75 years and over

4.3 Which one of the following best describes the current occupation(s) of adults in your household? (Please write the appropriate number in the box)

- Manager/Senior Official
- Small/Medium Business Owner
- Sales/Customer Relations
- Skilled Manual
- Student
- Unpaid Carer/Homemaker
- Professional
- Admin/Clerical
- Personal Services
- Unskilled Manual
- Retired
- Not currently in paid employment
- Rather not say

4.4 What is your total household income? 
(The combined gross income of everyone in your household. Please tick one box only)

- Up to £9,999
- £10,000 - £14,999
- £15,000 - £19,999
- £20,000 - £29,999
- £30,000 - £39,999
- £40,000 - £49,999
- £50,000 - £74,999
- £75,000 - £99,999
- £100,000 - £149,999
- £150,000 +
- Rather Not Say

4.5 What are the highest qualifications of the adults in your household? 
(Please write the number of adults in the appropriate box)

- CSE/O-Levels/GCSE
- A-Levels/Diploma/NVQ
- Bachelor’s Degree of equivalent
- Higher Degree or equivalent
- Other Vocational Qualification
- None of these /Rather not say

SECTION 5: Further Comment
Is there anything you would like to add about any of the topics raised in this survey? (Please use this space or additional sheet)
Thank you

Thank you very much for completing this survey. Your responses are of great value to the research.

Further Research and Prize Draw

If you would like to be involved in further research for this project or enter the prize draw to win either a luxury food hamper or £20 Amazon gift voucher please provide your contact details below and tick the options you are entering (if the tick boxes are left blank but your details are provided you will be added to both lists).

Following on from this survey I am looking to conduct short interviews with local residents and second home owners, and businesses to examine in more detail the value and contribution of second home tourism to local communities. If you would like to take part in this stage of the project please provide your name and contact details in the space below. Those selected will be paid up to £20 for your time.

Name: __________________________________________
Email and/or Tel: _______________________________________

☐ I would like to take part in further research
☐ I would like to enter the prize draw with a chance to win a luxury local food hamper or a £20 Amazon gift voucher (winners will be notified by 30th September)

Please detach this page from the questionnaire and return both items in the prepaid envelope provided by 1st August 2011.

Please can I reiterate that your details will not be passed on to any third party and will only be used to contact you with a view to arrange an interview for this project. All information provided by you in this survey, and in interview, will be kept anonymous. Completion of this survey is understood to be your consent to take part in the research.

If you cannot find, or did not receive the envelope please contact Jenny Barnett at J.E.Barnett@exeter.ac.uk or send to:

Second Homes Project
Planning Policy Team
North Devon Council, Civic Centre
North Walk
Barnstaple
EX311EA
Appendix 3 – Transcribed Interview Extract

Interviewer: What do you believe are the values and challenges that second homes pose to communities?

PM1: They can pose, where there’s a high level of second home ownership in a community they can, you can find that communities can almost literally close down as effective social...there aren’t enough kids in the school, there aren’t enough people buying in the local shop, the community facilities can close down....it’s just not....

Interviewer: Would you say that has happened anywhere in North Devon?

PM1: We haven’t had any school closures for a long time actually. Errm most of the school closures happened many years ago before second homes and for different reasons ummm but that’s not to say it won’t happen in the next few years as public sector finances get an awful lot tighter. I think it’s a risk for the future. We have seen other village facilities close down, shop, pubs, post offices all that, that’s been for a different reason, because of the Post Office Ltd and there bizarre funding arrangements, I was heavily involved in that a couple of years ago when we lost a lot of Post Offices but there is this kind of slow death of communities as each community facility closes – the village shop, village pub, village garage actually ultimately the village school and that’s where villages cease to be communities and become dormitories either for second home owners or people just commute in and out.

Interviewer: There’s a number of factors at play

PM1: Yes it is a number. That’s not ... you have to achieve quite a high percentage of second home ownership...up to about 20% before that really starts, before second homes become the single cause of that, there are other causes as you say, rural facilities being eroded just because of the economies of scale, and the withdrawal of the public sector from rural location back into the centralised service. Second homes can bring opportunities. Second homes can bring fresh sources of income into a community that wouldn’t have been there, people with spending power who wouldn’t have been there so there’s an upside. If the financial sector is still going to pay people millions of pounds in bonuses and these people are going to buy second homes frankly we’ll help them spend some of their money in North Devon. There is another side to it.

Interviewer: Do you think second homes could be developed as part of a tourism strategy?
PM1: Yeh, I do. North Devon Council briefly took a policy decision not to levy full council tax on second homes, it had a range of options, and they say no we won’t go 100%, they went to 90% or something like that, because the view was politically that most second home owners are actually prepared to pay, previously they were paying 50% council tax, and would be prepared to pay up to 90% on a second home as a kind of um social unity if you like and it was not...raising council tax level was not only a disincentive only to second home ownership but would provide the local authority with a different revenue. It was a political judgement made 5 or 6 years ago in the council. The reason for that was second home owners can contribute something to the tourist economy and even to the local village economy. If you’re running a village pub and you’ve got reasonable well off second home owners who want to go out for a meal in the evening - don’t knock it you think.

Interviewer: Could they have gone to 110%?

PM1: They could have done. They took a clear political decision not to do that because they wanted to just retain that little incentive, actually we quite like you being here, to a level. Not when it becomes...when it starts to dominate a village, up to a level it's part of the economy.

Interviewer: What about in the areas, like you say Brendon and Georgeham have both got over 20%, which was your cut off for saying that would be an issue – so what about those communities?

PM1: Yes they have. In Brendon I think is up to about 30%, or close to 30%

Interviewer: Brendon has got a lot of holiday homes – that’s the difficulty. Second homes are actually lower there than you may think because some are classed holiday homes.

PM1: Because of the holiday homes yeh. Georgeham, and particularly Croyde, the Croyde part of Georgeham is very much geared to the holiday industry anyway. Croyde is a funny place, we’ve never actually classified it as a holiday resort but it’s heavily seasonal and is made up in equal part of holiday homes, second homes and retirement homes, ok there are some people who are economically active as well but there’s a significant proportion of those other three: second homes, holiday homes and retirement, people who are retired living in the community. Funnily enough that can work as a mix, provided you’ve also got affordable housing opportunities and I know about 10 years ago the council got funding for a scheme on the edge of Georgeham village which achieved just that. It was a cross subsidy scheme with a local
developer, a local RSL that actually achieved three things: it brought some open market housing into the community, higher value open market housing, it created some social housing for local needs, and it was also able to cross subsidise the creation of the village car park and improvements to the village green and the football pitch, and achieved all of that...achieved 4 objectives in one development because it got the balance right between the sort of...the mix.

Interviewer: Was there much objection to having the development or not?

PM1: There was a bit, there’s a classic divide of those who want the homes are in favour and those who don’t want living near them are against. There is that mix in Georgeham but by and large because we worked with the parish council there was broad community support, there were objections there always will be but the parish council supported it which was key to it, because the parish council wanted their young people to have the opportunity of a home in the village and it worked. It was designed so well that in design terms you wouldn’t be able to distinguish between the social housing and the open market housing, it was designed to a common standard right across. It’s a scheme worth visiting actually.

Interviewer: I will do

PM1: Not today – it’s a bit of a bus ride.......It’s been there about 10 years. It was an excellent scheme, the people who moved into the housing for rent were really pleased to have a home of their own. OK it was a rented home but a rented home of their own as far as they were concerned, in the village where they wouldn’t have otherwise had the opportunity.