

Locating Identity and Ethnicity in Cornish Civil Society: Penzance; A Case Study

Volume One

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Abstract

Recently there has been considerable interest in Cornish ethnicity reflected both by a rise in the numbers in Cornwall who identify as Cornish and by academic research. Cornish studies have constructed a regional narrative embracing Celticity and an economy based on primary industries, particularly mining, from which has evolved a distinctive culture. This study adopting an ethnographic approach, extends Cornish studies by considering a number of elements which have not previously been addressed. These include investigating how identity may be played out in a particular place to see whether there may be differences in how ethnicity is performed within Cornwall, looking at how it may be practiced collectively in the context of civil society and examining the relationship between ethnicity and place identity. Three settings within Penzance have been selected to represent some of the issues prevalent in twenty first century Cornwall. They include a study of festivals celebrating ethnicity and place identity, an investigation of how kinship and ethnicity are the basis for social cohesion on a social housing estate and an analysis of a dispute over harbour re-development reflecting tensions between regeneration and conservation. Investigating the civil society associated with each of these settings has identified a number of discourses which influence place images, are the focus for debate and reflect different ways in which ethnicity is articulated and performed. Influences on Cornish identity have been exposed which have not been previously explored by Cornish Studies including the relationship between civil society and the state, the importance of place mythology and the impact of inward migration. The study concludes that collective identities, ethnicity and place images are constantly in flux driven by discourses debated within the micro-politics of civil society and that the overarching narratives of Cornishness contain tensions and cleavages which help explain the fractured nature of much of public life in Cornwall.

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Locating Identity and Ethnicity in Cornish Civil Society: Penzance; A Case Study

Table of Contents

Volume One of Two

	Page
Chapter 1: Identity, Ethnicity and Cultural Difference in Contemporary Cornwall	9
Chapter 2: The Idea of Civil Society	25
<i>The Idea of Civil Society</i>	26
<i>Recent approaches</i>	29
<i>Critics of Civil Society</i>	34
<i>Civil Society, Identity and Culture</i>	36
<i>Civil Society in Cornwall</i>	38
<i>Conclusion</i>	43
Chapter 3: Identity, Ethnicity, Culture and the Importance of Place	46
<i>Identity, Ethnicity and Culture</i>	48
<i>Identities</i>	49
<i>Collective Identity</i>	56
<i>Ethnicity</i>	58
<i>Culture</i>	64
<i>Common themes and linkages</i>	74
<i>The Importance of Place</i>	76
<i>Theorising Place</i>	78
<i>Place and Identity</i>	83
<i>Memory and Imagination</i>	86
<i>Linkages and Inter-relationships</i>	89
<i>Hierarchy and Scale</i>	92
<i>Privileging Place</i>	94
<i>Conclusion</i>	95
Chapter 4: Addressing the Research Question	96
<i>Selection of Settings for Study</i>	96
<i>Theory and Method</i>	97
<i>Ethnography</i>	97
<i>Discourse Analysis</i>	100
<i>The Approaches Combined</i>	102
<i>Research Design</i>	103
<i>Data</i>	110
<i>The Position of the Researcher</i>	112
<i>Application of the Research Design</i>	113

Chapter 5: Penzance; Capital of Penwith	117
<i>Historical Background; Origins</i>	118
<i>Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries</i>	121
<i>Twentieth Century</i>	127
<i>Governance and Civil Society</i>	129
<i>Historical Themes</i>	131
Chapter 6: Penzance; Contradictions and Conflict: Principal Town or Tourist Destination?	135
<i>Penzance Defined</i>	135
<i>Contemporary Penzance</i>	136
<i>A Brief Socio-economic profile of Penzance</i>	138
<i>Issues for Penzance</i>	154
<i>Discourses: 'a glorious mix – a town under threat'</i>	155
<i>Ethnicity</i>	159
<i>Conclusion: Identity, Ethnicity and Place</i>	163
Chapter 7: Festivals; Performed Ethnicity and Celebrating Place	166
<i>Festival Theory</i>	167
<i>Authenticity and Invention</i>	168
<i>Spectacle and Carnival</i>	170
<i>Insiders and Outsiders</i>	171
<i>Place and Globalisation</i>	172
<i>Civil Society and the State</i>	173
<i>Festivals in Cornwall</i>	174
<i>A Framework for Analysis</i>	177
<i>Golowan: History</i>	178
<i>The Revival of the Festival</i>	180
<i>Initial Organisation</i>	182
<i>The Selection of Content</i>	184
<i>The Performed Festival</i>	185
<i>Presentation</i>	189
<i>Venues</i>	193
<i>The Financial, Social and Political Context</i>	194
<i>Organising Creativity</i>	197
<i>Conflict and Change</i>	199
<i>Montol: Inception</i>	205
<i>The Performed Festival</i>	206
<i>The Financial, Social and Political Context</i>	210
<i>Continuing Invention: Pirates on the Prom</i>	211
<i>Conclusions</i>	214
Chapter 8: Treneere; Community Cohesion, Place Identity and Concealed Ethnicity	220
<i>Social Housing in Cornwall</i>	221
<i>Municipal housing in Penzance</i>	226
<i>The Present Day Estate</i>	230
<i>Housing Associations, the Right to Buy and the 'Sink Estate'</i>	
<i>Discourse</i>	234
<i>A Socio-Economic Profile of Treneere</i>	239
<i>Treneere as a Neighbourhood</i>	243

<i>Concealed Ethnicity</i>	247
<i>Civil Society on Treneere</i>	257
<i>Social Capital and Neighbourhood Development</i>	266
<i>The Role of Public Agencies</i>	273
<i>Conclusions</i>	277
Chapter 9: Adopted Ethnicity or Privileging Place?	282
Civil Society in Crisis: The Penzance Harbour Debate	
<i>Phase I: 2002-8: The Inception of the Project</i>	286
<i>The Development of Options for the Harbour</i>	289
<i>Phase II: Consultation and Opposition 2008-2010</i>	292
<i>The Development of Further Options</i>	297
<i>The Policy Making Context</i>	300
<i>Divisions within Civil Society</i>	302
<i>The Intervention of Andrew George</i>	305
<i>Cornwall Council versus the Opposition</i>	309
<i>Reasons for Opposition</i>	311
<i>Phase III: 2010-12; Efforts to Secure Funding</i>	320
<i>Why did the Project fail?</i>	323
<i>Phase IV: The Search for a Compromise</i>	324
<i>The Eventual Solution?</i>	329
<i>Conclusions</i>	333
Chapter 10: Does Civil Society in Cornwall Exhibit a Distinctive Cultural and Ethnic Difference?	343
<i>The Recognition of Cultural and Ethnic Difference</i>	344
<i>Ethnicity and Civil Society</i>	347
<i>Place, Identity and Class</i>	352
<i>Similarity and Difference</i>	356
<i>The Research Question</i>	357
Volume Two of Two	
Appendix One	
<i>List of Interviewees</i>	363
<i>Specimen transcripts of interviews</i>	369
<i>University Consent Form</i>	387
Appendix Two: Tables	
<i>6.1 The Study Area; 2011 Population Age Structure</i>	389
<i>6.2 The Study Area: Labour Market Profile</i>	390
<i>8.1 Treneere; IMD Deprivation scores 2010</i>	391
<i>8.2 Treneere; Selected 2011 Census Data</i>	392
<i>8.3 Treneere; Penzance East; Out of Work Benefits</i>	395
<i>8.4 Treneere; National Identity 2011</i>	395
Appendix Three	
<i>Development of the Research Process</i>	396
Bibliography	401

List of Illustrations

Figure

- 5.1 *Market Hall*
- 5.2 *Penzance Boundaries*
- 5.3 *Wesleyan Chapel, Chapel Street*
- 5.4 *Regency Terracing*
- 5.5 *St John's Hall*
- 6.1 *The Study Area*
- 7.1 *Quay Fair 1850*
- 7.2 *Golowan Programme Covers*
- 7.3 *Programme at selected Golowan festivals*
- 7.4/ *Golowan 2013; Mazey Day; Croust Procession*
- 7.5
- 7.6 *Golowan Images, Mazey Day*
- 7.7 *Preparations for the Parade*
- 7.8 *Pagan Iconography? Penglaz and the Golowan logo*
- 7.9 *Montol, Dancing in Chapel Street*
- 7.10 *Montol, Bonfire at Lescudjack*
- 7.11 *Montol, Old Ned, Guising and the Turkey Rhubarb Band*
- 7.12 *Pirates on the Prom*
- 8.1 *Treneere in relation to Penzance*
- 8.2 *Terraced Housing on Treneere*
- 8.3 *'Palm Trees': Treneere*
- 8.4 *Generous Open Space Provision*
- 8.5 *New Development on Treneere*
- 8.6 *Treneere Estate: LSOA Boundary; 2011 Census*
- 8.7 *Cornish Themed Art at Trelya*
- 8.8 *The Neighbourhoods Together Partnership*
- 8.9 *The Lescudjack Centre*
- 8.10 *Extracts from 'A Slice of Treneere'*
- 9.1 *Penzance Harbour*
- 9.2 *Penzance Harbour: The Wet Dock*
- 9.3 *Penzance Harbour Side*
- 9.4 *The Scillonian III*
- 9.5 *Penzance Harbour Option A*
- 9.6 *Penzance Harbour Option C*
- 9.7 *Before and After Views of the Proposed Passenger Terminal*
- 9.8 *An Enduring Place Image; Penzance Harbour in the 18th Century*
- 9.9 *Area of the Harbour to be Dredged*
- 9.10 *Highway Improvements*

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List of Abbreviations

CD	Compact Disc
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
DoT	Department of Transport
EU	European Union
FofPZh	Friends of Penzance Harbour
HRO	Harbour Revision Order
ICS	Institute of Cornish Studies
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOSSC	Isles of Stream Ship Company
LSOA	Lower Layer Super Output Area
MK	Mebyon Kernow
MP	Member of Parliament
Nimby	Not in my backyard
NRP	Neighbourhood Renewal Programme
Option PZ	Option Penzance
Penwith DC	Penwith District Council
PCSO	Police Community Support Officers
PHA	Penwith Housing Association
PHSMB	Penzance Harbour Scheme Management Board
RA	Residents' Association
WCPC	West Cornwall Pasty Company

Locating identity and ethnicity in Cornish civil society: A Case Study

Chapter 1: Identity, Ethnicity and Cultural Difference in Contemporary Cornwall

In April 2014 the coalition government agreed to propose to the Council of Europe inclusion of the Cornish within the Framework Convention for Protection of National Minorities.¹ It was announced that

The decision to recognise the unique identity of the Cornish, now affords them the same status under the European Framework...as the UK's other Celtic people, the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish. For the first time the government has recognised the distinctive culture and history of the Cornish.

This followed lobbying for minority status by Cornwall Council on the basis that Cornwall is both culturally and geographically distinct from the rest of the United Kingdom and has a separate language, Kernewek. In addition to the recognition of its cultural distinctiveness, the Council saw economic advantages in minority status to help promote Cornwall as a brand and as part of its case for devolving administrative powers from Westminster.²

For those who see Cornish identity as central to their ethnicity this was an important step forward in a process which had been gathering momentum over the past twenty or more years. Cornwall and Cornish ethnicity was increasingly a subject of serious academic study which provided the context for a number of important developments since the turn of the century. These included qualifying for Objective One and later Convergence Funding from the European Union, the granting of World Heritage status for former mining areas and recognition of Cornish as a minority language recognised under the European Charter for the Protection of Regional Minority Languages.³

¹ Gov. UK, 'Cornish granted minority status within the UK' Press Release, www.gov.uk/government/news/cornish-granted-minority-status-within-the-uk accessed 21 July 2015.

² Cornwall Council, *The Case for Cornwall*, 2014, p. 9.

³ Cornwall Council, 'Why should the Cornish be recognised as a national minority within the UK?' 2014.

Minority status was generally welcomed in Cornwall, the *Cornishman* commenting favourably that 'it was a landmark day, putting the preservation of Cornish culture in line with other Celtic nations'.⁴ But it was not clear what it meant other than recognition of the Cornish as a minority and a limited amount of funding to promote Kernewek. Cornwall Council considered its benefits to be giving 'young people more confidence' and helping to address 'negative attitudes to being Cornish'.⁵ The *Cornishman* acknowledged that 'it is not a magic bullet for Cornwall's problems associated with high housing costs and low wages',⁶ but generally the reaction was positive. However, despite recognition being generally welcomed, Deacon saw a danger that minority status would label the Cornish as 'an interesting historical relic consigned to the museum shelves and local histories',⁷ and it remained to be seen whether this apparent increase in self-identification and wider recognition of Cornishness would make a difference to how life is lived in Cornwall.

Outside Cornwall there was a predictably sceptical response. The *Guardian's* Simon Jenkins asked 'Are 5.5 million Yorkshire men and women not as deserving of "minority status" within the United Kingdom as half a million Cornish (of whom just 70,000 say they are actually Cornish)?'⁸ A former director of the Audit Commission queried how the recently announced devolution of powers to the Council to manage transport, health and social care, property and European funding⁹ would work given that Cornwall is 'a peripheral and relatively deprived area, that does not raise enough in local

⁴ *Cornishman*, Comment, 1st May 2014.

⁵ Cornwall Council, press release, 'Cornish Minority Status', www.cornwall.gov.uk/community-and-living/equality-and-diversity/Cornish-minority-status, accessed 20th October 2015.

⁶ *Cornishman*, *ibid.*

⁷ B. Deacon, 'The Unimportance of Being Cornish in Cornwall', in P. Payton (ed.) *Cornish Studies Twenty One*, Exeter, 2013 (a), pp.17-32., p. 24.

⁸ *The Guardian*, 'Why mighty Yorkshire is another country in waiting', 9th May 2014.

⁹ Cornwall Council, press release, 'Council Leader welcomes formal signing of historic Cornwall Devolution Deal', www.cornwall.gov.uk/council-and-democracy, accessed 21st July 2015.

taxation and where public services have often struggled to recruit good people'.¹⁰

These reactions illustrate a Kernow scepticism both outside and inside Cornwall which questions the claims for Cornish difference and continues to see Cornwall as an English county albeit one which is remote and peripheral. The debate, leading to the referendum for Scottish independence, brought the Celtic parts of the United Kingdom into sharper focus and for the Cornish the initial impact of minority status was that they were at last being noticed, however patronisingly, for something other than beaches and cream teas. Academia also acknowledged this rise in ethnic recognition with Husk and Williams commenting that 'in recent years there has been evidence of a growth in the recognition and legitimation of a distinct Cornish identity'¹¹ Weight's comment in 2000 that 'Cornishness was neither understood nor recognised by the rest of the UK' and that, 'because the English could not see any fundamental difference between themselves and the Cornish, they...disregarded them',¹² started to be challenged.

The principal outsider image of Cornwall for the past 120 years is as a major holiday destination with a distinctive landscape and a romantic Celtic past. Initially a place for tourists wishing to explore remote parts of Celtic Britain, it evolved, with the development of railways, into a location for middle class holidays. Visitors wanted rugged scenery, quaint and picturesque harbours, sandy beaches all spiced with a dash of romance and Celtic antiquity. Large numbers of tourists created its principal industry which has subsequently evolved to meet the challenge from European competition and changes in holiday tastes. Improved road communications have helped it to become a destination of choice for those seeking gourmet cooking, boutique hotels, outdoor activities and a middle class holiday experience.¹³

¹⁰ *The Guardian*, 'Cornwall gets its devolution deal-but who will foot the bill?' www.theguardian.com/public-leaders-network/2015/jul20/cornwall-devolution , accessed 6th August 2015.

¹¹ K. Husk and M. Williams, 'The Legitimation of Ethnicity: The Case of the Cornish', *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Vol.12 No.2, 2012, pp. 249-267, p.250.

¹² R. Weight, *Patriots: National Identity in Britain 1940-2000*, London, p. 603.

¹³ For example, www.visitcornwall.com, accessed 1 December 2011.

Tourism has encouraged inward migration into Cornwall. Its population has increased by over 50% since the mid 1960's driven partly by the difference in house prices with the rest of Southern England, but also by the promise of a better lifestyle, cleaner environment and beautiful scenery, perceptions gained by visits as holiday makers.¹⁴ This influx has created pressure for more housing and improved infrastructure but has allegedly altered the structure and traditions of Cornish society and the distinctiveness of local communities.¹⁵ Tourism and its concomitant migration have also constructed an idea of Cornwall which consists of an amalgam of environmentalism, romance, legend and Celtic spiritualism making it difficult to see past its West Country charm, scenic beauty and the picturesque. There is limited understanding of the underlying poverty, the precariousness of much of the economy or recognition of a sense of separate identity and cultural difference.

Apart from occasional references to the promise of hospitality and the guarantee of a warm welcome there is little mention in the tourist literature about the Cornish themselves.¹⁶ Where they are represented in national media they are often stereotypically portrayed as yokels, comic characters with West County accents, or in some way strange or dangerous with a history of piracy and wrecking. Some would argue that this process of Othering, coupled with inward migration, has meant that outsiders, with little cultural empathy with Cornwall but who form an articulate and active middle class, have taken many professional and managerial jobs resulting in a diminution of Cornishness. The plea of a former director of the Institute of Cornish Studies (ICS), Charles Thomas, in the 1970's to resist an increasing influence of Englishness has been largely overtaken by events.¹⁷ But the post-modernist perspective on identity is that it is always changing, that no identities are pure and that they are always subject to outside influences. As

¹⁴ R. Perry, K. Dean and B. Brown, *Counterurbanisation: international case studies of urban to rural movement*, Norwich, 1986. See Chapter Six, (Pages 137-138) for a detailed discussion of the motivation and consequences of inward migration.

¹⁵ R. Dickinson, 'Meanings of Cornishness: A Study of Contemporary Cornish Identity', in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Eighteen*, Exeter, 2010, pp.70-100.

¹⁶ www.visitcornwall.com accessed 1 December 2011.

¹⁷ C. Thomas, *The Importance of being Cornish in Cornwall*, Redruth, 1973.

MacLeod states, 'cultural identities...are neither fixed nor immutable' and are 'subject to the continuous play of history, culture, geographical movement, transfer and political power'.¹⁸ Clearly ethnicity is only one element of identity and for many people may not be the most important. But as Jenkins suggests, when ethnicity is seen as important, it is a major element in how individuals perceive their identity.¹⁹ Despite periodic forecasts that Cornish identity is dying and the persistence of Kernow scepticism both within and outside Cornwall, it is a reality for a sizable proportion of the population of Cornwall and there is evidence that rather than in retreat from globalisation and cultural homogenisation, self-identification as Cornish is increasing rather than diminishing.²⁰

In the 1990's academic work particularly by Exeter University's ICS and the University of Plymouth, constructed an analysis from which evolved a narrative explaining the evolution of Cornish identity. Philip Payton's *The Making of Modern Cornwall*²¹ addressed Cornish historical experience from a perspective based on Rokken and Urwin's centre and periphery model to explain how Cornwall evolved from its Celtic roots through a period of industrialisation to a state of paralysis from which it is now beginning to recover.²² This was followed by further insights from Bernard Deacon,²³ who identified two major strands of Cornish identity in the twentieth century which combined the romanticism of Celtic revivalism with a robust working class culture based on nineteenth century industrialisation derived from mining and engineering. They both argued that these strands synthesised by the end of the twentieth century to incorporate fresh symbols representing new cultural elements and a re-interpretation and re-invention of traditions.²⁴ Further studies explored in more detail these elements of Cornishness including its

¹⁸ G. MacLeod, 'Identity, Hybridity and the Institutionalisation of Territory', in D. C. Harvey, R. Jones, N. McInroy and C. Milligan (eds.), *Celtic Geographies*, London, 2002, p. 55.

¹⁹ R. Jenkins, *Social Identity*, London, 2008 (b), p. 87.

²⁰ B. Deacon, *The lands end? The great sale of Cornwall*, Redruth, 2013 (b), p. 124.

²¹ P. Payton, *The Making of Modern Cornwall*, Redruth 1992.

²² P. Payton, *ibid*, pp. 15-20.

²³ B. Deacon, 'Peggy Combellack's Conundrum: Locating the Cornish Identity', unpublished paper, Institute of Cornish Studies, 2006.

²⁴ B. Deacon and P. Payton, 'Re-inventing Cornwall: Culture Change on the European Periphery', in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies One*, Exeter, 1993, pp. 62-79.

industrial and technological origins²⁵ and its Celtic roots.²⁶ More recently writers such as Kent have identified its evolution during the first decade of the twenty first century to embrace elements of youth culture including music, design and surfing.²⁷ Perhaps the greatest achievement of the Institute has been to construct a narrative around which a number of facets of Cornishness can coalesce, albeit one which continues to be subject to academic scrutiny and challenge.

From this considerable body of work, it is possible to draw a number of conclusions. Firstly, that a distinctive identity is a reality for many living in Cornwall. The persistence of symbols such as flags, use of language and cultural events demonstrates that a sizable proportion of the population recognises and wishes to celebrate its difference. Secondly, however Cornishness is defined, it has evolved and continues to change so that what was considered to be Cornish fifty years ago has been augmented and modified by influences both from within and outside Cornwall. In other words it is dynamic; it doesn't stand still. So although identity and culture appear to be constructed from history, they are also a resource from which to look forward to determine 'what we might become, [as well as] how we have been represented and...how we might represent ourselves'.²⁸ Thirdly, it is in the nature of identities that they are hybrid incorporating elements from other cultures which contributes to their dynamism. Deacon reminds us of the 'Janus-faced' aspect of Cornish identity; 'that the Cornish can be intensely "Cornish" but also unthinkingly "English"'.²⁹ Cornwall is also subject to the processes of globalisation and its history of emigration connects it to a wider world. Cornish identity is thus complex and multi-layered, claiming a distinctiveness constructed from a number of diverse elements but also

²⁵ P. Payton, 'Industrial Celts? Cornish Identity in the Age of Technological Prowess', in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Ten*, Exeter, 2002, pp. 116-135.

²⁶ A. Hale, 'Whose Celtic Cornwall? The ethnic Cornish meet Celtic spirituality', in D.C. Harvey, R. Jones, N. McInroy & C. Milligan, (eds.) *Celtic geographies: old culture new times*, London, 2002,

²⁷ A. M. Kent, 'Celtic Nirvanas: Constructions of Celtic in contemporary British youth culture' in D.C. Harvey et al (eds.), 2002, p. 223.

²⁸ S. Hall, 'Who Needs identity?' in S. Hall and P. du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity*, London, 1996, p. 4.

²⁹ B. Deacon, *Cornwall: A Concise History*, Cardiff, 2007(b), p. 221.

forming part of a wider British identity. Its inherent conflicts and contradictions are reflected in a debate between progressive and conservative elements in Cornish identity; progressive in a willingness to embrace change or what we might become as opposed to a conservatism which focuses on what we were, how we have been represented and the need to protect what we have. The research shows how these two elements are played out in the cases studied.

Writing on Cornish ethnicity to date has a number of weaknesses. Although it has identified its broad strands it has not been so effective in analysing the differences, the tensions and the cleavages within Cornishness. It has tended to look backwards as to how we have been represented rather than how we might represent ourselves, it has focused on personal identities rather than group identities, it has not addressed spatial differences within Cornwall and has been largely hostile to the impact of inward migration seeing as a negative influence. It is only recently that Willett argued the need to move from 'who we are' to 'what we will become' suggesting that constructions, imaginings and narratives are critical in shaping ideas of place.³⁰ So this research challenges elements of the generally accepted models of Cornishness which have evolved over the past twenty five years while recognising that they form a contextual analysis on which a more detailed study can draw. It therefore looks at Cornishness in terms of social identities, the influence of place and the micro-politics of locality.

In a sense all identities are social, particularly ethnic identity. This research draws on social identity theory proposed by writers like Tajfel, to move the study of Cornish ethnicity and identity towards an examination of how it is performed collectively and how it may influence group behaviour.³¹ Tajfel makes a distinction between group and personal identity and argues that group identity has a major influence on personal identity through a number of phenomena such as boundary setting, stereotyping and criteria for admitting membership which are dependent on power relationships and political

³⁰ J. Willett, 'The Production of Place: Perception, Reality and the Politics of Becoming', *Political Studies*, 2014, pp.1-16, doi: 10.1111/1467-9248.12179.

³¹ H. Tajfel, *Human Groups and Social Categories*, Cambridge, 1981.

processes both between and within groups.³² So the research concentrates on studying Cornishness in contemporary Cornwall from the perspective of group behaviour to explore whether it throws light on new dimensions of Cornish identity.

It has been argued that researching the whole of Cornwall is an initial stage of Cornish social science and that there is now a need to examine the spatial dimension of Cornish culture and identity within Cornwall.³³ Deacon suggests that 'there may well be differences within Cornwall, on an intra-Cornish scale. To explore these, investigations at a micro-scale are required'.³⁴ However there have been few studies which differentiate between identities within Cornwall and how they may be played out in specific places. What has been done suggests that there may be a stronger sense of ethnic identity in the west and in the older industrial areas.³⁵ Gilligan's work on the dynamics of Padstow May celebrations, Ireland's study of the impact of tourism at Sennen and Willett's research on identity in the clay villages of Mid Cornwall³⁶ have explored identities in specific places. In all three, place identity emerges as part of the ethnography of the communities studied, particularly the images which are constructed around places, the meanings they hold, the relationships between insiders and outsiders and between the local and the global.³⁷ Post-modernist geographers such as Massey³⁸ and Shields³⁹ see places as socially constructed, forming key cultural components, as intersections of activities and, since they are frequently linked together in unequal ways, as expressions of power structures within society. Places

³² R. Jenkins, 2008 (b), pp.112-117.

³³ M. Williams, 'The New Cornish Social Science' in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Ten*, Exeter, 2002, pp. 44-66.

³⁴ B. Deacon, 'In Search of the Missing Turn: The Spatial Dimension and Cornish Studies', in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Eight*, Exeter, 2000, pp. 213-230, p. 226.

³⁵ R. Dickinson, 2010, and P. Aldous and M. Williams, 'A Question of Ethnic Identity', in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Nine*, University of Exeter, 2001, pp. 211- 226.

³⁶ H. G. Gilligan and C.C. Harris, 'Community and Community Studies: Studying Local Social Life', in R. G. Burgess (ed.) *Investigating Society*, Harlow, 1989, pp.12-31, M. Ireland, 'Gender and Class Relations in Tourism Employment', *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 20 1993, pp. 666-684, J. Willett, 'Sustainable Communities, Innovation, Social capital and the Inland China Clay Villages' in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Seventeen*, Exeter, 2009, pp.136-156.

³⁷ See for example D. Hayden, *The Power of Place*, Cambridge, Mass., 1995.

³⁸ See for example D. Massey, and P. Jess, *A Place in the World*, Oxford, 1995.

³⁹ R. Shields, *Places on the Margin*, London, 1991.

construct their own discourses based on their history and culture or, depending on their degree of agency, have them constructed by others. The aim of this research is therefore to investigate ethnic identity in a part of contemporary Cornwall and the extent to which it exhibits a particular distinctiveness.

To provide a framework for studying ethnicity, social identity and place the research draws on the concept of civil society. Although the idea has a long history from Aristotle, De Tocqueville, the Scottish enlightenment to Hagel and Marx, it has several interpretations and is often confusing and ill defined, hedged about with ideological and normative judgements.⁴⁰ It has attracted political interest as the 'Third Way' or 'Big Society'.⁴¹ It is generally considered to be that 'area outside the family, the state and the market which is created by individual and creative actions, organisations and institutions'.⁴² It can be imagined as a sphere of influence consisting of voluntary associations, community engagement and micro- politics which sits alongside economic activity, government and family and personal life. Civil society may be thought of as a site of debate and contestation as well as one of volunteering, cooperation and community, an area where hegemony may be both challenged and imposed and as a space where arguments take place about supermarket developments, citizens are motivated to organise a festival, or there is opposition to levels of car parking charges. Civil society is not the same as community as it acknowledges the influence of both economic and political spheres; it recognises the possibility of a bad civil society and regards communities as only one type of association.

Approaching group identity from the perspective of civil society presupposes that it is a space where identities may be formed, developed and sometimes

⁴⁰ For a useful summary of the principal approaches to civil society see P. Molyneux, *This is Somewhere I Want to Stay*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2007.

⁴¹ Both the previous Labour Government at various periods and initially the Coalition were interested in civil society influenced by for example, A. Giddens, *The Third Way and its Critics*, Cambridge, 2000. Since 2010 there has been a minister for civil society located in the Cabinet Office with responsibility for charities, volunteering, social enterprise and the 'Big Society'.

⁴² J.M. Mati, F. Silva and T. Anderson, *Assessing and Strengthening Civil Society Worldwide*, CIVICUS, 2010, p.17.

contested. Studying civil society throws light on collective rather than individual identities, how people express themselves within groups and how groups interact with each other and, in particular, how locality contributes to an understanding of the extent to which ethnicity, identity and place influence political activity. So rather than accept the alleged failure of Cornish identity to be channelled into effective formal politics⁴³, this research investigates whether it is more likely to be found in the alliances, disputes and struggles for power which form the micro-politics of civil society.

Writers such as Paasi⁴⁴ and Keating,⁴⁵ looking at regional distinctiveness or nationality within a state such as Scotland and Quebec, argue that national identity may be carried within civil society and that the narrative of the nation, territorial symbols, images and criteria for identity are maintained within its institutions and organisations. But there is a paradox that the greater self-awareness of difference within Cornwall has not been transformed into a 'resource for governance'.⁴⁶ Commentators on contemporary Cornwall identify a lack of Cornish agency, ineffective local institutions and the indifference of national politicians to engage with Cornish issues such as persistent poverty, lack of affordable housing or low wage levels. This analysis points to a reduction in exclusively Cornish institutions for major services such as health and the police and threats such as the proposed parliamentary constituency cross-Tamar boundary changes. These changes continue to reinforce Cornwall's positioning as a county forming part of South-West England rather than a territory with a history of distinctive institutions and a separate identity.⁴⁷

⁴³ B. Deacon, D. Cole and G. Tregidga, *Mebyon Kernow and Cornish Nationalism*, Cardiff, 2003, p.121.

⁴⁴A. Paasi, 'The institutionalization of regions: a theoretical framework for understanding the emergence of regions and the constitution of regional identity', *Fennia* 164:1 1986, pp.106-146.

⁴⁵ M. Keating, 'Stateless nation-building: Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland in the changing state system', *Nations and Nationalism* 3(4), 1997, pp. 689-717.

⁴⁶ B. Deacon, D. Cole and G. Tregidga, *ibid*, p.121.

⁴⁷ B. Deacon, 'Under Construction: Culture and Regional Formation in South-West England' *European Urban and Regional Studies* 11(3), 2004(a), pp. 213-225.

Deacon sees the reason for this failure to acknowledge Cornwall's difference as a lack of civil society⁴⁸ stating that 'In the current over-centralized political environment, it is difficult to discern... [a] civic culture'.⁴⁹ By this he means that with few pan-Cornish institutions and a continuing construction of Cornwall as an English county, there is little evidence for a distinctive Cornish civil society. But this research explores whether Cornishness may be expressed in parts of civil society which, unlike overt expressions of identity such as the Gorseth or the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies, may not be ostensibly focused on Cornwall but rather on place, on specifically local issues or on the phenomenology of everyday life. A further limitation of writing on Cornish identity is that has concentrated on asking questions about national identity; why ethnicity has not been reflected in politics and voting behaviour and emphasising a lack of institutions to support a distinctive civic culture. The hypothesis tested by this research is that Cornishness may be found in the social practices and micro-politics of civil society rather than formal institutions. It acknowledges that historically Cornishness has had an influence on formal politics⁵⁰ with a distinctive pattern of contestation in parliamentary and local elections⁵¹ and that Cornwall Council claims that its brief extends beyond that of a 'normal' unitary authority by embracing the promotion of language and culture.⁵² But this study examines how identity is performed at a local level where social and political practice may or may not be recognised as overtly Cornish. It argues that reappraising Cornish studies in the context of civil society exposes new dimensions leading to a richer analysis of Cornish identity and a greater understanding of its complexity. The overarching research question to be addressed is, 'Does civil society in Cornwall exhibit a distinctive cultural and ethnic difference?'

⁴⁸ B. Deacon, 2007(b), p. 214.

⁴⁹ B. Deacon, 2007(b), p. 230

⁵⁰ See for example G. Tregidga, "'Bodmin Man": Peter Bessell and Cornish Politics in the 1950's and 1960's' in P. Payton (ed.) *Cornish Studies Eight*, Exeter, 2000, pp.161-181, and B. Deacon, D. Cole and G. Tregidga, 2003.

⁵¹ A. Lee, 'Political Parties and Elections' in P. Payton, (ed.) *Cornwall Since the War*, Redruth, 1993, pp. 253-270.

⁵² Cornwall Council, *The Case for Cornwall*, 2014.

One of the consequences which have emerged from basing the study on civil society is a greater appreciation of the influence of class in Cornish society. Civil society consists of organisations which require leadership, decision making structures and criteria for membership. Following the work of Weber and Michels,⁵³ organisations form hierarchies headed by those individuals who have the skills and motivation to form and sustain them. Minority political entrepreneurs, often middle class migrants, have taken the lead in promoting Cornish culture, (Chapter Seven), opposing and supporting development and either seeking change or defending the status quo (Chapter Nine). But alternatively, as Aldous⁵⁴ has shown, and supported by subsequent work (Chapter Three, Pages 49-50 and 69) the relationship between cultural identity and class is not based on hierarchy. There is a strong correlation between working class occupations and assertions of Cornishness (Chapter Eight) and a belief that social class in Celtic societies has a different connotation from how it perceived in England. In the context of Wales, Gwyn Williams⁵⁵ makes a distinction between the *gwerin* or sense of culture consisting of an amalgam of literature, learning, religion and an awareness of community expressed as way of being, a national style and sense of humour. He makes it clear that the *gwerin* is not the same as Welsh working class culture (which has several parallels with the Cornish) but shares many of its attributes. This research identifies echoes of a similar 'traditional or proper' sense of Cornishness, encountered in different forms in the three settings studied.

Even within a relatively small urban area there are a multitude of organisations which comprise its civil society, forming complex networks and relationships which would be beyond the capacity of a single researcher to map and analyse. This research takes Penzance as its area of study. The reasons for selecting the town are firstly, the limited data which exists on ethnicity within Cornwall suggests that identification with Cornishness is

⁵³ S. Lipset, *Political Man*, London, 1960, pp. 37-38.

⁵⁴ P. Aldous 'Young people and Migration Choices in Cornwall', unpublished M.Phil. dissertation, University of Plymouth 2002.

⁵⁵ G. Williams, *When was Wales? A History of the Welsh*, Harmondsworth 1991. pp. 238-239.

higher in the far west.⁵⁶ Secondly, Penzance in Cornish terms is a relatively large town which contains a variety of settings for research and lastly and pragmatically, I have been a part time resident since 2000. Although not a native, I know the town well and had an initial understanding on which to base my research.

To provide a context for a more detailed investigation, the study addresses the research question by concentrating on a limited number of settings to analyse how the town is regarded by its residents, its place image and the discourses which drive debates about its future. The selection of settings has attempted to address the goal suggested by Malcolm Williams for Cornish social science to analyse 'what contemporary Cornwall is like and to understand what people in Cornwall think.'⁵⁷ Hence the three investigated, the Golowan and Montol festivals, Treneere estate, and the debates surrounding the link to the Scilly Isles, reflect in a local context some of the issues which Cornwall and its people face in the early twenty first century but they are also linked by their contribution to the place image of Penzance.

The first setting concerns how ethnic identity and place are celebrated in festivals which are rooted in the past but based on contemporary interpretations of Cornish culture. The Golowan festival is a revival of an original celebration of mid-summer which ceased towards the end of the nineteenth century. It is an event regarded both as overtly celebrating Cornishness but also the uniqueness of place and, hence promotes Penzance as a tourist destination. It is held in tandem with a mid-winter festival, Montol. In both festivals expressions of ethnicity, based both on recorded and imagined history, have become intertwined with controversies about the authenticity of performance and disputes about ownership and organisation.

The second, Treneere estate, looks at one of the most deprived areas of Cornwall which has a reputation for crime and drug taking with high levels of

⁵⁶ P. Aldous and M. Williams, 2001 and 2011 Census data on national identity.

⁵⁷ M. Williams, in P. Payton (ed.) 2002, p. 61.

worklessness and child poverty.⁵⁸ Former council estates in Cornwall are thought to be depositories for Cornish people who were either relocated in pre and post war slum clearance programmes or have been priced out of the present housing market.⁵⁹ But despite considerable investment in community regeneration, such areas are under researched. There is limited understanding of how they function, the role and robustness of their civil society and the extent to which they exhibit the characteristics ascribed to them by a discourse of social housing as 'sink estates'.

Thirdly, there is a continuing controversy about regeneration and preservation of the environment as illustrated by the debate about the renewal of the existing Scilly Isles link involving the redevelopment of Penzance harbour. This has raised issues about the need to replace old infrastructure, exposed the conflicts arising from tourism, the tensions between conservation and development and asked questions about the future of Penzance. It has been highly controversial, has involved both central and local government and has spawned a number of pressure groups both for and against development which reflect the tensions between conservative and progressive elements of Cornish identity.

These three settings represent a range of contemporary Cornish experience. They demonstrate both overt and concealed expressions of ethnicity and difference, issues surrounding poverty and multiple deprivation and the conflict between pressures for development and the demands of tourism. They also illustrate different ways in which contemporary Cornishness is *practiced* in terms of celebrating ethnic difference, kinship relations and the mobilisation of civil society.

It is arguable that in attempting to answer the research question by means of detailed case studies which apply to a particular place make it difficult to draw conclusions for the whole of Cornwall. There are a number of ways of

⁵⁸ Cornwall Council, *Understanding Cornwall*, 2010, maps 6 and 14.

⁵⁹ M. Williams, 'Housing the Cornish' in P. Payton, *Cornwall Since the War*, Redruth, 1993, pp.157-180.

addressing this problem. Firstly, the research investigates how Cornishness may be expressed in circumstances which will vary from place to place so it looks at the extent to which locality may modify generally recognised tropes . Secondly, focusing on a particular area brings into play the question of place identity and introduces uniquenesses which are specific to the locality which may either complement or contradict ethnic considerations. Thirdly, where possible, the research results have been compared and contrasted with what other work has been done both in Cornwall and elsewhere to see whether parallels can be drawn.

This study should therefore be regarded as a first step towards exploring the largely uncharted territory about the extent to which the fluid, multi-layered and hybrid nature of Cornish identity may be played out within a particular place. In tackling the principal research question a number of further questions are raised including the relationship between place and identity, hierarchies of identity and the extent to which Cornishness is a fragmented set of cultural practices and relationships albeit linked by a set of commonly recognised signs and representations. So its contribution to Cornish studies is that it challenges some of the existing assumptions about Cornishness by suggesting that civil society is where expressions of Cornish identity may be found, it examines how that identity is practiced collectively, it considers the often conflicted and fractured nature of many expressions of Cornishness and recognises the influence of inward migration.

The next two chapters set out the theoretical basis for the research starting in Chapter Two with an examination of some of the concepts of civil society, followed in Chapter Three by consideration of the linked theoretical areas of identity, ethnicity, culture and place. Chapter Four outlines a research methodology based on an overarching ethnographic approach combined with discourse analysis to achieve an understanding of settings and an analysis of the discourses within them. Chapter Five provides an historical, social, economic and cultural profile of Penzance. Chapter Six analyses how its place identity has been shaped, identifies competing discourses about the town and considers contemporary attitudes to Cornish identity. The next

three chapters examine each of the case study settings using the areas of theory and methodology outlined in Chapters Two, Three and Four. The final chapter draws together conclusions from the three case studies, identifying the contrasts and similarities in each and the contribution the research has made to Cornish Studies. It identifies additional avenues for research to explore further how the performance of identity and the influence of place may be addressed and how they may be related to the wider sphere of Cornish social science.

Chapter 2: The Idea of Civil Society

Civil society is composed of organisations which interact both with each other and various elements of the state and economic spheres to reinforce culture promote common tasks and services, articulate views of the local community and contribute to the idea of place. This may be achieved through various means such as the coming together of common interests, the provision of a service or by mounting a challenge to the state. From these processes emerge a collective identity which may be generally accepted or subject to challenge from alternative discourses and narratives produced by other organisations. Civil society influences how the identities of places are shaped, how collective identities are expressed and how discourses about place are articulated. It is what Keane terms a micro public sphere, where relationships between organisations are conducted frequently outside the realm of formal politics.⁶⁰

Several writers such as Paasi,⁶¹ McCrone⁶², and Keane⁶³ see the processes where culture and ethnicity are played out in civil society as a spring board for national or regional identity. They argue that the production of narratives based on history, literature, and popular culture supported by historical, invented and imagined traditions create an identity presented as primordial, essential unified and continuous. Such narratives are subject to different interpretations and are frequently disputed. Civil society is a place, perhaps the main place, where such national identities emerge from the processes associated with the construction of cultural and ethnic identities within regions. The evidence of this research suggests that this analysis should be extended to include the contribution of civil society to identity within the smaller scale of a town or neighbourhood. The mechanisms by which this occurs involve the

⁶⁰ J. Keane, *Civil Society: Old Images, New Visions*, Cambridge, 1998, p.176.

⁶¹ A. Paasi, *Fennia* 164:1, 1986.

⁶² McCrone D. 'Cultural capital in an understated nation: the case of Scotland', *The British Journal of Sociology* 56(1), 2005, pp. 65-82.

⁶³ J. Keane, *ibid.*

production of discourses and the playing out of power relations between organisations.

The idea of civil society

Different strands of political theory treat civil society in a number of often contradictory ways, as a normative concept associated with ideas about community, localism and neighbourhood,⁶⁴ as an essential element of democracy and as a mechanism for imposing the hegemony of the state. Despite this lack of consensus, the idea of civil society is highly topical. It was a major component of New Labour's third way which identified a role for sub-national institutions, voluntary networks and the notion of social capital to be incorporated into governance.⁶⁵ The coalition government's 'big society' promoted similar ideas involving 'building the capacity for citizens... encouraging national collective activity [and characterised by] a constant negotiation between the boundaries of civil society, citizen and government'.⁶⁶

Despite the rhetoric there is little evidence that these efforts by successive national governments have had any appreciable impact on civil society; the direction of travel is towards increased centralisation and direct government intervention. But the idea still retains currency and has a long pedigree stretching from Aristotle, to Marx, Hegel, Gramsci, and many others.⁶⁷ Classical thought saw civil society as consisting of rules to govern social behaviour and free association. In the eighteenth century writers such as Lock drew no distinction between civil society and political society. Rather, they saw civil society as government by law, toleration and the application of morality. The Enlightenment argued for civil society as a defence against intrusion by the state by means of self-regulating voluntary associations. Adam Smith, for example, regarded it as based on effective markets but made a distinction between commercial relations and personal relations seeing, at

⁶⁴ P. Molyneux, 2007.

⁶⁵ See for example A. Giddens, 2000.

⁶⁶ *Guardian*, Society 23 June 2010.

⁶⁷ For a summary of the history of civil society see S. Khilnani, 'The Development of Civil Society' in S. Kaviraji and S. Khilnani, (eds.), *Civil Society: History and Possibilities*, Cambridge, 2001.

the same time, a social and economic order as well as a moral order created by social interaction. Hegel, however, saw civil society as distinct from the state and family regarding it as formed by societal connections based on rights and duties and institutionally mediated cultural and historical processes of interaction. However, these relationships are not necessarily harmonious and far from being benign, civil society is more a location of competing interests where one part in the ascendancy may stifle and oppress others.⁶⁸ Marx was largely dismissive of civil society as representative of bourgeois society since its purpose was to conceal oppression and exploitation behind a smoke screen of ostensibly benign institutions.⁶⁹ However a more nuanced approach to the idea which built on Marxist theory was constructed by Gramsci who saw it as the location of the decisive struggle between competing interests but with the organisations of the dominant class subjecting the subordinate to a hegemony reinforced by the state and judicial system.⁷⁰ For Gramsci civil society was a mechanism for maintaining state authority by blurring the distinction between politics and everyday life so that coercion was combined with consent. Subaltern groups however must give their consent to coercion through their cultural values which uphold the position of the state⁷¹; in other words there is a transactional relationship between the dominant state and a subordinate civil society.

More recently, interest in the concept was given added impetus with the fall of the Soviet Union and the democratisation of much of its former empire resulting in the creation of new states and attempts to construct new civil societies with little tradition of voluntary organisation free from state interference.⁷² The promotion of western political values is reflected in the importance placed on the health of a state's civil society by organisations like the World Bank and IMF which see it as a factor in determining the distribution

⁶⁸ J. Keane, 1998, p. 50.

⁶⁹ R. Fine, 'Civil society theory, enlightenment and critique', *Democratization*, 4:1, 1997, pp. 7-28, p.23.

⁷⁰ J. Femia, 'Civil society and the Marxist tradition', in S. Kaviraj and S. Khilnani, (eds.) *Civil Society: History and Possibilities*, Cambridge, 2001, pp. 139-143.

⁷¹ S. Jones, *Antonio Gramsci*, Abingdon, 2006, pp. 50-51.

⁷² I. Sardamov, "'Civil Society" and the Limits of Democratic Assistance', *Government and Opposition*, 2005, pp. 379-402, p. 387.

of aid and direction of foreign policy. As part of this process there have been attempts to measure the degree to which a nation exhibits the characteristics of a good civil society.⁷³ Current ideas are therefore closely associated with thinking about democracy, devolution, networking, the role of the state, community development, social and political capital and social justice. Many political scientists see it as key to a successful liberal democratic state. As Barber states, 'without civil society, citizens are homeless: suspended between big bureaucratic governments they no longer trust and private markets they cannot depend on for moral and civic values. They are without a place to express their commonality'.⁷⁴ Given this ideological background, civil society is hedged with all sorts of value judgements. It is believed to have important moral benefits and is 'loaded with some potent redemptive ambitions'⁷⁵ or, as stated by Barber, 'strong democratic civil society is profoundly normative'.⁷⁶

But despite the apparent consensus between many contemporary commentators on the desirability and worth of civil society, this brief summary of its historical antecedents demonstrates there is much less agreement on what it comprises, where it sits within the polity, how it operates and its relationship with other aspects of society such as community. Little sees it as an 'ill-defined sphere'.⁷⁷ Definitions differ both with regard to the space it occupies and how it is perceived. One view sees civil society as 'the area outside the family, the state and the market which is created by individual and creative actions, organisations and institutions'.⁷⁸ However, other commentators argue that although such a description outlines the territory within which civil society operates, it ignores the role of other influences such as the state in fostering the conditions under which it can flourish and, as Little

⁷³ See for example, J.M. Mati, F. Silva and T. Anderson, 2010, pp. 42-48, N. Uphoff and A. Krishna, 'Civil Society and Public Sector Institutions: More than a Zero-Sum Relationship', *Public Administration and Development*, 24, 2004, pp. 357-372, and P. Grajzi and P. Murrell, 'Fostering civil society to build institutions', *Economics of Transition Vol. 17(1)* 2009, pp. 1-41.

⁷⁴ B. R. Barber, *A Place for Us, How to Make Society Civil and Democracy Strong*, New York, 1998, p.45.

⁷⁵ M. Kenny, *The Politics of Identity*, Cambridge, 2004, p.70.

⁷⁶ B. R. Barber, *ibid*, p.53.

⁷⁷ A. Little, *The Politics of Community: Theory and Practice*, Edinburgh, 2002, p.179.

⁷⁸ J.M. Mati, F. Silva and T. Anderson, *ibid*, p.17.

points out, the impact of market values on its culture.⁷⁹ Some of the more ideological claims, however, see civil society as a separate entity, a bulwark against the state and a depository for civic virtue. Alexander, for example, calls civil society ‘a solitary sphere in which a certain kind of universalizing community come to be culturally defined...and institutionally enforced’.⁸⁰ But although a space for civil society between the family, the state and the market can be identified, it operates within social, economic and political frameworks which inevitably influence its behaviour and obscure its boundaries. Hence, it is not, as suggested by some commentators, a sphere which is separate from the rest of society or the state. Keane sees the relationship between the state and civil society as:

a complex and dynamic ensemble of legally protected non-governmental institutions that tend to be non-violent, self-organising, self-reflexive and permanently in tension with each other and with the state institutions that “frame”, constrict and enable their activities.⁸¹

The role of the state is therefore to provide a legal context, an ordered framework and to act as a referee to structure the civil sphere.

Recent approaches

Edwards summarises more recent thinking drawing on the work already outlined by identifying a number of overlapping schools of thought which regard civil society as an associational life, as a building block of community, as a good society and as a public sphere. Firstly, an associational life is that part of society which focuses on networks and voluntary action, how people and organisations get together; a ‘space of uncoerced human association’.⁸² It is a notion which particularly resonates in the United States based on a De Tocquivillian philosophy which sees association as a counter to state power, providing checks and balances against an abuse of that power and protecting the freedom of citizens to determine the extent to which they are governed. This libertarian approach is based on a bipolar view dividing society into government and markets with civil society synonymous with the private

⁷⁹ A. Little, 2002, p.187.

⁸⁰ J.C. Alexander, *The Civil Sphere*, New York, 2006, p.31.

⁸¹ J. Keane, 1998, p.6.

⁸² M. Edwards, *Civil Society*, 2nd edition, Cambridge, 2009, p.20.

market. Within this zero-sum model any advance of one segment must be at the expense of the other. Civil associations in this context 'permit people to protect themselves more efficiently and serve themselves more securely but have little to do with participation, co-operation or sociability'.⁸³ The state is an instrument of coercion as opposed to the liberty of the private sector governed by voluntary contract and freedom of association. Rather than civil society being a space for the development of strong social relations, citizens relate to each other and with the state as clients, customers or consumers.

The collective action of voluntary organisation is expected to address social and economic issues rather than the state and, at the same time, have a moral purpose in rebuilding societal values.

Secondly, and in contrast, a communitarian view regards 'civil society gain[ing] strength when grassroots groups, non-profit intermediaries and membership associations are linked together in ways that promote collective goals, cross society coalitions, mutual accountability and shared action learning'.⁸⁴ This view is promoted by Putnam who sees the development of trust and solidarity through voluntary association contributing to 'social capital' which fosters both democracy and by encouraging business relations, economic growth.⁸⁵ Communitarians regard civil society as *Gemeinschaft*, 'a complex welter of ineluctably social relations that tie people together, first of all into families and kinship associations...then into clubs, neighbourhoods, communities, congregations and more extended social hierarchies'⁸⁶

Citizenship may therefore assume a cultural dimension which maps out a territory of difference often defined by reference to others 'whose foreignness helps to define the excluding insiders community'.⁸⁷ But one of the potential dangers of communitarianism, as seen in the discussion of boundaries in Chapter Three (Pages 49-53), is that the very act of forming close social relationships can be driven by parochialism, inequality, paternalism and hierarchy leading to exclusion. Hence:

⁸³ B. R. Barber, 1998, p.20.

⁸⁴ M. Edwards, 2009, p.30.

⁸⁵ R. D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work; Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton, 1993.

⁸⁶ B. R. Barber, *ibid*, p.23.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p.24.

many communities claiming traditional or natural identities must make strenuously artificial efforts to reconstitute themselves as the organic natural communities they no longer are or can be.⁸⁸

Reviving what is remembered or imagined as a previously held identity which may hark back to some mythical golden age is, 'not the same as fashioning a community in anything like its original form'.⁸⁹ Although communitarianism can be seen as closely connected to ideas about community:

On its own...civil society itself can amount to a kind of ailment, a practically pathological condition of claustrophobia, cringing parochialism and dismal self-absorption.⁹⁰

A third view of civil society sees it as an essential component of a 'good society' where institutions operate so that positive social norms are reinforced. This may seem to have similarities to the classical view of an associational life but as Edwards points out, communities, citizens and associations are 'nearly always mixed in their motivations and interests' and an associational life does not, by itself, guarantee positive norms and values.⁹¹ Associations have different views, values, objectives and purposes. These are not necessarily positive. An associational life can be the site of sexism, homophobia and racism, and be characterised by intolerance and conflict which contribute to disharmonies in civil society.⁹² In addition, an associational life does not take place on a level playing field. Voluntary organisations vary in influence based on their access to resources, decision making levers and policy makers. Therefore: 'Differentials in the power of associations to make their views heard, advance their agendas...are the enemy of the good society and democracy'.⁹³ The solution to achieving a good society, in contrast to the associational position, is to reduce inequality by involving spheres outside civil society such as the state, business and family life. Hence, within a good society, 'associational life has to be politically ordered if the huge diversity of positions and interests is to be consolidated in service to some broader or

⁸⁸ B. R. Barber, 1998, p.29.

⁸⁹ Ibid, pp.29-30.

⁹⁰ T. Nairn, *Faces of Nationalism: Janus Revisited*, London, 2006, p.88.

⁹¹ M. Edwards, 2009, p.50.

⁹² S. Chambers and J Kopstein, 'Bad Civil Society', *Political Theory*, 2001, 29:6, pp.837-865, p. 837.

⁹³ M. Edwards, *ibid*, p.56.

international agenda'.⁹⁴ The role of government is seen as essential to enforce norms, standards and rights or to facilitate these through a negotiated consensus.

A fourth concept of civil society is its role as a public sphere, which is seen as the arena for argument and debate as well as the site of association and collaboration, a 'non legislative, extra judicial space in which societal differences and social problems, public policy, government action and matters of community and cultural identity are developed and debated'.⁹⁵ Habermas is perhaps the most celebrated proponent of this view of civil society as a sociological construct.⁹⁶ His position, as interpreted by Fraser, sees the public sphere as:

a theatre in modern societies in which political participation is enacted through the medium of talk. It is the space in which citizens deliberate about their common affairs, have an institutionalized area of discursive interaction. This arena is conceptually distinct from the state; it is the site for the production of discourses which can in principle be critical of the state.⁹⁷

So the civil sphere is where a consensus is negotiated through a balance between personal autonomy and the demands of society achieved by a process of debate and negotiation. For Habermas civil society is an area of fluidity with identities created and reformulated in the context of critical reflection rather than adherence to history and place.⁹⁸ But again there is the issue of unequal power relationships. As Edwards states:

The reality of dialogic politics and public interaction...is one of continued, entrenched inequality in voice and access and the domination of certain orthodoxies over others, which legitimizes ideas through raw power.⁹⁹

Although he accepts that the idea of the public sphere is helpful in explaining much about civil society and how it relates to democracy he is critical of its failure to deal with problems of inequality and how discourses evolving from civil debate are translated into political action.

⁹⁴ M. Edwards, 2009, p.57.

⁹⁵ Ibid, p.64.

⁹⁶ J. Habermas *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Cambridge,1992

⁹⁷ Quoted in C.G.A. Bryant, 'Civic Nation, Civil Society, Civil Religion' in J.A. Hall (ed.) *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparison*, Cambridge, 1995, p.144.

⁹⁸ R. Fine, 1997, p. 12.

⁹⁹ M. Edwards, *ibid*, p. 79.

A fifth variation of the public sphere model is Barber's strong democratic by which he means a civil domain which is an open public realm, like the state but which, at the same time, is as voluntary and non-coercive as the private sector. He argues that by combining both, civil society has a powerful democratic aspect which is close to the ideological position adopted by the classical proponents of civil society. Although he accepts that groups will exhibit varying degrees of exclusiveness, sectarianism and authoritarianism, a combination of organisations offering a choice to the citizen to:

weave a fabric that is textured by variety and difference and allows particular identities to layer and cross out, blunting their sharp edges and endowing citizens with plural natures less vulnerable to domination by a single thick identity.¹⁰⁰

But as stated by Walzer, 'civil society must not be idealised as the location of unadulterated interaction between equally endowed groups who came together with benign altruistic intentions'.¹⁰¹ Barber privileges a partnership between government and the private sector to create a civic space to decentralise power, encourage participation and grant organisations a public voice but is unclear about what this means other than a wider recognition of the merits of promoting good civil society. As with a number of writers, normative prescriptions frequently tail off into generalised expressions of hope that voluntary association will achieve social benefits.¹⁰²

So although in the long history of the idea there is no consensus about an overarching theory, there are some common themes; an assumption that association is good and has moral benefits, is a counter to state domination and centralisation and hence is an essential part of the democratic process. In general, most commentators see civil society as positive. But there are also major differences in interpretation. Little sums up his review of civil society by identifying a major dividing line 'between those who regard it as a sphere in which a form of unity emerges out of difference and those who see the

¹⁰⁰ B. R. Barber, 1998, p.36.

¹⁰¹ Quoted in A. Little, 2002, p.185.

¹⁰² See for example R. D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York, 2000, pp. 402-414.

cultural expression of difference as the source of solidarity'¹⁰³. A further distinction is how writers treat equality, the redistribution of wealth and social justice and the role of social policies and state intervention to mitigate the effects of markets. Clearly associational models see little role for the state to set a context for or to referee civil society whereas Barber's strong democratic model is heavily dependent on state involvement to support or even be subordinate to civil society. But all commentators agree that civil society presupposes politics¹⁰⁴ although they give it different degrees of emphasis.

Critics of civil society

Gramsci regards civil society as a way of reinforcing capitalism, 'through an integrated set of institutions imbued with particular values' which maintains the hegemony of the ruling class.¹⁰⁵ This is achieved through civil society acting as the vehicle for 'common sense', or the consensus of a particular social group which can be shaped by the state or a powerful group into a hegemonic discourse.¹⁰⁶ We have already seen the concerns of those who recognise the problems of unequal power relations and the role of markets. In contrast to claims that civil society achieves mutual support, cooperation, trust and institutional effectiveness are counter arguments that it also harbours sectarianism, ethnocentrism and corruption. Tester has major difficulties with the concept claiming that civil society theory implies homogenisation, is dependent on the artificiality of reciprocity and endorses secondary values such as pragmatism, co-operation and compromise rather than primary values of virtue, beauty and justice.¹⁰⁷ Nairn challenges the view that civil society is in some way a counterweight to the power of the state and argues that the concept grew out of the Enlightenment in circumstances which were unique to Scotland since the position of institutions comprising civil society was enshrined in the Union Treaty with England¹⁰⁸. Chambers and Kopstein look at the negative effects on civil society when there is a lack of economic

¹⁰³ A. Little, 2002, p.198.

¹⁰⁴ S. Khilnani, in S. Kaviraj and S. Khilnani, (eds.) 2001, p. 26.

¹⁰⁵ A. Little, *ibid*, p.179.

¹⁰⁶ S. Jones, 2006, p.54.

¹⁰⁷ Quoted by C.G.A. Bryant in J. A. Hall (ed.) 1995, pp.147-148.

¹⁰⁸ T. Nairn, p.78.

and social justice, when 'poverty, downward social mobility, diminished economic expectations, and even basic inequality...can create illiberal citizens'¹⁰⁹ such as much of the public reaction to the benefit reforms of recent governments.

The fundamental assumption underlying the enthusiasm for proponents of civil society based on the supposed linkage between it and democracy has also been challenged; the idea that there is a causal relationship between the two and that civil society is a precondition for a flourishing democracy. But the beneficial outcomes of this nexus are questioned both by the inequalities outlined above and by changes in underlying social phenomena such as the growth of individualism, the weakening of social bonds with extended families or within small scale communities and the growth of a culture of neoliberalism in the provision of public services. This 'creeping egocentrism' and concentration on self-fulfilment are considered to have distanced the linkage between the individual and supporting economic, social and political networks and hence have weakened civil society.¹¹⁰ The consequence is that its role as a space for debate and as a check on the state is diminished and the linkage with fostering a strong democracy, as advocated by Barber, weakened.

Similarly, the often ambiguous role of the state in relation to civil society has been pointed out by writers such as Day in relation to Welsh devolution.¹¹¹ Where the state is active in encouraging civil society there is the danger of it being incorporated into the state, in Gramscian terms consenting to a hegemonic relationship resulting on pressures to achieve consensus and suppress differences. The complexity of, and conflict within, civil society highlights the tension between bodies:

expected to implement [Welsh] Assembly policy directives whilst also championing their members' interests' sitting 'uncomfortably with a tradition of local and community action fuelled by oppositional, rather than consensual interests.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ S. Chambers and J Kopstein, 2001, p.848.

¹¹⁰ I. Sardamov, 2005, p.381- 402.

¹¹¹ G. Day, 'Chasing the dragon? Devolution and the ambiguities of civil society in Wales', *Critical Social Policy*, 2006 Vol.26.3, pp. 642-655.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 651.

Attempts to harness civil society to state objectives by means of financial support and partnership arrangements lead both to a blurring of boundaries between the two and the risk of developing a consensus and loyalty to those objectives; the antithesis of its democratic role to debate, criticise and challenge state power.¹¹³ In some circumstances civil society is also seen as a potential substitute for state services by volunteering compensating for public sector withdrawal.¹¹⁴ The idea that civil society is therefore separate from the state is open to challenge. The close linkages between voluntary organisations and local councillors, school governors, hospital trusts and similar organisations suggests that interlocking memberships and local networks blur the distinction between civil society and those local agencies which operate within centrally determined policy frameworks.¹¹⁵ At a local level much of what may be defined as civil society merges with local arms of the state.

Civil Society, Identity and Culture

Perhaps the most difficult issue for the idea of civil society as an area of coordination and consensus is its relationship with ethnic identity which is defined, at least in part, by difference rather than cooperation. Most commentators agree with Keane that in the form of nationalism, ethnicity and identity are destructive of civil society. Within a diverse society nationalism simultaneously treats 'the [O]ther as everything and nothing'.¹¹⁶ On the one hand the Other is a threat to a way of life but at the same time it is frequently seen as inferior, unworthy of respect and can be culturally disregarded. Many of the tensions in British society revolve around national identity issues like the perceived impact of immigration, the place of minority ethnic communities and the accommodation of cultural difference. But on the other hand, one of the claims for civil society is that it is a building block for both national and

¹¹³ R. Meade, 'We hate it here, please let us stay! Irish social partnership and the community/voluntary sector's conflicted experiences of recognition' *Critical Social Policy*, 25; 349, 2005, pp.349-373.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. p.361.

¹¹⁵ D. Wilson, 'Unravelling control freakery: redefining central-local government relations', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol.5, No.3, 2003, pp.317-346, p.335.

¹¹⁶ J. Keane, 1998, p.96.

regional identity and that it contributes to the identity of place.¹¹⁷ Most writing however has concentrated on how it relates to national rather than sub-national identities.¹¹⁸ Paasi however, positions institutions at the centre of regional identity, developing a taxonomy to explain how they contribute to territorial awareness, the creation of symbols, the emergence of institutions and the establishment of regions in popular consciousness, concluding that: 'The development of the sphere of social institutions and organizations...is of crucial significance for the establishment of the content of regional consciousness'.¹¹⁹ MacLeod, applying Paasi's approach to Scotland sees the establishment of a national identity as reproduced and transformed by the actions of individuals and institutions acting within civil society. In contrast to Nairn, he sees Scottish civil institutions formed initially by the arrangements enshrined in the Union settlement evolving to form their own distinctive culture based on localism and volunteering.¹²⁰ However, in support of Nairn, a distinction should perhaps be made between a civil society supported by a legal and legislative framework and a sub-national or regional identity which emerges from voluntary association and cultural organisations.

Kenny, however is critical of the impact of identity politics on civil society as the assumption 'that a cultural community possesses a core or bedrock identity encourages the misleading idea that group identities can be grasped in isolation from wider social and cultural processes'.¹²¹ Group identities are therefore formed as part of a dialogue with, or opposition to, other groups (e.g. much of Cornish identity is positioned in relation to a dominant English culture and evolves as a response to and within the context of that culture) and also that within one cultural group there are frequently multiple narratives. Kenny sees identity politics giving vent to a 'language of opposition' having a deleterious effect on civil society, 'representing a blockage to the pluralistic patterning of social life, restricting its members' incentives and opportunities

¹¹⁷ P., 2007, p.9.

¹¹⁸ M. Keating, *Nations Against the State; The New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland*, Basingstoke, 2001, p.21.

¹¹⁹ A. Paasi, *Fennia* 164:1, 1986, p.126.

¹²⁰ G. MacLeod, 'In what sense a region? Place hybridity, symbolic shape and institutional formation in (post) modern Scotland', *Political Geography*, Vol. 17, No. 7, 1998, pp. 833-863.

¹²¹ M. Kenny, 2004, p.101.

for cultural innovation and experimentation'.¹²² This in turn sets up tensions since the relationship between a 'group demanding recognition and the agency required to grant it is not one between equals'.¹²³ Hence: 'Identity politics deflect citizens from the importance of developing attachments and shared interests with their fellows' which, in extreme cases involving illegal acts of violence results in state intervention.¹²⁴ This position runs counter to that of Bhabha who sees opposition and resistance to dominant cultures as encouraging hybridity and ambivalence leading to more positive outcomes from conflict such as new structures of political representation and renewed cultural expression.¹²⁵

The paradox of ethnicity and identity for civil society therefore is that on the one hand it is thought to reinforce community solidarity, provide a narrative to which citizens can relate, construct symbols which are representations of difference and maintain and reinforce cultural norms. On the other, by emphasising difference, it constructs an Other to which it may be hostile or resentful, particularly if it perceives itself to be a minority, lacking agency or subordinate to a more powerful culture.

Civil Society in Cornwall

Civil society has not featured explicitly in Cornish Studies. But in considering the development of Cornwall as an economic region, Wills sees the development of a local civic culture with the autonomy and flexibility to construct its own solutions rather than have them externally imposed as crucial to a successful regional economy.¹²⁶ But Deacon cannot see a civic culture in Cornwall as capable of pursuing such an agenda. He argues that, unlike Scotland, there are no institutions which can oppose state imposed solutions and he dismisses local government as capable of resisting national policies. Instead the Cornish economy is left to the vicissitudes of the market,

¹²² M. Kenny, 2004, *ibid*, p. 73-74.

¹²³ *Ibid*, p.75.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, p.75.

¹²⁵ J. Rutherford, 'Interview with Homi Bhabha', in J. Rutherford, (ed.) *Identity, Culture, Difference*, London, 1990, p.211.

¹²⁶ P. Wills, 'Cornish Regional Development: Evaluation, Europe and Evolution' in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Six*, Exeter, 1998, pp.143-162, pp.159-160.

strategy is replaced by ad-hocary and simplistic prescriptions in the form of the 'big idea' or 'quick fix' are seen as the answer to complicated problems.¹²⁷ For Deacon and others an effective civil society involves organisations and institutions with the capacity to challenge externally derived policies which ignore Cornwall's uniqueness and difference.

However, much of the academic writing about Cornish history over the past two hundred years implicitly touches on its civil society and how it has reflected its identity and culture. The nineteenth century was a period of rapid industrialisation, increased population growth and, with the development of mass communication, easier travel. In Cornwall this was modified by local circumstances. Primary industries and their related activities were prominent and although, after 1860 mining started to decline to a fraction of its former importance, there remained substantial numbers employed in related industries such as engineering and explosive manufacturing. China clay production continued to expand. Fishing remained important with investment in port facilities, and agriculture, helped by improvements to the rail network, could send high value produce such as meat, vegetable and dairy products to urban markets. The cultural impact of these economic changes on nineteenth century Cornwall produced a distinctive working class culture with its roots in mining and non-conformity but which also contained an underlying sense of difference, a way of being, similar to the Welsh *gwerin*.¹²⁸

The civil society which emerged from these economic developments also supported a growing bourgeoisie and was organised largely around various forms of Methodism, miners' institutes, fishermen's' missions and Masonic Lodges. But there are two interpretations of the state of Cornish civil society at the end of the nineteenth century. Payton sees it as a period of paralysis following the collapse of mining, characterised by de-industrialisation, high unemployment, falling population and emigration. What mining remained was now controlled by international companies located outside Cornwall. He

¹²⁷ B. Deacon, 2007(b), p.230.

¹²⁸ See B. Deacon *ibid.* and P. Payton, *Cornwall: A History*, Fowey, 2004 for accounts of the impact of industrialisation on Cornish identity in the nineteenth century.

characterises civil society as one of 'making do', describing it as introspective, fossilised, and defensive.¹²⁹ Perry challenges this analysis, citing the rise in china clay production, an increase in dairy farming and improved communications triggering the start of mass tourism as examples of economic vitality during this period.¹³⁰ These activities were supported by a modernising bourgeoisie consisting of a new moneyed middle class closely linked to the Liberal party and nonconformist churches who allied themselves with a small number of capitalist aristocrats with fortunes made from banking, mining and smelting and who were prominent in Cornish cultural and intellectual life. An example of their influence can be seen in the overlapping membership between two of the learned societies established during this period; the Penzance based Natural History and Antiquarian and Royal Geological Societies, where in the late 1880's the Bolithos, Pendarves and St Aubyns families feature as prominent members of both.¹³¹

These contrasting interpretations may be reconciled by recognising that there were, and are still, wide differences in economic and social circumstances within Cornwall. This study argues that the influence of place is more influential than has been previously assumed in both forming local identities and influencing civil society in particular communities. During the nineteenth century and continuing well into the twentieth, settlement patterns in Cornwall consisted of rival market towns or self-contained 'city states' reflecting both economic specialisation and 'the individualistic and independent character of the Cornish people and their antipathy to large monolithic structures and strict hierarchies of control.'¹³² It is also important to recognise the wide space occupied by late nineteenth century civil society. Although by 1900 chapel and church attendance had declined from the peaks of the 1850's, the Methodist tradition of lay involvement with church affairs in the form of trustees, class leaders, and local preachers who as Shaw says 'were able to

¹²⁹ P. Payton, 2004.

¹³⁰ R. Perry, 'The Making of Modern Cornwall, 1800-2000, A Geo-economic Perspective', in P. Payton (ed.) *Cornish Studies Ten*, Exeter, 2002, pp. 166-189.

¹³¹ Penzance Natural History and Antiquarian Society list of life members 1880-81, Royal Geological Society membership list 1887.

¹³² R. Perry, 'Economic Change and "Opposition" Policies', in P. Payton (ed.) *Cornwall Since the War*, Redruth, 1993,

give the fullest service to the community, and ... later took their place in local and county administration'¹³³ formed much of the basis for Cornish civil society. They were a major source for Perry's modernising bourgeoisie. Non-conformist influence spread well beyond the church as it carried out many of the functions across Cornwall which are now seen as the responsibility of the state such as the establishment of eighteen Wesleyan primary and four secondary schools, the development of a network of adult education classes and the creation of libraries at Truro, Camborne, Redruth and Hayle.¹³⁴ But it was also characterised by different interpretations of Cornishness. Payton and Deacon have traced how at the turn of the nineteenth century the revivalists, who were mainly middle class, emerged from late nineteenth century civil society by starting to reach back into history, language and Celticity as key elements in preserving the identity of Cornwall.¹³⁵ As pointed out by Deacon, this revivalist mix of Anglo-Catholicism, Celticity and royalist sentiment allied with an artistic depiction of Cornwall as romantic, primitive and remote could hardly have been further from the prevailing working class culture at this time rooted in primary industries.¹³⁶ Nevertheless, the founding of schools of art, galleries and studios and, after the First World War, the formation of Old Cornwall Societies and the Gorseth, established a distinctive strand of civil society harking back to Cornwall's historical and Celtic roots; a very different starting point from an industrially based working class non-conformity.

To re-examine Deacon's contention that there is a lack of civic culture in Cornwall, it is accepted that from a position of nineteenth century distinctiveness, there has been an erosion of civil society in the sense of specifically Cornish institutions. In contrast to the third stage of Paasi's model concerned with the emergence of regional institutions, there has been a reduction of Cornish influence in its governance through an accelerating process of amalgamation and centralisation which has resulted in the creation of cross border public authorities for police and health shared with Devon

¹³³ T. Shaw, *A History of Cornish Methodism*, Truro, 1967, p.114.

¹³⁴ T. Shaw, 1967, pp.117-119.

¹³⁵ B. Deacon and P. Payton, in P. Payton (ed.), 1993.

¹³⁶ B. Deacon, 2007(b), pp.180-203.

(Devonwall solutions)¹³⁷ and the consolidation of seven local authorities into one unitary council. But civil society is wider than public institutions which, to an extent, are outside it and representative of the state. The distinction between institutions and organisations discussed in Chapter Three (Pages 57- 58), may be helpful. The case made by Paasi for the significance of institutions can also be applied on a smaller scale at a local level but replaced by voluntary associations. Paradoxically, with the demise of Deacon's civic culture there has been an increase in the number of organisations promoting Cornish culture. The network of Old Cornwall Societies largely formed in the first half of the last century has now been joined by Bewnans Kernow an umbrella body listing a wide range of 37 Cornish cultural organisations for music, literature, performance and language. In the Penzance area there is a stratum of voluntary organisations ranging from local branches of national bodies to others which are particular to the locality. Research on associations and neighbourhood renewal in West Cornwall identified 1,185 voluntary and community organisations in the area of the former district councils of Kerrier and Penwith.¹³⁸ The *Cornishman* lists 670 groups across Penwith in connection with a programme to connect elderly people with their local communities.¹³⁹ The volume of voluntary association and volunteering is substantial. There is evidence that at least some of these groups reflect local identity by, for example adopting Cornish language names, promoting elements of Cornish culture such as choirs or gig racing and all are closely identified with place. Although Deacon's analysis is supported by increasing state influence and centralisation, there are groups of organisations which maintain local distinctiveness and are able, in Gramscian terms, to mobilise 'flashes' of resistance to, for example, to opposition to cross boundary parliamentary constituencies, when they believe this to be threatened.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ P. Payton, 2004, pp. 293-294.

¹³⁸ S. Cemlyn, E. Fahmy, D. Gorden and S. Bennett,, *Poverty and Neighbourhood Renewal in West Cornwall*, University of Bristol, 2002, p.12

¹³⁹ *Cornishman*, 5th March, 2015

¹⁴⁰ R. Burton, 'A Passion to Exist: Cultural Hegemony and the Roots of Cornish Identity', in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Five*, Exeter, 1997, pp. 151-163, p. 155.

Conclusion

Civil society constitutes a set of practices expressed through a network of organisations which overlap with formal political structures, institutions, the state and the economy but are separate from family and personal life. It forms an arena where competing claims may be debated; is a space for diversity but also for unity, and where ethnicity and cultural difference may be expressed. To move from a complex, ideologically driven and often confusing body of theory to a point where the position taken above can be used to investigate ethnicity and identity, Kopeck and Mudde suggest that rather than attempting to see civil society as a coherent body of theory, it can be regarded as a heuristic device¹⁴¹; in terms of this research, as a location where ethnicity and identity may be expressed rather than be the centre of the focus of investigation. Similarly Uphoff and Krishna argue that because of its complexity and ill-defined nature, a more productive approach to understanding its purposes and outcomes is to concentrate on what civil society does rather than what it is.¹⁴² This is particularly appropriate at a local level where despite a smaller scale, civil society remains diverse and complex; examples exhibit different elements of often contradictory theory as well as different positions in relation to the state and economic spheres.

Therefore the approach taken has been to investigate the degree to which collective identity and ethnicity influence the behaviour of organisations and their relationship with other organisations within the sphere of civil society. It recognises however, that it is an area of constant change, is fragmented rather than unified and although frequently influenced by the hegemonic influence of the state, this varies in intensity depending on the particular setting. The theoretical approaches outlined above inform this analysis which attempts to do more than simply see civil society as a location where ethnicity may be expressed but also tries to explore the nature of voluntary association, the politics of locality, the influence of class and add to the body of knowledge about the practice of civil society. Therefore despite treating it generally as a

¹⁴¹ P. Kopecky and C. Mudde, 'Rethinking Civil Society', *Democratization*, 10:3, 1, 2003, pp.1-14, p.11.

¹⁴² N. Uphoff and A. Krishna, 2004, p.359.

heuristic device, elements of theory have been used to explain how it works in individual settings.

Most of the academic writing on civil society considers how it relates to the whole of a nation state or region. Alexander's work on the civil sphere takes the United States as its reference point. Putman's empirical study, although it recognises differences in associational behaviour between different states within America, draws general conclusions relating to the entire country. The work of post-modernist geographers such as Massey have explored the question of place identity and power relations but they have not done so explicitly in the context of the role played by the structure and practice of civil society. Paasi has considered civil society in a regional context but there have been few examples of research at a local scale. Arguably a study of civil society within a relatively small urban area like Penzance is similar to a traditional community study as researched in the 1940's and 50's.¹⁴³ There are parallels between the concepts of both civil society and community, such as difficulties of definition, a concern with process and narratives, both are subject to normative judgements and they have been incorporated into the prevailing political lexicon. For these reasons they are frequently conflated.¹⁴⁴ But it is important to draw distinctions between them. Little sees civil society as wider than community with communities as only one type of association contained within it.¹⁴⁵ A Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club or Citizens Advice Bureau would all be part of civil society but not necessarily form a community. For Little, community is about 'friendship, voluntarism, sharing mutualism and co-operation'¹⁴⁶ rather than civil society consisting of 'local spaces in which citizens enter into disputes about who does and who ought to get what'.¹⁴⁷ Civil society also recognises the influence of both the political and economic spheres on the civil sphere; it acknowledges, although it may

¹⁴³ See, for example, R. Frankenberg, *Communities in Britain: Social Life in Town and Country*, London, 1966.

¹⁴⁴ P. Molyneux, 2007 quotes a speech by Ruth Kelly, Communities Secretary in 2006 saying that, 'We need to strengthen the bonds of civil society...The voluntary sector has a key role to play...it is better than government at understanding what communities want.'

¹⁴⁵ A. Little, 2002, p.177.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 25.

¹⁴⁷ J. Keane, 1998, p.170.

deplore, conflict and the possibility of a bad civil society; it also sees community as only one type of association within its compass.

To summarise, the justification for choosing civil society as a vehicle for studying identity and ethnicity is that it provides a context to examine social practices and collective identity in a range of different settings, what Keane terms micro-public spheres while, at the same time, it recognises the influence of both the state and the economy. Firstly, it enables the study of micro-politics; how groups and organisations communicate with each other at a local scale, how they build social capital, evolve discourses and relate to the state, both in terms of seeking support or challenging its hegemony. Secondly, there is a close relationship between place and civil society. Civil society is one of the ways places connect with other places but also helps distinguish one place from another including differences within that place and connectivity with other places. Thirdly, recognition that civil society may be a location of micro-politics allows the researcher to start from the proposition that within a town like Penzance there can be disputes, fractures and conflict as well as co-operation and consensus. Finally, investigating civil society from the bottom up exposes the interaction between the state and locality and offers perspectives on differences within Cornish identity through the lens of place.

Chapter 3: Identity, Ethnicity, Culture and the Importance of Place

Ethnicity is only one facet of identity and for many may be of only peripheral importance. But ethnicity is also one of the primary identifications; as Jenkins says: 'Ethnicity, when it matters to people, really matters'.¹⁴⁸ It is also important to point out that there are complex and often confusing relationships between ethnic and other forms of social identification such as class, occupation and religion. Writing on Cornish identity has not always taken account of this complexity and has tended to overemphasise its historical antecedents. The Chapter also deals with a further neglected area of Cornish studies, the influence of place on identity, the formation of images about places and how they affect group behaviour.

However, before discussing the theoretical background to the research it is necessary to review the evidence for the assumption that Cornishness is a reality for many who live in Cornwall and that it is not only an important part of their personal identity but is influential in how they behave collectively. The evidence suggests that, a belief in Cornish ethnicity refuses to disappear and that the numbers self-identifying as Cornish are increasing. Both the 2001 and 2011 censuses provided a facility for recording Cornish as an ethnic identity which, during the intervening ten years, apparently rose from 6.8% to 13.8%.¹⁴⁹ But it is difficult to understand what these results mean other than recording the percentage of the population who define themselves as 'Cornish if you feel Cornish'.¹⁵⁰ There are a number of studies which have attempted to quantify Cornish identity more precisely. Cornwall County Council's 2007 *Quality of Life Survey* concludes that more than a quarter of the population regard themselves as primarily Cornish, ranging from nearly 40% in Penzance to 20% in East Cornwall.¹⁵¹ Husk calculates, using a range of survey data and

¹⁴⁸ R. Jenkins, 2008(b), p. 87.

¹⁴⁹ ONS, 2001 and 2011 Census data, 2011 National Identity, 2011 (KS202EW), area Cornwall 070D. These figures include those who only identified as Cornish, those who considered that they had a Cornish and British identity and those who considered they had a Cornish identity and English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish identities.

¹⁵⁰ Cornwall Council, *Cornwall 2011, Demographic Evidence Base, Version 1.4*. p. 26

¹⁵¹ Cornwall County Council, *Quality of Life Survey 2007*.

statistical analysis, an overall level of Cornish ethnicity of between 25-30% of the population.¹⁵² Monitoring the ethnic identity of Cornish school children suggests there has been a steady rise in the number who identify as Cornish between 2006 and 2011 from 24% to 41%.¹⁵³ So despite high levels of inward migration, there is evidence of an increase in the proportion of the population whose primary identification is Cornish rather than something else. As Deacon says of the Cornish, 'we are not only still here but uncannily our numbers appear to be growing'.¹⁵⁴ But he makes a distinction between those who he calls 'consciously Cornish' i.e. those who self-identify and 'native Cornish' who are born and brought up in Cornwall. The increase in the former is represented by in-migrants who 'must be choosing to define themselves as Cornish in addition to, or instead of, English'.¹⁵⁵

As Kernow sceptics would be the first to point out these studies still leave those identifying as Cornish remaining in a minority. However, a central point of this research is the increasing complexity of identity. One criticism of how ethnicity has been measured is that it tends to categorise people living in Cornwall into two distinct groups, Cornish or not Cornish, whereas the following discussion suggests that such categorisations are fluid, influenced by place and class, characterised by ambivalence and hybridity and are subject to constant change. Identity theory warns against a reductive approach suggested by some writing on Cornishness and indicates a much more complicated and nuanced picture of how individuals ascribe their identity and ethnicity. Williams and Husk suggest treating ethnicity as a sociological characteristic rather than stressing the importance of measurement and that researchers should consider developing ways of understanding how people behave and what they believe developing a 'more nuanced approach that sees ethnicity as a complex interacting variable rather than either a casual or

¹⁵² K. M. Husk, Ethnic group affiliation and social exclusion in Cornwall; analysis, adjustment and extension of the 2001 England and Wales Census data, Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Plymouth, January 2012.

¹⁵³ School Census 2011, CIPTA EMS Pulse quoted in Cornwall Council, *Cornwall 2011, Demographic Evidence Base, Version 1.4*. p.27.

¹⁵⁴ B. Deacon, 2013(b), p.124.

¹⁵⁵ B. Deacon, 2013(a), pp.17-32.

explanatory variable'.¹⁵⁶ This study is an example of such an approach applied to a particular location.

Identity, ethnicity and culture

In academic literature, the terms identity, culture and ethnicity are often used haphazardly, have overlapping definitions and are frequently substituted for each other. Common to the understanding of each are notions of power and agency; i.e. who fashions identities, constructs narratives of ethnicity, and is instrumental in directing culture. So the discussion examines how power influences identities by phenomena such as boundary setting, stereotyping, gate keeping and categorization.

Meanings contributing to ethnic identity are constructed from elements such as geography, history, collective memory, class and religion which are arranged by individuals and social groups to create a cultural identity. I have, following Castells,¹⁵⁷ used the following as a basis for understanding the relationship between the three phenomena:

Identity is characterised by cultural attributes which are given priority over other sources of meaning. Where a significant group share the same identity based on a common culture or allegiance to territory, they self-identify, and may be identified by others, as an ethnic group.

This does not imply that there is some sort of linear relationship beginning with identity and ending with ethnicity or that the three concepts are mutually exclusive. Each is interdependent. Identity is central to ethnicity and culture embraces both so the discussion strays into the territory of all three. In addition, although it is accepted that ethnicity is one of the primary identities, it is not necessarily privileged over other identities. As implied above, an individual has a number of identities and even when their primary identity is ethnic then this may be hybrid, reflected in a number of different identifications within categorisations as British, English or Cornish.

¹⁵⁶ M. Williams and K. Husk, 'Can we, should we, measure ethnicity?', *International Journal of Research Methodology*, 2012, p.13, DOI:10.1080/13645579.2012.682794.

¹⁵⁷ M. Castells, *The Power of Identity: Vol. II, the Information Age, Economy, Society and Culture*, Oxford 1997, pp. 6-7.

Identities

Boundaries

How are identities formed and what constitutes the cultural attributes which construct an identity? As Castells states, meanings are constructed from cultural elements and other social phenomenon but also in terms of difference. Identities are defined by what they exclude as well as what they include. So boundaries are an essential feature of identity both marking territories, distinguishing between social groups and representing cultural difference. Barth sees boundaries as signifying:

a syndrome of ideas, ranging from an imagined line drawn on the ground, through various abstract separations and distinctions in realms of political and social organisation, to a schema for conceptualising the very idea of distinction.¹⁵⁸

Identities have gatekeepers, who police boundaries, establish the basis for inclusion and exclusion and impose cultural standards, norms and the use of symbolism; processes which are often arbitrary, mythical and illusive.¹⁵⁹ The role of the gatekeeper is to maintain the distinctiveness of the boundary. An obvious example would be the state applying citizenship tests to decide who is, or is not, granted nationality but the position becomes more complicated where the qualifications for inclusion or exclusion may not be based on visible racial, geographical or cultural differences but are more subtle and nuanced. As an example, ethnographic research carried out by the author on the regeneration of Pool showed a clear distinction between those who considered themselves Cornish and those who didn't.¹⁶⁰ Compare, for example, the comments such as, 'we have Cornish values...we look after our own', 'the Cornish are spiritually hungry [which] sets Cornwall apart' and 'why shouldn't Cornish identity be recognised?' with the view that, 'Cornish people can't see the opportunity... they feel things are done to them... they have difficulty in adapting'. Contrast the distinction between 'we' and 'they'.

¹⁵⁸ F. Barth, 'Boundaries and connections', in A. P. Cohen, (ed.) *Signifying Identities: Anthropological perspectives on boundaries and contested values*, London 2000, p. 20.

¹⁵⁹ G. Younge, *Who are we; and should it matter in the twenty first century?* London, 2010, pp. 89-110.

¹⁶⁰ R. Harris, 'South Crofty and the Regeneration of Pool', in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Eighteen*, Exeter, 2010, pp. 33-57. See also unpublished MA thesis, *South Crofty and the Regeneration of Pool: National Agenda v Cornish Ethnicity?* Exeter University, 2009.

Boundaries are being drawn and processes are in place to decide who is or is not Cornish, who are 'we' and who are the 'Other', who is to be included or excluded, distinctions constructed from a complex social amalgam of class, occupation and ethnic origin.

Although boundaries are perceived as essential to maintain difference and determine identity they also construct meanings through a dialogue with the Other. Hence, as Hall states, everything we say and mean is modified by the interaction and interplay with the Other.¹⁶¹ But, despite the construction of boundaries and the attempts to maintain them by insistence on the permanence of interpretations of history, tradition, symbolism and cultural distinctiveness, identities are in a constant state of flux through this process of cross boundary interaction. The production of identity is therefore 'a construction, a process never completed'.¹⁶² Thus for Hall:

identities are never unified and... [are] increasingly fragmented and fractured, never singular but [multiple] constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices and positions. They are subject to a radical historicization, and are constantly in the process of change and transformation.¹⁶³

So far from some immutable primordial identity based on an unambiguous interpretation of the past, identities may be seen as routes travelled both individually and collectively rather than rooted in history.

Cornish identity has in recent years been reinforced by a number of overt expressions of identity principally in the use of symbolism such as the St Piran's flag, maps of Cornwall used in advertising¹⁶⁴ and the increasing use of Kernewek on street signs, shop hoardings and in publications. Opinions differ as to whether this represents a growing confidence in asserting Cornishness, reflecting pride in its difference and culture, or as a response to the perceived

¹⁶¹ S. Hall, 'The Spectacle of the Other', in S. Hall (ed.), *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, London 1997, pp. 234-238.

¹⁶² S. Hall, in S. Hall and P. du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity*, London 1996, pp. 2-3.

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, p.4.

¹⁶⁴ See D. McCrone, *The Sociology of Nationalism*, London, 1998, p.109 for a discussion of the importance of maps as a symbol of identity.

threats of social homogenisation, inward migration and globalization.¹⁶⁵ But whatever the reason for the proliferation of such cultural symbols, their impact is to define identity by drawing a boundary signifying what is, or is not, Cornish. Boundaries marking a distinctive cultural identity may also be reinforced by a geography delineating a place which needs to be defended. The integrity of its territory has been a politically important, issue for Cornish identity,¹⁶⁶ with determined efforts, some unsuccessful, to fight cross-Tamar administrative changes to local government and political constituencies, and resistance to its categorisation as a county incorporated into an English construction of South West England¹⁶⁷ rather than a distinctive part of Britain with its own history and culture.

There are, however, few overt examples of gatekeepers of Cornish identity. Given the rise of nearly 50% in its population since the middle of the twentieth century, it is difficult to see how the Cornish could have erected barriers to prevent outsiders influencing, challenging and, in some cases, adopting its identity. Mebyon Kernow's web site for example stresses its inclusiveness claiming that the party represents 'all the people of Cornwall'.¹⁶⁸ However, the site for the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies, an organisation originating in the early twentieth century revivalist movement, directs enquiries to a page containing Morton Nance's initial 1922 statement of its purpose. This uses exclusionary language such as a 'Celtic nation, up country foreigners, a Cornishman of sixty or seventy years ago treasuring traditional knowledge, Cornish origin and Cornish stock'.¹⁶⁹ Fifty years later Charles Thomas believed that Cornish identity was struggling against a tide of inward migration suggesting that 'having been born in Cornwall' or 'born in Cornwall, of parents both of whom were also born in Cornwall' would place the Cornish in, at best, less than 65% of the total population and with the latter definition, less than

¹⁶⁵ See discussion in B. Deacon, 2013(b), pp. 120-128.

¹⁶⁶ J. Willett and J. Tredinnick-Rowe, 'The fragmentation of the nation state? Regional development, distinctiveness and the growth of nationalism in Cornish politics, *Nations and Nationalism* 2016, p.11 DOI 10.1111/nana.12188.

¹⁶⁷ B. Deacon 2004 (a). pp. 213-225.

¹⁶⁸ www.mebyonkernow.org accessed 11th November 2010.

¹⁶⁹ www.oldcornwall.org/what_we_stand_for.htm, accessed 11th November 2010, first published in *Old Cornwall*, No.1, 1925, pp. 3-6.

50%.¹⁷⁰ Both Morton Nance and Thomas see place of birth, history, language and dialect as central to the definition of Cornishness summarised by a more recent statement of Cornish identity in connection with the reopening of South Crofty mine; 'Cornwall has its own language, its own flag...we can't be running around serving cream teas all the time. We're a mining nation; we should mine'.¹⁷¹ So although the gate keeping of Cornish identity is often concealed, described by one councillor in connection with local government as 'the elephant in the room',¹⁷² there are social processes connected with place of birth, family connections, and the imagining of Cornish history and culture which define boundaries and admit or exclude.

Construction of the Other

The construction of identity therefore involves deciding both what it is not as well as what it is. Constructing the self also involves constructing the Other. But there is a relationship between both. As stated by McCrone, 'one is not only a mirror of the other but involves a complex dialectic between the two'.¹⁷³ As an example of the ambivalence between similarity and difference, of the need to distinguish but at the same time seek commonality (as seen in the discussion in Chapter Two regarding the influence of ethnicity on civil society, Pages 37-38), Jenkins argues against emphasising difference as the marker for identity.¹⁷⁴ In this he is at odds with writers like Hall who he claims see difference as fundamental to personal meaning, or, in Castell's terms, cultural attribution. To form a collective identity, similarity must be recognised as well as difference; what we have in common as well as what makes us different from others. Similarity creates a sense of 'Us', and notions of community and solidarity. Hence: 'Invocations of similarity are intimately entangled with the conjuring up of difference'¹⁷⁵ and difference should therefore not be privileged in determining group identities.

¹⁷⁰ C.Thomas, 1973.

¹⁷¹ The Guardian, 'Clash in the dark over renewal of Cornwall's tin heritage', May 17, 2004.

¹⁷² Interview with B. Biscoe, 12 December 2008

¹⁷³ D. McCrone, 1998, p.108.

¹⁷⁴ R. Jenkins 2008(b), p. 22.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 23.

If one of the functions of identity is to construct boundaries, however fluid and impermanent, then the allocation of terms such as 'Us', 'We', 'Them' and 'Other' are fundamentally political. This enters the territory of post-colonial writers whose theoretical work illuminates the Celtic experience in the shape of phenomena such as stereotyping, the colonizing gaze and the ascription of the Other.¹⁷⁶ Said, for example, shows in this context how the Other is both regarded by the coloniser as inferior in terms of culture, history and language but at the same time is seen as disturbing, dangerous and, in consequence, often attractive.¹⁷⁷ So the construction of identity is also concerned with the distribution of power and powerlessness in each society. Consequently the Other frequently assumes a subaltern status, represented so that its identity reflects the positioning of the dominant culture. As an illustration, the idea of Britain is conflated with a dominant English discourse of southern ruralism, idealisation of the home counties, suspicion of foreigners, and notions of fair play which does, 'not allow a contesting variant any political house room [as] anything different lies...beyond the envelope of Britishness'.¹⁷⁸ In particular, the interpretation of history is selective, based on the values of the dominant cultural identity.¹⁷⁹ The discourse of the Celtic Other is marginalised and excluded from the island story of 'England'.¹⁸⁰ Similarly, those elements of the Cornish working class experience of primary industry, heavy engineering and migration were ignored for much of the twentieth century as they did not fit into a dominant discourse, largely constructed outside Cornwall and influenced by the tourist industry, of peripheralism, remoteness and Celtic romanticism.¹⁸¹

Hybridity

Despite the primacy of a dominant culture, boundaries are permeable with identities constantly in flux and subject to external influences. Symbols and gatekeepers create and attempt to maintain boundaries but identities are

¹⁷⁶ M.G.H. Pittock, *Celtic Identity and the British Image*, Manchester 1997, p. 100.

¹⁷⁷ E.W. Said, *Orientalism*, New York, 1994.

¹⁷⁸ M.G.H. Pittock, *ibid.*, p.11.

¹⁷⁹ See for example R Strong, *Visions of England*, London, 2011.

¹⁸⁰ However, recent developments regarding devolution in Scotland have started to challenge this perception

¹⁸¹ B. Deacon and P. Payton, in P. Payton, (ed.), 2003.

porous, impermanent and subject to constant change. They are therefore essentially hybrid, exhibiting characteristics from several sources. But this does not mean a merger between dominant and subordinate cultures. For post colonialist writers such as Bhabha:

the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two moments from which the third emerges, rather [it] is the “third space” which enables other positions to emerge.¹⁸²

This interplay between dominant and subaltern cultures influences and changes both through a process of syncretism within which elements of different cultures combine to produce new meanings, symbols and expressions.¹⁸³ An example is Kent’s analysis of the influence of Celtic affiliation on British youth culture, particularly the merger of surfing, music, symbolism and imagery which at the same time is both territorially specific but also culturally a-spatial.¹⁸⁴ He argues that a combination of Celtic symbolism and certain forms of popular music ‘is a mechanism for giving some disaffected youth groups (both non-Celtic and Celtic) ways to form a cultural identity’.

What does hybridity mean for the identity of the subaltern? As this research demonstrates, place identity in Cornwall is both hierarchical and multi-dimensional: at the same time British, English, Cornish and also intensely local. The Cornish element is itself hybrid with elements of Celticity, mining, industrial prowess, romance and global connections arising from migration, existing together and sometimes in conflict, but forming a cultural text or matrix.¹⁸⁵ As Payton states,¹⁸⁶ Cornish identity ‘exist[s] alongside the dominant discourses of Englishness and Britishness together with an emerging narrative of Celticity to create multi-layered, overlapping categories of identity’. Such identities may be considered to be nested where stateless, national or regional identities exist within a wider national state identity and

¹⁸² J. Rutherford in J. Rutherford (ed.) London, 1990, p.211.

¹⁸³ H.K. Bhabha, ‘Culture’s In-Between’ in S. Hall and P. du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity*, Sage, London, 1996, p.58.

¹⁸⁴ A. M. Kent, in D.C. Harvey, R. Jones, et al (eds.), 2002, p.225.

¹⁸⁵R. Burton, ‘A Passion to Exist: Cultural Hegemony and the Roots of Cornish Identity’, in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Five*, Exeter, 1997, pp.151-163

¹⁸⁶ P. Payton, ‘...a Vision of Cornwall’, Fowey, 2002, p.185.

challenge its integrity¹⁸⁷. But hybridity is part of the mechanism by which identities change and evolve. As argued by MacLoad, it can be a trigger for releasing new expressions of power and influence to negotiate meanings and representations which challenge the dominant identity.¹⁸⁸

Identity is therefore a process subject to external influences and internal reinvention. Identities are not fixed although those claiming specific identities frequently argue that they are rooted in history and have a primordial significance. As Hall states:

Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories, but like everything else which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous play of history, culture and power.¹⁸⁹

Comparing writing on Cornish identity at the beginning of the nineties with more recent research illustrates how rapidly this process evolves. In 1993 Deacon and Payton traced the evolution of Cornish identity from a nineteenth century popular culture based on mining and engineering combining with a Celtic revival and subsequently synthesised with modern symbols, some borrowed from other cultures, together forming a distinctive late twentieth century identity.¹⁹⁰ Fifteen years later Kent and Hayward demonstrate how the process has continued by recording how Cornish identity has been augmented by developments in music, design and surfing which contribute to a distinctive youth culture 'reflecting current awareness among the [young] Cornish of their own Cornishness and Celtic identity'.¹⁹¹ Cornwall is now 'cool' alongside the more familiar tropes of Celticity, romance and remoteness.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁷ G.H. Herb and D.H. Kaplan (eds.) *Nested Identities, Nationalism, Territory and Scale*, Maryland, 1999.

¹⁸⁸ G. MacLoad, in D.C. Harvey, R. Jones, et al (eds.), 2002, pp. 53-68.

¹⁸⁹ S. Hall quoted in G. Younge, 2010, p. 117.

¹⁹⁰ B. Deacon and P. Payton, in P. Payton (ed.), 1993.

¹⁹¹ A. M. Kent, in D.C. Harvey, R. Jones, et al (eds.), p. 223, 2002, and P. Hayward, 'Jynwethek Ylow Kernewek: the Significance of Cornish Techno Music', *Cornish Studies Seventeen*, Exeter, 2009, pp. 173-186.

¹⁹² See for example, Exeter University, *Cornwall Campus; Undergraduate Prospectus 2008*; Cornwall is 'the place to be seen' offering the chance to study in an environment of sun serf and scholarship.

Collective Identity

It can be argued that all identities are social as interactions between individuals create meanings involving agreements and disagreements, negotiation and communication.¹⁹³ The processes of setting boundaries, stereotyping, classification and gate keeping are clearly social activities which maintain group solidarity by reinforcing values in drawing distinctions and marginalising the Other. This explicit recognition of the social dimension of identity is absent from much of the writing on Cornish identity. Ivey and Payton's theorisation of a five stage model of Cornish identity¹⁹⁴ suggests there is a progression in a person's awareness of Cornishness but do not allow for how it might be expressed collectively. Individuals frequently have multiple identities, elements of which may come to the fore at certain moments and although 'one identity may be stressed more than others [this] does not mean that the others cease to exist'.¹⁹⁵

In considering group identification within the context of institutions and organisations the research has drawn on the ideas of a number of writers from a social psychological perspective such as Barth, Tajfel, Hogg and Abrams, Brewer and Hewstone together with others like Jenkins who adopt a sociological approach. Barth is concerned with the processes that generate groups such as the maintenance of boundaries and the recruitment of members.¹⁹⁶ He makes a distinction between a boundary which categorises the group externally and its characteristic content or culture which internally identifies the group. Hence identity is formed both within groups and by interactions across group boundaries which involves categorisation and potentially stereotyping.¹⁹⁷ Tajfel, coming from a social psychological perspective, distinguishes between personal and social identity with group membership by itself sufficient to differentiate between in group and out group members as both stress the similarity within the group and the differences

¹⁹³ R. Jenkins, 2008(b), p. 17

¹⁹⁴ A. E. Ivey and P. Payton, 'Towards a Cornish Identity Theory' in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Two*, Exeter, 1994, pp.151-163.

¹⁹⁵ G. Younge, 2010, p.146.

¹⁹⁶ R. Jenkins, *ibid*, p. 44, and pp.112-113.

¹⁹⁷ F. Barth. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, Long Grove, 1969, pp. 9-38.

with those outside it.¹⁹⁸ He argues that group identity is a major influence on personal identity and unlike some writers such as Brubaker who question the reality of groups,¹⁹⁹ maintains that they are real; they have a life beyond those of their individual members and they develop their own identities and their own histories. Hence group identities are created through boundary setting, beliefs and values, histories and positioning in relation to other groups.²⁰⁰ In addition, intergroup mechanisms such as stereotyping, categorisation and attribution determine how groups sustain membership and cohesion.²⁰¹

Looking at collective identity in the context of civil society, Jenkins differentiates between *collectives* such as crowds which came together temporarily, *institutions* which he defines as agencies of control and *organisations* which have members, objectives, recruitment procedures and a recognised pattern of decision making and task allocation. He sees institutions as forming patterns of behaviour which are recognised as coherent and have meaning; in other words they determine, 'how things are done'.²⁰² Where people participate in a common pattern of activity which becomes accepted as the way of doing things, where meanings are shared, and where actions are habitualised then the conditions are ripe for the formalisation of an institution. Such institutions may be sites of identification but can also within themselves generate identities, for example the officials who manage or hold a position within them. They maintain consistency through rules, records and ritual which provide order and structure. There is however, a distinction to be made between institutions and organisations. Organisations comprise members who combine voluntarily in the pursuit of common objectives. Members are recruited according to agreed criteria and tasks are allocated between them.²⁰³ Decisions are taken according to an agreed process. Individuals become identified as members of an organisation through

¹⁹⁸ H. Tajfel, 1981.

¹⁹⁹ R. Jenkins, 2008(b), pp. 8-9.

²⁰⁰ S. Worchel and D. Coutant, 'It takes Two to Tango: Relating Group Identity to Individual Identity within the Framework of Group Development', in M.B. Brewer and M. Hewstone, *Self and Social Identity*, Oxford, 2004, p.184.

²⁰¹ M. A. Hogg and D. Abrams, *Social Identifications*, London, 1988.

²⁰² R. Jenkins, 2008(b), p. 157.

²⁰³ *Ibid*, p.167.

processes of recruitment, the application of membership criteria and the affirmation of membership through the pursuit of common interests. This distinction between institutions and organisations is important in the following discussion of civil society involving the interplay between institutions, basing their authority on the state, and the collective and voluntary nature of organisations.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity is about group membership and a shared culture. It is 'a decision people make to depict themselves or others symbolically as the bearers of a certain cultural identity'.²⁰⁴ An ethnic group is a collectivity, having a real or imagined ancestry, memories of a shared historical past, elements of a common culture with a shared consciousness amongst members of the group.²⁰⁵ Smith lists the attributes of an ethnic community or *ethnie* as;

- a collective proper name;
- a myth of common ancestry;
- shared historical memories;
- one or more differentiating elements of a common culture;
- an association with a specific 'homeland';
- a sense of solidarity for a significant sector of the population.²⁰⁶

On the basis of this list the Cornish can make claims to be an ethnic group having a collective name, a myth of Celtic ancestry, shared historical memories of rebellion, mining and technological prowess, a culture of music, dance and performance, a distinctive cuisine and an association with place. A sense of solidarity, as we shall see, is more problematic although Smith does subsequently reword his last point to 'a sense of solidarity on the part of at least some sections of the *ethnie*'s population'.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ D. McCrone, 1998, p. 25.

²⁰⁵ J. Hutchinson and A. Smith, (eds.) *Ethnicity*, Oxford, 1996, p. 6.

²⁰⁶ A. D. Smith, *National Identity*, London, 1991, p. 21.

²⁰⁷ A. D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism*, Cambridge, 2010.

There are two basic approaches to ethnicity. Hutchinson and Smith distinguish between primordialists who see ethnicity as ascription by individuals to the ties of religion, kinship, language and customs which are essentially unchanging²⁰⁸ as opposed to instrumentalists who regard ethnicity as socially constructed from a variety of identities and cultures to form their own identities which are subject to shifts and changes as already outlined by Hall, Bhabha and Cohen.²⁰⁹ Few writers exclusively adopt one or other of these positions but Weber for example, tends to a primordialist approach defining an ethnic group as based on a belief shared by its members of common descent through a common ancestry²¹⁰. But this belief is likely to be a consequence of collective political action. Members of the group belong together because they act together. Barth, leaning towards an instrumentalist position, sees ethnic identity generated by interactions between individuals which are a matter of political manoeuvring and individual decision making.²¹¹ This involves the maintenance of boundaries between “Us” and “Them” which are variable and dynamic and depend on the ascription of identities by both the ethnic group and outsiders. Similarly, Jenkins sees ethnicity as containing a number of continually changing elements which interplay between similarity and difference and the sharing of meanings.²¹²

Within these two approaches writers examine ethnicity from a number of different directions and emphasise different perspectives. Barth, for example focuses on the boundary, how it symbolically defines group ethnicity by language, food or culture and the transactional nature of relations which determine and reinforce it. Thus, ‘the ethnic boundary... defines the group not the cultural stuff that it encloses’.²¹³ Other writers stress the importance of imagination and mythology to the identity of the group. Horowitz following Tajfel’s group psychology approach takes the view that ethnicity is based on kinship myths and concerns with group status and hence efforts to secure the

²⁰⁸ R. Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity*, London, 2008(a), pp. 46-50.

²⁰⁹ J. Hutchinson and A. Smith, (eds.), 1996, pp. 8-9.

²¹⁰ R. Jenkins, 2008(a), p.10.

²¹¹ F. Barth, in A. P. Cohen (ed.) London, 2000, p.17.

²¹² R. Jenkins, *ibid*, p.14.

²¹³ F. Barth, ‘Ethnic Groups and Boundaries, in J. Hutchinson and A. Smith, (eds.) 1996, pp. 75-82.

continuation of an ethnic group focus on maintaining prestige and recognition.²¹⁴ Anderson sees nations as imagined constructions with finite boundaries, responsible for their own affairs and as communities with 'a deep, horizontal comradeship',²¹⁵ which is echoed by the ethno-symbolism as advanced by Armstrong and Smith, concerned with forms, myths and symbols that unify populations and ensure the continuity of their culture. Historical narratives, visions of an imagined 'golden age', memories and symbols are all examples of the maintenance of ethnic identity which assume increased importance as an antidote to the hegemonic influence of globalisation.²¹⁶

A number of themes run through these approaches, firstly that ethnicity, although based on history whether real, invented or imagined, is not primordial in the sense that it is fixed and therefore not subject to change. Boundaries and categorisations are fluid and permeable. As stated by Jenkins, like identity, 'ethnicity is transactional, shifting and essentially impermanent'.²¹⁷ Secondly, the construction of ethnicities and their maintenance both within the group and in relation to outsiders is essentially a political process involving negotiation, resistance and contestation. In other words ethnic boundaries are always two sided. Finally, ethnicity is defined by identity, culture and difference. It should be pointed out however, that there are writers who question the whole idea of ethnic groups suggesting that they do not really exist and that those claiming group ethnicity only have a shared sense of image that is real. For Brubaker ethnicity is simply 'a point of view of individuals, a way of being in the world'.²¹⁸ It is also acknowledged that for many, ethnicity is accepted as a given and hence impinges little on their daily lives. But for others it is a major part of their sense of self; it is what defines them. As Jenkins states; 'ethnic identity may be imagined but it is emphatically not imaginary; locally that imagining may be very powerful'.²¹⁹

²¹⁴ D. Horowitz, 'Symbolic Politics and Ethnic Status' in J. Hutchinson and A. Smith, (eds.) 1996, pp. 285-291.

²¹⁵ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, London 2006, p.7.

²¹⁶ J. Hutchinson and A. Smith, (eds.) 1996, p.10.

²¹⁷ R. Jenkins, 2008(a), p. 20.

²¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 25.

²¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 80.

The studies which have attempted to explore ethnicity in Cornwall have adopted different theoretical approaches and survey methods and have usually conflated identity, ethnicity and culture. They have focused on whether there is such a phenomenon as Cornish difference rather than how it is expressed or performed and the extent to which it influences group behaviour. For example, Willett researching Cornish identity concludes, following Durkheim, that 'Cornish identity is a "social fact" ...and is a significant factor in the lives of the majority of people in Cornwall'.²²⁰ A study of Cornish school children suggests that despite high levels of inward migration, 'a greater proportion of young people are prepared to assert their cultural distinctiveness'.²²¹ These studies examine personal self-identification but have only tangentially explored how Cornish people express their identity in a social context; in other words whether they act and are identified by others as an ethnic group, the extent to which ethnicity is reflected communally, and whether this distinguishes Cornish civil society.

Some of the reasons why there has been a rise in the numbers who identify as Cornish as an ethnic group have been addressed by Husk and Williams. Identification is driven by a combination of 'push and 'pull' factors.²²² Both require recognition by means of external verification during stages of ethnic boundary formation which involve processes both of expansion and contraction. Drawing on the work of Popkin²²³ and Wimmer,²²⁴ push factors may involve the measurement of ethnicity or the external designation of minority status which may encourage boundary expansion promoted by 'minority political entrepreneurs'.²²⁵ Pull mechanisms are more localised, for example, reinforcing ethnic solidarity by rejecting an ascription by outsiders (in Popkin's example as Mayan peasants) and responding by an ethnic

²²⁰ J. Willett, 'Cornish Identity: Vague Notion or Social fact?' in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Sixteen*, Exeter, 2008, pp.183-205, p.200.

²²¹ P. Aldous and M. Williams, in P. Payton (ed.), pp. 213-226, p 223.

²²² K. Husk and M. Williams, 2012, p. 263.

²²³ E. Popkin, 'Guatemalan Mayan migration to Los Angeles: constructing transnational linkages in the context of the settlement process' *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol.22 (2); 2005, pp.267-289.

²²⁴ A. Wimmer, 'Elementary strategies of ethnic boundary making, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol.31 (6), 2008 pp.1025-1055.

²²⁵ *Ibid*, p.1035.

reorganisation which redraws or contracts the boundary around the group. Both processes of expansion and contraction are evident in the Cornish case. The numbers who identify as Cornish appear to be rising but at the same time there is an intensification of ethnic solidarity in response to ascriptions by the English majority as peripheral and unimportant.

The social processes involved with the formation of ethnic identities highlights again the construction of the Other. How the Cornish are perceived beyond Cornwall is reflected in both resistance to outsider 'interference' and how they are depicted in literature and the arts. But, as Younge points out, this is more a reflection of Englishness as the dominant non-reflexive culture. While not regarding itself as ethnic, which is seen as an ascription applying to minorities, it fails to take it seriously or acknowledge it in others, particularly when they not seen as racially, linguistically or culturally distinctive.²²⁶ However, when this indifference meets opposition and resistance based on a different set of values, the Cornish are quickly identified as the subaltern Other; 'the Cornish are difficult, the Cornish are a problem, Cornwall's a difficult county to work in', they are regarded as 'insular and the authors of their own misfortune...infantilised and spoken of almost like difficult children, presenting a perspective of Cornish people as in some way "backward"'.²²⁷ In other words the Cornish are defined and judged against hegemonic outsider criteria.

The depiction of the Cornish as the Other has a long history, from the description of Cornwall as West Barbary²²⁸ to Hudson's Edwardian account of their 'curious childlike simplicity', their exhibiting 'a great deal of barbarity' and reputation as 'a clannish people'²²⁹ to the more recent touristic perspectives of Ruth Manning-Sanders, Paul Theroux and others who are dismissive of its

²²⁶ G. Younge, 2010, p.47.

²²⁷ J. Willett, 'Insider/Outsider Tensions in Culture and Heritage in Cornish Economic Development; Heritage for Action or Heritage for Consumption?' Regional Studies Association conference paper, Prague, 2008.

²²⁸ B. Deacon, "'The hollow jarring of the distant steam engines': images of Cornwall between West Barbary and Delectable Duchy', in E. Westland (ed.), *Cornwall; The Cultural Construction of Place*, Penzance, 1997, p. 11.

²²⁹ W.H. Hudson, *The Land's End, A Naturalist's Impressions in West Cornwall*, London, 1908, p.7 and pp.135-152.

culture and characterise its society as 'lacking in vibrancy and originality'.²³⁰ Where Cornwall is the setting for film or television it is the landscape which predominates rather than the Cornish. In two popular television shows, *Wycliffe*, a detective series²³¹ and *Doc Martin* a romantic comedy,²³² the remoteness and romance of a peripheral location have been their unique selling points rather than a distinctive local ethnicity or culture. *Wycliffe* 'is well worth watching ...for the scenery alone and hearing the slow local accents'.²³³ In *Doc Martin* the Cornish are depicted as principally comic characters and peripheral to the main narrative contributing local colour to supplement the landscape.²³⁴ In both series most of the principal characters are not Cornish and are portrayed as professional, intelligent and competent as opposed to the slow, eccentric and sometimes dangerous Cornish. Dickinson makes similar points in relation to tourist literature where the discourse of Cornwall as a romantic destination, 'a space of wild nature and cultural difference' is tempered by the perception that it is 'populated by an inferior people'.²³⁵

Such categorization is another example of the exercise of power. As Jenkins points out, it 'relates to the capacity of one group successfully to impose its categories of ascription upon another set of people'.²³⁶ Stereotyping reduces the Other to a few simple essentials which are both reductive and magnified to create an image. It is part of the way of making sense of the world. But it is also political. Cornishness, where it is recognised within the English imagination, reflects how the imbalance of power enables the creation of a stereotype which, as Hall implies, 'operates as much through culture, the production of knowledge, imagery and representation as through other means'.²³⁷ However, it is a mistake to assume that such power is imposed

²³⁰ R. Dickinson, 'Changing Landscapes of Difference: representations of Cornwall in Travel Writing 1949-2007' in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Sixteen*, Exeter, 2008, pp.167-182, p.174.

²³¹ *Wycliffe*, Harlech Television, 1994-1998.

²³² *Doc Martin*, Buffalo Pictures/Home Run Productions, 2004-present.

²³³ www.imdb.com, accessed 6 Aug.2010.

²³⁴ S. Wollaston, Last Night's TV re. *Doc Martin*, 'If I was Cornish I'd be cross-why are they portrayed as bumbly, workshy idiots?' *The Guardian*, 8th September 2015.

²³⁵ R. Dickinson, 2008, p.179.

²³⁶ R. Jenkins, 2008(a), p.23.

²³⁷ S. Hall (ed.) 1997, p. 263.

without resistance. There is a symbiotic relationship between English and Cornish perceptions within the stereotype. Reaction against it defines and reinforces the self-perceived ethnicity of the subordinate group. But this definition may take different forms. Kennedy and Kingcome, exploring differences between insider and outsider interpretations of heritage, show how the reaction of the Cornish to how they are perceived is often one of ambivalence veering between adopting the attributes imposed by the dominant heritage discourse as a way of reinforcing their identity or alternatively emphasising their difference by rejecting touristic portrayals.²³⁸ Both represent different forms of resistance to stereotyping and further demonstrate the symbiotic relationship between similarity and difference.

Culture

Culture consists of an interrelated series of concepts standing for or representing the real world arranged and classified into complex relations with each other. It includes the signs, ceremonies and way of life characteristic of a given group.²³⁹ Language and signs including images, music and objects represent the concepts and conceptual relations which make up the meaning systems of culture. Culture may therefore be defined as 'shared meanings' or 'shared conceptual maps'.²⁴⁰ But there are a number of interpretations of culture. Structuralist, functionalist and interpretivist positions each have different perspectives on the positioning of the individual in society, the role of language, the influence of class, ethnicity and gender. Cornwall Council's definition of culture tends towards a structuralist position; 'Culture is a set of distinctive spiritual and material traits that characterise a community. It embraces literature and arts as well as ways of life, value systems, traditions and beliefs'.²⁴¹ There is a fundamental difference between this statement and an interpretive position which regards culture as a product of negotiation subject to different understandings of societal values with meanings interpreted in different ways and that of structuralists who regard it as a

²³⁸ N. Kennedy and N. Kingcome, 'Disneyfication of Cornwall – Developing a Poldark Heritage Complex', *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 4.1, 1998, pp. 45-59, p.54.

²³⁹ A. Giddens, *Sociology*, Cambridge, 2001, p.686.

²⁴⁰ S. Hall, (ed.), 1997, p.18.

²⁴¹ Cornwall Council, *Green Paper for Culture*, Truro, 2010, p.7.

shared way of life based on accepted norms and values binding society together. Jenkins social constructionist position, for instance, is at odds with pluralists such as Hall. Using the example of South Wales, he rejects the pluralist assumption that the past was homogeneous and ‘that negotiable, socially constructed identities and cultural diversity difference, pluralism – are somewhat new phenomenon’ and that the ‘human world...is or was an archipelago of discrete, bounded, culturally distinctive and homogeneous units’.²⁴² This is similar to Grossberg’s criticism of post-colonial writers who he considers ignore the complexity and power struggles within ethnic groups.²⁴³ For Jenkins, society consists of a multitude of such groups which ‘are contingent and imminently changeable, an emergent product of interaction and of classificatory processes’.²⁴⁴ He quotes Roberts work on different kinds of Welshness based on geographic cultural distinctions between, Valley Welshness characterised by a mining and industrial heritage, British Welshness on the coast and border communities and Welsh Welshness defined by language in the north and west.²⁴⁵ All three are characterised by overlapping interpretations of Welsh ethnicity which are frequently at odds. He sums up the difference between his view and the pluralist position as, ‘Human society...is best seen as an on-going and overlapping kaleidoscope of “group-ness” rather than a “plural” system of distinct and separate groups’.²⁴⁶ This is a reminder that to regard Cornishness and Englishness as polarities or to see Cornish identity as either revivalist, working class or new ageist, ignores its complexity, hybridity and diversity.

To examine further how social theory might be applied to Cornish culture; representation theory and semiotics explain how signs such as objects and or cultural practices form a language or matrix of meaning. Consistent with the post structuralist approach outlined above, Hall, taking a similar position to

²⁴² R. Jenkins, 2008(a), pp.32-33.

²⁴³ L. Grossberg, ‘Identity and Cultural Studies: Is that all there is?’ in S. Hall and P du Gay (eds.), London, 1996, p. 87- 107.

²⁴⁴ R. Jenkins, *ibid*, p.52.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid* p.137. See also J. Osmond, ‘Welsh Civil Identity in the Twenty-First Century’ in D.C. Harvey, R. Jones, N Mc Inroy and C. Milligan (eds.), *Celtic Geographies, Old Culture, New Times*, London, 2002.

²⁴⁶ R. Jenkins, *ibid*, p.52.

Castell's perspective on identity, argues that individuals develop concepts and images which represent the real world by forming mental maps which, when shared, become a culture of meanings.²⁴⁷ Therefore a post-structuralist definition of culture sees it as:

shared meanings or shared cultural maps... [and] to belong to a culture is to belong to roughly the same conceptual and linguistic universe, to know how concepts and ideas translate into different languages, and how language can be interpreted to refer or reference the world.²⁴⁸

Cornwall has been very successful as promoting itself as a brand particularly with regard to food and catering and food and food-related industries can be central to the formation of regional identities.²⁴⁹ As an example, a semiotic approach to an obvious example of Cornishness might conclude that the signification triggered by the word 'pasty' includes a number of meanings including a food invented for miners, a symbol of domesticity, a shape (e.g. pasty hats) and a universally recognised icon of Cornwall. But such signifiers are not universally shared and are subject to change. Hence the Cornish interpretation of the pasty may be very different from that of outsiders. The translation of signs takes place in a wider context of beliefs, cultural frameworks and values which collectively, following Barthes, may be termed myths.²⁵⁰ Hence the Cornish myth of the pasty is that genuine pasties can only be made in Cornwall by Cornish women²⁵¹ but its association with mining, industry and through sponsorship, rugby, suggests that their consumption is also linked to a masculine world. However, the commercialisation of pasty production led by the West Cornwall Pasty Company (WCPC) has created new representations and myths.²⁵² The symbols used to promote pasties in England are not representations of mining or industry but reflect a tourist gaze of pirates and fishing villages. The WCPC

²⁴⁷ S. Hall (ed.), 1997, pp.17-18.

²⁴⁸ Ibid, p.22.

²⁴⁹ S. Everett and C. Aitchison, 'The Role of Food Tourism in Sustaining Regional Identity: A Case Study of Cornwall, South West England', *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, Vol.16 (2), 2008, pp.150-167, P.164.

²⁵⁰S. Hall (ed.), 1997, pp. 39-41.

²⁵¹ Reinforced by European Union designation of the pasty as a distinctive regional food but not necessarily made by Cornish women!

²⁵² www.westcornwallpasty.co.uk, accessed 14th November 2010. The WCPC now has 70 branches outside Cornwall, has been recapitalised by a £40m management buyout and can be found in most London railway termini.

web site mentions mining in passing but focuses on the romantic, coastal and touristic aspects of Cornwall written in cod dialect with some branches of WCPC having Cornish tourist literature on display.²⁵³

Cornish cultural difference is represented by a variety of signifiers including images of Celticity and language, activities such as choirs, rugby, silver bands, gig racing, wrestling and festivals and ceremonies such as Padstow's 'Obby 'Oss May Day Celebrations, Helston's Furry Dance or the Gorseth. Assertions of ethnicity take the form of St Piran's flags, usage of Kernewek and opposition to second homes.

But to what extent are such symbols and events representative of a wider and more profound Cornish culture and can they be ascribed to an ethnic group? In addition to Kernow scepticism there has been reluctance by some researchers to pursue claims for a distinctive Cornish culture. This unwillingness is perhaps due to a combination of its hybridity, the negative connotations associated with ethnicity and the low level and reactive nature of Cornish political activity which has yet to translate cultural awareness into a resource for political action.²⁵⁴ Perhaps the search needs to be widened. Billig suggests that national identity is reinforced by a low key ideology of everyday discourse rather than by organised politics or by overtly cultural events; what he terms the 'unwaved flag'²⁵⁵. Edensor takes this a stage further considering national identity in relation to popular culture and everyday life and is critical of writers such as Smith²⁵⁶ and Anderson²⁵⁷ who, he argues, focus on high cultural arbiters such as authors, historians, artists and scholars rather than the 'everyday', taken for granted, cultural commonsensical practices²⁵⁸. He regards national identity as:

constructed out of a huge cultural matrix, constantly in the process of becoming, emerging out of the dynamism of popular culture and everyday life

²⁵³ Personal observation, Worthing, February 2011.

²⁵⁴ B. Deacon, D. Cole and G. Tregidga, 2003, p.121.

²⁵⁵ M. Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, London, 1995.

²⁵⁶ A.D. Smith, 1991.

²⁵⁷ B. Anderson, 2006.

²⁵⁸ T. Edensor, *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life*, Oxford, 2002, pp. 33-34.

whereby people make and remake connections between local and national, between the everyday and the extraordinary.²⁵⁹

Looking at the relationship between space and national identity he sees a complex geography consisting of borders, symbolic areas and sites but also including dwelling places and commonplace features such as place names.²⁶⁰ So culture is not only composed of grand landscapes and famous sites but also by the mundane spaces of everyday life; not only St Michael's Mount and the Land's End but the distinctive style of Cornish hedges, Celtic field patterns, slate roofs and granite fronted houses. This suggests that to explore Cornishness further we need to look more closely at the relationship between how people in Cornwall live their lives, their knowledge of locality, their embedded habits, the things which they produce, how they socially interact and conduct their civil society all of which contribute to signifying their cultural identity.²⁶¹

In addition to symbols and representations, the formation of myths and the construction of discourses are important determinants in the construction and evolution of culture. Foucault sees representation incorporated into the production of knowledge through discourses which he regards as relations of power rather than relations of meaning. A discourse determines how a topic can be meaningfully talked about but it limits and restricts other ways of talking about the topic. Thus, 'meaning and meaningful practice is constructed within the discussion' ²⁶² which not only then assumes the authority of truth but has the power to make itself true. We have already seen this in relation to 'English' discourses of Britain. In the case of the pasty, the commercialisation of the product has created a discourse which, when linked to tourism, is sufficiently powerful to challenge and override the traditional feminine, (embracing motherhood and domesticity) and masculine, (mining and essentially working class) discourses.

²⁵⁹ T. Edensor, 2002, p. vii.

²⁶⁰ K. Mackinnon, 'Bys Kernewek: a Cornish Language world, in which we live and move and have our being', paper to the Third Annual Cornish Studies Conference, Exeter University, 2014.

²⁶¹ M. Williams, in P. Payton (ed.), 2002, pp. 61-62.

²⁶² S. Hall (ed.) 1997, p.49.

Gramsci's perspectives also have relevance for a study of dominant and subordinate cultures. Taking an essentially Marxist perspective, he notes the variety of cultures within capitalist societies but also that the values of the ruling class predominate and achieve hegemonic status.²⁶³ Cultural hegemony means that one culture is seen as superior to others but alternative cultures are needed to legitimise the capitalist system by permitting the existence of other views and perspectives. The ruling class's cultural and ideological dominance will always be contested but it may also marginalise and ridicule minority beliefs and culture. But paradoxically, the dominant culture while on one hand dismissive of subaltern cultures, at the same time tolerates them and in so doing legitimises itself by emphasising its superiority and reinforces inequality. It is important to understand therefore, that hegemony is not simply the exercise of power but rather the imposition of moral and intellectual leadership which treats the views and aspirations of subaltern people as an active element but which is controlled within the prevailing political culture.²⁶⁴ An example is the promotion of regional distinctiveness to pursue economic objectives valuing it not so much for itself but rather for its potential to encourage tourism and promote quality of life.²⁶⁵ Gramsci thus links culture not only with political power but also regards civil society, which he defines as cultural institutions and practices that appear to be independent of politics, as a place 'where meanings and values [that] can sustain or transform society are created'.²⁶⁶ In other words, he suggests it is a space where identity and culture may be expressed.

Burton²⁶⁷ applying the concept of hegemony to Cornish identity suggests that a hegemonic English culture incorporated the subordinate culture of Celticity, primary industry and folklore to perpetuate a distinctive Cornish identity creating an example of Bhabha's third space. This is reflected in a 'popular consciousness' which 'is not exclusively Cornish...but is neither an exact

²⁶³ D. Abbott, *Culture and Identity*, London, 1998, p.39.

²⁶⁴ S. Jones, 2006, p.34-36.

²⁶⁵ J. Willett and J. Tredinnick-Rowe, 2016, p.4.

²⁶⁶ S. Jones, *Ibid.* p.33.

²⁶⁷ R. Burton, in P. Payton (ed.), 1997, pp. 151-163.

reflection of the English view of the world'; a 'mosaic of meaning' consisting of a complex and often contradictory cultural text consisting of a large number of disparate elements which go to make up Cornishness. But while it may recognise a space for a subordinate identity the culture of the dominant group is hegemonic, controlling representation and discourses and dismissing 'partial cultures' by emphasising the 'large numbers and long periods' which are 'out of time with the modes of recognition of minority or marginalised cultures'.²⁶⁸ However, since both dominant and subordinate cultures have a symbiotic relationship, Bhabha argues that:

at the point at which the precept attempts to objectify itself as a generalized knowledge or a normalizing, hegemonic practice, the hybrid strategy or discourse opens up a space of negotiation where power is unequal but its articulation may be equivocal.²⁶⁹

This process of cultural hybridity or syncretism, is achieved not only by negotiation but by contestation and, in Gramscian terms, by the legitimising strategies of the dominant culture, making it possible for minorities to open spaces for debate, often within the context of civil society and resisting the representation and social categorization of the Other.

So from a post colonialist and post-modernist perspective, the application of power and agency is complex and subtle. Foucault's position, for example, is that power and knowledge is not transmitted downwards from one source to another but permeates all levels of social existence and operates at every site of social life.²⁷⁰ Hall similarly considers that power:

cannot be thought of in terms of one group having a monopoly of power, simply radiating power downwards from a subordinate group. It includes the dominant and dominated within its circuits.²⁷¹

Grossberg again sounds a cautionary note on the stance taken by such writers in that they tend to assume a binary relationship between the dominant and subaltern which ignores the complexity within cultures of 'other

²⁶⁸ H.K. Bhabha, 1996, p.57

²⁶⁹ Ibid, p.58

²⁷⁰ N. Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change*, Cambridge, 1992, p. 50.

²⁷¹ S. Hall, (ed.), 1997, p.261

knowledges, other histories, other traditions'.²⁷² Also, within subaltern cultures there are differences and power struggles, as seen in Chapter Seven (Page199-204), between groups and hierarchies partly brought about by a search for authenticity and a desire to resist the tendency towards categorisation into closed definitions of culture.

So far the discussion has been concerned with relationships between cultures but the impact of economic, social and above all cultural globalisation is assumed to have homogenised individual cultures so that differences are diminished and in some cases eliminated. But the counter argument is that that there is a symbiotic relationship between the global and the local since the effect of globalisation is to reduce the control individuals and communities believe they have as citizens with the result that they emphasise their localism and difference thus providing an identity and a sphere in which power may be exercised. Hence as Younge suggests:

Feeling under threat from a world whose politics and economics we are unable to control, many resort instead to the defence of "culture"...they retreat into their identities – often reinvented as the local, the known, and above all, the traditional.²⁷³

This explains not only the rise in symbols of cultural identity in Cornwall but also how they are treated with a degree of ambivalence. Flags, kilts and tartans are sometimes regarded as not representing the 'real' Cornwall, as they are not based on a history of mining and fishing, non-conformity and working class culture. Rather they are seen as synthetic inventions, linked to Celtic revivalism signifying a retreat into a self-conscious identity as a counter to the threat of cultural homogenisation, economic decline and loss of political control.²⁷⁴ However these 'new' symbols help create what Jenkins calls 'the banal routines of living in "cultural stuff"' by reinforcing difference²⁷⁵ as a counter to a perceived increase in cultural homogeneity. But, as with similarity and difference, globalisation and localism are two sides of the same coin and:

²⁷² L. Grossberg, in S. Hall and P. du Gay (eds.), 1996, p.92.

²⁷³ G. Younge, 2010, p.208.

²⁷⁴ P. Aldous and M. Williams, 2001, p.223.

²⁷⁵ R. Jenkins, 2008(a), p.165

globalization and heightened localization, far from being contradictory are interlinked: the world is becoming smaller and larger at the same time; cultural space is shrinking and expanding.²⁷⁶

This lack of consensus over the interpretation of symbols and the previous discussion regarding the hybridity and fluidity of cultures, challenges the notion of a uniform Cornish culture. Payton's application of Rokken and Urwin's centre periphery model explains how at the start of the nineteenth century, a predominantly Celtic culture evolved into a Methodist – mining culture followed by a paralysis, a period of introverted 'making do' characterised by atrophy and depression.²⁷⁷ This overarching narrative arguably does not give sufficient weight to the different strands of Cornishness which have historically coexisted and continue in contemporary Cornwall. Deacon considers that Celtic revivalism and an industrially based working class culture continued in parallel through much of the twentieth century but at the start of the 1970's, at the same time as the population began to grow through inward migration, there was a cultural renaissance embracing increased interest in language, music and dance. He maintains that by the 1990's these two strands of Cornishness had started to synthesize with 'the demise of Cornish mining...now join[ing] the Cornish language as an aspect of heritage to be preserved'.²⁷⁸ Husk and Williams agree that there 'has been a merging of Celtic and industrial discourses around identity' and that modern Cornish identity is seen as an amalgamation of the two.²⁷⁹

But the evidence is contradictory and other research suggests that Cornish culture is becoming more fragmented possibly because of the different responses to globalisation and that place, class and demography are important variables. Dickinson, for example stresses the complexity and different experiences of Cornish identity²⁸⁰ and Aldous suggests in her study of eighteen year olds that there was considerable variation in what was

²⁷⁶ R. Jenkins, 2008(a), p.45.

²⁷⁷ P. Payton, 2004, p. 237.

²⁷⁸ B. Deacon, 2007(b), p. 229.

²⁷⁹ K. Husk and M. Williams, 2012, p.255.

²⁸⁰ R. Dickinson, 2010, p. 97.

considered to be Cornish.²⁸¹ As Hale states ‘Cornwall does not contain a homogenous mass of people ...and there are a number of hybrid Cornish identities which could profitably be researched’.²⁸² Kennedy²⁸³, in a recent analysis of the potential of Cornish culture to build resilient and sustainable communities, identifies several strands. Celtic revivalism is still an important element but this has formed the basis for a broader based ‘Cornish movement’ which is motivated more by economic inequality and anti-metropolitanism. Classic Cornishness, as originally defined by Payton, is exemplified by the nineteenth century legacy of industrialisation and Methodism²⁸⁴ and Kennedy charts how it has evolved into ‘proper Cornish’²⁸⁵ still drawing on its nineteenth century working class origins but maintained by family narratives, an awareness of difference and a continuing ethos of egalitarianism, informality and non- subservience, echoes of a Cornish version of the Welsh *gwerin*. It has become what Williams terms a ‘structure of feeling’ or the transmission of continuities within cultures.²⁸⁶ As an example, Easton looking at how culture is passed on within families in Perranporth shows how memory, kinship and identity are inextricably linked and that this communication between generations is how a sense of Cornishness is maintained.²⁸⁷ But in addition to these major cultural categorisations, the impact of inward migration and its attendant ‘lifestyle Cornwall’, the elective or adopted identities assumed by incomers and the geographical variations within Cornwall all contribute to the piecemeal nature of its culture. Far from historically based strands of Cornishness synthesising as argued by Deacon and Payton,²⁸⁸ a case can be made for an increasing diversity within Cornish identity. Hybridity and ambivalence are both centrifugal and centripetal forces which simultaneously drive both similarity

²⁸¹ P. Aldous, 2002.

²⁸² A. Hale, ‘Cornish Studies and Cornish Culture(s): Valuations and Directions’, in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Ten*, Exeter, 2002, pp.240-251, p. 249.

²⁸³ N. Kennedy, *Employing Cornish Cultures for Community Resilience*, Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Exeter, 2013.

²⁸⁴ P. Payton, 1992, pp. 73-118.

²⁸⁵ ‘Proper’ in Cornish-English dialect has a subtly different meaning from Standard English. In dialect described as ‘fitty’ or in Standard English as ‘fit for purpose’ or ‘how things should be’.

²⁸⁶ R. Williams, *The Long Revolution*, Harmondsworth, 1965, p. 64.

²⁸⁷ K. Easton, *Memory, Kinship. Identity: A Multigenerational Case Study of Cornish Families*, Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Exeter, 2008.

²⁸⁸ B. Deacon and P. Payton in P. Payton (ed.), 1993.

and difference so that many of the signifiers of Cornishness are widely accepted as such but at the same time have different meanings in different contexts and in different locations.

Common themes and linkages

Identity, ethnicity and culture are inextricably interlinked and there are a number of themes which are common to all three. Firstly, each is not fixed but in a permanent state of flux, subject to a constant stream of influences which cause them to change and mutate. We have seen how identities evolve, the impermanence and porosity of boundaries, the volatility of ethnic groupings and the forces of hybridity all of which drive cultural change. So both the production and consumption of Cornish culture is a constantly state of flux with changing symbols, interpretations and content. As McCrone states, cultural identity is:

less an accomplished fact and more of a “production” never complete, always in process and closely linked with how it is (re)presented –a matter of “becoming” not “being”- belonging to the future as much as to the past.²⁸⁹

What frequently drives these processes is the transactional relationship across boundaries and between cultures; an interplay between similarity and difference, between the global and the local. But some of the literature oversimplifies what is a complex and intricate process by implying a clear distinction between competing groups which ignores the nuances and subtleties faced by individuals, particularly in the case of Cornwall, with profoundly hybrid identities. Not only may ethnic identity be ‘a low key ideology of everyday discourse rather than a matter of organised politics’²⁹⁰ but alongside a general affiliation to Cornwall there may be stronger and more fundamental allegiances based on class, occupation and locality. So the notion of a homogeneous Cornish culture oversimplifies a complex web of relationships based on a variety of factors which may extend beyond ethnicity including a strong identification with place.

²⁸⁹ D. McCrone, 1998, p.138.

²⁹⁰ R. Jenkins, 2008b, p. 166.

Secondly, power and agency are central in shaping the construction of stereotypes, the creation of myths, the development of discourses and the establishment of hegemonic relationships. Boundary setting, gate keeping, stereotyping and categorization are all examples of how power is exercised to construct identities, determine ethnicities and shape culture. Hence, the ascription of identity, culture and ethnicity is fundamentally political but as we have seen the exercise of power is not simply domination by one group and subordination or resistance by the Other. The state has a central role to play. Governing requires a degree of consent and in Gramscian terms a ruler has to 'take on ... some of the values of those it attempts to lead, thereby reshaping its own ideals and imperatives'.²⁹¹ Cornwall Council's *Green Paper for Culture* suggests that the local authority proposes to promote Cornish difference in a five year cultural programme 'to transform Cornwall's cultural sector, to build on our cultural assets and get the best value out of a range of existing and future investments'.²⁹² Rather than ignoring Cornish ethnicity it will now be harnessed to support the local economy and meet the Council's equality and diversity objectives. But by privileging Cornish culture the policy also begs a number of questions about its interpretation, access, and authenticity. Who decides what constitutes Cornish culture and the extent to which it represents local ethnicity? The production of a cultural strategy is profoundly political, particularly since its promotion by a local authority involves the exercise of control and influence through patronage and the awarding of grants. Cornwall Council's own research suggests that only a minority of Cornwall's inhabitants identify as Cornish²⁹³ but it can be argued that it is in the interests of the dominant to promote a minority culture to achieve its own objectives to boost the local economy rather than to support it for its intrinsic value. Gramsci describes this as a hegemonic relationship of mutual exchange between the superstructure of culture and the underlying economic base.²⁹⁴ The processes of controlling and shaping change and the exercise of power which this entails are exercised in the context of struggles

²⁹¹ S. Jones, 2006, p.4.

²⁹² Cornwall Council, 2010, p.6.

²⁹³ Cornwall County Council, *Quality of Life Survey*, 2007.

²⁹⁴ S. Jones, 2006, pp. 28-30.

between groups acting within civil society with different interpretations of history and culture and competing for the allocation of resources which are largely controlled by the state. Hence the state determines what it will support and promote both in the economic sphere and in the voluntary sector but recognises that to do this it needs the cooperation of civil society.

The Importance of Place

Place is a dimension of identity and culture which has been largely neglected in academic writing on Cornwall. But it is central to the research topic as civil society is frequently the vehicle through which ideas about place are articulated and debated. As Hall argues, a sense of place contributes to how we perceive identity and culture, what he terms the 'landscaping' of cultural identities, to anchor them in an imagined place or home.²⁹⁵ As an example, the preface to the national minority report arguing for the distinctiveness of the Cornish to be recognised by the Council of Europe, is the poem 'We are of this place' explaining the centrality of landscape, history and personal connection between the identity of the Cornish and the place where they live.²⁹⁶ Place is more than an actual location, it is a symbolic guarantee of cultural belongingness²⁹⁷ and is one of the basis 'through which identity is rooted and developed'.²⁹⁸ As Tilley states:

Personal and cultural identity is bound up with place...Geographical experience begins in places, reaches out to others through spaces and creates landscapes or regions for human existence.²⁹⁹

Westland reminds us of the universality of place in which:

Ideas of place are persuasive ideological forces, bearing as they do the freight of so many feelings and values, and their prominent role in marketing and the media attests to their power.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁵ S. Hall, 'New Cultures for Old' in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds.), *A Place in the World*, Oxford, 1995, p.182.

²⁹⁶ P. Farmer, 'We are of this place/ We suffer her skies/ We have carved our towns from her hillsides/ and we have charmed her mineral heart/ We have lived for it/ Died for it/ Grown cold for it/ Fried for it/ From the peaks of Brown Willy to deep Dolcoath we have lived for it/ Died for her/ Grown cold for her/ Fried for her/ We are of this place', in Cornwall Council, *Why should the Cornish be Recognised as a National Minority within the UK?* 2014.

²⁹⁷ S. Hall, in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds.), *A Place in the World, Places, Cultures and Globalisation*, Oxford, 1995, p.180.

²⁹⁸ D. Massey, 'Geographies of responsibility', *Geografiska Annalar*, 86B (1) 2004, 5-18 p. 7.

²⁹⁹ C. Tilly, *A Phenomenology of Landscape*, Oxford, 1994, p. 15, quoted in D. Massey, 2004, p.7.

³⁰⁰ E. Westland, *Cornwall: The Cultural Construction of Place*, Penzance, 1997, p. 1.

More recently, Willett, looking at the narratives of Cornwall, develops this point further by suggesting that ‘the production of place is political not only for the *practices* that are enabled within it, but also for the narrative or stories that are told about that space’.³⁰¹ Therefore, in contemporary Cornwall, influences such as ‘quality of life’ or expectations of lifestyle influence ‘what we will become’ by inhibiting imagining other possibilities to address economic and social inequalities.

The plethora of romantic fiction, travel writing and tourist literature set in Cornwall conflates the landscapes of former fishing villages, mining sites, river estuaries, archaeological remains, moorlands and coastal scenery into a generalised tourist gaze.³⁰² Much of the academic writing on Cornish identity largely ignores the possibility that locality may create differences within Cornwall and, in terms of identity, privilege place over ethnicity. Therefore, it is a criticism of Cornish studies that until relatively recently it has concentrated on Cornwall rather than investigating identity at a local level.³⁰³ Cohen’s analysis of rural and peripheral cultures in Britain makes the case for focusing on the uniquenesses of particular locations and challenges externally imposed assumptions about their homogeneity which are ‘reviled by the members of localities, who see in it as a gross misrepresentation of their special circumstances and of their distinctive cultures’.³⁰⁴ There are however, relatively few studies of differences in identity within Cornwall, an exception being Ella Westland’s *Cornwall: The Cultural Construction of Place* which contained a series of essays, drawing largely on literary references which distinguished between the clay country, north Cornwall, Bodmin moor, mining and Methodism. In 2000 Deacon suggested that a further development of Cornish studies would be to have regard to its scalar dimension distinguishing

³⁰¹ J. Willett, 2014, p.14.

³⁰² A recent exception is P. Marsden, *Rising Ground: A Search for the Spirit of Place*, London, 2014 which describes the impression on the author and his reaction to a variety of Cornish landscapes.

³⁰³ G. Tregidga (ed.), *Memory, Place and Identity: The Cultural Landscapes of Cornwall*, London, 2012, pp. 6-7.

³⁰⁴ A. P. Cohen, *Belonging: Identity and Social Organisation in British Rural Cultures*, Manchester, 1982, p.1.

between local, Cornwall wide and international perspectives, part of which would be to promote investigations at a micro-scale.³⁰⁵ To a degree this challenge has recently been taken up; by local studies of contemporary Cornwall such as Willett's examination of identity in the clay villages and a comparison between them and Truro in terms social and human capital.³⁰⁶ Other examples include Kent's analysis of the manipulation of cultural memory in Mousehole,³⁰⁷ and Tregidga's compilation of essays in *Memory, Place and Identity* but the influence of place in Cornish Studies remains relatively unexplored.

Theorising Place

The importance of the relationship between place and identity and the evolutionary changes generating movement and flux brought about by the interaction between them point to the work of historical materialists such as Lefebvre who see a combination of the social, spatial and temporal shaped by historical processes.³⁰⁸ The spatial can be represented by the individual's personal activity space starting with the body and the immediate home environment but it also extends to places in the form of a locality, community or nation.³⁰⁹ However, space evolves into place as it acquires meaning and value³¹⁰ but the development of rapid physical and electronic communications means that places which were historically seen as bounded, separate and distinctive have now become interconnected to an extent which was previously inconceivable. This shrinkage or elimination of distance has changed the concept of place as it has become so stretched that 'it is difficult any more to distinguish within social *space* any coherent area which might be called *places*'.³¹¹ Nevertheless, as Harvey argues, a sense of place is still closely associated with social identity and culture which is motivated by

³⁰⁵ B. Deacon, 2000.

³⁰⁶ J. Willett, 2009.

³⁰⁷ A. Kent, 'From Igraine Ingrained to Callin' 'Ome Mouzel' in G. Tregidga (ed.), pp. 31-36.

³⁰⁸ S. Elden, *Understanding Henri Lefebvre: Theory and the Possible*, London, 2004, p. 193.

³⁰⁹ D. Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Oxford, 1989, p. 302.

³¹⁰ Y. F. Tuan, *Space and place: The perspectives of experience*, Minneapolis, 1977.

³¹¹ D. Massey, 'The Conceptualisation of Place', in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds.), 1995, p. 54.

history and tradition.³¹² Despite the stretching out of social relations, place remains a key element in the construction of identities

Lefebvre sees space (which he equates with urban space) not as a neutral void or abstract area but produced and reproduced by the utilisation of labour and the construction of social relations. Lefebvre postulates a theoretical structure starting with *spatial practice* concerned with the relationship between daily reality and what he terms urban reality; the linkages between places for work and leisure which are reflected in the built environment and landscape.³¹³ *Spatial practice* describes how space is experienced, represented by flows of goods, people and communications and the production and distribution of physical forms within it such as buildings and infrastructure. Secondly, *representations of space* involve the production of space such as conceptualisations and forms of technical knowledge controlled by architects, designers, urban planners and the state. Representations of space are perceptions which are formed from mental maps, spatial discourses and spatial hierarchies which determine how different patterns of land use interact, are mapped and managed to form an urban landscape. Thirdly, *representational spaces* are based on imagination which 'embody complex symbolisms...linked to the clandestine or underground of social life'; or space as reflected in associated images and symbols. 'Representational spaces...need obey no rules of consistency or cohesiveness. Redolent with imagery and symbolic elements, they have their source in history'.³¹⁴ The production of representational space is where places acquire reputations, an identity, and a unique character. For Lefebvre the production of space is a dialectic between these three elements which result in cultural notions and spatial practices.³¹⁵

³¹² D. Harvey *ibid*, p. 303.

³¹³ H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Oxford, 1991, P. 38. See also D. Harvey, 1989, pp. 218-19.

³¹⁴ H. Lefebvre, *ibid*, p. 41.

³¹⁵ J. Urry, *Consuming Places*, London, 1995, p. 25.

Shields³¹⁶ applies Lefebvre's approach to social spatialisation, illustrating by a number of examples, how the spatial is socially constructed and hence transformed into an image of place which assumes a particular identity. Brighton has a continuing reputation for pleasure and carnivalistic behaviour stretching back to the Regency period and the idea of the 'North' emerging from the industrial revolution as dark and grim, persists in the English imagination. A further example is the impact of rural England as central to the national consciousness of Englishness. As Stedman says, a 'sense of place is not intrinsic to the physical setting itself but resides in human interpretations of the setting which are constructed through experience with it'.³¹⁷ Social divisions and cultural distinctions are frequently expressed spatially, combined into 'imaginary geographies' consisting of literary depictions, historical events, physical descriptions and social values. Shields develops the idea of the place myth consisting of a number of different images which may be contested and changeable but are nevertheless unique to that locality and set places apart from each other. Place images attach meanings to places often based on stereotypes and labels regardless of their real character but are a convenient and short-hand way of thinking about place.³¹⁸ They are used to convey complexity without having to explain associations in detail.³¹⁹ Cornwall's place images of remoteness, Celticity and romance are good examples.

But as Shields points out, place images may change over time. He shows that Brighton has retained its overarching historical myth as a place of pleasure, entertainment and carnivalesque behaviour despite how this has been re-interpreted by a succession of changing place images; from the raffish activities of the Regency Period, as a playground of the early nineteenth century industrial bourgeoisie to a centre for mass seaside holidays. Each of these images has contributed and continues to contribute to the myth of

³¹⁶ R. Shields, 1991, pp.73-116.

³¹⁷ R. C. Stedman, 'Is it Really Just a Social Construction? : The Contribution of the Physical Environment to Sense of Place', *Society and Natural Resources* 16: 2003, pp. 671-685, p.672.

³¹⁸ S. Lash and J. Urry, *Economies of Signs and Space*, London 2002, p. 264-266 make similar points about the place images of Stratford upon Avon, Stonehenge and English country houses.

³¹⁹ R. Shields, 1991, p. 46.

Brighton as a place where rules of behaviour may be suspended. A similar but more profound change in the myth of Cornwall as different and peripheral has been traced by Deacon in a succession of place images, from the eighteenth century perception of it as a place of barbarism to, by the middle of the nineteenth century, a centre, if not the premier centre, of metaliferous mining and related engineering excellence from which developed a distinctive regional identity. By the late nineteenth/early twentieth century this underwent further change by a revival of Celticity and the promotion of Cornwall as a holiday destination with associated images of remoteness, pristine beaches and rugged landscape;³²⁰ a 'transformation from Industrial Civilisation to "Delectable Duchy", from a narrative of achievement to "Vanishing Cornwall"'.³²¹ But despite these changes in imagery the underlying myth of peripherality and difference remained.

Deacon also discusses the processes by which place images are formed and the role played by different insider and outsider interpretations of place. The image of Cornwall as West Barbary was largely based on outsider accounts of eighteenth century travellers encountering the unexpected impact of early industrialisation in a remote and peripheral region. The Celtic revival was principally an outsider construction eventually supported by the burgeoning holiday industry.³²² As Shields demonstrates, although place images are largely outsider constructions, when applied to a locality they may generate insider resistance as described by Cohen since broad generalisations start to break down when images are ascribed to the detailed circumstances and complexity of a particular setting. The place image of Cornwall as a holiday destination, as a haven for relaxation and enjoyment, does not fit comfortably with its low wage economy and pockets of poverty and deprivation.

In summary, Shields is critical of how he sees sociology as largely ignoring the spatial. He identifies a 'discourse of space' consisting of an understanding

³²⁰ B. Deacon, in E. Westland (ed.) 1997, pp. 7-24.

³²¹ Ibid p. 21.

³²² P. Payton and P Thornton, 'The Great Western Railway and the Cornish-Celtic Revival', In P. Payton (ed.) *Cornish Studies Three*, Exeter, 1995, pp. 83-103.

of place and the relationship between it and the individual as 'central to everyday conceptions of ourselves and the world we live in'.³²³ Shield's approach provides a way of deconstructing Penzance and its component settings as places. The concept of the place myth, embedded in history, memory and present spatial practices explains how competing discourses about the town are shaped and how different interpretations of representations of space and representational space generate conflict, as described in Chapter Nine, in the form of arguments about whether or how it should develop and what its future might be.

Place is therefore one of the cultural attributes people use to create meaning; to make sense of the world. But places are subject to different interpretations which may be contested.³²⁴ Following Barthes, Shields states that: 'The same place, at one and the same time, can be made to *symbolise* a whole variety of social statuses, personal conditions, and social attitudes'³²⁵. Places are perceived to have boundaries, they identify themselves against other places, they promote perceptions of difference and are subject to stereotyping and classification as part of what Massey and Jess call a 'geography of power'³²⁶ which determines how different interpretations are formed and resolved.

Identity and culture are critical to how such relations are played out as:

the identities of both places and cultures...have to be made. And they may be made in different, even conflicting ways. And in all this *power* will be central: the power to win the contest over how the place should be seen, what meaning to give it: the power in other words, to construct the dominant imaginative geography, the identities of place and culture.³²⁷

Hence, processes to enforce power such as ascription, contestation and stereotyping and the resulting conditions of hybridity, evolution and change which are fundamental to identity, ethnicity and culture also apply to place³²⁸.

³²³ R. Shields, 1991, p. 48.

³²⁴ D. Massey, 2004, p. 7.

³²⁵ R. Shields, *ibid*, p. 24.

³²⁶ D. Massey and P. Jess, in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds.), 1995, pp. 224-225.

³²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 232

³²⁸ A. P. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, London, 1985.

Place and identity

The discussion so far has considered the identity of places rather than how places may influence the identities of individuals and social groups. Manzo is critical of Lefebvre who she sees as ignoring the subjective in the shape of the experiences of individuals in forming place attachments and place identities.³²⁹ Several writers therefore adopt a phenomenological approach as the starting point for an understanding of the emotional relationship with place.³³⁰ Phenomenology 'is the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view'³³¹ or the way in which people give meaning to the everyday world of lived experience. It is concerned with significance of objects, events, the flow of time, the self and also relationships with places. It embraces various psychological ranges of experience such as perception, memory, imagination and social activity. A phenomenological approach to place attachment therefore draws principally on the disciplines of social and environmental psychology but also includes a wide range of other fields such as geography, sociology and political theory.

Hayden sees place attachment defined by a sense of place or personality of a location which is both a biological and psychological response to the immediate physical environment and a cultural creation.³³² The idea of 'knowing one's place', belonging to a particular place or having a sense of place is central to the identity of many and is a way in which individuals understand their position in the world. A sense of place is a combination of the physical environment, human activity and social processes.³³³ Place is summarised by Carl Sauer as a 'combination of natural and man-made elements that comprises, at any given time, the essential character of a

³²⁹ L. C. Manzo, 'Beyond house and haven: toward a revisioning of emotional relationships with places', *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 23, 2003, pp.47-61, p. 56.

³³⁰ See for example Manzo 2003, Dixon and Durrheim, 'Displacing place-identity: A discursive approach to locating self and other', *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 39, 2000, pp. 27-44. and Devine-Wright, 'Rethinking Nimbyism: The role of Place Attachment and Place Identity in Explaining Place-protective Action', *Journal of Community and Applied Psychology* 2009, pp. 426-441,

³³¹ Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/phenomenology/>

³³² D. Hayden, 1995, p.15.

³³³ R. C. Stedman, 2003,

place'.³³⁴ Where a sense of place is part of an articulation of identity then individuals feel they have a loyalty to that particular location but this feeling of belonging is counter-poised by perceptions of other places and people as different. There is therefore a contrast between a sense of one's own place when compared with other places which are represented as strange, unfamiliar and alien.³³⁵ Attachment to place is therefore an emotional bond which may be positive or negative between people and their environment.³³⁶

Gustafson suggests that there are four underlying dimensions to how individuals relate to places.³³⁷ Firstly, a *distinction* is made between similarity and difference which is based not just on the uniqueness of a place but also how it is categorised (what kind of place it is) and how it both differs and what it has in common with other places. Secondly, the *valuation* or degree to which a place is meaningful, based on personal experience; thirdly, *continuity*, usually signified by length of residence in a place, involving memory, family connections or historical traditions and finally *change* involving the acquisition of fresh meanings or images, responding to disturbances to place and forming new social relations. These dimensions focus principally on the relationship between the individual and place but other attempts to analyse and measure place attachment give more importance to the social nature of place identity. Raymond et al³³⁸ propose a similar set of criteria but argue that place attachment can be seen in terms of 'membership' of an environment and stress the importance of neighbourhood belonging suggesting that identity with place is collective as well as individual. Hence, attachment to place has a social dimension so that: 'Places can be interpreted as repositories of specific

³³⁴ Cited in D. Hayden, *ibid*, p.16.

³³⁵ G. Rose, 'Place and Identity: A Sense of Place' in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds.), 1995, p. 97.

³³⁶ L. C. Manzo, 'For better or worse: Exploring multiple dimensions of place meaning', *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 25, 2005, pp. 67-86.

³³⁷ P. Gustafson, 'Meanings of Place: Everyday Experience and Theoretical Conceptualisations', *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 21, 2001, pp. 5-16.

³³⁸ C. M. Raymond, G. Brown and D. Weber, 'The measurement of place attachment: Personal, community and environmental connections', *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 30, 2010, pp. 422-434.

meanings, memories, values and emotions which are shared by members of a particular group'.³³⁹

Twigger-Ross and Uzzell argue that rather than place being seen as a separate component of an individual's identity, 'all aspects of identity will, to a greater or lesser extent, have place related implications'.³⁴⁰ Firstly, they see this as expressed through a number of principles, based on social psychology but adapted to apply to an environmental context, starting with *distinctiveness* where place identification is used to differentiate the self from others and where place identification can be thought of as a social identification, i.e. as Cornish, an insider or native of Penzance. Secondly they agree with Gustafson that *continuity* in the shape of the apparent permanence of place is important both for a sense of identity and psychological wellbeing. Continuity may incorporate a sense of history, family connections or the importance of landscape as a memorial to a person's past. Consequently, disruption or displacement of the physical environment may contribute to personal anxiety and generate collective resistance.³⁴¹ Thirdly, a place can generate *self-esteem*; much of the inward migration to Cornwall is motivated by a search for a better life, a retreat from urbanisation and a desire for a connection with the environment.³⁴² Fourthly, *self-efficacy* is important in giving the individual the ability to influence their environment, their sense of the degree to which they can exercise personal agency or their ability to manage their immediate surroundings. Based on these principles Twigger-Ross and Uzzell conclude from their research in London Docklands that, 'the environment becomes a salient part of identity as opposed to merely setting a context in which identity can be established and developed'.³⁴³

³³⁹ P. Devine-Wright and E. Lyons 'Remembering Pasts and Representing Places; The Construction of National Identities in Ireland', *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 17, 1997, pp. 33-45, p. 35.

³⁴⁰ C. L. Twigger-Ross and D. L. Uzzell, 'Place and Identity Processes', *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 16, 1996, pp. 205-220, p. 206,

³⁴¹ P. Devine Wright, 2009.

³⁴² R. Perry, K. Dean, et al, 1986.

³⁴³ C. L. Twigger-Ross and D. L. Uzzell, 1996, p.218.

Memory and Imagination

Closely associated with myth and place imagery is how places are memorised; in particular how landscapes and buildings are an essential part of culture making contributions from history, tradition, literary descriptions and a sense of the uniqueness of locality.³⁴⁴ Samuel describes this process as forming ‘theatres of memory’ involving mental mapping in which places are represented by both imagery and association.³⁴⁵ Hayden sees the cultural significance of urban landscape as ‘storehouses for...social memories because...streets, buildings and patterns of settlement, frame the lives of many people’.³⁴⁶ But memory fixes place images at a particular period of time. As Manzo states, place memories are bridges to the past and recollection of a number of interconnected places can be conflated into a ‘web of meaning’ which forms a collectively important whole.³⁴⁷ There is often an instinct to preserve what is remembered and resist pressure to disrupt what already exists. Change brought about by regeneration and redevelopment has ‘taught many communities that when the urban landscape is battered, important collective memories are obliterated’.³⁴⁸ Similar points have been made about the restoration of mining sites in Cornwall by landscaping and tree planting, seeing these ‘improvements’ as damaging a cultural heritage which is central to Cornish identity. As part of the ‘theatre of memory’ they are regarded as part of the moral geography of the landscape which perceives ‘the landscape as a powerful cultural icon’.³⁴⁹ But for Samuel memory is also dynamic; it is an ‘active shaping force’ which forgets as well as remembers. Recollection constantly changes and is altered from generation to generation influenced by the experience of cultural conditions at particular periods in time.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁴ S. Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, London, 2004.

³⁴⁵ R. Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: The Past and Present in Contemporary Culture*, London 2012, p. xxi.

³⁴⁶ D. Hayden, 1997, p. 9.

³⁴⁷ L. C. Manzo, 2005, p. 78.

³⁴⁸ D. Hayden, *ibid*, p. 9.

³⁴⁹ P. Payton, ‘Derelict land and cultural identity – the case of Cornwall’, in N. Johnson, P. Payton and A. Spalding (eds.) *The Conservation Value of Metalliferous Mine Sites in Cornwall*, Truro, 1996, p. 12. See also S.P. Schwartz, *Voices of the Cornish Mining Landscape*, Truro, 2008.

³⁵⁰ R. Samuel, *ibid* p. xiii.

With the shared experience of families, neighbourhoods, and at work and leisure, such cultural memories are collective. As stated by Urry:

memories are irreducibly social: that people basically remember together; that the production of a shared memory of an event, place or person necessitates co-operative work...³⁵¹

But memories may be contested and place myths and images may not be universally shared. There may be rival claims challenging the meaning of places and how they are presented. As Gilda states in connection with memorising history:

there is no single...collective memory but parallel and competing collective memories elaborated by communities which have experienced and handle the past in different ways.³⁵²

Devine-Wright and Lyons, researching the role of historical places in constructing Irish national identity conclude that different groups associate the same places with different social memories exposing the conflicts between interpretations of Irish history.³⁵³ The collective recollection of place history may therefore be intensely political, manifested in the construction of competing discourses based on interpretations of the past designed to serve the interests of particular groups. Massey and Jess illustrate this point by reference to a case study of resistance to a tourist development in the Wye Valley which was opposed by incomers on the basis that it would disturb the essential rurality of the area, validating their objections by appealing to a memory of tranquillity and closeness to nature. They demonstrate that although the Wye Valley has historically been sought for its seclusion, it has also been an eighteenth century magnet for tourism and an industrial location for iron, wire and brass works from the fifteenth century. Hence the objectors ignored those parts of the historical record which did not support their case.³⁵⁴

³⁵¹ J. Urry, 1997, p. 27.

³⁵² R. Gilda, *The Past in French History*, London 1994, p. 10.

³⁵³ P. Devine-Wright and E. Lyons, 1997.

³⁵⁴ P. Jess and D. Massey, 'The Contestation of Place', in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds.), 1995, pp. 137-140.

The political nature of social memory and collective representations of history contribute to what can be termed a 'dominant' memory,³⁵⁵ which may derive from the outcome of struggles with competing historical perceptions which as a consequence are marginalised or ignored. Rather than a representation of the actuality, a dominant memory of place may arise from the place myth or the ideology relating to place. This may be constructed from a selected interpretation of history and tradition, banal references to 'our country' based on such interpretations (British values, the Cornish way, proper Cornish),³⁵⁶ exclusion of certain groups on the basis of place (incomers, 'emmetts') and distinctions made between 'our space' and 'their space'; between the centre and periphery.³⁵⁷ Therefore there is a relationship between the past and the present; memory 'directs our attention not to the past but to the *past-present relation*'.³⁵⁸ So the past lives on in its contribution to contemporary place myths and images, to the construction of discourses and the shaping of political debate.

Central to memory of place is the phenomenon of time. A definition of memory is that it is an accumulation of time which is an essential part of the process of memorising place and space. Game, quoted by Urry, states that '[s]pace transforms time in such a way that memory is made possible'.³⁵⁹ A city or landscape is both a repository of memory and of the past but also contains cultural symbols which have significance for the present and are interpreted differently from their original builders. Benjamin describes how this process of assimilating places is often based on an almost unconscious absorption of the landscape and urban environment rather than a conscious recording of buildings and spaces. Places are read by individuals adopting the role of a *flâneur*, who in the course of casually strolling through a town, sample it in ways which may be transitory and arbitrary but, using their imagination and fantasy, also trigger past memories and identity with a sense of place.³⁶⁰ This

³⁵⁵ Popular Memory Group, 'Popular Memory: Theory, politics, method' in R. Perks and A. Thomson (eds.), *The Oral History Reader*, Oxford, 1998, p.44.

³⁵⁶ See discussion of representation referencing M. Billig, 1995, in Chapter Two page 67.

³⁵⁷ J. Dixon and K. Durrheim, 2000, p. 22.

³⁵⁸ Popular Memory Group, *ibid*, p. 46.

³⁵⁹ J. Urry, 1997, p. 24.

³⁶⁰ W. Benjamin, *One Way Street and Other Writings*, London, 2009.

resonates with the idea of banal nationalism where identity is vested, in part, by a sense of place based on familiar everyday objects rather than overtly nationalistic symbols. It also relates to Edensor's idea of identity as embedded in a cultural matrix which includes both the ordinary and mundane formed from memory and traditional practices.³⁶¹ A similar point is made by Samuel who stresses the contribution of 'unofficial knowledge' to historiography based on popular memory, the work of non-historians such as librarians and collectors as memory keepers and the use of imagery and symbols.³⁶²

Linkages and Inter-relationships

Massey argues that in academic literature time has been privileged over space. Time is seen as dynamic equalling movement and progression whereas space is passive. In the case of writers such as Layla, space is 'associated with negativity and absence'³⁶³ and hence 'temporality must be conceived as the exact opposite of space'.³⁶⁴ Space has therefore attracted less attention than the more 'dynamic, exhilarating notions of narrative and history'³⁶⁵ explaining why, until recently, it has been a relatively neglected area of Cornish studies. But as already argued, space and time are 'inextricably interwoven' illustrated by the past present relationship in the Wye Valley example where historical interpretations were used to justify contemporary opposition to the use of space.

Harvey introduces the idea of time-space compression as the influence of technological change means that:

space appears to shrink to a "global village" of telecommunications and a "spaceship earth" of economic and ecological interdependencies...and as time horizons shorten to the point where the present is all there is...so we have to learn how to cope with an overwhelming sense of *compression* of our spatial and temporal worlds.³⁶⁶

³⁶¹ T. Edensor, 2002.

³⁶² R. Samuel, 2012, pp. 3-48.

³⁶³ D. Massey, 'Politics and Space/Time' in M. Keith and S. Pile (eds.) *Place and the Politics of Identity*, London, 1993, p.148.

³⁶⁴ Quote from *E. Laclau, New Reflections on the Revolution of our Time*, London 1990, in D, Massey, 1993, p. 148.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 152.

³⁶⁶ D. Harvey, 1989, p. 240.

Harvey does not argue that time-space compression means that the significance of place and space therefore decreases. Paradoxically the distinctiveness and character of a place becomes more important as the spatial barrier of distance diminishes and cultural hegemony increases. Therefore, in response to the need for certainty and stability, there is resistance to the 'placelessness' generated by time-space compression and an appreciation of place as a repository of history, of memory and a need 'to believe that it will still be there in its essence in many generation's time'.³⁶⁷ The rise of the heritage industry is a response with its 'nostalgia...for an idealised past, for a sanitized version not of history but of heritage'³⁶⁸ where everything old is considered valuable, a belief in a past golden age and the replacement of historical narrative by spectacle are all responses to time-space compression. So there are limits to the homogenising influence of the phenomenon of globalisation. Thus the global and the local are interlinked and, rather than places and culture becoming the same, there is a concern with maintaining difference through memory and tradition. For Jenkins, 'globalisation and heightened localization, far from being contradictory are interlinked: the word is becoming smaller and larger at the same time: cultural space is shrinking and expanding'.³⁶⁹

The idea of time-space compression leads to a rethink of the notions of place and space. Massey in attempting to reconcile the relationship between the local and the global quotes Allen and Hammett as seeing space as stretched out social relations which mean that relationships have become so interconnected that it is increasingly difficult to relate social space as belonging to a place.³⁷⁰ Yet clearly people identify with places and places acquire their own identities. As Harvey states, 'any place bound identity has to rest at some point on the motivational power of tradition'.³⁷¹ Massey suggests therefore rethinking place not 'simply as settled enclosed and internally

³⁶⁷ S. Lash and J. Urry, 1994, p. 250.

³⁶⁸ S. Lash and J. Urry, 1994, p. 245.

³⁶⁹ R. Jenkins, 2008(a), p. 45.

³⁷⁰ J Allen and C. Hammett, *A Shrinking World? Global Unevenness and Inequality*, Oxford, 1995

³⁷¹ D. Harvey, 1989, p. 303.

coherent' but replacing it with 'a concept of place as a meeting place, the location of the intersections of particular bundles of activity spaces, of connections and interactions, of influences and movements'. A place is therefore an intersection of networks of activities, movements and influences rather than a fixed, undisturbed and permanent entity.³⁷² So the identity of places is constructed in part from their inter-relationships with other places which in turn produce new combinations and distinctivenesses which counter the hegemonic influences of globalisation.³⁷³ Far from accepting the proposition that all places are becoming the same, Massey and Jess see that the unevenness of the processes of globalisation, the influence of migration, networks of social relations (part of which constitutes civil society) and the interdependence between places and other places makes each unique. Hence the distinctiveness of places is formed by their interrelationships which produce new combinations, new uniquenesses and hence the persistence of a sense of difference.³⁷⁴ So the apparent erosion of spatial boundaries does not reduce the significance of space. Urry argues that, on the contrary, place is not necessarily the victim of globalisation and 'we become more sensitised to what different places in the world actually or appear to contain'.³⁷⁵ Rather than impose homogeneity, globalisation has created increased competition between places which stress their differences and advantages over other places to attract investment, jobs and tourists from elsewhere. The need to celebrate difference and individuality through the proliferation of festivals and similar social practices in the latter part of the twentieth century, discussed further in Chapter Seven (Page 172), is an example of the effort to counter the hegemonic influence of globalisation.

An example of the relationship between the connectivity between what appear to be disparate places is Said's analysis of Jane Austin's *Mansfield Park* where the basis of the wealth of the society described, located in the bucolic Home Counties, is predicated on proceeds from another place based on the

³⁷² D. Massey, in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds.), 1995, p. 58.

³⁷³ D. Massey and P. Jess, in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds.), 1995, pp. 223.

³⁷⁴ D. Massey and P. Jess, in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds.), 1995, pp. 221-223

³⁷⁵ J. Urry, 1997, p.23.

ownership of a slave plantation in the West Indies, a global connection which is only mentioned in passing in the narrative.³⁷⁶ A more local example is the country estate of Trengwainton, on the outskirts of Penzance bought in 1814 by Sir Rose Price on the proceeds of his Caribbean sugar plantations.³⁷⁷ Similar linkages are the connections between Cornwall and other metaliferous mining areas. This has resulted in the increasing interest both inside and outside Cornwall in its diaspora, its status as an international surfing destination, the rise of literary tourism, its relationship with other Celtic nations, its international role in the development of green energy and the designation of its former mining areas as a world heritage site. Many of these cultural artefacts although based in the locality of Cornwall, are promoted globally and have become part of a wider transnational culture.³⁷⁸

Hierarchy and Scale

The link between place, identity and ethnicity is complicated by the issue of hierarchy and scale. This research concentrates on one place in Cornwall. So what is the relationship between identification as Cornish and identification with one particular part of Cornwall? As we have seen an individual can have multiple identities and where place is privileged, identities may also be multiple with individuals having a hierarchy of place based identities. Traditionally there has been intense rivalry between different places in Cornwall. Although territorial identity is only one of many identities; 'yet such geographical affiliations can be among the most salient and provoke the greatest degree of ambivalence and conflict'.³⁷⁹ Historically local identities have reinforced boundaries and differences.³⁸⁰ The immediate locality may therefore be for some a primary reference point either in terms of relating to a particular place, or contrasting with another place represented as different.³⁸¹ Bearing in mind Twigger-Ross and Uzzell's view that all aspects of identity will

³⁷⁶ E. W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, London 1993, pp. 69, 100-116.

³⁷⁷ M. Sagar-Fenton, *Penzance: The Biography*, Stroud, 2015, p. 141.

³⁷⁸ See discussion on the pasty (Chapter Three, Page 66-67) as a signifier. Pasties were promoted nationally by voucher in the *Sun* newspaper, 21st April 2015 in connection with the proposed 'pasty tax'.

³⁷⁹ G. H. Herb and D. H. Kaplin, 1999, p. 1.

³⁸⁰ K. D. M. Snell, 'The culture of local xenophobia', *Social History*, Vol. 28 No 1 2003, pp. 1-30.

³⁸¹ G. Rose, in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds.), 1995, p. 97

have place-related implications, for some it may be insignificant but for others extremely important and intensely local. Where it is important, individuals may identify with their immediate locality but for others their district, town, region or country may be their primary identification. Many hold a range of place identities which combine to make sense to the individual who may deploy different place identities depending on circumstances. A resident from Penzance may, for example, stress its difference in comparison with St Ives in the context of Penwith but adopt a Cornish identity when outside Cornwall.

As will be seen in Chapter Five, Penzance claims an individual identity albeit nested within a wider Cornishness. It is distinguished from the rest of Cornwall by a series of images which contribute to its place myth; its remoteness as the 'end of the line', a location of Celtic spirituality and a reputation as a principal artistic centre. Other signifiers emphasise its uniqueness such as St Michael's Mount, proximity to the Lands' End and ancient monuments, the fishing industry, artistic heritage and Regency architecture. It recognises itself and is recognised by the rest of Cornwall as different although at the same time is part of the fabric which comprises the identity of Cornwall.³⁸² This insistence on difference albeit within an umbrella of Cornish identity explains the traditional rivalries between different parts of Cornwall.³⁸³ Jenkins stresses that the 'role of symbolism in the social construction of community boundaries is ...a powerful contribution to our understanding of ethnicity'³⁸⁴ But he poses the question, when considering a hierarchy of identifications, 'where does an identity that is based on community and locality become an identity that is based on ethnicity?'.³⁸⁵ This point is important for the research question as it raises the relationship between ethnicity and place identity. In Jenkins' view, the difference between locality, community and ethnicity rests with the consequences of each; individuals have rights and responsibilities towards the locality in terms of civic engagement, administration and local government, in other word the space occupied by civil society. However, the

³⁸² J. Rhurmund, interview, 20 December 2011.

³⁸³ R. Perry, *Cornwall circa 1950* in P. Payton (ed.) pp. 28-29.

³⁸⁴ R. Jenkins, 2008(b), p. 44.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p. 43.

distinction made by Jenkins is unhelpful as the term community is ill defined and civil society does not recognise a clear separation between rights and responsibilities and social recognition; the two are inextricably linked. The evidence from this research suggests that civic rights and responsibilities contribute to how a locality perceives itself and that together with social recognition they combine as part of the micro-politics played out within civil society.

Privileging Place

The idea of place is central to the research question. The uniqueness of place is formed by a combination of how people collectively feel about a place and what image they hold of it. A second group of influences is its position in connection with a wider set of social relations which link it to other places and thirdly the processes of social change whereby a place accumulates a set of 'layers' of social relations³⁸⁶ which interact with previous layers to add new place images or modify the old. All three combine to form discourses about a place which draw on a variety of place myths and images. But whereas there may be general agreement about a place myth, images may not be uniformly recognised and accepted; the terms 'market town', 'administrative centre', 'shopping destination', 'tourist hub', 'cultural location' and 'deprived area' may all refer to the same place but imply alternative representations and meanings. Different combinations of labels will create conflicting discourses. Whether and how these are resolved will depend on power relations to privilege some meanings over others and contribute to determining a place image, a process which is played out within the politics of civil society and its relationship with the economic and governmental spheres. Each of the settings discussed in Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine show how myth, discourse and the attachment of loyalties has contributed to the shaping of place.

³⁸⁶ D. Massey and P. Jess, in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds.), 1995, p. 222.

Conclusion

The theories discussed in this chapter and which provide a framework for the subsequent analysis have been influenced by perspectives which lean towards interpretive and post structuralist positions. It is accepted that there is a danger that this epistemology, emphasising change, fluidity, permeability and hybridity can appear to form a confusing post-modernist soup where nothing is certain and everything is relative. But it is important to remember that the anchor or standpoint of this research is a study of Cornishness within a particular locality and the hypothesis tested is whether identity and cultural difference are expressed within the context of the social relations of civil society. This common thread shapes the analysis and influences the selection and application of theory to address the research question.

Chapter 4: Addressing the Research Question

This Chapter outlines the research design, the methods used, and the collection and analysis of data to deconstruct the settings in Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine. Organisations, defined by Jenkins as bounded networks of people are the components of civil society. They act as sites of identification by virtue of processes of affirmation such as rituals, so that 'we have to be made to feel "We"'³⁸⁷, and by such processes determine their identity by the application of criteria for membership recruitment. But as already explained, organisations and institutions are not closed entities; they change and develop in response to their environment. The research methodology has therefore been designed to investigate behaviour both within and between organisations. It draws on a combination of ethnographic and discourse analysis approaches to gather data, analyse the power relationships and the importance of ethnicity within each setting.

Selection of settings for study

As explained in Chapter One, (Pages 21-22), to construct a manageable framework, three settings were selected to address the research question chosen to reflect some of the principal issues which are of concern both in Penzance but are also mirrored across contemporary Cornwall. There are however, reservations in using settings as a basis for research as they do not occur naturally but are constructed by the researcher from a combination of economic, cultural and social factors.³⁸⁸ A setting is defined by drawing a boundary around a set of phenomenon or activities but these may not always be recognised as a coherent grouping by the community in which they are located. The research process therefore needs to test the initial assumptions of the researcher regarding the scope of the setting. Secondly, even when its boundaries are widely recognised, they are not fixed and are subject to redefinition and renegotiation both by the organisations within them and by the researcher during the progress of the research. Thirdly, however comprehensive the research it is not possible to give a complete account of

³⁸⁷ R. Jenkins, 2008(b), p. 176.

³⁸⁸ M. Hammersley and P. Atkinson, *Ethnography*, 2007, London, p. 32.

the multitude of interactions within a setting so that those areas are selected for study which appear to be most fruitful for understanding the relationships under investigation. Finally, as an artificial construction, a setting is not a closed system and it is sometimes necessary to go outside as part of the research to explain certain phenomena within it. Hence Chapters Five and Six provide historical and contemporary overviews of Penzance providing a context for the more detailed investigations which follow.

Theory and Method

The theory and methodology on which the research is based draws on a combination of three main sources which focus on ethnography, discourse analysis, and interviewing: Hammersley and Atkinson's *Ethnography, Principles in Practice*, Phillips and Jorgensen's *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* and Holstein and Curium's *Inside Interviewing; New lenses, New Concerns*³⁸⁹. Data to support the analysis include twenty seven hours of recordings from thirty two individual and group interviews, (Appendix One), involving forty interviewees, quantitative data from a variety of published sources, publically available reports issued by local authorities, a cuttings library based on the local newspaper and web sites. In addition, local knowledge or 'naturally occurring material'³⁹⁰ has been used to anchor the discussion in the research topic.

Ethnography

The principal methodological approach is ethnographic which involves investigating people's actions and accounts in everyday contexts using data gathered from interviews, observations and other sources to study social and cultural phenomena or what Hammersley and Atkinson, following Malinowski, call 'foreshadowed problems'³⁹¹. This means looking at the actors involved, how they respond to the situations they face, how they view one another and how they see themselves within the context of the setting under investigation.

³⁸⁹ J.A. Holstein and J. F. Gubrum, (eds.) *Inside Interviewing: New Lenses, New Concerns*, London 2003.

³⁹⁰ L. Phillips and M.W. Jørgensen, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*, London, 2002, pp.120-121.

³⁹¹ M. Hammersley and P. Atkinson, 2007, p.3.

Hammersley and Atkinson describe ethnographic research as ‘have[ing] a characteristic “funnel” structure, being progressively focused over its course.’³⁹² Another way of describing the process of inquiry is ‘like grabbing a ball of string, finding a thread, and then pulling it out’ which makes it difficult to predict the trajectory of the research³⁹³. This approach, of necessity, concentrates on a few in-depth cases of the phenomenon to be studied which provide insights into the wider topic under investigation. The sources of data include observation of behaviour, interviews, documents, texts and images to interpret meanings, actions and institutional practices.

There have been a number of studies which explore Cornish ethnicity by means of interviews; Husk, Kennedy and Dickinson are examples,³⁹⁴ but this research proposes that new perspectives may be found by a study of organisations within civil society rather than individuals which suggests that the focus of the investigation should be ‘an analysis of organizations in action, a discovery of how the social is organized’ and how this action is achieved in work people do with texts’.³⁹⁵ Smith, who originally coined the term institutional ethnography when researching the position of women within organisations, defined it as:

the experience of some particular person or persons as the entry point into forms of social organisation which shape local settings but originate outside of them. Understanding the localized social world of the individual or group is no longer treated as an end in itself and inquiry is not restricted to observation and interviewing...actual practice – how things actually work – become the focus of the investigation.³⁹⁶

Institutional ethnography modifies some of the approaches used in other types of ethnographic research. It requires a style of interviewing where ‘people are not the object of inquiry in and of themselves’ but rather peoples’ experiences are used to interpret how the organisation of discourses create

³⁹² M. Hammersley and P. Atkinson, 2007, p. 160.

³⁹³ M. L. DeVault and L. McCoy ‘Institutional Ethnography: Using Interviews to Investigate Ruling Relations’, in J.A. Holstein and J. F. Gubrum, (eds.), 2003, p. 373.

³⁹⁴ See for example, Husk 2012, Kennedy 2013 and Dickinson 2010.

³⁹⁵ K. Walby, ‘On the Social Relations of Research: A Critical Assessment of Institutional Ethnography’, *Qualitative Inquiry* Vol.13 No. 7, 2007, pp.1008-1030, p 1012.

³⁹⁶ P. R. Grahame, ‘Ethnography, Institutions and the Problematic of the Everyday World’, *Human Studies* 21: 1998, pp. 347-360, p. 352, quoting from D. E. Smith, *The Everyday World as Problematic, A Feminist Sociology*, Toronto,1987.

'ruling practices'.³⁹⁷ In this sense it is more akin to oral history research where the object is to discover a wider picture through personal experience.³⁹⁸

Ruling practices are established through texts consisting of accounts and their interpretation. Although not described in the academic literature as discourses, they are a closely related concept, the difference being that ruling practices govern how organisations operate within professional or operational cultures whereas discourses exist in the wider public sphere and influence how power is distributed within society.

Smith sees the tasks for institutional ethnography as three fold. Firstly, a concern for ideology by addressing the practices which are used to make an institution's processes accountable by, for example, the use of professional discourses. Secondly, studying the activities in which people are involved in which produce the world they experience; in other words what they actually do. Thirdly, investigating ways in which a local organisation operates as part of a broader set of social relations linking multiple sites of human activity; for example, the bureaucratic rules and regulations, termed 'relations of ruling', within which organisations operate.³⁹⁹ So the focus of institutional ethnography 'is not to learn about the individual per se but to learn about the individual's location in the relations of ruling or to learn about what the individual does with texts'.⁴⁰⁰

Institutional ethnography influenced how the research was conducted. Interviews were used principally to position the interviewee in the setting under investigation, understand their role within an organisation, their influence over its actions, the nature and history of the organisation itself and its relationship with other organisations and institutions both within and outside the setting. However, the research approach was modified to investigate a range of collective cultures. For example, many, but not all interviewees were voluntary members of organisations rather than employed

³⁹⁷ K. Walby, 2007, p.1020.

³⁹⁸ A. Green and K. Troup, *The Houses of History: A Critical Reader in Twentieth-Century History and Theory*, Manchester 1999, pp. 230-238.

³⁹⁹ P. R. Grahame, 1998, pp.353-356, quoting from D.E. Smith, 1987.

⁴⁰⁰ K. Walby, *ibid*, p.1013.

by institutions. Relations of ruling in organisations are based on consent rather than institutionally imposed. At the same time, institutional rules influence how organisations behave in circumstances where both are working in partnership or where the institution has authority over the organisation.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis sits within the overarching umbrella of ethnography but also has its own distinctive epistemology.⁴⁰¹ There are many approaches to discourse analysis but they have in common the study of particular ways of talking about and describing social and cultural phenomena. In discourse analysis the social world is created through language and meanings. Representations achieve meaning through discourses. A discourse is formed from a number of statements which provide an order of language for presenting knowledge about a topic, for example the combination of ideas and myths which construct a place image.⁴⁰² Following Foucault, discourses reflect power relationships within society as they construct social identities and social relations and are drivers for social change generated both by struggles between discourses and changes within them.⁴⁰³ An analysis of competing discourses within the same social domain or setting, aims to identify which are dominant, where there is competition between them and which assumptions are shared between discourses within a particular domain or setting.

Phillips and Jørgensen suggest that discourse analysis is appropriate to investigate issues such as the significance of national identity in interactions between people in an organisational context or where there is a struggle between different knowledge claims.⁴⁰⁴ Deacon proposes that a form of discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis (CDA), 'might offer a particular methodological appeal for those seeking critical Cornish Studies'⁴⁰⁵ since it

⁴⁰¹ M. Hammersley and P. Atkinson, p. 97.

⁴⁰² F. Tonkiss, 'Analysing text and speech: content and discourse analysis' in C Seale (ed.), *Researching Society and Culture*, London, 2007, p. 373.

⁴⁰³ Ibid, p. 374.

⁴⁰⁴ L. Phillips and M.W. Jørgensen, 2002, p.2

⁴⁰⁵ B. Deacon, 'From "Cornish Studies" to "Critical Cornish Studies": Reflections on Methodology' in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Twelve*, Exeter, 2004, pp.13-29.

offers the possibility of deconstructing how Cornish people regard themselves and are regarded by others. Discourse analysis is primarily dependant on primary sources such as interviews, conversations, newspaper reporting and observation. Its interest is in investigating ruling practices using a number of texts rather than textual examination of a few. So rather than a detailed analysis of individual texts, although this has been necessary on occasion to illustrate particular points, the approach used has marshalled the corpus of research material to identify discourses and ruling practices from a number of sources. Since institutional ethnography seeks to uncover relations of ruling within organisations and there is a close relationship between them and discourses, this was considered an appropriate way of combining the two methodologies.

Phillips and Jørgenson identify three complementary and overlapping approaches to discourse analysis. Laclau and Mouffe argue that discourses give meaning to the social world but because of the instability of language this meaning can never be fixed. So discourses are never closed and are being constantly transformed through contact with other discourses. The struggle between competing discourses may result in the formation of overarching and dominant hegemonic discourses which are then regarded as objective and received wisdom. CDA, as developed in Fairclough's three dimensional model, considers discourses firstly on the basis of texts, secondly by identifying discursive practice or how texts are consumed and interpreted, and lastly social practice, which links the discourse with a social, political or cultural context.⁴⁰⁶ Discursive psychology, based largely on the work of Potter and Wetherell,⁴⁰⁷ investigates the use of discourses in constructing and negotiating representations of the world from which identities are formed. Their work links with social identity theory already discussed, (Pages 56-58), which recognises that relationships between groups are rooted in social and historical contexts.⁴⁰⁸ Although there is a considerable degree of overlap between them, Laclau and Mouffe focus on the political power of discourses,

⁴⁰⁶ N. Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*, London, 1995.

⁴⁰⁷ L. Phillips and M.W. Jørgensen, 2002, pp.98-137.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid, p.100.

Fairclough on how they are constructed and discursive psychology on how they are used. All three however:

recognise that in every discursive practice, it is necessary to draw on earlier productions of meaning in order to be understood, but that some elements may also be put together in a new way, bringing about a change in the discursive structures.⁴⁰⁹

Hence discourses do not emerge from nowhere readily formed; they need to be set in some form of context related to the history and culture of the society from which they have evolved.

The Approaches Combined

As Hammersley and Atkinson point out, there is tension between the naturalist position of ethnography which suggests that a study of behaviour reflects social reality and the possibility that, in undertaking research, ethnographers impose their own interpretation based on their particular social conditioning or 'the constructionism and cultural relativism that shape their understanding of the perspectives and behaviour of the people they study'.⁴¹⁰ This tension is reinforced by the use of discourse analysis which 'involves a perspective on language that sees [it] not as reflecting reality in a transparent or straightforward way but as constructing and engaging the terms in which we understand that social reality'.⁴¹¹ So there is a danger that a research approach, combining an overarching naturalistic methodology with social constructionist methods to gather and interpret data, contains an inherent contradiction. Hammersley and Atkinson, while never entirely reconciling this conflict, suggest that the influence of post-structuralist and post-modernist ideas blur the distinction between naturalist and positivist approaches to ethnography leading to an acceptance by most ethnographers that there are hidden structures and sources of power which underlie society, that 'some discourses/voices are suppressed... that the function of research should be to liberate them'⁴¹² and that straightforward ethnographic descriptions of reality do not have scientific authority. Given that the task of institutional ethnography

⁴⁰⁹ L. Phillips and M.W. Jørgensen, 2002, p.139.

⁴¹⁰ M. Hammersley and P. Atkinson, 2007, p.10.

⁴¹¹ F. Tonkiss, 2007, p. 373.

⁴¹² M. Hammersley and P. Atkinson, *ibid*, p.13.

is to explore ruling practices within organisations, it therefore moves closer to a constructivist position. In support of this partial reconciliation of positivist and naturalistic positions, Phillips and Jørgenson suggest that, despite epistemological differences, it is legitimate to construct elements from both discursive and non-discursive approaches when designing research methodology. They argue that such multiperspectival methodologies are advantageous in combining different forms of knowledge to produce a wider understanding of the research topic providing there is an appreciation of the relationship between them and the contribution each approach can make.⁴¹³

Other analytical methods were considered but rejected. It would have been possible to rely entirely on sources of published information to produce an analysis of the festival and Penzance harbour settings but they would not have enabled such a close analysis of the reasons why there were divisions over cultural interpretation and performance. A textual analysis based on a purely ethnographic approach would have explored roles and relations of ruling but would not have exposed the wider context of each setting. The methodology adopted, combining both elements of discourse analysis and institutional ethnography, offered the most promising approach to address the research question.

Research Design

It has been noted that ethnographic research is relatively unstructured characterised by initially identifying ‘foreshadowed’ problems, selecting settings for research to analyse these problems and initiating a process for refining and funnelling data collection and analysis to arrive at conclusions. Throughout this process foreshadowed problems are constantly reviewed and may be discarded or modified by the researcher in the course of the research. In contrast the research design for discourse analysis may follow a more structured process as for example, the three dimensional model of textual analysis employed in CDA. There are however overlaps and common reference points between these apparently different approaches. They are

⁴¹³ L. Phillips and M.W. Jørgensen, 2002, p.2.

both principally qualitative (although they may incorporate quantitative data), involve textual analysis and are used to investigate similar phenomena. While the methodology adopted should demonstrate coherence, 'it is possible to create one's own package by combining elements from different discourse analytical perspectives and, if appropriate, non-discourse analytical perspectives'.⁴¹⁴ The incorporation of discourse analysis into the research design for this study uses elements from all three approaches outlined by Phillips and Jørgensen, for example Laclau and Mouffe's approach to power and Fairclough's order of discourse.

The starting point for analysis is the 'order of discourse' which is the 'complex configuration of discourses which compete in the same domain'.⁴¹⁵ The topic Cornishness, as an example, might be considered as an order of discourse consisting of a number of different discourses about what being Cornish means. A domain equates to a material and institutional setting as identified by the three selected for this research. Within an order of discourse there may be a dominant hegemonic discourse or a struggle between different discourses requiring analysis. The task of the researcher is to identify the relative strength of discourses within the order, which assumptions are common to all and who has access and is able to influence discourses within the domain. It might be possible to identify many discourses within a particular order so the researcher needs to limit the study to those which relate to the standpoint of the research and the research question.

So with the caveat that the following stages in the research process were reviewed and repeated and did not follow a linear sequence, they are listed as follows;

- **The research question;** based on the assumption that the existing depictions of Cornish ethnicity may be challenged by an investigation into the degree to which civil society in a particular location in Cornwall

⁴¹⁴ L. Phillips and M.W. Jørgensen, 2002, p.2.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid, p. 141

reflects identity and ethnicity based on the hypothesis that Cornishness may be found in the social practices and micro-politics of civil society.

- **Sample for study;** the choice of Penzance as a location and the selection of settings within the town to reflect some of the principal issues of concern in contemporary Cornwall.

- **Production of naturally occurring material;** the gathering of qualitative data from newspapers, reports, web sites, conversations and other textual sources to provide a background to the setting to be analysed and the identification of possible discourses for study.⁴¹⁶ Quantitative data was drawn from a range of sources including the National Statistical Office, the Census, and Cornwall Council Community Intelligence Unit in combination with qualitative data for a wide range of reports commissioned by the Council on socio-economic topics. In CDA terms this provided the basis for understanding the context for the discursive and social practice of settings but recognised that any initial view would be subject to review. This occurred following further analysis of data, particularly from interviews, additional reading and the need to explore unanticipated areas of theory on festivals, social capital and Nimbyism.

- **Production of material through interviews;** consisting of face to face interviews with a cross section of the actors involved in each of the settings. There are issues about whom to interview and the time taken to conduct a sufficiently large sample of interviewees to obtain valid results. Each of the settings had interviewees who were identified either from initial contacts or were suggested by their prominence in a particular setting. Snowball sampling was used where the researcher relied on the personal recommendations of respondents within a particular network about whom else to interview to explore further the setting and organisations working within it. It was necessary to be alert

⁴¹⁶ See F. Tonkiss, 2007, p.376 regarding collection of data from a wide variety of sources.

however to the possibility that relying on recommendations rather than a quantitative sampling method might bias the results. A range of institutions and organisations operated in each setting revealing, in some cases, strong differences of opinion about motivation and the interpretation of events. As part of the funnel structure of ethnographic research, some individuals were interviewed more than once as the research progressed and further questions arose. Approximately eight interviews were held for each setting plus a further twelve to gain an overall view of Penzance. Not all of the potential interviewees agreed to be interviewed. Some councillors and the local MP were not prepared to discuss controversial issues particularly the link to Scilly and the redevelopment of Penzance harbour.

A list of those interviewed is shown in Appendix One giving a summary of the names, descriptions and the reason why they were interviewed. Of the forty people interviewed, three were interviewed more than once to follow up points previously raised and thirteen were involved in group interviews. Eighteen were female and seven were under eighteen. A variety of views were canvassed about Penzance by interviewing a minister of religion, a local author, a newspaper columnist, representatives of local businesses and local government. Interviewees were selected from the principal actors involved in the organisations and institutions in a particular setting. Inevitably, because of the focus of the research on civil society, the majority of those interviewed tended to be middle class, middle aged and articulate.

Interviews were non-standardized and semi-structured to assess the attitudes and values of participants and to review the initial understanding of discourses formed from the review of naturally occurring material. As the object of institutional ethnography is to focus research on how discourses within organisations determine ruling practices rather than personal experiences of the interviewee it was, however, necessary to request some personal information as background. Prior to the interview, a prompt sheet was prepared based

on an initial understanding of the topic but this was used as a starting point as unforeseen points emerged in the course of discussion. Appendix One illustrates examples of the questions and responses. Where possible, questions were open-ended and interviewees were encouraged to be discursive. To achieve comparisons both within and between settings, some key topics and questions were common to all. For instance, a basic question used at the start of the interview was 'How would you describe Penzance?' or 'What do you understand by Cornish identity?' Information gathered from interviews did not always fall into one or other of the three settings. Inevitably an interview for one setting touched on another so there was sometimes an overlap reflecting the interlocking nature of networks within civil society in a small town.

Most interviews took approximately between 45-60 minutes. They were held in a variety of locations, the majority on neutral territory such as a café or pub although some were held at the interviewee's home or work place. The choice of venue rested with the interviewee. Four group interviews were held consisting of three or four individuals. Interviews were recorded digitally and stored electronically. One interview was videoed as part of a seminar presentation.⁴¹⁷ They were supported by direct observation such as attendance at public meetings, observation within organisations (Chamber of Commerce AGM, Treneere Team Spirit Committee), by-standing at events (Golowan, Montol) and visiting public performances.

Interviews were conducted in accordance with the University's policy for ethical research, the appropriate authority having been obtained from the College of Humanities ethics officer Professor Graham Key. Interviewees were asked to sign a consent form setting out details of the project, contact details, the information to be collected and how it

⁴¹⁷ R. Harris, 'Social Capital on a Cornish Estate. The role of Women in a Deprived Neighbourhood', Daughters of Cornwall, ICS Seminar, Tremough, 5th October 2013.

would be stored (Appendix One). Children were interviewed at Trelya⁴¹⁸ with the consent of the organisation in groups supervised by youth workers who were present throughout the interview. Where their comments are referenced, the names have been changed.

- **Transcription and coding;** this step involved both transcribing the whole or taking selections from the interview and coding the data by identifying themes for further analysis. Although the research design required a high degree of reflexivity for both this and the previous step it was particularly important to review previous assumptions, reflect on the influence of the standpoint taken by the research and if necessary reinterpret some of the subsidiary research questions based on the information gained from interviews. Appendix One shows how interviews were colour coded according to the main themes of the research and where discourses were identified in the responses.

- **Analysis;** ethnographic research involves an interaction between problem formulation, data gathering and analysis rather than distinct stages of a process. Hence, the analytical framework outlined developed as the research progressed, new information became available and ideas continued to evolve. The approach needed to identify the principal organisations within each setting and how they related to the order of discourse and individual discourses within the setting. Four dimensions based on criteria identified by CIVICUS⁴¹⁹ were used as a framework for analysing organisations ;
 - the nature of the organisation including its role, size, structure and resources;
 - how it defines itself through objectives, processes of affirmation, patterns of decision making and allocation of tasks;
 - how people become members, the criteria for membership and the methods of selection;

⁴¹⁸ A children's' organisation working on Treneere. See Chapter Eight, p.262-266.

⁴¹⁹ J.M. Mati, F. Silva and T. Anderson, 2001, pp.26-31.

- the organisation's influence both within the setting and on public attitudes and policies.

In parallel with the investigation of civil society, the framework for studying discourses about Penzance as a place and the representation of ethnicity in a particular setting is based on an approach suggested by Phillips and Jørgensen consisting of the following elements:

- investigating ways in which each discourse within the order of discourse ascribes meaning;
- exploring areas of struggle and conflict between different discourses;
- identifying those assumptions which are common to all discourses and regarded as commonsense.⁴²⁰

This approach was used to compare different texts, for example between interviews or between interviews and written material. It also was used to investigate intertextuality to explore the relationship between the investigated text and other texts.⁴²¹ But the analysis was iterative as further understanding revealed by closer textual analysis required further investigation of other texts or re-interviewing, an approach which is similar to the funnel structure of ethnographic research.

- **Validation**; requires tests of coherence by methods such as comparing information from different phases of the research and cross checking accounts of interviewees about the same phenomenon or series of events.⁴²² It became clear from early on in the analysis that actors often had very different perspectives and also had conflicting views on the objectives and motivation of other actors. Triangulation of data did not mean that the research sought the 'truth' or what really happened. Rather, as a study of ascription of meanings, struggle between discourses and

⁴²⁰ L. Phillips and M.W. Jørgensen, 2002 pp.144-145.

⁴²¹ Ibid, p.69.

⁴²² Ibid, p.173.

different facets of ethnic identity, the purpose of validation was to explore differences and similarities, compare perspectives and expose conflict.

Data

The principal category of data collected was qualitative which, together with other bibliographical sources, formed a corpus of information categorised as follows:

- Data from the thirty two interviews which were digitally recorded, transcribed and analysed by topic
- A literature search on the history of Penzance.
- Published documents produced by public bodies or by consultants on their behalf. These examined socio-economic phenomena, identified issues need to be addressed by public policy, explored options for development and made recommendations. Such material is an important source of information for analysing the discursive and social context of hegemonic discourses constructed from public policy. As Jacobs observes; 'The scrutiny of policy documents is important, not least, because organisations and policy decisions are dependent on "writing" in order to regulate and legitimise their functions'.⁴²³
- Other material published by organisations and pressure groups setting out their purpose and views based on discourses which are often in opposition to public documents. This took the form of written publications but also included information published and opinions expressed through web sites, blogs and social networking
- The local newspaper for the Penwith area is the *Cornishman* reporting on Penzance for over 150 years and which claims to have the highest penetration of a paid for weekly newspaper the UK read by 75% of people in West Cornwall rising to 88% in Penzance.⁴²⁴ Despite a perception of local newspapers as yesterdays' media the *Cornishman* is still influential taking positions on issues like the future of Penzance town centre, Newlyn Harbour development and the importance of

⁴²³ K. Jacobs, 'Key Themes and Future Prospects: Conclusion to the Special Issue', *Urban Studies* Vol. 36, No.1, 1999, pp. 203-213, p. 204.

⁴²⁴ *Cornishman*, 1st March 2012.

Golowan to the local economy. It has extensive letters pages, columnists 'Old Mike' and Fi Read commenting on local issues, and regular contributions from two local Members of Parliament and occasionally the leader of Cornwall Council. It was used both as a source of historical information and also for researching contemporary Penzance. A cuttings library, organised by setting between 2010-15, was compiled as a data base to track how local events developed and how discourses evolved.

- Quantitative data from various Censuses, the Office of National Statistics and Community Network and Neighbourhood profiles which are published by Cornwall Council Community Intelligence Unit based on data sets compiled from a wide range of population, housing, health, crime and economic data. The data sources used have been compiled from various studies on the demographic and economic profile of West Cornwall commissioned by Cornwall County Council and the successor Unitary Authority as a framework for strategic planning, as a background to securing European funding and in preparation of a local development framework for Cornwall.⁴²⁵ In addition, Cornwall Council Community Intelligence Unit publishes a range of data based around the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) for lower layer super output areas (LSOAs) averaging 1500 population.⁴²⁶ These give detailed information on population, crime, housing and poverty at sub ward level.⁴²⁷ These sources have been used selectively

⁴²⁵ These include, Land Use Consultants, R. Tym and Partners and TRL, *The Cornwall Towns Study*, Bristol, 2005, Opinion Research Services, *West Cornwall Housing Requirements Study*, Swansea, 2008, Cornwall Development Company, *Penzance and the Isles of Scilly Investment Framework*, Truro, 2009, Cornwall Council, *Understanding Cornwall 2009-10*, Truro, 2010, Cornwall Council, *Green Paper for Culture*, Truro, 2010, G. V. A. Grimley, *Cornwall Retail Study*, 2010.

⁴²⁶ www.cornwall.gov.uk/intelligence; Indices of Deprivation are a compilation of a range of indicators which aim to measure different facets of deprivation including income, employment, health and disability, education skills and training, barriers to housing and services, crime and living environment. They are used to rank areas rather than as an absolute measure of deprivation. See Cornwall Council, *Understanding the Index of Multiple Deprivation*, 2011.

⁴²⁷ LSOAs nest into wards. For the study area they break down as follows, Promenade Ward; E01019001, Penzance Promenade Ward East, E01019000, Penzance Promenade Ward West; Central; E01018999, Penzance Town Centre Central, E01018998, Penzance Town Centre North, E01018995, Penzance Central Ward East, E010018994, Penzance Central Ward West; East; E01018997, Penzance Treneere, E01018996, Penzance Lescudjack and Ponsandane

for the socio-economic profile of Penzance and to provide background information on Treneere.

The Position of the Researcher

Institutional ethnography and discourse analysis require a certain distance to be maintained between the topic and researcher to evaluate, for example, the strength of competing discourses or the role played by different actors in a particular setting. There has been therefore a need to be reflexive, to acknowledge the researcher's role in generating research knowledge,⁴²⁸ to be particularly alert to preconceived ideas, taken-for-granted assumptions and to be aware of a possible emotional involvement with the research topic.

As a researcher, I identify as Cornish having been brought up in West Cornwall and with a family background which can trace its ancestry to the seventeenth century. This close identification can lead to an emotional engagement with the research topic and a lack of objectivity. However, rather than the interviewer taking a detached position to record 'events' and 'facts', it can be argued that 'only by directly engaging with the interviewee can we supply an ethical and democratic context for recording and then interpreting personal testimonies'.⁴²⁹ Taking this approach, an interview may be seen as a collaborative event between interviewer and interviewee. Being Cornish, understanding something of the prevailing social discourse and retaining the vestige of a Cornish accent helped in building relationships and gaining access. In addition, a local authority/housing association background and working in the voluntary sector also facilitated contact with a wide range of interviewees. However, although empathy with interviewees may have facilitated access and helped to obtain fuller answers, as Rehman points out it runs the risk of assuming similarity where it may not exist.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁸ S. Ali, K. Campbell, D. Branley and R. James, 'Politics, Identities and Research' in C. Seale, (ed.), *Researching Society and Culture*, London 2007, p. 25.

⁴²⁹ G. Tregidga and L. Ellis, 'Talking Identity: Understanding Cornwall's Oral Culture Through Group Dialogue', in P. Payton, *Cornish Studies Twelve*, Exeter. 2004, pp.88-105, p.90.

⁴³⁰ L. A. Rehman, 'Recognizing the Significance of Culture and Ethnicity: Exploring Hidden Assumptions of Homogeneity' *Leisure Services*, 24, 2002, pp. 43-57.

Hence the importance of reflexivity which includes not only making explicit the position taken by the researcher towards the research but also how it is conducted, i.e. the role the researcher takes in relation to the setting being researched, as a participant, observer or recorder. The success of the research is dependent on the approach adopted, the perception of the host community and the access afforded to carry out the research. In certain circumstances the researcher may be regarded with suspicion as a critic or spy and consequently it is difficult to obtain interviews or fail to conduct a useful interview. This can be a particular problem with institutional ethnography where the interviewer may touch on sensitive and controversial local political issues regarding both organisations and individuals which explain the resistance of the local MP and some councillors to be interviewed. Walsh suggests that researchers need to gain the trust and rapport of subjects of ethnographic research which has implications for their attitude, dress and sociability, summarised as impression management, without immersing themselves to the point where they go native. Hence he recommends that the position adopted should be one of a naïve participant or a marginal bystander.⁴³¹

Application of the research design

The first stage in the analysis of a setting was a reformulation of the basic research question to apply it to the particular setting under consideration. In the case of the festivals discussed in Chapter Seven the investigation related to the extent to which they reflect performed ethnicity, what elements of Cornish culture they celebrate and how civil society is organised to enable them to happen. For Treneere, it concerned the organisation of civil society, the role of public agencies and the relationship between ethnicity and social capital. The harbour redevelopment reflected the conflicting discourses about Penzance, place identity, the role of the state and the degree to which ethnicity was a factor in the disputes about how the harbour should develop.

⁴³¹ D. Walsh, 'Doing ethnography' in Seale, (ed.) 2007, pp. 232-233.

The data collection stage involved compiling a corpus of information including the history of the setting, naturally occurring material, texts, quantitative data and interviews. From this it was possible to construct a description of the setting, secondly, identify the principal organisations within its civil society and thirdly, locate those discourses which influenced how things happened within the setting by coding the ethnographic data and identifying the principal discourses. (Appendix One).

Applying this research design meant that although there was consistency with the overall approach it needed to be sensitive and flexible to reflect three very different circumstances. There are nevertheless common elements which apply to all three settings. They each exist within the overall context of Penzance and contribute to its place image. Each of their histories is rooted in the wider history of the town and there are interrelationships between them such as the link between the harbour and urban regeneration and the building of public housing on Treneere. But they also exhibit different characteristics which required modification to the research design, for example the reliance on interviews and observation for the festival and Treneere settings as opposed to a greater emphasis on written texts for the harbour analysis.

Written textual material specifically on Golowan and Montol is sparse consisting mainly of programmes, web site information and press reports. Hence much of the data was obtained by interviewing those who had been involved with its organisation, publicity material and newspaper reports. The analysis also involved observation of parades at both festivals, examination of images and attendance at programme events.

The study of Treneere has concentrated on a limited number of organisations which operate within the estate, its relationship with public sector institutions and the extent to which ethnicity influences these relationships or is a factor within its civil society. It is set within an overarching discourse about social housing estates. Treneere is a focus for organisations and institutions working in the area. This takes the form of partnerships which seek to alleviate a range of social and economic problems and provide community cohesion by

means of social interventions.. There is little written documentation about how these programmes are applied, how agencies interact with local residents and how residents organise themselves although there has been some analysis of the effectiveness of programmes in evaluation reports. The approach has incorporated quantitative data, observation and use of what naturally occurring material exists but has focused mainly on interviews with representatives of organisations and institutions working on Treneere and with groups of residents.

The debate about the Scilly link and the redevelopment of the harbour exhibits a sequence of events, a well-defined group of actors and a clear topic for analysis. The case for developing the link is well documented as are the alternatives proposed by those opposed. The narrative, which can be divided into a number of stages, has been extensively reported in the local press and recorded on several web sites. Analysis of this setting has needed to take note of the relationship between the different, and often competing, discourses of economic development, heritage, environmental sustainability and tourism. Material for researching this setting included local authority and consultants reports, newspaper reporting and interviews which reflected a high degree of intertextuality. To understand the relationships between the different agencies involved, the analysis focused on the order of discourse within this setting, examined which discourses were dominant, where there were struggles between different discourses, which assumptions were shared and the extent to which identity and ethnicity influenced the debate.

The research process increasingly found its focus as ideas developed and concepts were refined. The iterations exposed issues which were not initially foreshadowed problems; for the festivals the distinction between high and low culture, on Treneere the role of women, the importance of leadership and the accumulation of social capital. The opposition to the Penzance harbour regeneration exposed the motivation for opposition to development and the central importance of place image in the debate. Two important areas for further investigation which had not initially been identified were exposed as the process developed; the importance of place identity in all three settings,

its conflation with ethnicity and the influence of class on how identity is perceived and performed.

Most of the research for this investigation took place between 2010 and 2014. One of the characteristics of studying contemporary phenomena is that they are likely to change as the research progresses. Although not directly concerned with the settings studied, the helicopter link with the Scillies was closed during the period of study; there were concerns about the impact of a further supermarket on the town centre and an increasing impact from continuing reductions in public expenditure which have had an impact on support both for Treneere and Golowan. The environment of these settings is continuously changing so the study conclusions are based on a snapshot of the data available during the period of research. But although it evolves and mutates in response to these changes, there is a distinction to be made between the rapid turnover of events and their influence on the more gradual evolution of the phenomena studied.

Chapter 5: Penzance: Capital of Penwith

A traveller, alighting from the train at Penzance station 325 miles from central London, has arrived at the end of the line. With the exception of local bus services and the links to the Scilly Isles there are no onward connections. Penzance is the most south westerly town on the British mainland; at the periphery of both Britain and Cornwall. But after leaving the station and ascending the curve of Market Jew Street, a *flâneur* would recognise from the elegantly domed market hall,⁴³² the statute of Sir Humphrey Davey, substantial Georgian town houses, (Figure 5.4) and impressive public buildings, (Figures 5.3 and 5.5) that this is a town of substance and a centre of its surrounding area. The view from the top of the street overlooking the sweep of Mount's Bay, St Michael's Mount and the Lizard, explains why Penzance has also been a destination for tourists since the middle of the eighteenth century. But it would be also apparent from strolling through the streets that few of the town's inhabitants are wealthy, that there are several who appear to be new age travellers and the proliferation of cut price stores and charity shops suggest that many find life a struggle.

Penzance today is experiencing an unprecedented degree of change. Its status as a major Cornish town is under threat, the future of communications with the Scilly Isles is uncertain, a number of regeneration initiatives have foundered or are stalled and prospects for the local economy depend on circumstances which are beyond the control of local decision makers. This Chapter sets the context for a detailed analysis of the three settings. As explained in Chapter Four, (Pages 95-96) settings are constructed for the purposes of research; they are a creation of the researcher rather than recognised by the community. Each of the three investigated function within orders of discourse; they don't exist in isolation. What links them is the wider context in which they are set. So this chapter starts by looking at some of the themes which have emerged from the history of Penzance, continue to shape its civil society in the twenty first century and, when combined, constitute a

⁴³² Figure 5.1.

narrative influencing how the town sees itself today, form its place image and contribute towards an overarching order of discourse.



Figure 5.1: Market Hall

R J P Harris

Historical background; Origins

The history of Penzance has been recorded by numerous authors⁴³³. By the eighteenth century it was the most prominent town in West Cornwall and was the place from which eighteenth and nineteenth century travellers would start from or use as their base to explore the Penwith peninsula. Hence many

⁴³³Penzance is well served by a number of histories of the town, the best known nineteenth century account being J. S. Courtney, *A Guide to Penzance*, Penzance, 1845, and the most scholarly work, P. A. S. Pool, *The History of the Town and Borough of Penzance*, Penzance, 1974, from which much of the historical basis for this section has been drawn and updated by the recently published, M. Sagar-Fenton, *Penzance: The Biography*, Stroud, 2015.

accounts of the town are included in wider descriptions of West Cornwall, emphasising features of interest in the surrounding area including the Land's End, St Michael's Mount and ancient monuments.⁴³⁴ Most accounts suggest that in the fifteenth century Penzance, together with Marazion, Newlyn and Mousehole was one of a number of fishing villages around the shores of Mount's Bay. Leland writing in c.1536 describes the town as distinguished only by its market.⁴³⁵ Marazion received its borough charter in 1595 whereas Penzance did not become a borough until 1614. Most writers agree that it was in the seventeenth century that Penzance, with its substantial harbour, became the predominant settlement on the shores of Mount's Bay. However more recent research claims that Penzance became pre-eminent about three hundred years earlier in the fourteenth century under the patronage of Alice de Lisle, heiress and lord of the manor of Alverton, and that Penzance/Alverton had already become a substantial settlement with the granting of a market charter in 1332.⁴³⁶

Despite the uncertainty about its origins, it is generally accepted that a seminal event in the town's history occurred in 1595 when Mousehole, Newlyn and Penzance were attacked by the Spanish and largely destroyed. But by the early 1600's Penzance had recovered sufficiently to be granted a charter which enabled the borough, *inter alia*, to repair the damage from the Spanish raid, appoint a mayor and aldermen with powers to enact local legislation, maintain the harbour and ironically, in the light of its subsequent history, suppress piracy.⁴³⁷ In addition to fishing and port activities, the area around Penzance was mined for tin. As all tin produced locally had to be sent to the nearest coinage town, which for West Cornwall was Helston, the town petitioned to become a coinage town and was granted its charter in 1663.

⁴³⁴ See, for example, J. A. Paris, *A Guide to the Mount's Bay and the Land's End*, London, second edition, 1824, Mrs Craik, *An Unsentimental Journey Through Cornwall*, London, 1884, or W. H. Hudson, 1908.

⁴³⁵ T. Grey (ed.), *Cornwall: The Travellers' Tales*, Exeter, 2000, pp. 27-28

⁴³⁶ T. Goskar, A Short History of Alice de Lisle: Patroness of Penzance, paper presented at Penzance literary festival, 2013.

⁴³⁷ P. A. S. Pool, 1974, p. 30.

Henceforward considerable quantities of tin were exported from Penzance to both London and Europe.⁴³⁸

Despite its remoteness, one of the characteristics of the early history of Penzance is its connectivity with other places. It was in the front line of the continuing hostility with Spain following the defeat of the Armada. Its charter charged it with defending the coastline from raids by North African pirates. It exported two products which were in demand in Europe, pilchards and tin and imported timber, iron, coal and salt.⁴³⁹ By the seventeenth century Penzance was strategically and commercially important, at the intersection of a number of activities, movements and influences which are essential for the formation of place identity.⁴⁴⁰ From the early seventeenth century it was responsible for its own administration as granted by its charter and from its status as a coinage town although, as Pool remarks, the charter did not extend, as it did in many Cornish towns, to the granting of Parliamentary representation.⁴⁴¹ However, the town had the authority to govern itself, reinforced in 1836 by the creation of a reformed borough with an extended franchise.

The new Borough maintained largely the same boundaries formed by a semi-circle of half a mile radius drawn from the town centre and bisected by the coastline, (Figure 5.2) rather than following topographical features.⁴⁴² Pool notes from harbour regulations imposed by the newly formed Borough that they distinguished between three different categories of users as inhabitants of Penzance, strangers or denizens (other Cornish and English) and aliens or foreigners. Harbour users defined by their identity were the basis of imposing differential charges to the detriment of strangers and aliens.⁴⁴³ These processes involving the establishment of connections with other places, asserting authority by the delineation of boundaries and the marking out of

⁴³⁸ P. A. S. Pool, 1974, pp. 44-45.

⁴³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 44.

⁴⁴⁰ D. Massey, in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds.), 1995, p. 58.

⁴⁴¹ P. A. S. Pool, *ibid*, p. 33.

⁴⁴² *Ibid*, p. 31.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 45.

difference are the basic building blocks of the formation of place identity; spatial and social constructions based on a geography of power.⁴⁴⁴

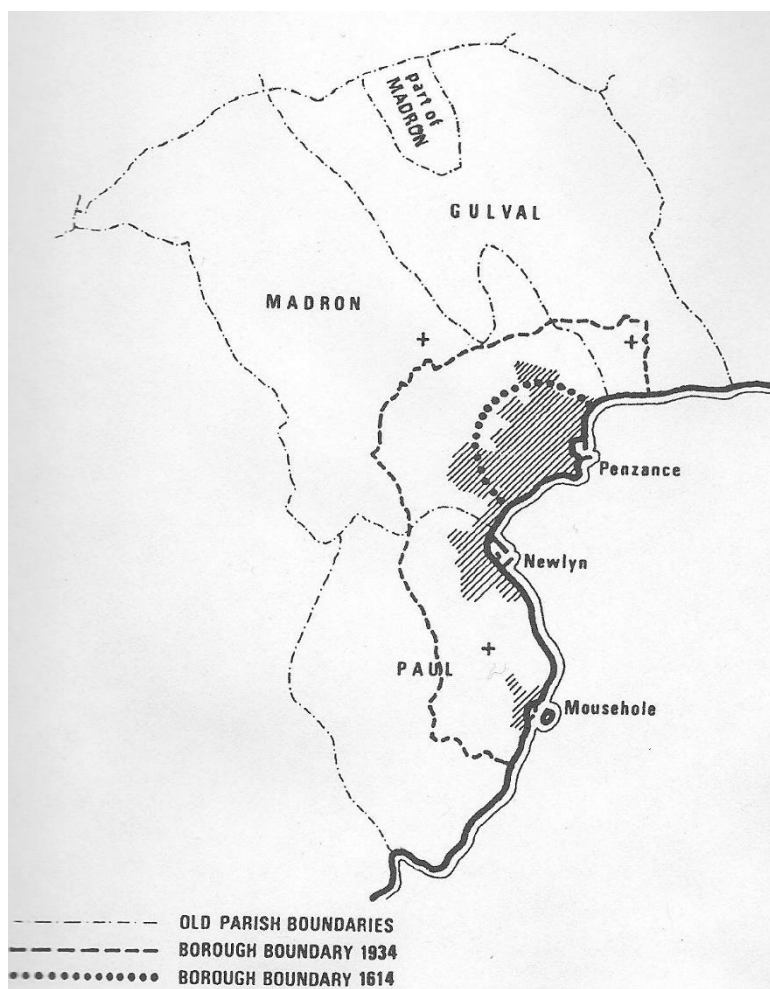


Figure 5.2: Penzance Boundaries © Penzance Town Council⁴⁴⁵

Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

During the latter part of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Penzance consolidated its position as the administrative and social centre for the surrounding area of Penwith. At a considerable distance from other major Cornish towns and with road travel difficult and time consuming, it became a focus for commerce, social activities and administration involving entertainment, banking services and learned societies. Courtney states that

⁴⁴⁴ D. Massey, 1995, in D. Massey and P. Jess, p. 69.

⁴⁴⁵ Adapted from M. Hardie, *Penzance: The Town and Around*, Penzance 2000.

'the Penzance markets are among the largest in the County' and that the pier 'is now the largest in Cornwall, but still is found to be insufficient for the trade of the town'⁴⁴⁶ Much of this prosperity was based on the developing role of the harbour for both exporting tin and fish and importing coal, grain and other commodities to serve its growing industrialised hinterland, an important linkage which has continued to define the town. The increasing wealth was reflected in the Assembly rooms and theatre built as part of the Union Hotel 1791 which also contained a theatre. A number of learned societies emerged during this period including the Royal Geological Society of Cornwall, 1814, the Penzance Library, now known as the Morrab, 1818, and the Natural History and Antiquarian Society, 1839. Pool paints a picture of a vibrant civil society during this period claiming that as a social centre Penzance was second only to Truro.⁴⁴⁷ It also started to become an important financial centre with three banking companies established by 1810.

The prosperity during this period is reflected in the town's domestic architecture, perhaps the best example being Chapel Street which was the focus for much of its cultural and social life and where many of the organisations mentioned above were first established. It contains such landmark buildings as the Egyptian house, the Union Hotel and one of the largest Methodist Chapels in Cornwall, (Figure 5.3). It also features several impressive town houses originally build for merchants and bankers. The Cornwall and Scilly urban survey describes it as 'one of the most picturesque of all urban scenes in Cornwall... [and] it is amongst the best streets in Britain.'⁴⁴⁸ This prosperity can also be seen by the use of expensive materials such as brick and stucco in a number of substantial Regency terraces constructed during the town's age of elegance which fringe its western side and give it a character rivalled only by Falmouth and Truro (Figure 5.4). This architectural heritage which is a key element in the in the identity of Penzance, is defended by an active Civic Society and has influenced the debate as to how the town should respond to pressures for development.

⁴⁴⁶ J.S. Courtney, 1845, pp. 31 and 36.

⁴⁴⁷ P.A.S. Pool, 1974, p.119.

⁴⁴⁸ N. Cahill and S. Russell, *Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey, Penzance, Truro*, 2003, p. 47.



Figure 5.3: Wesleyan Chapel; Chapel Street

R J P Harris

From the beginning of the nineteenth century, various branches of nonconformity began to play an important part in Penzance civil society dominated by a number of influential families, the Branwells, Carnes, Bolithos and the Holmans being particularly prominent and forming complex relationships between the civic, commercial, intellectual and religious life of the town.⁴⁴⁹ The Branwells,⁴⁵⁰ for example, were not only important mill owners and shipping merchants but also involved themselves in the administration of the Borough as mayors and were instrumental in building the Wesleyan chapel in Chapel Street, (Figure 5.3). They were also connected by marriage to the Carne banking family who also had interests in mining and who were involved with the formation of the Royal Geological and Natural History Societies. The Bolitho family established a rival banking dynasty and had interests in tin smelting and tanning at Chyandour.⁴⁵¹ These networks of

⁴⁴⁹ J. Horner, *Even in this Place: 19th Century Nonconformists and Life in the Borough of Penzance*, Penzance, 2010.

⁴⁵⁰ Maria Branwell was the mother of the Brontë sisters.

⁴⁵¹ P.A.S. Pool, 1974, pp. 123-124.

prominent families controlled civic, commercial and religious life.⁴⁵² Non-conformist chapels provided Sunday School instruction and by the middle of the century supported the establishment of day schools.⁴⁵³ As elsewhere in Cornwall, non-conformity in its various guises was a major thread running through Penzance civil society, linking its prominent families and providing educational opportunities, which were not to be supplanted until the introduction of state education.



Figure 5.4: Regency Terracing

R J P Harris

The nineteenth century saw the population of Penzance triple from 3,382 in 1801 to 10,425 by 1871⁴⁵⁴ due to wealth generated from its principal industries, fishing, mining and agriculture. This growth was boosted in the latter part of this period by linking, in 1859, the West Cornwall and Cornwall railways to the national railway system following the opening of the Royal Albert Bridge. Fresh fish and agricultural products were able to be quickly

⁴⁵² Unusually for Cornwall a number of prominent families continue to live on their estates in the Penzance area, the St Aubyns' at St Michaels Mount, the Bolithos' at Trengwainton and the Le Grices' at Trereife

⁴⁵³ J. Horner, 2010, pp. 55-60.

⁴⁵⁴ Censuses for 1801 and 1871.

transported to major centres of population and, at the same time, made West Cornwall accessible to large numbers of tourists from other parts of Britain.⁴⁵⁵ By 1891 the population of Penzance had risen to 12,432. Many of the buildings and landmarks, several designed by local architects, which now distinguish the town were built during this mid-nineteenth century period of prosperity including the Market House in 1838, the public buildings, now known as St John's Hall, in 1867, (Figure 5.5), the construction of the Albert Pier in 1846, and wet dock in 1884.



Figure 5.5: St John's Hall

R J P Harris

The growing importance of tourism is reflected in the Promenade, built in 1843, and the Queen's Hotel in 1861. The increase in population during this period is evidenced by the large areas of mid-Victorian granite fronted terraced housing to the north and east of the town centre. Penzance by the end of the 1860's was a thriving urban centre with a range of industries underpinning its prosperity, having a well-developed commercial and administrative sector, a flourishing port and acting as a focus for West Cornwall society. This prosperity was supported by a hinterland which included a diversity of primary industries including mining, quarrying, fishing

⁴⁵⁵ S. C. Jenkins and R. C. Langley, *The West Cornwall Railway: Truro to Penzance*, Usk, 2002, pp. 228-229.

and agriculture. All these factors were reinforced by the town's connection to the national railway network which by the 1890's, once gauge differences between the Great Western Railway and the rest of the national network had been resolved, enabled tourists from all parts of Britain to reach the 'remote, wild and romantic' far reaches of West Cornwall and give artists accessibility to both picturesque and 'authentic' subject matter and, at the same time to city based galleries to display and market their work.⁴⁵⁶

Ronald Perry in his survey of Cornwall circa 1950⁴⁵⁷ characterises Cornish towns as 'independent-minded, self-contained "city states", of roughly equal size, each with its own jealously guarded, personality, traditions and spheres of influence'. They were characterised by 'localised political loyalties, self-sufficient administrative units, separate public transport and retail catchments, a dispersed and specialised pattern of industry, free standing port ownership and a fragmented intellectual infrastructure'.⁴⁵⁸ Although his description applies to the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, his analysis is based on the legacy from Victorian urban life established in nineteenth century Cornwall. Penzance 150 years ago exhibited many of Perry's characteristics. The exception was its employment structure, since it was less dependent than most other parts of Cornwall on specialisation and had developed, by the middle of the century, a significant service and transport sector employing 37.4% of the workforce in 1851 which grew to 48.5% by 1891⁴⁵⁹. Other industries included tin smelting, boatbuilding, leather working and flour milling. Consequently, when mining in Penwith began to fail, Penzance was initially less adversely affected than many Cornish towns (although its hinterland, particularly St Just and Pendeen suffered loss of employment and population) and did not experience mass emigration in the latter quarter of the nineteenth century⁴⁶⁰ to the same extent as other parts of

⁴⁵⁶ B. Deacon, 'Imagining the Fishing: Artists and Fishermen in the Late Nineteenth Century', *Rural History* 12:2, 2001 pp.159-178.

⁴⁵⁷ R. Perry, in P. Payton (ed.), 1993, pp.28-29.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid p. 28.

⁴⁵⁹ 1851 and 1891 Census returns

⁴⁶⁰ B. Deacon, 'We don't travel much, only to South Africa': Reconstructing Nineteenth-century Cornish Migration Patterns', in P. Payton, (ed.), *Cornish Studies Fifteen*, Exeter, 2007(a), pp.90-116.

Cornwall. The town reached its zenith at the end of the nineteenth century but by that time the closure of many local mines in Penwith had triggered the demise of related industries such as smelting and started to have an impact on the service and financial sectors⁴⁶¹. In addition, competition from east coast fishing fleets with more modern steam driven trawlers began to challenge the local traditional drift net fishery. The completed rail connection enabled their greatly increased catches to be landed locally and quickly distributed to the rest of the country. Resentment from local fisherman culminated in the Newlyn riots in 1896 ostensibly on the grounds of the failure of Sunday observance⁴⁶² but masked by an underlying hostility towards outsiders competing successfully for local fishing grounds.

Twentieth Century

By the beginning of the First World War Penzance had reached the stage of Payton's paralysis⁴⁶³ although this occurred later than in most parts of Cornwall as the decline in primary industries was mitigated by a more diverse local economy and a growing tourist industry. This relative decline was reflected by its population which by the turn of the twentieth century had stopped growing and had started to decrease as recorded by the 1921 and 1931 censuses. However, some interwar development took place in the Lariggan area between Penzance and Newlyn and the Borough Council commenced a slum clearance programme in the early 1930's building new estates at Parc Wartha and Penalverne to the west of the town centre.⁴⁶⁴ The decline in traditional industries was partly offset by the aggressive marketing of Cornwall as a holiday destination by the Great Western Railway emphasising its difference, remoteness, romance and Celticity which ushered in an era of mass tourism.⁴⁶⁵ Penzance was one of the destinations able to take advantage of the link between tourism and the railway associated with

⁴⁶¹ P. A. S. Pool, 1974, pp. 161

⁴⁶² A. K. Hamilton Jenkin, *Cornwall and its People*, London, 1946, p. 112-113.

⁴⁶³ See Chapter Two, pages 13 and 39. What the data suggests is that the centre-periphery model as an explanation of the history of nineteenth and twentieth century Cornwall does not take account of local variations where the experience of some areas was different or occurred at a different period.

⁴⁶⁴ P. A. S. Pool, *ibid*, p. 173.

⁴⁶⁵ P. Payton and P. Thornton, in P. Payton (ed.), 1995, pp. 83-103.

this re-invention of Cornwall.⁴⁶⁶ Uniquely it combined access to a wide variety of ancient sites, proximity to sandy beaches, picturesque fishing villages and a number of iconic symbols such as the Land's End, and St Michael's Mount. These attractions, together with the legacy of the Newlyn artists, the surviving fishing industry, a mild climate and arrival at the 'end of the line' at what was perceived to be the most Cornish bit of Cornwall, all promised to give the tourist a rich, varied and un-English holiday experience.⁴⁶⁷ Thornton traces how the Borough Council responded to such marketing initiatives by increasingly stressing in successive editions of its town guide the importance of Penzance as a centre for excursions to explore the variety offered by Penwith rather than a self-contained resort⁴⁶⁸. At the same time it improved the town's attractiveness by revamping the sea front and remedying the absence of an accessible bathing beach by building in 1935 the *art deco* Jubilee Pool.

In 1934 the Borough of Penzance was enlarged as a result of a national review of County Districts, to include parts of the neighbouring parishes of Gulval, Madron and Paul, (Figure 5.2). This brought within its boundaries the communities of Heamoor, Newlyn, Paul and Mousehole, greatly increasing its area and doubling its population to approximately 19,350⁴⁶⁹. The popularity of the Gilbert and Sullivan opera had added piracy to the iconography of the town and the adopted coat of arms of the new authority included a pirate as one of its supporters. The image of the pirate has subsequently become the principal symbol of the town, used in advertising, the name of its rugby team and as a tourist brand. The functions of the extended Borough remained broadly the same but were administered against a background of increasing regulation of local authorities by central government and, in 1888, the introduction of a further tier of governance by the creation of Cornwall County Council. As a reflection of its former status, the Borough retained its own

⁴⁶⁶ The importance of the Great Western Railway to the Penzance economy is demonstrated by its representatives attending as guests at the pre-war annual banquet of the Chamber of Commerce; *Cornishman* 2nd February 1937.

⁴⁶⁷ See S. P. B. Mais, *The Cornish Riviera*, London, 1924.

⁴⁶⁸ P. Thornton, 'Cornwall and Charges in the "Tourist Gaze"', in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies One*, Exeter, 1993, pp. 80-96, p. 92

⁴⁶⁹ P. A. S. Pool, 1974, p. 169.

police force until 1947 when it was merged into the County force, the last independent force in Cornwall to be so absorbed.⁴⁷⁰ Perhaps the most important development, following the creation of the extended authority, was the continuation of slum clearance around the harbour area and the provision of public housing with estates considered to be well laid out with spaciouly designed houses.⁴⁷¹ The 1934 system of local government continued until 1974 when the majority of the powers of the Borough were transferred to Penwith District Council, (Penwith DC). A successor Town Council assumed parish council responsibilities within the 1934 boundaries.

Governance and Civil Society

Historically civil society in Penzance seems to have experienced periods of dispute and conflict frequently concerned with how the town should develop and the role of the local authority. There is a symbiotic relationship between local government and civil society.⁴⁷² As will be seen in Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine, the boundaries between contemporary civil society and local governance are fluid and porous but this relationship has changed and developed over time. In the early days of the Borough the distinction between civil society and the state was even more difficult to draw than it is now.⁴⁷³ During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it often took the form of dispensing patronage within the wider community, in the nineteenth century it was characterised by social and economic networks linked to non-conformity and industry and in the present with overlapping memberships between councillors and local organisations, support for the voluntary sector and the award of grants. In the seventeenth century there were few, if any, officials in the sense that they are known today and appointments such as the Town Clerk were part time, a position held by Penzance solicitors as late as 1930.⁴⁷⁴ The community governed itself under the terms of its charter. With a restricted franchise throughout much of its history, governance was confined

⁴⁷⁰ P. A. S. Pool, 1974, p. 148.

⁴⁷¹ N. Cahill and S. Russell, 2003, p.33, and P. Laws, 'A Review of the Architecture of Penzance', in P. A. S. Pool, 1974, p. 203.

⁴⁷² M. Taylor, *Public Policy in the Community*, Basingstoke, 2003, p. 60.

⁴⁷³ For a discussion of the relationship between local government and civil society see S Goss, *Making Local Government Work*, Basingstoke, 2001, pp. 50-62.

⁴⁷⁴ P. A. S. Pool, *ibid*, p. 135

to an elite. The same family names keep reoccurring throughout the history of the Borough.⁴⁷⁵ Mayoral elections were often hotly disputed; the period at the turn of the eighteenth century being particularly turbulent with factions challenging for political leadership and resorting to litigation.⁴⁷⁶ The early nineteenth century saw conflict between Methodists and Baptists over the spiritual life of Penzance and its surrounding area. Throughout much of the nineteenth century the Corporation tried to ban public celebrations on St John's Eve on the basis of the risk of fire from torches and flaming tar barrels and finally succeeded in 1877.⁴⁷⁷ Disputes over the development of the harbour occurred throughout the Borough's history with the Corporation constantly attempting, often unsuccessfully, to cope with accommodating and giving shelter to the increasing size and number of vessels. The election of 1841, for example, was fought on the proposal to provide a new pier, which was initially opposed on the grounds of expense and, 'after years of discord and frustration'⁴⁷⁸ not completed until 1846, an echo of events more than 150 years later. Throughout the inter-war period the slum clearance and rebuilding programme was criticised for breaking up old communities, causing ratepayers unnecessary expense by promoting renting in preference to owner occupation.⁴⁷⁹ In the mid twentieth century there was controversy over filling in part of the harbour for a car park to ease congestion from an increasing number of tourists and a proposed system of sewage disposal by sea outfalls both of which were opposed by a minority of councillors and conservationists continuing the disputatious nature of the town's civil society.

Although it has always been the larger town, Penzance has been part of the St Ives constituency since the 1832 reform act. Its first two Members of Parliament, (MPs) following constituency reform in 1885, Sir John Aubyn and Thomas Bolitho were Liberal Unionists from Penzance representing a continuation of the influence of the local network of influential families. Until

⁴⁷⁵ M. Sagar-Fenton, 2015, p. 82.

⁴⁷⁶ P. A. S. Pool, 1974, pp. 57-69.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid, pp.131-133.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 139.

⁴⁷⁹ See *Cornishman* 6th May 1937, 22nd July 1937 and further discussion in Chapter Eight, Page 227.

1922 when the Conservative John Hawke was elected, the constituency had been Liberal or Liberal Unionist and a Liberal connection, albeit in name only, survived until 1966 when the National Liberals represented by John Nott, merged with the Conservatives. Between 1968 and 1997 the seat was held by the Conservatives who lost to the Liberal Democrat, Andrew George in 1997 but retook it in the 2015 general election. This Parliamentary electoral history reflects a similar pattern across much of Cornwall where the contest has almost always been between the Conservatives and various manifestations of Liberalism usually representing the more radical traditions of non-conformity.⁴⁸⁰ Until relatively recently, local politics in Cornwall has been dominated by independent councillors many of whom were elected unopposed⁴⁸¹ although this has now started to change with the increasing involvement of political parties as discussed in Chapter Six, (Page 150).

Historical Themes/Order of Discourse

A number of themes emerge from the evolution of Penzance from fishing village, to administrative and social centre, a flourishing port, market town and tourist resort, which have remained broadly consistent and which influence its current order of discourse. The first concerns responsibility for its governance. From 1614, until the inception of Penwith DC in 1974, despite the increasing influence of central government and changes in local authority functions and boundaries, Penzance perceived itself as a self-contained town managing its own affairs. Although other bodies controlled major public services, for most of its citizens the first port of call was the Borough Council. Pool regarded the 1974 reorganisation with mixed feelings:

Penzance is about to lose its cherished corporate dignity, which it has borne honourably and untarnished by corruption for more than three and a half centuries.

However, he continued that:

no friend of the town can deny that it needs some vital stimulus to rouse it from present frustrations and give it a new purpose in a world from which tin,

⁴⁸⁰ G. Tregidga, *The Liberal Party in South West England since 1918*, Exeter, 2000, p.4.

⁴⁸¹ R. Harris, 'The Survival of Political Difference amid Organisational Change: Voting Behaviour in County Council and Unitary Elections in Cornwall since 1945', in G. Tregidga (ed.) *Cornish Studies One*, third series, Exeter, 2015, pp.146-173.

pilchards and markets have long passed away as adequate foundations of prosperity and in which tourism is such an inadequate substitute....⁴⁸²

a view that would still resonate with many Penzance residents today. His hope was that the reorganisation of local government might create that stimulus. The creation of Penwith DC meant that the town became part of a wider authority incorporating the whole of Penwith and taking in the Borough of St Ives, the Urban Districts of Hayle and St Just and the Rural District of West Penwith, but its headquarters remained in Penzance in the former Borough Council offices at St Clare. The town's civil society continued to look to the 'Council' to take a lead, represent the area and provide its public services. For almost 400 years the Borough, in its various guises, provided a focus for identity and civic pride by representing the interests of Penzance and promoting its welfare. In 1974 this relationship became diluted and in 2009, with the creation of a unitary Cornwall, it experienced a fundamental change.

The second theme is the myth of the town as remote and peripheral. In several interviews it was described as 'the end of the line'⁴⁸³ meaning that it is as far it's possible to go; the place where people finally get off. The social history of the railway in Cornwall has yet to be written but its symbolism is such that 'the railway has etched itself into local folk memories and traditions in a way that is quite remarkable'.⁴⁸⁴ Despite roads carrying the great majority of traffic into and out of Penzance, its location as a terminus is defined by the railway which is seen as metaphorical link with 'up country', a legacy of the route taken by thousands of nineteenth century emigrants and which, despite the ubiquity of road transport, is still seen as its major link with large centres of population elsewhere in the United Kingdom. So the railway is an important part of the identity of Penzance; on the one hand it is the final stop which encapsulates its remoteness and difference; on the other, it is representative of its connection with the outside world.

⁴⁸² P. A. S. Pool, 1974, p.181.

⁴⁸³ Interviews with G. Musser, 8th February 2012, S. Glasson, 8th March 2012, and D. Cliffe, 9th March 2012.

⁴⁸⁴ S. C. Jenkins and R. C. Langley, 2002, p. 235.

But as the history of Penzance shows despite this myth which cements its image of peripherality, the town has also been, and remains, connected to a number of locations. As the most important harbour west of the Lizard, from the sixteenth century it has frequently been part of the front line in hostilities with Spain and France and at risk from raids by pirates and privateers⁴⁸⁵. Gun emplacements were built at Battery Rocks in 1740 which became a location for coastal defences for the next two hundred years and, as will be seen, have been the site of controversy over harbour developments in the twenty first century. Trade along the coast and with Europe and links to the Scilly Isles connected it to a wider world. Public house names such as the Turks Head, the Navy Inn and the Nelsonian association with the Union Hotel,⁴⁸⁶ indicate that Penzance was more than a remote backwater. In both world wars the harbour was an important military asset which needed to be defended. Self-contained and a focus for West Cornish life it may have been, but throughout its history it has been part of a wider canvass illustrated by its twinning links with Bendigo in Victoria reflecting the large numbers of miners who emigrated to Australia, Cuxhaven in Germany as an example of post-war reconciliation and Concarneau, Brittany with which it shares common Celtic and cultural traditions.

Thirdly and related to its place image, there has been a continuing tension, between the idea of Penzance as a destination where artists encounter picturesque fishing communities, where counter-urbanists, seeking a different lifestyle,⁴⁸⁷ feel that they have reached their goal, where arriving tourists expect to find a holiday resort and the romance of Penwith all of which needs to be protected, and Penzance as a centre providing employment, a comprehensive range of services and connectivity with other places to continue to perform its function as a major Cornish town. Put simply, there is confusion over its identity; is it primarily a market town and administrative

⁴⁸⁵ P. A. S. Pool, 1974, p.106.

⁴⁸⁶ Reputedly where the news of Trafalgar and the death of Nelson were first reported.

⁴⁸⁷ R. Perry, K. Dean et al 1986, and interviews with J. Rhurmund, 20th December 2011, and D. Cliffe, 9th March 2012.

centre or is it a tourist destination? These two notions are not necessarily in conflict but have developed into discourses which have polarised opinion and generated power struggles which have had a profound effect on its civil society. One interviewee described these different interpretations of place image as follows:

Penzance has always been snotty about tourism. It's a market town, it's an administrative centre and has its own hospital. It's nice if they come but the town looks down on places which make their pitch to attract tourists.⁴⁸⁸

The tension between these images of the town has become more acute with the impact of globalisation and administrative change which threaten its former status but, at the same time drive the principal industry on which it has become increasingly dependent. These three themes contribute to its place image as an important centre as the capital of Penwith, traditionally responsible for its own affairs with its own uniquenesses and character which it wishes to protect. But within this overarching order of discourse there are inherent contradictions which emerge as conflicting discourses, which are discussed in the following chapter.

⁴⁸⁸ M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 20th December 2011.

Chapter 6: Penzance; Principal Town or Tourist Destination? Contradictions and Conflict

This Chapter outlines the context for the detailed study of the three settings by providing a brief socio-economic profile of Penzance and an overview of its present day governance and civil society. It discusses how the historical themes which contribute to its place image and order of discourse identified in Chapter Five inform debate between conflicting discourses. It also looks at how Penzance residents regard the town's culture and place identity and their own identities and ethnicity in the context of inward migration, globalisation and debates within the town's civil society.

Penzance defined

So far no distinction has been made between the locality of Penzance and its administrative boundaries but the extension of the Borough in 1934 included a number of other communities which continue to retain their identities.

Mousehole and Newlyn do not see themselves as part of Penzance⁴⁸⁹.

Historically there has always been rivalry between them based on competition over fishing and, in the case of Penzance and Newlyn, over harbour construction.⁴⁹⁰ Snell describes this antagonism between neighbouring communities a 'culture of local xenophobia'⁴⁹¹, based on historical myth, boundary setting and the processes of Othering; a feature of many such close inter-town relationships in Cornwall, Camborne-Redruth and Falmouth-Penryn being the most well-known examples.⁴⁹² Today, despite there being no physical separation between them, interviewees still draw a clear boundary between Penzance and Newlyn which is reinforced by the continuing distinctiveness of Newlyn as a fishing port.⁴⁹³ But even within what is generally accepted to be the built up area of Penzance there are boundaries drawn between localities like Treneere, Alverton, and the Battlefields; 'the

⁴⁸⁹ Interviews with J. Drew, 1st November 2011 and B. Turner, 7th March 2012.

⁴⁹⁰ Penwith History Group, *Newlyn Life*, Penzance, 2003, p. 13

⁴⁹¹ K. D. M. Snell, 2003, pp.1-30.

⁴⁹² A. K. Hamilton-Jenkin, 1946, p. 458.

⁴⁹³ Interviews with J. Drew and B. Turner, *ibid*.

loyalty to neighbourhoods is fine grained'.⁴⁹⁴ The former Mayor explains that she was required to attend three separate ceremonies to switch on Christmas lights all within different areas of Penzance rather than in Newlyn or any of the surrounding villages. The idea of Penzance can therefore be regarded as 'a fluid concept'⁴⁹⁵ depending on connections, interrelations and networks in which hierarchy plays an important part. Hence at various levels it is a Cornish town, the capital of Penwith, a collection of historic communities and a conglomeration of separate localities. The further this hierarchy descends in scale, formal administrative structures become much weaker or disappear altogether as:

the distinctiveness of communities and, thus, the reality of their boundaries...lies in the mind, in the meanings which people attach to them, not in their structural forms,⁴⁹⁶

or in the case of the Penzance area, 'the civic layer of government doesn't recognise different communities'.⁴⁹⁷ As Cohen points out, distinctions between places are drawn from the past in the form of myth or invented traditions, forming cognitive maps which are part of a cultural store used by communities to determine difference and create boundaries.⁴⁹⁸ The importance of these distinctions will be considered again in Chapter Eight when considering Treneere as a neighbourhood, (Pages 243-246).

Contemporary Penzance

Statistically Penzance is an elastic concept with quantitative data on different topics relating to a variety of scales including the former Penwith DC, the local area network for Penzance, Marazion and St Just which excludes St Ives and Hayle,⁴⁹⁹ the present Town Council boundaries, wards within those boundaries and LSOAs. However, by cross referencing between a number of studies and data sources a profile can be constructed of what most local

⁴⁹⁴ S. Newby, interview 15th May, 2012.

⁴⁹⁵ J. Drew, interview 1st November 2011

⁴⁹⁶ A. P. Cohen, 1985, p. 98

⁴⁹⁷ J. Drew, interview 1st November 2011

⁴⁹⁸ A. P. Cohen, *ibid*, p. 101.

⁴⁹⁹ Cornwall Council Community Intelligence Unit produces data sets for areas which have been identified as forming coherent communities following the formation of the unitary authority in 2009.

residents define as Penzance and which includes the area within which the three settings are located. This comprises the Promenade, Central and East wards of the Town Council, roughly corresponding to the pre 1934 boundary, and from now on is referred to as the study area, (Figure 6.1).

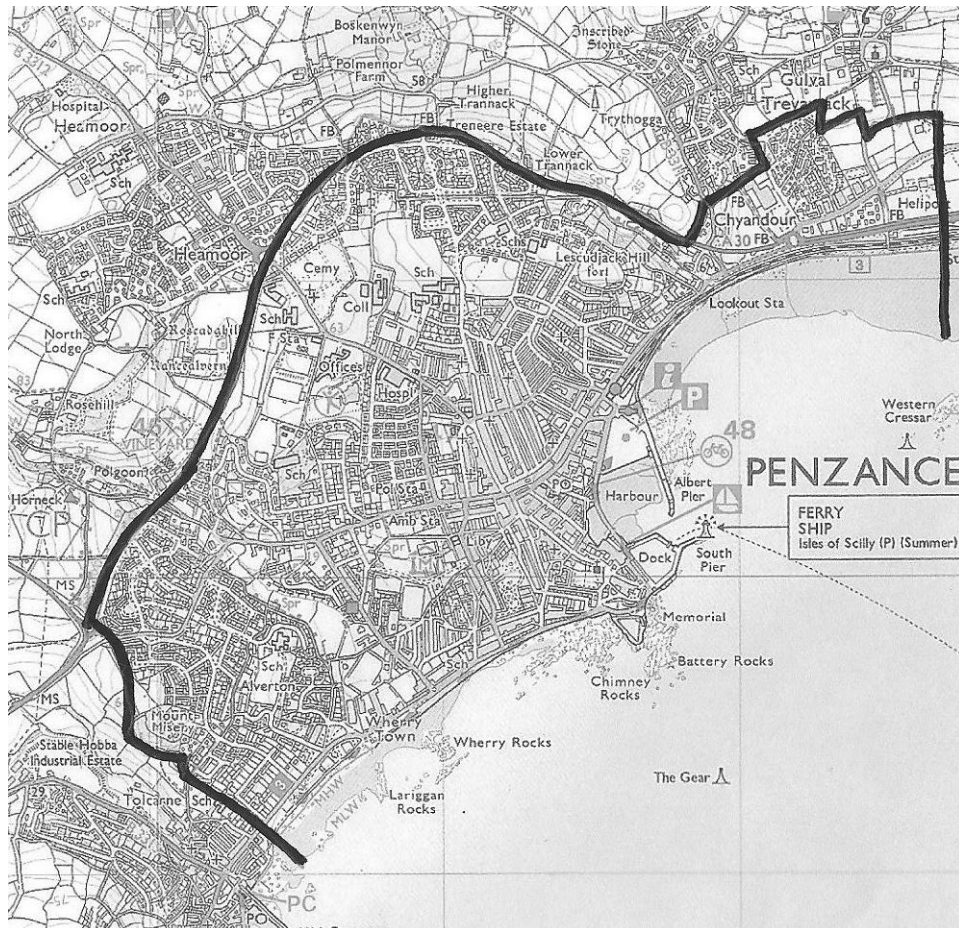


Figure 6.1: The Study Area Contains OS Data © Crown Copyright

The study area consists of the town centre, the harbour area, Chyandour to the east of the town centre, with the Battlefields, Treneere, Chyandour, Alverton, and Wherry Town as the main districts within the built-up area. Much of the centre retains its Georgian, Regency and Victorian character with most twentieth century development located in the west and on former council estates. The domestic architecture to the west of the town centre is particularly attractive as are public buildings such as St John's Hall and the Market House. However unlike Falmouth or smaller settlements like St Ives where the harbour is a focal point, Penzance has turned its back on its harbour. Part of it has been filled in to form a car pack, vacant sites remain an

eyesore and some recent redevelopment has not added to the attractiveness of its waterfront.⁵⁰⁰ Consequently despite a number of proposals to address the lack of connection between the town centre, the harbour and promenade areas they remain separate and disconnected.⁵⁰¹ Penzance harbour remains a working harbour as it includes facilities for ship repairing and freight and passenger linkages to the Scilly Isles as well as moorings for leisure boats. Unlike many Cornish harbours it does not form a picturesque and romantic focal point for the town. Nevertheless it is part of the place image of Penzance and illustrates the conflict between its role as a working town and tourist centre. Chapter Nine returns to this issue in more detail.

A Brief Socio-economic Profile of Penzance

Population

In contrast to many parts of Cornwall, Penzance has not experienced rapid population growth due to inward migration exceeding emigration. The population of Cornwall increased by 6.6% between 2001 and 2011, in contrast to the study area which declined from 12,592 to 12,428.⁵⁰² The age structure in the study area, (Table 6.1, Appendix Two) is similar to Cornwall with the exception of the Penzance East ward which has a significantly higher percentage of 0-15 and 16-29 year olds, reflecting the high numbers of children on Treneere (Table 8.2, Appendix Two). Both the study area and Cornwall show lower percentages in the 16-29 year cohort but are similar to England for those aged 20-64. This reflects the high levels of both emigration and immigration from Cornwall with the flows consisting of different age groups. Thus migrants from Cornwall tend to be young adults seeking opportunities in further education or employment⁵⁰³ whereas inward migrants are older but still economically active, 'dispelling the image of Cornwall as a retirement location'.⁵⁰⁴

⁵⁰⁰ N. Cahill and S. Russell, 2003, p. 54-5.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid, p. 85.

⁵⁰² 2001 and 2011 Censuses.

⁵⁰³ P. Aldous, 2002.

⁵⁰⁴ Land Use Consultants, R. Tym and Partners and TRL, 2005, p. 102.

Although for Penzance net migration change has been broadly neutral, it is important to discuss briefly the impact of inward migration in terms of a change in the age and social structure of the town rather than population increases which have occurred in the remainder of Penwith. The movement of population into Cornwall is part of a process of counterurbanisation first examined in detail by Perry et al.⁵⁰⁵ But counterurbanisation is a 'chaotic concept'⁵⁰⁶ subject to several meanings. Mitchell suggests that some of the confusion may be resolved by distinguishing between movements to the countryside with other interpretations which concentrate on the shifting shape of settlement patterns. The reasons why people move are also subject to controversy. Stockdale⁵⁰⁷ suggests that the stereotypical reasons for moving, such as lifestyle choices hide a complex decision making process involving both personal and individual considerations as well as wider economic and social factors.

Inward migration is also closely associated with a 'migratory elite' who are economically active and generally more highly qualified and of a higher occupational status⁵⁰⁸ although as has been pointed out the picture for Cornwall is mixed with migrants not necessarily 'doing better' than the indigenous population.⁵⁰⁹ Several studies also see benefits of inward migration in building social capital, leading special interest groups and volunteering.⁵¹⁰ Although for Penzance, as defined by the study area, inward migration has not resulted in some of the development pressures found elsewhere in Cornwall, its importance for this study is that its impact can be

⁵⁰⁵ R. Perry, K. Dean et al, 1986.

⁵⁰⁶ C. Mitchell, 'Making sense of counterurbanisation' *Journal of Rural Studies* 20, 2004, pp.15-34, p.21.

⁵⁰⁷ A. Stockdale, 'Unravelling the migration decision-making process: English early retirees moving to rural mid-Wales, *Journal of Rural Studies*, 34, 2014, pp.161-171.

⁵⁰⁸ K. Dean, D. Shaw, B. Brown, R. Perry, and W.Thorneycroft, 'Counterurbanisation and the Characteristics of Persons Migrating to Cornwall' *Geoform*, Vol15, No.2, 1984, pp. 177-190, p.188.

⁵⁰⁹ M. Williams and E. Harrison, 'Movers and Stayers: A Comparison of Migratory and Non-Migratory Groups in Cornwall, 1981-91', in P. Payton (ed.) *Cornish Studies Three*, Exeter, 1995, pp 176-193. See also G. Bosworth and J. Willett, G. Bosworth and J. Willett, 'Embeddedness or Escapism? Rural Perceptions and Economic Development in Cornwall and Northumberland', *Sociologia Ruralis*, Vol. 51(2) 2011, pp.195-214. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9523.201100533.x

⁵¹⁰ See for example A. Stockdale, A. Findley and D. Short. 'The rural repopulation of rural Scotland: opportunity and threat' *Journal of Rural Studies* 16 2000, pp. 243-257.

seen in the activities of civil society organising performed ethnicity (Chapter Seven), the intervention of public and voluntary sector professionals (Chapter Eight) and the promotion and resistance to the harbour redevelopment (Chapter Nine).

As with many coastal areas, Penzance has concentrated pockets of elderly people such as in Promenade Ward West where 40% of the population are over retirement age.⁵¹¹ The general demographic profile of the study area is a static and ageing population which is similar to the rest of Cornwall but with a more elderly profile than for England. But the ageing of its population is not reflected in higher life expectancy. Community network profiling shows the Penzance East Ward, within which Treneere is located, as having the lowest life expectancy in Cornwall at 75 years (in contrast to 83 years in Feock and Kea).⁵¹² Penzance has the highest percentage of population with a limiting long term illness in the Penwith community network area ⁵¹³ and the third highest percentage of smokers. Low levels of life expectancy are closely related to high levels of deprivation which correlate with a higher incidence of illness and disease.⁵¹⁴ Deprivation is also measured by a number of other indicators including housing problems, low wages, crime, unemployment and benefit dependency.⁵¹⁵ All of the eight LSOAs within the study area fall within the bottom third of the most deprived in England with Treneere within the bottom 3%.⁵¹⁶ A study of 37 of the largest sea side towns in England with a population of over 10,000 concludes, on the basis of 2007 indices of

⁵¹¹ Understanding Cornwall 2009-10, Map 4. Retirement age is defined as 65 for males and 60 for females and hence differs from the 32.4% in table 6.1 which represents the whole population over 65.

⁵¹² Cornwall Council community intelligence team/NHS Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Community Network profile for Penzance, life expectancy by ward (1999-2003). www.cornwall.gov.uk

⁵¹³ Cornwall Council's community network areas are groups of local councillors working with partner organisations to advise on local service priorities, consider the delivery of services and build relationships between people and organisations. www.cornwall.gov.uk/community-and-living

⁵¹⁴ Cornwall Council Community Intelligence Team, Community Network Profile, Penzance, Health and Wellbeing; percentage of population with limiting long term illness, 2001 Census; percentage of smokers, NHS Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly; life expectancy 1999-2003, ONS.

⁵¹⁵ Department for Communities and Local Government 2007.

⁵¹⁶ www.cornwall.gov.uk/intelligence, E 01018997, Penzance Treneere, 2010. These percentages are based on the total number of LSOA's in England at 32,482. See Table 8.1, Appendix One.

deprivation, that greater Penzance is the most deprived overall, particularly in terms of low income, high unemployment, levels of poor health and disability and barriers to housing.⁵¹⁷

Employment and the Economy

Penzance has traditionally experienced higher levels of unemployment than either Cornwall or England. Unemployment rates across the study area were 8.6% in 2011, (Table 6.2) as opposed to a figure for Cornwall of 5.9% and England of 7.6%. The nature of employment is seasonal, part-time and exhibits a high incidence of individuals having a portfolio of several part-time jobs. As interviewees state, 'people are willing to come in and work [in the restaurant] but they put several jobs together to get a reasonable wage':⁵¹⁸ 'I have a part time job but would like another one to make ends meet'.⁵¹⁹ Rather than high levels of long term unemployed, unemployment tends to be concentrated on young people at 36.7% in January 2009 in comparison with 29.8% for England.⁵²⁰ In 2009 about 22% of the working age population were claiming some form of benefit but by 2012 this was as high as 27% in Penzance Central and Penzance East wards, almost twice the percentage for Great Britain.⁵²¹ Relatively high levels of unemployment, a disproportionate proportion of which is youth unemployment, coupled with a high degree of benefit dependency are exacerbated by local wage levels. Cornwall has the lowest wage levels in England and in 2009, at £13,500 per annum, Penzance had the lowest income levels within Cornwall.⁵²² Dick Cliffe, a bed and breakfast owner and Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce states that he is:

⁵¹⁷ C. Beatty, S. Fothergill and I Wilson, *England's Sea Side Towns: A 'Benchmarking' Study*, Sheffield Hallam University 2009.

⁵¹⁸ B. Turner, interview 7th March 2012.

⁵¹⁹ D. Sims, interview 19th June 2012.

⁵²⁰ Job Centre Plus, Claimant Count January 2009 in *Penzance and the Isles of Scilly, Strategic Investment Framework*, Appendix 1, 2009, p. 11.

⁵²¹ www.Nomisweb.co.uk/reports, Official Labour Market Statistics, Ward Labour Market Profile: Penzance Central and Penzance East.

⁵²² Cornwall Development Company, Appendix 1, 2009, p. 7. Wages are defined as workplace earnings; incomes include remuneration from employment, self-employment and pensions. Average workplace incomes in the West Penwith Community Area, which includes Penzance, were £17012 in 2012 which were also the lowest in Cornwall, *The State of the Economy*, Cornwall Council, November 2013.

conscious of the area as one of extremely low incomes. There are people who are comfortably middle class but the majority are living on very modest incomes, much lower than, say Somerset. Some people are prepared to move to Cornwall to do identical work for 20% lower wages.⁵²³

The low wages are largely due to the part time nature and seasonality of the tourist industry which is the fastest growing sector of the Penzance economy.⁵²⁴ Jobs have been created in hotel and catering and also in closely connected areas of employment such as retailing, recreation and transport.⁵²⁵ As the administrative centre for Penwith and also as the location of West Cornwall Hospital, the town has formerly had high levels of public sector employment. However, given the various initiatives to centralise public services such as local government and the courts, the future for this sector is uncertain. The traditional sources of employment, particularly the primary industries of fishing, agriculture and quarrying have declined or disappeared and there is little manufacturing. The main growth areas of the present economy are in retailing, distribution and tourism.

The above quotation also suggests that low wages are not an impediment to inward migration. The motivation for moving by those who are economically active is often related to factors which relate to lifestyle choices and identification with place rather than economic reasons.⁵²⁶ But for those seeking skilled employment and full-time work the competition is intense:

I had to work for free or very little money to build up a portfolio to help achieve a permanent job. I had to apply for fifty graphic design type jobs before I was successful.⁵²⁷

Cornwall has a high proportion of small businesses with less than five employees⁵²⁸ which is also reflected in the business structure of Penzance. The vulnerability of small business is indicated by high rates of insolvency with Penwith reported as having the highest incidence in the form of debt

⁵²³ D. Cliffe, interview 9th March 2012.

⁵²⁴ 38% of jobs in the West Penwith Community Network Area are part time, Cornwall Council, 2013.

⁵²⁵ Cornwall Development Company, Appendix 1, 2009, p. 7.

⁵²⁶ R. Perry, K. Dean, et al, 1986.

⁵²⁷ G. Musser, interview 8th February 2012.

⁵²⁸ Land Use Consultants et al, 2005, p. 41.

relief orders in England.⁵²⁹ One particular feature of the local economy is the cluster of artistic and cultural activities drawing on the tradition of the Newlyn School of painters and the creativity of local artists and writers. This is reflected in three major galleries, a theatre, museums and other arts venues⁵³⁰ which make an important contribution to the tourist 'offer'⁵³¹ but direct employment in this sector is relatively small in comparison with retailing or other sectors of the local tourist industry. Bosworth and Willett question the effectiveness of small businesses in achieving economic growth in Cornwall, suggesting that the motivation of migrants anticipating a 'holiday lifestyle' and the attractions of place take precedence over becoming 'embedded' as part of the local economy and are therefore less successful in generating additional jobs and social and economic capital.⁵³²

Tourism is increasingly seen as key to the future of Penzance. Interviewees working in the tourist industry consider that it is surprisingly robust, that over the past twenty years, the season has extended and that approximately 20% of visitors are now from overseas.⁵³³ The quality in terms of accommodation, restaurants and variety of tourist experience has also improved. There is a trend towards more high quality, imaginative and environmentally friendly holidays where, 'people arrive on the sleeper from London, go whale watching, stay one night in Penzance and go back the next day'.⁵³⁴ The importance of the tourist industry is reflected by the total spend of visitors in Penwith at £180m in 2008 and it employing approximately 6,000 full time equivalent staff.⁵³⁵ Although a number of boutique hotels are now established, the main deficiency in hotel accommodation is the lack of a substantial four star hotel, in contrast to St Ives, Falmouth and Newquay. There has also been a failure to develop the promenade and sea front as a tourist destination and the town lacks an attraction such as a major museum. There remains an

⁵²⁹ *Guardian*, 17th May 2012. A debt relief order is an option open to someone who is unable to pay their debts but owes no more than £15,000 and has little in the way of assets or income. Insolvency Service 2012.

⁵³⁰ Cornwall Development Company, 2009, p. 21.

⁵³¹ Cornwall County Council, Penzance Strategic Plan, 2007.

⁵³² G. Bosworth and J. Willett, 2011, pp. 209-210.

⁵³³ Interviews with D. Cliffe, 9th March, 2012 and B. Turner, 7th March 2012.

⁵³⁴ D. Cliffe, *ibid*.

⁵³⁵ South West Tourism, *The Value of Tourism, Cornwall*, Exeter, 2008.

uneasy relationship between its roles as both a tourist and administrative centre. Tourism is very much focused on small businesses, wage levels are low and employment is seasonal, part time and largely female.⁵³⁶

Housing

A consequence of a combination of a low wage economy and high levels of inward migration by existing home owners seeking a change in lifestyle is that house prices are high in relation to incomes. Although, property prices have stabilized in recent years, in the Penwith area they increased by 170% between the second quarter of 2000 and the first quarter of 2007 with average prices rising at a faster rate than West Cornwall or the South West.⁵³⁷ During the same period the ratio of average full time earnings to average house prices in the area increased from 1:5 to 1:9.5⁵³⁸ placing property ownership out of the reach of the majority of local wage earners. This rapid rise which seems to have occurred in the Penwith area later than in other parts of Cornwall, has placed considerable strain on the local housing stock with 20% of households in the Penzance area living in unsuitable property due to overcrowding, disrepair or a lack of facilities⁵³⁹. Rented accommodation is often available only on a temporary basis, required in the tourist season for holiday lets. Social housing continues to be in short supply as more people are excluded from owner occupation because of the cost of house purchase. Several of the interviewees mentioned the high cost of housing and lack of suitable accommodation as a major issue particularly for young people, described by Jan Ruhrmund as 'a lost generation',⁵⁴⁰ which is reflected in the opposition to second homes and resistance to continued inward migration to West Cornwall.⁵⁴¹

⁵³⁶ M. Williams, 'Why is Cornwall so poor? Poverty and in-migration since the 1960's' *Contemporary British History* 17, 2003, pp. 55-70 and P. Thornton, 'Tourism in Cornwall: Current Research and Current Trends', in P. Payton (ed.) *Cornish Studies Two*, Exeter 1994, pp. 108-127.

⁵³⁷ Opinion Research Services, 2008, p. 30.

⁵³⁸ Opinion Research Services, *ibid*, *Main Report of Study Findings*, pp. 42-43.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 36.

⁵⁴⁰ Interviews with J. Ruhrmund, 20th December, 2011, and G. Musser, 8th February, 2012.

⁵⁴¹ For a discussion on the impact of inward migration and the local authority response see B. Deacon 2013, pp. 45-58.

Catchment Area and retailing

With its mainline rail connection, sea link to the Scilly isles, extensive local bus network across Penwith and location on the main A30 trunk road, Penzance is the most significant transport hub in West Cornwall which supports its role as a major employment and shopping centre. It is identified, along with Truro and St Austell as having a high comparison shopping spend and, based on 2004 data, has the highest market share within its catchment of any Cornish town.⁵⁴² However, although a more recent study acknowledges that the centre is relatively healthy it also draws attention to an increase in vacant shop units and in commercial yields on retail property. It has also been overtaken in terms of retail spend by Falmouth and Newquay and is under challenge from St Austell.⁵⁴³ In the Penwith area Penzance is the principal destination for shopping and services but Truro is a major centre for non-food shopping.⁵⁴⁴ Despite its distance from other major centres of population and its role as a sub-regional centre, shopping hierarchies are volatile and subject to change. Hence Penzance is already affected by the out of town shopping centre at Hayle which is likely to intensify with the recent construction of a third major supermarket. Penzance like many towns of its size has felt the effects of national retailing trends which currently favour out of town or edge of town shopping with easy access and free car parking. There is a perception is that its centre has deteriorated with vacant shop fronts, high car parking charges and a general rundown appearance.

A number of recent developments including replacing the heliport with a supermarket at the eastern edge of the town are considered to further weaken the attractiveness of the centre and contribute to the discourse of a town in decline.⁵⁴⁵ In response, a number of local initiatives have been promoted to attempt to revive the town centre.⁵⁴⁶ This illustrates the dilemma created by globalisation and the corporate power of supermarkets. They either need to

⁵⁴² Land Use Consultants et al, 2005, p. 41.

⁵⁴³ G. V. A. Grimley, Vol. 1, 2010, pp. 71 and 75.

⁵⁴⁴ Land Use Consultants et al, 2005, p. 99.

⁵⁴⁵ *Cornishman* 12th July 2012.

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid*, *Proud to be in Penwith* initiative, 22nd April 2011, and the *Go to Town* campaign 2nd February 2012.

be resisted as detrimental to local business and the identity of the town or embraced on the basis that they bring employment. It is also assumed that the town's problems are unique but as pointed out by the Chamber of Commerce, businesses in the town centre have held up relatively well in the current recession with about 3% of premises empty in March 2011.⁵⁴⁷ Penzance has been more successful than some other Cornish towns in retaining its retail catchment area in the face of recent shopping trends as 'it has done better than you would expect and is not worse than anywhere else'.⁵⁴⁸ A similar debate about town centres and the alleged impact of supermarket development is played out across the UK. In Penzance it has a particularly local twist as it was central to the sale of the Heliport which was regarded as part of the identity of the town and is seen as indicative of the loss of local control over decisions with major planning applications now determined by Cornwall Council. A coherent view balancing the complexity of arguments about the town centre, supermarket development and regeneration of the harbour area requires a level of political leadership which, at present, the town struggles to achieve.

Culture and Media

Traditionally Penzance has been a centre for the arts, building on the legacy of the Newlyn School and the reputation of Penwith as a location which stimulates a variety of artistic genre⁵⁴⁹. The visual and performing arts are a key part of the town's place image. As has been pointed out, places are boosted where people feel they can be creative.⁵⁵⁰ Together with Newlyn there are three public galleries of regional importance; Penlee, managed by the Town Council and a trust which runs the Exchange and Newlyn galleries. There are also a number of commercial and private galleries selling paintings, pottery, and sculpture within the town centre. The Morrab library and Penzance public library art history collection are important cultural resources

⁵⁴⁷ *Penzance Chamber of Commerce Newsletter* 18th March 2011, p. 3

⁵⁴⁸ D. Cliffe, interview 9th March, 2012.

⁵⁴⁹ See for example D. Val Baker, *Britain's Art Colony by the Sea*, London, 1959.

⁵⁵⁰ J. Willett and J. Tredinnick-Rowe, 2016, p.5 and D. Bell and M. Jayne 'The creative countryside: Policy and practice in the UK rural cultural economy' *Journal of Rural Studies*, 26, 2010, pp. 209-218.

which have a Cornwall wide significance. There is a well-established musical tradition. Professional and amateur artistic and musical performances are held at St John's Hall, the Ritz, a former cinema, and the Acorn, a former chapel. Penzance has also had a lively night club scene with the Barn, Zero Lounge and Sound Night Clubs. Several interviewees mentioned the strong relationship between the local community and art although there was criticism of some of the more modernist shows at Newlyn and the Exchange.⁵⁵¹ In 2008 it was claimed in the national press that the arts scene in Penzance surpasses St Ives; 'once a small town on the way to nowhere, Penzance has reinvented itself in recent years as a haven for art lovers that is unrivalled in Cornwall'.⁵⁵² But this twenty first century tourist gaze needs to be qualified by the recent closure of the Barn Club and some private galleries and the struggle for public funding to support the Acorn theatre which now operates on a restricted basis. There have also been a number of museum closures including the St John's Hall geological and Trinity House museums and the Pilchard Works at Newlyn. In addition, there is a view, contributing to the discourse of decline, that the Penzance cultural scene is under threat from competition from other Cornish towns, in particular Falmouth with a large student population sustaining its nightlife, the recession and the withdrawal of grants by Cornwall Council and the Arts Council.⁵⁵³ Nevertheless, there remains a vibrant local artistic culture supported by private enterprise, public funding and voluntary organisations.

Overt expressions of Cornish culture are to be found in festivals which are a way of emphasising the uniqueness of place, its cultural memory and a celebration of its distinctiveness. Montol and Golowan are not the only examples. St Piran's day parades, the Newlyn fish festival and the May Horns ceremony are others which seek to reinforce local identity. But cultural activities which are more traditionally associated as Cornish, representing a more common place version of identity but which contribute to the cultural matrix of Cornishness, are to be found in the 'Down Your Way' pages of the

⁵⁵¹ Interviews with J. Moreland, 7th March 2012 and M. Sagar-Fenton, 20th December 2011.

⁵⁵² *The Observer*, 15th April 2008.

⁵⁵³ N. Pengelly, interview 16th May 2012.

Cornishman. Reports from local correspondents on the activities of gig racing clubs, church and chapel activities, Old Cornwall Societies and local choirs show a rich, distinctive and vibrant local culture; a Shelter Box concert consisting of music from the Golowan band, Tros an Treys, Celtic Fiddlers and Levow an Bys⁵⁵⁴, or the St Aubyn's Singers, regaling their audience with a wide range of Cornish and other songs...pasties and other Cornish goodies were served'⁵⁵⁵. In addition to events many of the interviewees also identified those aspects of Cornish culture which Edensor calls the everyday commonplace which is taken for granted⁵⁵⁶ comprising a focus on small localities,⁵⁵⁷ resistance to perceived outside interference⁵⁵⁸ a high degree of informality and a sense being able to let oneself go, of Mardi Gras and carnival.⁵⁵⁹ Much of this is similar to what Billig terms 'banal nationalism' or the 'unwaved flag', the ideological habits which are a part of everyday life⁵⁶⁰. It can simply be a feeling that:

the day to day awareness of a situation and experience are not just precisely what they would be in England – and among those who grew up here, the sense that “this is how it belongs”.⁵⁶¹

Local media is a further contributor to the identity of place. The *Cornishman* newspaper, published weekly by Cornwall and Devon Media, has its offices in Penzance and although sharing some content with its sister newspapers, the *Cornish Guardian* and *West Briton*, gives a focus for local news. It is claimed to be read by almost 90% of Penzance residents, assumes a distinctiveness for Penzance and its surrounding area and is a major influence on the development of discourses.

Between 1982 and 1996 *Peninsula Voice* was published as a monthly newsheet by a group of independent correspondents, most working on a voluntary basis, to 'challenge convention and the status quo' and report on

⁵⁵⁴ *Cornishman*, 11th February, 2010.

⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 18th March, 2010.

⁵⁵⁶ T. Edensor, 2002, p.103-108.

⁵⁵⁷ J. Rhurmund, interview 20th December, 2011.

⁵⁵⁸ G. Care, interview 1st November, 2011.

⁵⁵⁹ J. Rhurmund, *ibid*.

⁵⁶⁰ M. Billig, 1995, p. 6.

⁵⁶¹ Cornwall County Council, *Penzance Strategic Plan*, 2007.

'unreported stories on poverty and unemployment'.⁵⁶² Described as the 'Penzance version of *Private Eye*',⁵⁶³ it was particularly critical of the *Cornishman* stating that if it:

were not afraid to delve below the surface of local issues, to risk controversy, to represent other views apart from the true-blue establishment, there would have been no need for *Peninsula Voice*.⁵⁶⁴

It also attacked Penwith DC with accusations of corruption and mismanagement and generally criticised the 'ineptitude' of local authorities. It investigated issues like beach pollution, wage rates in the tourist industry and the appointment of school governors and continued to be critical of the management of the promenade, the potential development of the gas works site on the harbour frontage, the influence of supermarkets and the policy of Penwith DC to place a cap on the allocation of housing benefit. It reported extensively on artistic and cultural events featuring local exhibitions, performance and music. *Peninsula Voice* closed as a result of a threatened libel action, but it was an expression of the articulate, anti-authoritarian and anarchic thread which runs through the town's civil society. There is some evidence that, since its demise, the *Cornishman* has been prepared to address more controversial issues mainly through its columnist 'Old Mike', a former contributor to *Peninsula Voice*, and its letters pages but it has not ventured into irreverent investigative journalism.

Governance

Just as globalisation has encouraged the rationalisation and concentration of the town centre economy, similar pressures have had a profound influence on local governance. Since 2009, with the creation of Cornwall Council, responsibility for most local authority services has been based at Truro and some staff previously located in Penzance have been transferred to Truro and Camborne. The needs of Penzance now have to compete for resources with other parts of Cornwall against a background of the Unitary Authority seeking substantial reductions in expenditure. Although Penwith DC had its detractors:

⁵⁶² *Peninsula Voice* No 3, December 1982.

⁵⁶³ *Cornishman*, 4th February 2016

⁵⁶⁴ *Peninsula Voice* No 12, December 1983.

there is a real detachment from locality...there's no [political] leadership...people are turned off from normal avenues of political expression.⁵⁶⁵

Hence recent decisions, particularly during the period between 2010-14 such as the withdrawal of support for the town's tourist information centre, the threat to close public conveniences and increases in car parking charges, all previously the responsibility of the District Council, were seen as detrimental to Penzance and illustrative of the lack of empathy and understanding by a remote, Truro based authority. Letters and comment pages in the *Cornishman* have been full of anti-Unitary Council rhetoric:

Your cabinet are inland people; you do not understand how to run a seaside tourist town, let alone a working harbour ⁵⁶⁶;

This can't go on. Every foreboding we had of a central council is coming horribly true...Cornwall is taking on the air of a banana republic, and Cornish councillors need to listen to the howls of criticism and take a grip of their monster before it's too late ⁵⁶⁷;

That's the way it is in Truro now...instead of listening to [local councillors] who have the ear of ordinary Cornish people, they prefer to shut the door, cut off the phones, pull up the drawbridge and leave the serious decision-making to a few highly paid officials. ⁵⁶⁸.

Having lost the District Council, Penzance civil society now believes that the principal decisions affecting the town are made elsewhere, should be treated with suspicion and if necessary resisted. Consequently, a major contribution to the negative discourse of decline is the 2009 reorganisation, where Cornwall Council has been seen as an alien body attempting to force its decisions on Penzance. As discussed further in Chapter Nine (Page 323-324), this was a major factor with the harbour redevelopment where:

Cornwall Council chose to drive it through and when they encountered opposition they drove harder. And they took their defeat extremely hard and bitterly. Truro has taken it out on Penzance ever since, taking revenge. Local councillors are doing their best but Truro is taking the view that we turned down a fortune and if there are any cuts to be made then Penzance should suffer. We feel we're up against it... The Unitary Authority has turned out to be the corrupt, enclosed; self-regarding organisation we thought it would be.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁵ J. Drew, interview 1st November 2011.

⁵⁶⁶ *Cornishman*, letters, 'Unitary isn't working', 18th August 2011.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid, 'Old Mike', 20th January 2011.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid, 'Old Mike', March 24th, 2011.

⁵⁶⁹ M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 20th December 2011.

The traditional antagonism between Cornish towns has become magnified through the prism of Cornwall Council and interpreted, or almost personified, in an anti-Truro discourse which is perceived as accumulating not only public services, but commercial activities, retailing and wealth and prosperity. In institutional terms Truro has become the Other.

Voting behaviour in local elections over the past twenty years has been volatile. In its final period of office, political representation on the former Penwith DC was finely balanced, the Conservatives being the largest party of 17 councillors in a Council of 35 with 12 Liberal Democrats, 5 Independents and one Labour making up the remainder. During the life of the District Council, seats in the study area wards alternated between Conservative and Liberal Democrat.⁵⁷⁰ With the creation of the Unitary Authority, this pattern started to change with two Liberal Democrats and one Independent elected in 2009 and in 2013 two Labour and one Independent elected for the three wards. Arguably this swing between parties is reflective of the dissatisfaction with the performance Cornwall Council, weak local political party organisation and concerns about the perceived failure to address the problems of Penzance.⁵⁷¹

The forces driving the rationalisation of local government apply equally to other public services. The town lost both its Magistrates and County Courts in 2010⁵⁷² with court services now provided at Truro. The range of facilities at West Cornwall Hospital is periodically under threat from health service reorganisations which increasingly concentrate provision at Truro⁵⁷³. In addition to the loss of status, the closure and transfer of services has implications for local employment which ripple throughout the community; solicitors, for example are required to work where the court is located. Simon

⁵⁷⁰ Penwith DC elections were held annually with a third of seats contested.

⁵⁷¹ R. Harris in G. Tregidga (ed.), 2015, p.169.

⁵⁷² *Cornishman*, 1st July, 2010.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid*, Comment, 26 November, 2009.

Glasson summarises the effect of the transfer of services and employment from the town as:

We have suffered from the withdrawal of civil service and local government jobs and the business which support them. Also we are on the periphery at the “end of the line”; since unitary government we have lost a layer of government which looks after its major town. Now we have gone from being a major town in a district to being just another town in a unitary.⁵⁷⁴

When making the case for a unitary authority to replace six previous councils which inevitably involved centralisation and reconfiguration of services, Cornwall Council placed great emphasis on the importance of locality. It established a network of nineteen community areas by involving representatives from parish and town councils, local and voluntary organisations and other providers to agree priorities, enable communities to make choices on service delivery and allocate grants.⁵⁷⁵ Penzance is part of the Penwith area which includes the entire peninsula but excludes St Ives, Carbis Bay and Lelant. Community network managers coordinate public agencies and voluntary organisations; provide a link with local Cornwall councillors and with the Town Council.⁵⁷⁶ However, community areas have not been seen by the communities they were established to serve as replacing the former Penwith DC. They have a low public profile and the activities of the Penwith area are not regularly reported in the local press. But they are a means of encouraging and sustaining civil society through grants, the coordination of a diverse set of agencies and as a source of expertise. Their consultative and coordinating rather than decision making role means than they struggle for legitimacy against the negative discourses surrounding the unitary authority and, for Penzance, the increasing profile of the Town Council

The 2009 reorganisation of local government has placed greater importance on the Town Council. Although having the status of a parish, it is responsible for a number of services including the Penlee Gallery, grant aiding Golowan and is a consultee on planning applications, but most importantly, is the only

⁵⁷⁴ S. Glasson, interview 8th May, 2012.

⁵⁷⁵ www.cornwall.gov.uk accessed 11th February 2012.

⁵⁷⁶ S. Newby, interview 15th May 2012.

directly elected body representing Penzance. It has twenty councillors half of whom are Independents.⁵⁷⁷ The Council has a gross budget in excess of £1m which has been under pressure as the Unitary Authority has tried to reduce its services with the Town Council taking on some of its responsibilities.⁵⁷⁸ Consequently the Council Tax precept for Penzance, which is not capped, has increased at a far greater rate than Cornwall Council. As will be seen in Chapters Seven and Nine, the Town Council has been a key player in supporting Golowan and in the debate over the harbour.

Civil Society

The history of Penzance shows the importance of its civil society in shaping the culture and personality of the town. On the basis of data from Bristol University and the *Cornishman*,⁵⁷⁹ the number of voluntary organisations in Penzance amount to several hundred which range from branches of major charities like the Scout movement or Age UK which are part of nationally based organisations, to those which have a purely local remit. Some, including Old Cornwall Societies or Cornish arts and cultural organisations are part of a Cornwall wide network. Others relate specifically to Penzance such as the Golowan festival or the Morrab library and in the case of Newlyn, the Seamen's Mission or for Mousehole, the Male Voice Choir. But it would be a mistake to see civil society operating in neatly stratified layers. As an example, the Penzance Chamber of Commerce, although part of a national and Cornwall wide network, has adopted a local and what some would regard as a partisan position lobbying hard in favour of development, particularly with regard to the Scilly link⁵⁸⁰. On the other hand, the Morrab library is a local resource but which is used and has a wide membership throughout Cornwall

⁵⁷⁷ The Council elected in 2013 consists of 10 Independents with two councillors each for the Lib. Democrats, Green Party, Mebyon Kernow, Labour and Future for Penzance. For the three wards in the study area the division between councillors is five Independents, two for both Mebyon Kernow and Labour and one each for the Green Party and Lib. Democrats and Future for Penzance.

⁵⁷⁸ S. Glasson, interview 8th March, 2012.

⁵⁷⁹ See figures for Penwith and West Cornwall, Chapter Two, p. 42.

⁵⁸⁰ M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 20th December 2011 and various issues of the Penzance Chamber of Commerce Newsletter from 16th July 2010. www.pzchamber.blogspot.co.uk/p/newsletters.html accessed 12th July 2011 and 10th January 2012.

and beyond. The structure of civil society is therefore complex and often fluid. Parts of it are closely associated with place and are important contributors towards place identity; Mousehole Male Voice Choir is a good example, but other elements such as the pressure groups spawned by controversy over the Scilly link are transitory. Civil society, even in a small town such as Penzance, is a constantly changing and evolving network of organisations operating at multifarious levels driven by political, economic and social influences.

Issues for Penzance

There are a number of aspects of contemporary Penzance which are contradictory. Although the IMD data needs to be treated with caution it does suggest that relatively high levels of unemployment, low wage levels, an elderly population and a high degree of dependency create conditions which are significantly worse than in many parts of Cornwall and, on some counts, similar to inner city communities. However, when the quantitative data is placed alongside qualitative and ethnographic evidence, a different picture emerges. Within the Penzance order of discourse there is a perception of the town as the jewel, albeit somewhat faded, of West Cornwall, a vibrant community with a strong self-identity, a centre for its surrounding area and with an architecture and environment which is distinctive and which should be protected and enhanced. On the other hand there is also recognition that its problems need to be addressed by investment but this is often regarded as introducing changes which threaten its distinctiveness. This paradox between the perception of Penzance by some of its leaders and opinion formers and the socio-economic issues exposed by the various studies outlined above is at the centre of the debates between competing discourses within its civil society. Overlaying these arguments are also the historical themes identified in the previous chapter, the perceived loss of status through changes in local governance, the ambivalence towards peripherality, and resistance to the place image of a tourist destination. These competing elements contained within the town's order of discourse crystallise into two opposing discourses.

Discourses: 'A glorious mix' – 'A town under threat'

Monitoring stories about Penzance in the *Cornishman* and evidence from interviews, illustrate some of these tensions. The issue which has raised most controversy is the redevelopment of the harbour which is dealt with in detail in Chapter Nine but there are several others which illustrate the same underlying themes. One of the questions asked of all interviewees was, 'How would you describe Penzance?' The responses fell into two parts; a positive discourse represented by statements that the town is a 'glorious mix'⁵⁸¹, 'an interesting mix – surprisingly cosmopolitan...people seeking what they can't find elsewhere'⁵⁸², 'people are given a chance to be themselves'⁵⁸³; representing a belief that Penzance is in some way a refuge from the complexity of urban life and still retains its individuality and identity reflected in its remoteness and 'end of the line' location. Consequently the status quo needs to be protected, an illustration of the conservative dimension of Cornishness,. But the negative response is that the town is 'a faded jewel in need of regeneration'⁵⁸⁴, that it is 'a town under threat'⁵⁸⁵, and is 'kind of sad'⁵⁸⁶. This second discourse suggests that Penzance is in decline, has been disadvantaged in terms of investment compared with other areas of Cornwall, particularly St Ives, and has become 'poor and run down'⁵⁸⁷. This discourse contains a degree of ambivalence, partly characterised by a conservative view that nothing will change and 'this is how it is' but also, from other sections of Penzance society, a progressive response to the challenges of modernity by accepting its consequences and being open to new ideas.

Unpicking these discourses in more detail, the individuality of Penzance and its surrounding area is considered to be reflected not only in the celebration of place and Cornish identity through festivals such as Golowan, the Newlyn Fish Festival, St Piran's Day and a vibrant arts scene but also its role as a refuge for counter-urbanists, those people seeking an alternative attracted by

⁵⁸¹ J. Rhurmund, interview 20th December 2011.

⁵⁸² M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 20th December 2011.

⁵⁸³ G. Musser, interview 8th February, 2012.

⁵⁸⁴ S. Glasson, interview 8th May, 2012.

⁵⁸⁵ J. Drew, interview 1st November, 2011.

⁵⁸⁶ J. Moreland, interview 7th March 2012.

⁵⁸⁷ J. Rhurmund, *ibid.*

the place myth of remoteness and a more relaxed lifestyle⁵⁸⁸. The perception is that Penzance allows people to have a freedom unavailable elsewhere, 'you're allowed to be different here, in a way that other communities perhaps wouldn't tolerate'⁵⁸⁹. A further perception is that some middle class immigrants buy into Penzance as they remember it from holidays or, as return migrants,⁵⁹⁰ from childhood and wish to see it stay the same and not changed into something which they have left behind, as opposed to others who believe the town must embrace change to maintain its status as a major Cornish town.⁵⁹¹ Salaman identifies similar tensions between incomers to small towns in Illinois as some 'newcomers find the neighbourly ways of small town old timers, quaint, amusing and inefficient,' whereas others 'respect the special sense of place where they take up residence and value a town's uniqueness'.⁵⁹² Coupling this dichotomy with different discourses about the role of the town as an administrative and commercial centre rather than a tourist destination indicates why decisions on a number of issues have been so difficult to resolve and have created conflicts within its civil society. As the clerk of the Town Council observes, 'a minority of people understand that the role of the Council is to balance both views'⁵⁹³ but very often, given that the solution to the negative discourse depends on resources to enable progress to be made, the result is either a stalemate and deferral of decisions. The power to make things happen does not lie with Penzance. Ethnicity however, is not central to the debate. Incomers and ethnic Cornish are on both sides of the competing arguments.⁵⁹⁴ Their perspectives coincide; on one hand the insiders' resistance to outside interference allies with incomers wishing to preserve the status quo but on the other, there is a consensus between both

⁵⁸⁸ D. Cliffe, interview 9th March, 2012; for a definition of counter-urbanism and its influence on migration to West Cornwall see R. Perry, K. Dean, et al 1986, pp. 97-111 and discussion on Pages 138-140.

⁵⁸⁹ *Cornishman*, F. Read, Community Spirit, 26th November 2009.

⁵⁹⁰ K. Dean, D. Shaw, et al, p180.

⁵⁹¹ S. Glasson, interview 8th March, 2012.

⁵⁹² S. Salaman, *Newcomers to Old Towns: Suburbanization of the Heartland*, Chicago, 2007, p. 8.

⁵⁹³ S. Glasson, *ibid*, 2012.

⁵⁹⁴ D. Cliffe, interview 9th March, 2012.

groups who are involved with local businesses that change is needed to address deep seated economic issues.⁵⁹⁵

A response to this paralysis which attempts to reconcile these different discourses has been the emergence of a pressure group, 'Future Penzance' comprising a number of local businesses and people involved with the arts who 'want Penzance to be a more dynamic future-facing town at ease with change'. They see Penzance as:

- The most world-facing/global town in Cornwall;
- the arts/creative capital of Cornwall;
- having a reinvigorated link to the Isles of Scilly;
- the music capital of Cornwall;
- a key "foody" destination in Cornwall;
- having the best environment/setting of all major towns in Cornwall;
- having the strongest cluster of dynamic micro-businesses in Cornwall.⁵⁹⁶

This progressive vision emphasises the importance of Penzance as a place which is connected to other places, as a hub of activities and challenges the negative discourse of 'the end of the line' or 'on the way to nowhere'.

Members of the group operate as a network, see public sector agencies and councillors as often frustrating change but are happy to support public initiatives and other elements of civil society which wish to see the town progress. Recognising that to pursue its objectives requires political engagement, this group stood in the 2013 Town Council elections gaining two seats.

There is therefore a substantial lobby within the town's civil society lead by Future Penzance, the Chamber of Commerce and supported by the *Cornishman* which attempts to embrace economic development and investment in the town. Hence, the Chamber has welcomed further supermarket development despite many of its members being small town

⁵⁹⁵ Chamber of Commerce newsletters, December 2010-October 2011.

⁵⁹⁶ www.facebook.com/afutureforpenzance?v=info accessed 5th February 2012.

centre traders and shop keepers on the basis that it will provide much needed employment and bring more comparison shoppers to Penzance⁵⁹⁷. For similar reasons the Chamber has also supported festivals and events such as the Penzance Proms which bring more people into the town centre.

However the conservative counter discourse of remoteness, acceptance of decline, reluctance to change and ambivalence to tourism remains. The Town Clerk points out the difficulty of overcoming the town's lack of identity as a tourist destination. As Simon Glasson recognises:

Penzance doesn't have an immediate image compared with Newquay's beaches, the Tate at St Ives, Truro for shopping, whereas Penzance is at the end of the line.

He continues by stating that although, 'Penzance has it all. It's Cornwall condensed in a day, beaches, restaurants, culture, architecture, moors and ancient monuments',⁵⁹⁸ it lacks a focal attraction such as Falmouth's maritime museum and fails to market its tourist offer. The ambivalence towards tourism is illustrated by the closure of the town's tourist information centre in 2011 following Cornwall Council's withdrawal of funding, in contrast to the St Ives centre which remained open.⁵⁹⁹ Simon Glasson sums up the prevailing view of much of Penzance regarding tourism:

the population of Penzance has different aspirations; it's not dominated by one particular section of society. It's not like St Ives, now gentrified and chic, which stems from the influence of the Tate and the artists' community. There is now a degree of artificiality about St Ives; it's not the place for fishing and more real activities.

Herein lies part of the difficulty of addressing the economic problems of Penzance. In addition to the perception of its remote location, the decline in its traditional signifiers of Cornishness in the form of primary industries, the loss of both influence and employment to the pressures of globalisation, all contribute to the 'town under threat' discourse which is characterised by a reluctance to embrace change, a lack of confidence in how to change and a failure to develop a consensus on how change should take place. The conflict

⁵⁹⁷ Penzance Chamber of Commerce Newsletter, No.55, 2nd September 2011.

⁵⁹⁸ S. Glasson, interview 8th March 2012.

⁵⁹⁹ The centre has now re-opened in conjunction with the National Trust.

between these discourses paralyses decision making. To illustrate the difficulty, of the ten proposed developments outlined in the 2009 *Strategic Investment Framework for Penzance* which set out a strategy for its regeneration, only three have been completed or are in progress despite the availability of support through the European Regional Development and Social Funds⁶⁰⁰. This is only one of a series of plans and proposals published over the past twenty years suggesting how Penzance might develop which have had a minimum impact on the town.⁶⁰¹

Ethnicity

Despite recognising the difficulties in reconciling these discourses most interviewees stressed the positive elements of life in Penzance, its sense of independence, recognised it as different and despite the changes in its governance, its civic pride:

We are the best bit; we are the most Cornish. When the District Council was in being you were always treated [by the rest of Cornwall] as though you were a bit apart, a bit independent, a bit maverick⁶⁰²

All of the interviewees contacted of which thirteen of whom were incomers, recognised that there is a Cornish identity although there were different interpretations of how it is expressed, described by one as 'several streams of Cornishness'⁶⁰³. These were seen as including pride in place, a sense of community and resistance to outside interference and also a predisposition to opposition, irrespective of the issue, due to an innate conservatism and lack of ambition. But another facet of modern Cornishness is considered to be carnivalistic behaviour; dressing up, having fun, festival and celebration; 'having a good time is not frowned on, indeed it's encouraged'⁶⁰⁴. Some regard such collective celebrations of Cornishness as replacing religious faith. 'It gives people the opportunity to participate in a spiritual life in a way that they used to do through religion'⁶⁰⁵. And despite the decline in established

⁶⁰⁰ Cornwall Development Company, 2009, pp. 37-38.

⁶⁰¹ For example, Penzance Strategic Plan, Cornwall County Council, 2007, based on the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative to revive coastal settlements exhibiting high levels of deprivation.

⁶⁰² J. Rhurmund, interview 20 December 2011.

⁶⁰³ J. Drew, interview 1st November 2011.

⁶⁰⁴ G. Care, interview 1st November 2011.

⁶⁰⁵ S. Glasson, interview 8th March 2012.

religion, Julyan Drew, a Methodist minister sees a wider spirituality 'affecting the whole area' which resonates with new ageism, mysticism, paganism and Celtic spirituality⁶⁰⁶ a theme which is explored further in Chapter Seven, (Pages 199-203).

There was an appreciation of the hybridity of Cornish identity; that it was an amalgam of many different strands and an understanding by most interviewees that people may hold several identities at the same time although one or two drew a clear distinction between Englishness and Cornishness and saw the latter as their primary identity. Some interviewees agreed with recent research that the percentage of children identifying as Cornish is rising.⁶⁰⁷ Several incomers pointed out that those children born of inward migrants are often intensely Cornish albeit an identity defined by surfing, music, environmental concern and performance rather than traditional aspects of Cornish culture. As an example:

Bev's daughter was born here but both parents are from London and Middlesex. She has tattooed on the bottom of her foot "made in Cornwall". She has a real strong Cornish identity.⁶⁰⁸

Such feelings are 'emotional and intuitive' rather than based on family traditions or a sense of history,⁶⁰⁹ and link with Kent's analysis of the Celtic influence on youth culture although there are concerns that elements, for example surfing, are becoming commercialised and commodified.⁶¹⁰

The impact of mainly middle class immigrants is regarded with a degree of ambivalence. It has resulted in house prices remaining well beyond the reach of average wage earners but, in the opinion of some interviewees its impact has also been positive by stimulating new cultural developments, providing an audience for the town's arts scene and regenerating local business. Stockwell and Macleod point out the positive role of inward migrants to rural areas by

⁶⁰⁶ J. Drew, *ibid.*

⁶⁰⁷ G. Care, interview 1st November 2011.

⁶⁰⁸ B. Turner, interview 7th March 2012.

⁶⁰⁹ G. Musser, interview 8th February, 2012.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*

volunteering and holding positions of responsibility in local groups.⁶¹¹ The influence of inward migration on Penzance civil society means that there is an articulate and middle class element which is prepared to challenge, lobby and organise around the competing discourses. As one Cornish born resident stated:

We have learnt a lot from people who have come from outside, We have become more assertive. There has been a cultural change.⁶¹²

echoing Dickinson's conclusions about attitudes to incomers in his research who 'are valued for what they have to offer in social, cultural and economic terms and their contributions are encouraged and welcomed'.⁶¹³

Some interviewees also see overt expressions of Cornishness as a consequence of inward migration representing a corresponding need to assert identity:

In the 1950's and 60's we didn't feel threatened. We didn't need to express our Cornishness because Cornwall was all around you. Most people were Cornish...the influx of tourists and incomers means that minorities respond and in Cornwall we have symbols by the bucket load to express our identity.⁶¹⁴

But many immigrants attracted to Penzance because of holiday memories or a desire for a different lifestyle assume a loyalty to place which starts a process of acquiring a Cornish identity:

I've seen people move into an area and then go native. The attitudes they come down with are not the attitudes they retain – they become Cornish. After people have spent a few summers and winters and get used to the bad weather and visitor congestion then they absorb a Cornish mentality,⁶¹⁵

which is then reinforced and reinterpreted by their children. A relatively recent migrant considered that for her, quality of life was one of the primary reasons for moving to Cornwall from London as:

People here seemed to be more content. Where we came from people were much more materialistic. Children had to have things but it didn't seem to

⁶¹¹ Stockdale, A. and 'Pre-retirement age migration to remote rural areas', M. Macleod, *Journal of Rural Studies*, 32, 2013, pp.80-92, p.88.

⁶¹² G. Care, interview 1st November 2011.

⁶¹³ R. Dickinson, 2010, p.98.

⁶¹⁴ M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 20th December 2011.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid.

matter down here what trainers you wore; you didn't have to have the latest thing. Here people had more freedom and lived their life more outside [the home]. They enjoy the area they live in.⁶¹⁶

On the other hand, for the ethnic Cornish there is a concern that Cornishness is dying out:

Cornish people are still very proud to be Cornish. People from outside think it's warm; lovely beaches but they don't see the Treneeres or the other estates. My daughter at school is learning Cornish – I didn't have the opportunity. In some ways things are getting better but I don't think there are many Cornish people in Cornwall now. I like walking through the town and listening to the old people speaking with a Cornish accent...people who are still in Cornwall who are Cornish are very proud to be Cornish but there are not many of us left... My mum got married at seventeen, had five children and never left Cornwall,⁶¹⁷

indicating that for some, Cornish identity is classic Cornishness based on family history, primary industry and working class culture which are challenged by the fluidity of a hybrid culture and new cultural interpretations.

Some interviewees discussed the position of young people who feel the need to leave Cornwall to find work, pursue an education or to seek a wider experience. As table 6.1, (Appendix Two) shows, 16 to 29 year olds are underrepresented in Penzance, a feature of migration from Cornwall stretching back to the nineteenth century. Julian Drew cited the case of a youth worker who felt the need to go away from what she felt was a remote and closed community to see more of the world.⁶¹⁸ He asked why she felt she needed to leave concluding that sometimes you have to experience somewhere else before understanding and appreciating where you come from. Greg Musser, in his twenties who had been to university in Surrey, felt that he better understood Cornwall from having been away. He believed that:

There is a greater community feeling in Cornwall than Surrey; [in Surrey] there's not the same cohesiveness or support for each other. At university street musicians seemed in stark contrast to the "head down get on with your life" attitude in Farnham. The musicians stood out like a sore thumb; in Penzance it wouldn't have been unusual.⁶¹⁹

⁶¹⁶ B. Turner, interview 7th March 2012.

⁶¹⁷ D. Sims, interview 19th June 2012.

⁶¹⁸ See P. Aldous, for examples of ambivalent feelings of young people towards staying or migrating from Cornwall.

⁶¹⁹ G. Musser, interview 8th February, 2012.

Returnees are identified as a significant group of inward migrants by Perry, Dean, et al⁶²⁰ but their motivation for both leaving and returning is under researched. The point to stress however is that middle class returnees are important influences in the social and economic make-up of the town and will be considered further in Chapter Nine, (Pages 338-339)

Although the interviewees broadly accepted the inevitability of inward migration and many acknowledged that it could be positive there was also recognition that there can be a negative side to Cornishness; that incomers could be seen as the Other. A lettings agent commented that:

People who have moved into the area sometimes come up against ethnic prejudice; "You're not Cornish, you've only been here five minutes."⁶²¹

One incomer involved in the harbour controversy considered that although people were generally welcoming to incomers, Cornishness could be introspective and xenophobic:

For some people [Cornishness is] more than pride; it can manifest itself in unpleasant ways...it's somewhere where there is sensitivity about incomers and identity and anyone who is not local gets it in the neck. It's not a good place to be black or brown.⁶²²

Cornish Studies, as we saw in Chapter Three, has largely regarded the influence of migration on Cornish identity negatively in terms of dilution of culture, housing stress and development pressure. But the analysis of the settings in the following chapters suggests that there is a more nuanced interpretation; that inward migration has brought new skills, that identity with place may be a way in which a sense of ethnicity is reinvigorated and, following Bhabha, that Cornishness is renewed through the processes of interaction between cultures resulting from inward migration.

Conclusion: Identity, Ethnicity and Place

At present Penzance struggles to cope with changes, some of which relate to globalisation, some from the application of neoliberal policies which have little

⁶²⁰ R. Perry, K. Dean, et al. 1986.

⁶²¹ M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 20th December 2011.

⁶²² D. Cliffe, interview 9th March, 2012.

regard for locality and some from changes in local administration. The debate between the two competing discourses is taken out of the hands of local decision makers. The effect is perceived as a loss of control, 'a sense of powerlessness. People are turning off from normal avenues of political expression'⁶²³ and this has developed into an anti-unitary discourse; the belief that Cornwall Council is governing against the interests of Penzance.⁶²⁴ The creation of a unitary authority has worked against the grain of Cornish local politics which has traditionally found expression in small towns emphasising their separateness and independence. More than most Cornish communities, Penzance feels these changes have been to its detriment and challenge its historic identity as a major Cornish town.

But the town is unable to exert leverage to influence a debate about its future. It finds it difficult to reconcile the competing discourses between conservation and economic development, between a vision of it as a tourist destination or as an administrative and commercial centre. The overarching place myth, which is the basis for the town's order of discourse, emphasises its remoteness at the end of the line, its destination as an escape from the pressures of urbanisation and the opportunities it allows for artistic and personal self-expression. There is, however, a contradiction between remoteness and isolation which needs to be protected and the need for investment to alleviate endemic poverty and deprivation. A lack of local political leadership to navigate through this dilemma and reconcile these discourses, made all the more difficult with the loss of the District Council, means that issues have been fought out within its civil society which have frequently resulted in stalemate. An interpretation of contemporary Penzance is that it is still in a state of Payton's paralysis reluctantly accepting that its future prosperity may depend on tourism, fearful of the implications of changes such as the loss of the helicopter service to the Scilly Isles and believing that it has little control over its future. So although the town has a strong sense of civic pride and an awareness of its historical role as the

⁶²³ J. Drew, interview 1st November 2011.

⁶²⁴ R. Harris, 2015, p.168.

capital of Penwith, it is confused about its future and how it should address the major social and economic issues it faces. A number of ideas about Cornish identity also emerged during this overview of Penzance. These suggest the importance of place in relation to personal identity, the possible linkage between loyalty to place image and ethnicity and the contradictory impact of inward migration on Cornish culture which paradoxically is seen as both strengthening and eroding identity. The following chapters will consider how the opposing discourses are played out in the context of the settings studied and explore further the questions raised about Cornishness and the impact of inward migration.

Chapter 7: Festivals: Performed Ethnicity and Celebrating Place

Golowan and Montol are examples of overt expressions of ethnicity. They are part of the positive 'glorious mix' discourse emphasising the town's uniqueness, creativity and sense of place. They illustrate three themes of this research. Firstly, festivals are perceived as expressions of ethnicity performed in a social context. Secondly, they are important signifiers for reaffirming and celebrating place. Thirdly, they are an example of how civil society is mobilised to enable them to happen, a process which involves high levels of organisation and commitment but, at the same time, has the potential for conflict as the relationships between the participants are played out. This Chapter will look at the extent to which they illustrate the practice of explicitly performed ethnicity, their interpretation of Cornish culture and how they were initiated and are sustained by the town's civil society. It draws on a body of theory concerned with the function of festivals in celebrating identity and interpreting and promoting culture. It will also explore how they have drawn on interpretations of the past and how they continue to evolve to shape the place imagery of Penzance. The Chapter will consider the debates about cultural authenticity and invention, the response to the festivals from insiders and outsiders, the impact of globalisation and the role of civil society and the state.

Although this setting sits largely within the positive, 'glorious mix' discourse, it will become clear that other less positive discourses with different interpretations of Cornishness question the idea that Penzance unites behind these festival versions of performed ethnicity. The research identifies a number of tensions between authenticity and invention, spectacle and carnival, the importance of place identity and its relationship with the influence of tourism and politics. The Chapter concludes by suggesting that the varying ways of consuming culture and the production of discourses based on interpretations of history reflect different dimensions of Cornish ethnicity and different ideas about Cornishness seen through the prism of the place image of Penzance. The principal interviewees were the first three directors of Golowan, Stephen Hall, Mike Sagar-Fenton and Andy Hazlehurst, two of the

organisers of Montol, Simon Reed and Helen Musser and the promoter of Pirates on the Prom, Angie Butler, (Appendix One).

Festival Theory

Festivals may be regarded as one of the elements contributing to the historical, cultural, symbolic and communal aspects of place formation. Paasi, in connection with regional identities, considers that places become institutionalised through a number of cultural processes of which festivals are a good example⁶²⁵. They are one of the ways in which civil society is mobilised to shape identity and as Massey states, reinforce the notion of places, as 'locations of particular sets of intersecting social relations'.⁶²⁶ More specifically, McClinchey considers that festivals contribute to and reinforce the social and cultural identity of a particular locality and enable people to connect with and attach meanings to a place.⁶²⁷ They may have a number of specific and sometimes overlapping objectives such as promoting economic regeneration by boosting its image,⁶²⁸ addressing community tensions, privileging a particular section of society for instance writers or artists, or encouraging tourism by stressing the distinctiveness of local culture.⁶²⁹ Festivals provide opportunities for creativity and the celebration of a unique history. By suspending or blurring the distinction between normal social relationships, between public and private spheres and between observers and participants, festivals open up opportunities for negotiation and the introduction of new ideas. Following Bakhtin's notion of Carnival,⁶³⁰ festivals create an opportunity to perform outside the norms of society, blurring the distinction between the public and the private when the usual rules of behaviour are temporarily set aside.

⁶²⁵ A. Paasi, 'Place and region: regional worlds and words', *Progress in Human Geography* 26:6, pp.802-811, 2002 and 'Region and place: regional identity in question', *Progress in Human Geography* 27:4, 2003, pp.475-485.

⁶²⁶ D. Massey in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds.), 1995, pp. 45-85.

⁶²⁷ K.A. McClinchey, 'Urban Ethnic Festivals, Neighborhoods, and the Multiple Realities of Marketing Place', *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing* 25:3, 2008, pp.251-264.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid*, refers to the processes surrounding the promotion of places as 'geographies of hype', p. 252.

⁶²⁹ S. Harrison, 'Culture, tourism and local community – the heritage identity of the Isle of Man', *Brand Management*, Vol. 9, No 4-5, 2002 pp.355-371, p. 361.

⁶³⁰ M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, MIT. 1968.

Festival theory draws on a wide range of overlapping disciplines including cultural geography, sociology, identity studies and politics. It also deals with difficult concepts like authenticity and cultural politics. To give a focus and structure to understanding festivals, it is helpful to discuss briefly a number of closely related themes which are prominent in the academic corpus and which are reflected in the following analysis.

Authenticity and Invention

Festivals, particularly those which celebrate ethnicity or place, are generally believed by both participants and observers to be grounded in history. They reach back to a past ceremony or cultural practice forming a tradition which is reinforced by repetition and ritual, hence conferring an authenticity which is regarded as immutable and unchanging. But as Hobsbawm points out: "Traditions" which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented'.⁶³¹ He defines invented tradition as:

a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.⁶³²

Morgan identifies reasons for inventing tradition as the absence of an historical tradition and hence the need to construct one or alternatively the rediscovery of a romantic past onto which traditions can be grafted, assisted by a lack of challenge from intellectuals to check and balance historical myths. In the case of Wales he writes that it was necessary 'to ransack the past and transform it with imagination, to create a new Welshness which would instruct, entertain, amuse and educate the people'.⁶³³

This process of invention does not conjure practices from thin air since it is based on an understanding of place and the experience of being an insider. Authenticity is conferred by 'a deep knowledge of one's surroundings and an

⁶³¹ E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, (eds.) *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, 1983, p.1.

⁶³² Ibid, p.1.

⁶³³ P. Morgan, 'From a Death to a View: The Hunt for the Welsh Past in the Romantic Period', in E Hobsbawm and T Ranger (eds.) *ibid*, p.99.

awareness of places as settings for meaningful human activity'.⁶³⁴ But, as Wang points out, in the post-modern festival, authenticity itself can be subject to interpretation by the consumer of the experience. Hence if tourists seeking authenticity believe that they are experiencing an authentic experience, 'the issue of whether the toured objects are authentic is irrelevant or less relevant'.⁶³⁵ Authenticity can therefore be constructed from a combination of insider cultural knowledge and a tourist construction based on belief rather than possessing an absolute value.

However, authenticity can be a contested issue when there are different ideas about what is authentic and what is imagined and invented, differences which may be determined by who controls the processes of discourse construction.⁶³⁶ An example is the perspective of outsiders regarding Celticity which is defined by a variety of, often contradictory, representations by the 'centre' as a combination of peripheral Others, a spiritual people, an uncivilised dangerous pagan race and as simple, slow and stupid.⁶³⁷ The construction and determination of these discourses and the extent to which they are adopted by those to whom they are applied is based on power; who controls the means to promote the discourse. Rather than a clear authenticity, 'the elusive, ill-defined nature of the Celts is what keeps them interesting to those located at the centre',⁶³⁸ reflects a Gramscian view of cultural hegemony.⁶³⁹ Hence the idea of Celticism had been subject to repeated reinterpretation and reinvention by outsiders or those in the 'centre' spurred on by the tourist industry and commercial interests. So authenticity far from being immutable emerges and evolves and 'is an ever-changing system of representation rather than a fixed setting of objects and ideas'.⁶⁴⁰

⁶³⁴ N. MacLeod, 'The Placeless Festival: Identity and Place in the Post-Modern Festival', in D. Picard and M. Robinson, (eds.) *Festivals, Tourism and Social Change: Remaking Worlds*, Clevedon, 2006, p 224-5.

⁶³⁵ N. Wang, 'Rethinking Authenticity in Tourism Experience', *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 26, No2, 1999, pp. 349-370, p. 366.

⁶³⁶ See discussion of the pasty, Chapter Three, Page 62.

⁶³⁷ M. Kneafsey, 'Tourism images and the construction of Celticity in Ireland and Brittany' in D.C. Harvey, R. Jones, N. McInroy & C. Milligan, (eds.) 2002, p. 125.

⁶³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 137.

⁶³⁹ D. Abbott, 1998, p. 45. See also the discussion of Gramsci in Chapter Three.

⁶⁴⁰ MacLeod, *ibid*, p. 225.

Spectacle and Carnival

A number of writers distinguish between the spectacle of a festival in the form of parades, images, banners and iconography and the concept of carnival as a radical occasion when social norms are suspended and public spaces commandeered. Spectacle is consumed by observers, who watch but do not participate in parading banners and images. But the role of spectators is not simply passive as, by their presence, they contribute to forming and reinforcing the identity and legitimacy of the festival. So as Picard and Robinson state: '[t]he creation of the spectacular within a festival is an important process of social expression, instrumental in marking and celebrating identity and collective consciousnesses'.⁶⁴¹

Carnival is also important in identity formation but differs from festival as, following Bakhtin, it 'does not acknowledge any distinction between actors and spectators...Carnival is not a spectacle seen by the people; they live in it, and everyone participates because its very idea embraces all the people'.⁶⁴² Mendible sees the all-embracing aspect of carnival as an expression of working class popular culture in opposition to elite or high-brow art. Carnival also inverts the normal social order by appointing a lord of misrule, carnival jester or mock mayor selected from the general populous so that the normal social order is turned on its head, the ruled have the freedom to become the unruly.⁶⁴³ An element of the carnivalesque dimension of festivals is dressing in costume or adopting a disguise so that different identities can be assumed which is part of the process of transgressing social hierarchies. All festivals clearly are not carnivals but, as will be shown in later examples, many which are ostensibly seen in terms of the spectacle of parades and images, they frequently exhibit an element of carnival, the unruliness of which may conflict with the intentions of the organisers.

⁶⁴¹ Picard and M. Robinson, (eds.) 2006, p.17.

⁶⁴² M. Bakhtin, 1968, p. 7.

⁶⁴³ M. Mendible, 'High Theory/Low Culture: Postmodernism and the Politics of Carnival' *Journal of American Culture*, 22 (2), 1999, pp. 71-76, p. 72.

Insiders and Outsiders

A festival may be held for a variety of reasons but a distinction can be drawn between those who see it as an affirmation of place, celebrating an individual culture and part of a collective memory and tradition, and others who are not part of the locality or community but participate as consumers. As expressed by MacLeod:

the potential for festivals to construct and express the cultural identities of place and community means that cultural tourists in search of an authentic engagement with the locals can expect to find this within a festival.⁶⁴⁴

Like authenticity, festivals are meeting points for different sets of perspectives but there are wide variations in how this interaction may be played out.

Examples like the Padstow May Day celebrations suggest a clear distinction between Padstonians and outsiders with the festival an opportunity to reclaim the town from 'second home owners and owners of capital'.⁶⁴⁵ In the Ashbourne Shrovetide football game outsiders are welcome so long as they temporarily assume an insider role and play the game.⁶⁴⁶ A different relationship between insiders and outsiders is described by De Bres and Davis in their analysis of the Kansas River festival where outsiders are welcomed as tourists in an area with a poor self-image and despite the over simplistic commodification of local culture, the festival is seen as contributing to a more positive identity for a depressed area.⁶⁴⁷

Outsiders may therefore have a profound influence on how a festival evolves. This may take the form of commercialisation of an event by incorporating a degree of commodification to attract visitors and revenue which has little to do with the history or culture of place. In extreme forms the festival itself becomes the destination rather than the place where it is held, a feature which is characteristic of literary and arts festivals. An example is the Wexford

⁶⁴⁴ MacLeod, 2006, pp. 228-9.

⁶⁴⁵ J.H. Gilligan and C.C. Harris, in R.G. Burgess (ed.), 1989, p.23.

⁶⁴⁶ S. McCabe, 'The making of Community through Historic Festive Practice: The Case of Ashbourne Royal Shrovetide Football' in Picard and M. Robinson, (eds.), 2006, p. 117.

⁶⁴⁷ K. De Bres and J. Davis, 'Celebrating Group and Place Identity: A Case Study of a New Regional Festival', *Tourism Geographies*, 3: 3, 2001, pp. 326-337.

Festival Opera which, although started by locals, deliberately attracts outsiders who themselves become part of the spectacle so that local people, indulge in the glamorous and exotic atmosphere created by the foreign singers, producers, directors and visiting dignitaries attending the festival. ⁶⁴⁸

Place and Globalisation

Several writers comment on the increase in festivals worldwide towards the end of the twentieth century. Selberg, quoting Manning, states that, 'new celebrations are being created and older ones revived on a scale that is surely unmatched in human history'.⁶⁴⁹ Part of the explanation may be found in the present era of rapid social change, globalisation and the commodification of culture. Festivals are 'a response from communities seeking to re-invent their identities in the face of a feeling of cultural dislocation brought about by rapid structural change, social mobility and globalisation processes.'⁶⁵⁰ They are a response to time-space compression by emphasising the distinctiveness, historical antecedents and character of a place. A perceived tendency towards cultural conformity allied with the demands of tourism to provide novelty, creates pressure to demonstrate difference by staging festivals based on often invented traditions and customs. However, this resistance to 'placelessness' is itself paradoxically part of a global tendency to assert difference by means of holding a festival. At the same time as following a global phenomenon, the function of a festival is to emphasise the cultural and spatial uniqueness of place, particular group or ethnicity and the need to demonstrate this to the outside world. So festivals may be regarded as intersections between local and global cultural influences. As stated by Selberg:

a festival can, thus, be viewed as a focal point for the merging of local and global narratives, and as an occasion when, and a space where, relations between global, national, regional and local levels are discussed, negotiated and perhaps, redefined.⁶⁵¹

⁶⁴⁸ B. Quinn, 'Symbols, Practices and Myth-making: Cultural Perspectives on the Wexford – Festival Opera', *Tourism Geographies*, 5:3, 2003, pp.329-349.

⁶⁴⁹ T. Selberg, 'Festivals as celebrations of Place in Modern Society: Two Examples from Norway', *Folklore*, 117:3, 2006, pp. 297-312, p.297.

⁶⁵⁰D. Picard and M. Robinson, (eds.) 2006, p.2.

⁶⁵¹ T. Selberg, *ibid*, p. 298.

Civil Society and the State

An area which is neglected in festival literature is how festivals are organised, how they are financed, how volunteers are recruited and the role of the state in enabling them to happen. The function of festivals to promote places rarely happens without some involvement from public sector agencies which can include granting or withholding permissions, licensing street traders, closing streets or allowing performances in public places, as well as ensuring that events are appropriately stewarded and performed safely.⁶⁵² Many festivals rely on public subsidy either in kind or from grants to enable them to happen. Where the object of the festival is to boost the image, reputation or economy of a particular place, there may be political support for a financial subsidy from local authorities or arts organisations; the problem being continuity of funding if there is a change in political priorities.⁶⁵³ Festivals often have a civic element, opened by a mayor or including a civic procession or church service illustrating the linkage between civil society and the state. They may also operate within a framework such as a cultural strategy determined by a local council or arts organisation which directs funding in accordance with objectives relating to a wider area than the festival place.⁶⁵⁴ So although festivals may often appear to arise spontaneously from local communities they are usually closely associated with public sector stakeholders.

Festivals are frequently a product of civil society initiated by voluntary association between groups of similar minded people. However much they are supported by the state, they invariably rely on the organisation of volunteers to make them happen. Parades, events and images are produced within civil society. So although festivals rely on support from the state there is often a tension between festival promoters and statutory bodies. Burr summarises this in the case of the Notting Hill carnival where the legal-rational culture of statutory stakeholders clashes with the organisers of a

⁶⁵² A. Burr, 'The "Freedom of the Slaves to Walk the Streets": Celebration, Spontaneity and Revelry versus Logistics at the Notting Hill Carnival' in D. Picard and M. Robinson, (eds.) 2006, pp. 84-98.

⁶⁵³ M. Smith and K. Forest, 'Enhancing Vitality or Compromising Integrity? Festivals, Tourism and the Complexities of Performing Culture' in D. Picard and M. Robinson, (eds.), 2006, p.144.

⁶⁵⁴ Cornwall Council, *Green Paper for Culture*, 2010.

creative event.⁶⁵⁵ However, within civil society itself there may be differences in the interpretation of place identity. Jeong and Santos cite the case of the Kangnung festival in Korea as an example of a festival acting as a catalyst for issues (or conflicting discourses) concerned with power and identity which for the most part lie dormant in communities but coalesce and are given focus and expression during a festival's organisation and performance.⁶⁵⁶ So the relationships between civil society and public bodies and struggles between various interests over control of the festival process may be profoundly political.

Festivals in Cornwall

Before focusing on festivals in Penzance some general points can be made about the evolution of contemporary festivals in Cornwall. There is an extensive literature on their history from Borlase's eighteenth century survey of Cornwall to accounts of Victorian antiquarians, recording by Old Cornwall Societies and more recently, by academic studies.⁶⁵⁷ There are two reservations to make about this corpus of work. Firstly, although much of the recording of festival historical practice suggests that it is particular to Cornwall, phenomena like guise dancing, 'Obby 'Osses and hurling are not exclusively Cornish or Celtic and were, and in some cases still are, to be found in folk culture across Britain.⁶⁵⁸ Guise dancing, for example, occurs in Scotland and Yorkshire and have links with similar forms like morris and molly dancing.⁶⁵⁹ The remoteness of Cornwall and the absence of large urban centres suggest that such practices survived there longer than elsewhere but they are not unique. Secondly, the recording of folk ceremonies and events by nineteenth century observers like Courtney, on which much of the understanding of folklore and its present day interpretation is drawn, reflects the attitudes prevailing at the time of the collector and the different

⁶⁵⁵ A. Burr in D. Picard and M. Robinson, (eds.) 2006, p. 89.

⁶⁵⁶ S. Jeong & C. Santos, 'Cultural Politics and Contested Place Identity' *Annals of Tourism Research* Vol.31, No.3, pp.640-656, 2004.

⁶⁵⁷ See a summary of much of this work in M. A. Courtney, *Cornish Feasts and Folk Lore*, Penzance, 1890, or for a more modern interpretation, S. Reed, *The Cornish Traditional Year*, London, 2012.

⁶⁵⁸ S. Reed, 2012, pp. 27-28, p. 62.

⁶⁵⁹ H. Musser, interview 7 January, 2014.

perspectives of the collector and informant. Hence, although practices may appear to be rooted in antiquity, as pointed out by Green, they also have a contemporary meaning and 'no matter how strange it may look to an outsider, every tradition has in it something which gives its exponents a reason far deeper than mechanical force of habit for practising it'.⁶⁶⁰ Comparison between antiquarian accounts of festivals and those reported in contemporary newspaper reports sometimes show a considerable difference in interpretation. So although modern practices may be similar to those held in antiquity, the reasons for celebrating a festival at one period may be very different in another. In tracing the history of the Cologne Carnival from the Middle Ages, to the present day, DeWaal demonstrates that although there was a successful transmission of the form and practice of the carnival across hundreds of years, 'the origins of the tradition in the distant past of which little was documented and publically known permitted broad imaginings and reinvention'.⁶⁶¹

In Cornwall festivals may be traced to a number of traditions including feast days, some of which like St Just and St Ives survive, together with festivals and theatre which allegedly have a Celtic origin.⁶⁶² In one of the few references which link celebrations and parades with identity formation, power and civil society, Harvey, Brace et al⁶⁶³ show how in nineteenth century Cornwall, Sunday School parades and tea-treats 'operated as a social discourse that actively structured individual and communal Methodist identities'. The authors see parades as 'identity forming vehicles' which use public space to celebrate distinctiveness and demonstrate 'the power and autonomy of a specific place or town and its institutions'. By the use of ritual, in symbols, dress and ceremony, traditions become established.⁶⁶⁴ Some tea-treats also incorporated earlier practices such as the serpent dance which

⁶⁶⁰ A. E Green, Forward to M. A. Courtney, *Cornish Feasts and Folk Lore*, Penzance, 1973 edition.

⁶⁶¹ J. De Waal, 'The Reinvention of Tradition: Form, Meaning and Local Identity in Modern Cologne Carnival', *Central European History* 46, 2013, pp. 495-531, p. 531.

⁶⁶² A. Kent, *The Theatre of Cornwall*, Bristol 2010.

⁶⁶³ D.C. Harvey, C. Brace, & A. Bailey, 'Parading the Cornish subject: Methodist Sunday Schools in West Cornwall, c. 1830-1930', *Journal of Historical Geography* 33, 2007, pp.24-44, p.27.

⁶⁶⁴ *Cornishman*, 19th May 2011, reporting the traditions of the Golowan Band.

predated non-conformity,⁶⁶⁵ an example of cultural memory combining the old and the new. As Kent observes about the recent growth of Cornish festivals:

many of these... were begun “anew”; others were reinvented along more contemporary lines, but so successfully that many people now regard them as utterly traditional.⁶⁶⁶

They frequently feature parades incorporating banners, huge images, and kites in which the old and contemporary become indistinguishable. All are now regarded as part of the festival tradition and reinvention has reinvigorated the celebrations.

So Cornwall, as elsewhere, has seen a proliferation of festivals and celebrations over the past twenty to thirty years stimulated by the often contradictory but at the same time complementary pressures of resistance to time-space compression, the homogeneity of globalisation and the demand from tourists for an authentic, local and traditional experience. Cornish festivals range from those with an uninterrupted history such as Padstow May Day celebrations and the Helston Flora or Furry stretching back several hundred years, to new ones based on the history and distinctiveness of communities such as Camborne’s Trevithick Day and Redruth’s Murdock Day, cultural events like the Du Maurier (now renamed as the Fowey Festival of Words and Music) and Port Eliot literary festivals. Events like St Piran’s Day, marking the patron saint of miners, which were celebrated by a few enthusiasts fifty years ago, are now widespread across Cornwall. The motivation for this explosion is summarised by the organisers of Camborne’s Trevithick festival who list the reasons for holding a festival as *inter alia* raising civic pride, promoting community cohesion, celebrating the local industrial heritage, and helping to support efforts to regenerate a deprived area with an image of a declining industrial base,⁶⁶⁷ echoing many of McClinchey’s reasons for their recent proliferation.

⁶⁶⁵ M, A & J, Davey, *Scot Dances Troys, Furrys and Tea Treats: The Cornish Dance Tradition*, London, 2009, p. 39. The serpent dance involved a long line of dancers lead by a band which moves in a series of spirals, snake shapes and, in some versions, form arches and weaving in and out of other dancers. It continues to be performed at Golowan.

⁶⁶⁶ A. Kent, 2010, p.761.

⁶⁶⁷ www.trevithick-day.org.uk/index.php/trevithick-day-association, accessed 30th November 2013

However, as well as celebrating the history and culture of place, tourism is also a major motivation for holding festivals which are increasingly marketed as promoting Cornishness. Cornwall Council's Green Paper for Culture identifies 150 festivals under the heading of community culture.⁶⁶⁸ West Cornwall is particularly rich in new and revived festivals. During August and early September 2012, the *Cornishman* advertised or contained copy about a dozen or so festivals including Ludgvan Country Fair, St Buryan Gala Week, St Just's Lafrowda, Morvah Pasty Day, Goldsithney Charter Fair and the Newlyn Fish Festival. Penzance has initiated several festivals in addition to Golowan and Montol including a literary festival, a spring May Horns celebration and a St Piran's Day parade. A brochure promoted by Cornwall Council and arts and tourism organisations lists fifty major festivals across Cornwall of which thirteen are in West Penwith. Readers are invited to 'Enjoy a Cornish cultural feast in 2013'.⁶⁶⁹ Festivals are now part of the Cornish tourist experience, with its connotations of packaging and commodifying local culture as well as celebrating place. Emerging from civil society, they are promoted by the Authority as part of the global festival movement.

A Framework for Analysis

Combining the elements of festival theory outlined above, Picard and Robinson identify the principal characteristics of festivals based on a range of disciplines and historical studies.⁶⁷⁰ Firstly, they see festivals as triggered by a 'life crisis' or collective event such as a seasonal, economic or technological change. Secondly festivals alter and transform social space or the public realm by claiming it for spectacle and performance and suspending normal daily routine, a process which they term 'liminality'. Following Lefebvre, spatial practice is replaced by representational space. Thirdly, as outlined by Bakhtin's analysis of carnival, festivals create the opportunity for suspending the normal rules of social behaviour, allowing disguise and the transformation of identity. In addition they frequently involve some form of performance and the mobilisation of symbols which, as stated by Hobsbawm, 'can express a

⁶⁶⁸ Cornwall Council, 2010, p. 21.

⁶⁶⁹ Cornwall Arts Centre Trust, *A feast of Festivals: Lanwes a Wolyow*, 2013.

⁶⁷⁰ D. Picard and M. Robinson, (eds.), 2006, pp. 9-16.

unified collective consciousness or set of identities', when 'rules and rituals of a symbolic nature can be maintained' and 'histories, whatever their accuracy, can be told and re-told with the regularity of festivity'.⁶⁷¹ Festivals also involve some form of exchange which Picard and Robinson see as primarily economic, suggesting that the form of a festival may be influenced by the requirements of tourism which introduce new audiences and new perspectives. Although they do not use the term civil society they recognise that the practices of festival are opportunities to exercise political power between the various networks of participants and they also see the potential for cultural creativity to be political in changing perceptions and developing strategies to cope with social change.

Their analysis is useful in summarising some of the main strands of festival theory and their approach has been adapted in this research as a three part framework to structure the analysis of Golowan and Montol. The first concerns the conditions for the revival and invention of the festivals, the nature of the 'crisis' and the motivation of the original organisers (and in discourse analysis terms, the texts they used to initiate the discourse). The second concerns the performance of the festival, how the content is structured, what is to be included, how it is to be presented and where is it to be performed, and analyses the issues surrounding liminality, rules, ritual and carnivalesque behaviour. The third element is the social context (equating to Fairclough's social practice) for the festival, the role of civil society, the organisation of creativity, its relationship with the state and the political processes for handling conflict and change.

Golowan: History

Several mid nineteenth century writers describe the tradition of celebrating the feast of St John, (*Kernewek, Gol Jowan*) and the mid-summer solstice in Cornwall,⁶⁷² but the practice appears to have been strongest in West Cornwall, particularly in the Mount's Bay area. In the early nineteenth century

⁶⁷¹ D. Picard and M. Robinson, (eds.), 2006, p. 12.

⁶⁷²J.S.Courtney, 1845 and J.Paris 1824, pp.53-55.

Penzance is described as the centre of festivities during St John's Eve which included torch-light processions, dancing, burning tar barrels, bonfires, fireworks, a fun fair on the quay and boating trips in Mount's Bay, (Figure 7.1). Pool,⁶⁷³ describes it as a fire festival which 'was celebrated in Penzance for centuries' and other writers have proposed links to a pagan past and the importance of mid-summer within the Celtic calendar.⁶⁷⁴ Courtney describes the burning of tar barrels and torches, the election of a 'popular' i.e. mock mayor and the serpent dance interweaving between burning tar barrels.⁶⁷⁵

More objective descriptions are found in the local press:

On midsummer evening, as usual tar-barrels, bon-fires and fire-works were almost everywhere to be seen and was kept up to a late hour. On midsummer day "quay fair" took place, which was well attended. There were plenty of amusements; and the country folks kept the boatmen fully employed in giving them their customary "pen'orth of sea."⁶⁷⁶



Figure 7.1: Quay Fair 1850: Penlee House Gallery and Museum

In the final quarter of the nineteenth century the tradition had died out, encouraged by the Corporation of Penzance which was concerned about the risk from fire and general disturbance. But it also seems that the enthusiasm for Gol Jowan within the neighbourhood was also waning. In June 1860 the

⁶⁷³ P.A.S. Pool, 1974, p.133.

⁶⁷⁴ S. Reed, 2012, pp. 13-28.

⁶⁷⁵ M. A. Courtney, 1890, pp.39-41.

⁶⁷⁶ *The Penzance and Mining Journal*, 1st July 1840. Pen'orth of sea is a boat trip in Mount's Bay.

Cornish Telegraph reported that poor weather had turned boat trips into a 'pennyworth of sickness' and that 'the whole affair was dull'.⁶⁷⁷ A combination of civil disapproval and growing public indifference seems to have brought the festival's demise.

This linkage with the past which is the basis for the claims for ethnicity and authenticity for both Golowan and Montol is selective having been filtered both through the perceptions of the original recorders of nineteenth century practices and the interpretation and choices made by contemporary organisers. Performance of the festivals is a synthesis of these two processes. So today much of their content is regarded as signifying a uniquely Cornish culture drawing on folk history, and replicating ancient ceremonies and traditional cultural practices. However, it also incorporates interpretations, inventions and new cultural elements which have attracted controversy. There are different ideas about what is and is not Cornish; disputes over authenticity; accusations about the use of allegedly pagan symbolism and invented tradition; conflict over content and organisation and concern about the degree of licence permitted in the celebration of carnival. Despite these differences Penzance civil society has largely built, through negotiation and assimilation, a consensus around the cultural meaning of these festivals but this changes and evolves in response to the tensions inherent in the interpretation of contemporary Cornish ethnicity and the politics of festival organisation.

The Revival of the Festival

The history of modern day Golowan from its inception until 2012 can be divided into three parts each coinciding with a different form of organisation and a different director.⁶⁷⁸ The festival started in 1991 and although there are varying accounts about how it began there is general agreement that the crisis which triggered the initiative to hold a festival was the early 1990's

⁶⁷⁷ *Cornish Telegraph*, 27th June 1860.

⁶⁷⁸ 1991-2006, Stephen Hall, 2007-2008, Mike Sagar-Fenton, 2009-2012, Andy Hazlehurst.

recession.⁶⁷⁹ The idea to hold a special day for Penzance was a response to economic decline, a loss of jobs in the locality, the emerging negative discourse that the town was a depressed area and a belief that it had lost status in comparison with the rest of Cornwall. A consensus formed between a number of individuals prominent in the local arts scene, supported in varying degrees by the Chamber of Commerce and a range of cultural and voluntary organisations, to counter this negativity by holding a community event to echo the success of other recently established Cornish festivals.⁶⁸⁰ So the inception of Golowan is an example of where the two principal discourses about Penzance intersected at a period of crisis. The organisation of a festival emerged to counter the prevailing view of the town as depressed and in decline:

It was born out of recession; there was no money, people were losing jobs, they were splitting up, everyone was depressed.⁶⁸¹

As well as alleviating a sense of gloom and despondency, part of the motivation for the festival was also to promote Penzance; 'to have pride in where we lived and celebrate place.'⁶⁸² Other ideas on which to base a festival were considered such as Poldark or pirates but Gol Jowan was considered to be uniquely associated with Penzance.

The form the day would take had its origins in initiatives started in the 1980s, principally a community archive project sponsored by Cornwall County Council based on local history which had involved local schools and which had researched the history of Gol Jowan. This was succeeded by the Penwith Peninsula project investigating the culture, heritage and landscape of West Penwith.⁶⁸³ From this publically funded research it was eventually realised that Penzance had its own traditions which could form the basis of a celebration. The first Golowan festival incorporated elements which were believed to be features of the original St John's feast celebrations. These

⁶⁷⁹ M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 18th September 2013. There have been two more festival directors since 2012. In 2015 there was an attempt by the Town Council concerned by the increasing cost of Golowan to hand its organisation over to a private company.

⁶⁸⁰ S. Reed, 2012, p.27.

⁶⁸¹ M. Sagar-Fenton, *ibid.*

⁶⁸² S. Hall, interview 9th January 2014

⁶⁸³ *Ibid.*

included the serpent dance, the election of the Mock Mayor, the Quay Fair, torch lit processions and fireworks. But it also incorporated a programme of wider cultural events, the focal point of which was Mazey Day consisting of parades, street theatre, music, and market stalls in the town centre. There have been changes to Golowan over the past twenty or so years as it has grown from a one day event to a two week festival but the basic format has remained since its inception and is now perceived through ritual and repetition as a traditional Cornish festival.

Initial Organisation

The first, unpaid, director, Stephen Hall, had been responsible for the former community archive and Penwith Peninsula projects. A team gradually formed around him consisting of people with theatre experience (e.g. Kneehigh theatre's community team⁶⁸⁴) and performance artists who had developed links with those schools, particularly at Alverton, which were sympathetic to the opportunity to participate in an event embracing art, music and performance. But at this stage it was very much an informal group of individuals who happened to know each other, who had connections with the artistic community of Penzance and could use these to mobilise schools and volunteers.⁶⁸⁵ Schools were involved from the beginning which, under guidance from performance artists, organised dances and made banners and images.⁶⁸⁶ Workshops were organised for volunteers who wished to participate.⁶⁸⁷ The flavour of organisation at the inception of Golowan is captured by Sagar-Fenton:

Most Cornish towns had feast days but Golowan was the blueprint for a different form of festival. The giant imagery was unique to Golowan; it originally came from Kneehigh. We'd never seen anything like that. Local artists got involved making flags; flag making was open to the whole community. Anyone could go in and contribute...schools were involved at the heart of Golowan. The annual carnival and Corpus Christie fair were not the same thing; they did not involve the community. Suddenly kids had Golowan as part of their birth right.⁶⁸⁸

⁶⁸⁴ A touring company based in Cornwall with roots in children's theatre; A. M. Kent, 2010, pp. 747-749.

⁶⁸⁵ M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 18th September 2013.

⁶⁸⁶ Interviews with S. Hall, 9th January 2014, and A. Butler, 13th December 2013.

⁶⁸⁷ A. Butler, *ibid.*

⁶⁸⁸ M. Sagar-Fenton, *ibid.*

It is alleged that initially there was no help from the District Council or its tourism officer⁶⁸⁹ although the Council is listed as one of the organisations involved in a report of the first festival.⁶⁹⁰ In the first few years the organisers' belief was that Penwith DC and Penzance Town Council regarded Golowan as a middle class initiative based in the artistic community over which they had no control. The local authorities supported the principle of holding a festival to boost the town and encourage tourism but initially promoted a maritime festival. It is claimed this was not a success⁶⁹¹ although a version has continued as part of Golowan. Hall describes how the festival gradually gained acceptance:

I don't think that the [District Council's] tourism officer understood what the festival was trying to achieve. People didn't understand the agenda but we didn't have an agenda except to celebrate the town. The Town Council wanted to influence what was going on and, at the same time, cock-a-snook at the District Council...As time went on the local papers were supportive so people became more supportive. We won an award from the English Tourist Board so it started to have status, which the District Council didn't like; we were unconsciously pressing topical buttons like community involvement and participation.⁶⁹²

By the late 1990s both councils accepted that Golowan had become established, was attracting considerable popular support and at that stage started to grant aid the event. But at its inception, Golowan was organised by a group which, although it did not have civic support, could use the informal artistic networks within Penzance and beyond, who knew how to approach schools and had access to a limited amount of start-up money.⁶⁹³ In other words the revived festival emerged from voluntary associations within Penzance civil society and was not initially promoted by local authorities or other public organisations which only became involved as the festival grew and developed its own momentum.

⁶⁸⁹ Interviews with M. Sagar-Fenton, 18th September 2013 and S. Hall, 9th January 2014.

⁶⁹⁰ *Cornishman*, 27th June 1991.

⁶⁹¹ M. Sagar-Fenton, *ibid.*

⁶⁹² S. Hall, *ibid.*

⁶⁹³ *Ibid.* e.g. Kneehigh Theatre paid for the involvement of their community team and designed the Golowan logo.

The Selection of Content

The first Golowan was held, at the insistence of the Council, on the Saturday nearest to the 24th June. It took place over one day which became known as Mazey Day (from the Kernewek for mad or crazy) and consisted of a street market, a series of parades and dances through the town, the principal one being the Serpent dance, the election of a mock mayor and a performance by Kneehigh Theatre in Penlee Park.⁶⁹⁴ Hall recalls that although the Golowan organisers wanted to reference the past they recognised that they had to adapt its traditions to a modern context:

We wanted to take from the past but in a modern context. “Blowing on the embers of the past with new imagery and ritual” was our slogan. We decided to select what we thought was important.⁶⁹⁵

acting as ‘cultural entrepreneurs’ selecting ‘what may or may not be included in a Cornish ethnics’.⁶⁹⁶

The election of the Mock Mayor, and the idea of dances and parades through the town were chosen but augmented with the inclusion of a ‘Obby ‘Oss, Penglaz, and the introduction of Celtic and Cornish iconography. In its second year the festival was held over a weekend, with the Quay Fair added on Sunday. So as Golowan evolved it took elements from a modern interpretation of the historic Gol Jowan but added others. The focal point, Mazey Day, is now perceived as traditional but contains many features such as parades, costumes and images which have their origin in the original 1991 festival.

A festival needs to capture public support if it is to survive. Sagar-Fenton describes how the first Golowan caught the imagination of Penzance by the liminality of transforming public space, the relaxation of controls and the disappearance of boundaries.⁶⁹⁷ On Mazey Day, having obtained permission

⁶⁹⁴ *Cornishman*, 27th June 1991.

⁶⁹⁵ S. Hall, interview 9th January 2014.

⁶⁹⁶ K. Husk and M. Williams, 2012, p.254.

⁶⁹⁷ M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 18th September 2013.

to close the main Penzance thoroughfare, Market Jew Street, the parades were lined up to start but it started to rain.⁶⁹⁸ The heavens opened and everyone was soaked. The event was threatened with disaster which confirmed the doubts about holding a festival in Penzance. But Market Jew Street was closed to traffic and filled with market stalls. The town looked different. Despite suspicions about the organisers and the appropriateness of a festival 'the opening of the streets was the key to making it popular'.⁶⁹⁹

Angie Butler, a teacher at the time, remembers that:

there was a sense of freedom for the children to walk through the town without their parents and to feel that the whole town was clapping and applauding.⁷⁰⁰

By 1992 momentum had started to build in support of the festival particularly as a celebration of place, the editorial in the *Cornishman* commenting:

The *Cornishman* can only praise again all those who had obviously put so much effort into this festival for the benefit of the town and Penwith as a whole. It has become a worthy celebration for all Penwithians of the joy of living in this beautiful neck of the woods.⁷⁰¹

The Performed Festival

In its twenty five year history, the basic structure of Golowan has remained the same although within this there have been variations depending on the director, the level of financial support and whatever theme has been chosen for the parades. The festival is now held over eight to ten days in June surrounding the feast of St John; its length has varied depending on when St John's Eve falls during the week and the level of available funding. The constants have been Mazey Day with four parades featuring the serpent dance through the day, Crowst at 11 am, Dinner at 1pm, Crib at 3pm all of which process down Market Jew Street and finally a Men and Maids Dance at 4.45pm. The first three feature schools, dance groups, and bands and are the occasion to parade giant images and banners. In the evening there is a torch-lit procession in Chapel Street. Much of this links with the tradition of tea-treat parades which as we have seen, were held in the nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries as an important part of celebrating non-conformist identity

⁶⁹⁸ *Cornishman*, 27th June 1991.

⁶⁹⁹ M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 18th September 2013.

⁷⁰⁰ A. Butler, interview 13th December 2013.

⁷⁰¹ *Cornishman*, 2nd July 1992.

and place by reclaiming the streets and which 'is not a foreign thing for Cornish people to do.'⁷⁰²



Figure 7.2: Golowan Programme Covers

On the first Saturday the Mock Mayor election is held, the winning candidate chosen from whoever wishes to stand and bribe enough voters. The mock Mayor holds office throughout the festival. Tongue in cheek, *The Cornishman* describes an election:

⁷⁰² M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 18th September 2013.

The stage was set, the excitement intense for the election of the lord of misrule - the Mayor of the Quay. Rumour was rife; would the present, disreputable incumbent have the gall to stand again? He did – some people are so thick-skinned, so insensitive, so hungry for power, there's no putting them down or off – and what's more he won!⁷⁰³

A typical candidate's address, printed on a photocopied ten pound note, stating 'Vote for David White. You know he's Bent, But at least he's Cornish. Building for the Future' gives a flavour of the humour and irreverence of the election but together with the claiming of streets and public spaces also invokes a Bakhtinian undertone of anarchy and challenge to authority which can be traced to behaviour in the original Gol Jowan. Another constant has been events with a particularly Cornish or Celtic flavour including storytelling, films, theatre and music played by Cornish, Irish and Breton Bands. However, Golowan has also had an international flavour with different genres of music from a number of countries, Portugal 1995, Gypsy music 1996 and South America 2008.

The historical anchor for Golowan is St John's Eve commemorated on the first Sunday of the festival by a civic parade from St John's Hall to St John's Church for the feast service. But the majority of the content is a development of the early 1990s revival. All three former directors stressed the importance of maintaining its links with the past but conceded that the festival had developed into a hybrid, celebrating place and ethnicity but also the cultural and artistic community of Penzance, (Figure 7.2). So it is interesting to compare the programmes at different points in the festival's history, 1995 when it had become established, 2008 following the collapse of the Golowan trust and more recently in 2013,⁷⁰⁴ (Figure 7.3). In 1995 it stretched over fourteen days and had 27 major events together with approximately 40 other supporting acts providing street entertainment on Mazey Day. By 2008 it had reduced to nine days but with 35 major events advertised and a further 45 held on Mazey Day. In 2013 Golowan had grown to eleven days and had 35 major events with about 50 supporting acts on Mazey Day and with another

⁷⁰³ *Cornishman*, 26th June 1997.

⁷⁰⁴ Golowan festival programmes, Penzance, 1996, 2008, and 2013

Figure 7.3 Programme at selected Golowan festivals

	1996 10th -25th June 2001	2008 21st-29th June	2013 21st-30th June
Theatre	Three Performances	One Performance	Three Performances Puppet show
Music	Irish, Scottish and Cornish folk songs Choirs Classical music Jazz Latin	Local rock bands Folk Afro-Latin-Cuban Choirs Classical –Youth orchestra Busking Competition Cabaret	Local rock bands Classical x 2 Youth orchestra Folk Electro pop Tribute Band Hip Hop Night club sessions at the Ritz, Sound Jazz at the Exchange Latin
Comedy	Pub session	Stand up	
Story Telling	Dialect stories	Tongue Pie Evening event	
Local History	Talks x 2 Harbour walk	Talks x 4	Walks around the town
Poetry	Cornish poetry	Readings x 2	
Films	Cornish and Celtic films	Short films x 2	
Harbour	Sea and Sail day		Maritime Festival Penn'arth o' Sea
Fireworks	23rd June		
Mock Mayor election	23 rd June	27 th June	27 th June
Penglaz	23 rd and 24 th June		
Supporting Acts	20 +	40 +	65 +

A sample from the programmes of three Golowan festivals with the Cornish or local content in orange. It suggests some decline in local content and in 2013 the switch to commercial venues with an increased emphasis on music.

25 providing street entertainment on Quay Fair Day. Figure 7.3 gives a rough breakdown of the events advertised at each festival. This data has been compiled from festival programmes which were subject to alteration, brief descriptions of the events which may not have always been accurate and does not include those like street musicians and dancers who simply turned up to perform on the day.

The constants of the festival programme have been the civic procession, the election of the Mock Mayor, Mazey Day and the four principal dances, the Quay Fair and various manifestations of the maritime festival, fireworks and the inclusion of Penglaz. Around these fixed points the balance of the programme has varied largely depending on funding, the availability of artists and the decisions of the organisers in any particular year. There has been a conscious effort to maintain a Cornish and Celtic element with the inclusion of folk music, storytelling, films and local history. However there have been accusations that more recent festivals have reduced the Cornish content, some evidence for which can be seen in Figure 7.3.

Presentation

Most of the spectacle of Golowan is focused on Mazey Day when streets in the town centre are closed and the public realm is given over to performance and spectacle. The parades provide the opportunity for dressing in black and white, Cornish kilts and tatters,⁷⁰⁵ dancing and displaying large images of animals, giants, mythical characters some of which are articulated by the participants. Banners are held at the head of each school procession, often incorporating Cornish iconography. Together with the street market, street decorations, outdoor entertainment and large crowds they contribute to a carnival atmosphere. As Picard and Robinson observe:

The creation of the spectacular within a festival is an important process of social expression, instrumental in making and celebrating identity and collective consciousness.⁷⁰⁶

⁷⁰⁵ Ribbons attached to clothing, ragged formal attire, S. Reed, 2012, p. 59.

⁷⁰⁶ D. Picard and M. Robinson (eds.), 2006, p.17.

Estimates for the numbers who attend Mazey Day should be treated with caution but undoubtedly they have grown from 25,000 reported in 1993, 40,000 in 1994, 50,000 in 1995,⁷⁰⁷ the most recent estimate being 70,000 which if accurate would make it one of the largest one day events held in Cornwall. For many, Mazey Day is Golowan, an opportunity for people of all backgrounds to enjoy themselves, observe a version of Cornishness, or celebrate their ethnicity.

Figures 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6 capture some of the festival flavour; not only performance and spectacle but also its liminality where the streets are closed to traffic and the crowd mingle and are part of the performance.

Observation⁷⁰⁸ suggests that Mazey Day is an occasion for many former residents of Penzance to return to meet family and renew friendships. The suspension of rules of behaviour coupled with all day opening of pubs and cafes adds to its carnival atmosphere. Sagar-Fenton describes it as:

food, drink and entertainment continuing throughout the day. Things happen that you didn't know were going to happen, puppet shows, belly dancing and events which haven't been booked. The town changes its character; picks up its skirts, people have a good time eating and drinking.⁷⁰⁹

But this licence to suspend the normal rule of behaviour is not appreciated by all, a recent letter in the *Cornishman* claiming on behalf of 'the silent, decent majority' that:

This annual "celebration" has in recent times descended into little more than Bacchanalian mayhem, an excuse to imbibe copious amounts of intoxicating liquor, rampaging through the streets and generally behaving badly.⁷¹⁰

Golowan welcomes outsiders in a way that some, more well established, Cornish festivals have not. Gilligan, researching Padstow's May Day celebrations describes its highly orchestrated rituals, distinctive dress and ceremony. These not only symbolise the uniqueness and difference of the community but are a way of Padstonians reclaiming their town from outsiders.

⁷⁰⁷ *Cornishman*, 23rd June 1994, 20th April 1995, 13th June 1996.

⁷⁰⁸ Author's attendance at Mazey Day on 2012 and 2013.

⁷⁰⁹ M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 18th September 2013.

⁷¹⁰ *Cornishman*, 'Mazey Madness', 22nd October 2015.



Figure 7.4: Golowan 2013; Mazey Day, Croust Procession R J P Harris



Figure 7.5: Golowan 2013; Mazey Day, Croust Procession R J P Harris



Artistresidenthotelpenzance.blogspot.com



*Figure 7.6: Golowan images,
Mazey Day*

Artistresidenthotelpenzance.blogspot.com



christopha.co.uk

They are:

a powerful evocation of community, identity and uniqueness, symbolizing the distinctiveness of Padstow in relation to the outside world and simultaneously reasserting the...cleavage between Padstonians and outsiders.⁷¹¹

Golowan is more ambivalent, at the same time welcoming but also asserting the identity of place:

there is an element of reclaiming the town [by closing streets and dressing up]...with Penzance and Golowan we welcome outsiders but we are also saying that this is what our community can do.⁷¹²

Although not initiated as a tourist attraction and still regarded predominantly as a festival for Penzance, nevertheless Mazey Day encourages outsiders with special trains chartered to bring people into the town from across the rest of Cornwall. Golowan is now seen as the starting point for the summer tourist season.

Venues

Most of the Golowan programme is now performed in a number of both public and private venues across the town centre including St John's Hall, the Acorn Theatre, Sound Nightclub and the Exchange Gallery. Some events are held out of doors using Penlee Park for drama or the Morrab Gardens for tango. On Mazey Day nearly all the entertainment is outside at various points in the town centre which contribute to the carnival atmosphere. Prior to 2009 a feature of the festival was a 500 seat marquee which provided a venue for major acts but controversially this was omitted from later festivals because of cost. Stephen Hall disagrees that it was too expensive and was one of the reasons why the festival ran into financial difficulties in 2006. 'The marquee wasn't expensive; we could afford big bands; we were paying everyone,'⁷¹³ but his successors take a different view:

At the best of times it was marginal. If it sold out it made a profit. This is what killed Golowan. If you couldn't get the audiences you made a loss. In the previous year they'd got it very wrong.⁷¹⁴

⁷¹¹ J.H. Gilligan, 'Padstow: Economic and Social Change in a Cornish Town', in C. C. Harris, (ed.), *Family, Economy and Community*, Cardiff 1990, p.182.

⁷¹² M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 18th September 2013.

⁷¹³ S. Hall, interview 9th January 2014.

⁷¹⁴ A. Hazlehurst, interview 13th December 2013.

Consequently, for more recent festivals there has been a gradual movement to incorporate Golowan branded events in the programmes of commercial venues to reduce expenditure and the risk of loss, a position which became more formalised in 2013,⁷¹⁵ explaining the change of emphasis in the music programme with fewer international acts and more local bands, (Figure 7.3).

The Financial, Social and Political Context

The social practices influencing the evolution of Golowan have been the availability of external financial support, its ability to raise revenue, the personalities of its three directors, the skills and enthusiasm of trustees and committee members and the political commitment of local authorities. The three former directors often had contradictory views about the context within which Golowan was organised. What follows is an interpretation of the festival's history based on their accounts.

By the late 1990s the festival had grown to the extent that it was becoming more difficult to manage, could not continue to be run as a purely voluntary organisation and consequently needed a full time director. The Barbican (a building near the harbour) became available as a base for the festival, a trust was formed, and Hall was elected as a paid director. This arrangement continued for some time but 'after fifteen years, exhaustion had set in and the organisation collapsed'.⁷¹⁶ After the 2006 festival there were accusations about the alleged mismanagement of its finances and threats to involve the Charity Commissioners, resulting in the resignation of Hall as the director and the demise of the trust. The *Cornishman* reported that 'the Golowan charity has been dissolved after its deficit jumped by £28,000 in eight months'.⁷¹⁷ At the same time, following increasing restrictions in public expenditure, much of the funding from Cornwall County Council and South West Arts disappeared and it was left to the Town Council to decide whether it should continue.

⁷¹⁵ M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 18th September 2013.

⁷¹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷¹⁷ *Cornishman*, 28th December 2006.

After representations from some of those who had been involved in Golowan, the Council agreed to support the festival financially on the basis that it was now part of the culture of Penzance, enjoyed wide public support and brought tourism and revenue to the town. Mike Sagar-Fenton became its second director and a number of new people were recruited onto a festival management committee. The festival was revamped to include less expensive acts but by a process of juggling the programme, 'we made sure it stayed the same as possible'.⁷¹⁸ The involvement of the Town Council changed the relations of ruling under which the festival had previously operated which was a bruising process for some of the original organisers who felt that the criticism about the festival becoming too ambitious and needing to go back to its local roots was unfair and that 'respect should be given to the founders and hundreds of people who have made Golowan a local, national and international gem'.⁷¹⁹

After two years, Sagar-Fenton was unable to continue on a voluntary basis and the management committee appointed his deputy, Andy Hazlehurst as a paid part-time director. His brief was to continue to hold a festival on the same basis as previously but found this impossible on a greatly reduced budget, 'I was faced with a cut of £28,000 in my budget plus being asked to pay for things which had previously been free like street cleaning'.⁷²⁰ His approach was to partly reduce the festival costs by cancelling the marquee, expanding the Quay Fair to generate more revenue and encourage a greater contribution from Penzance civil society:

I went to community groups and said, "It's your festival. We don't have enough money to bring people over from Cuba to entertain you but we have talent in this area," giving the town a greater sense that they owned the festival rather than someone doing it for them.⁷²¹

He increased the involvement of schools, approached pubs and commercial organisations such as nightclubs as possible venues. Rather than book music acts for a fee the festival organisers allowed them to sell CDs. This approach

⁷¹⁸ M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 18th September 2013.

⁷¹⁹ *Cornishman*, letter Anna Murphy, 24th May 2007.

⁷²⁰ A. Hazlehurst, interview 13th December 2013.

⁷²¹ *Ibid.*

succeeded with the number attending on Mazey Day growing from fifty acts to over a hundred as they started to be hired by commercial venues. 'The community enabled things to happen that previously would have had to be paid for.'⁷²² The impact on the festival programme was twofold. There was much less of an international flavour than there had been under the management of the trust but a greater emphasis on the promotion of Cornish artists by creating an opportunity for them to perform, (Figure 7.3).

The role of the Town Council was crucial at this stage. Its involvement anchored the event both politically and financially.⁷²³ In 2011/12 the gross expenditure of the Festival Committee was £86,235 offset by an income from fees and charges of £59,250 requiring a subsidy of £26,985 which represented in that year 5.5% of the Council's overall net expenditure.⁷²⁴ Taking into account other pressures on the Council's budget, this was a substantial commitment. Two of the three festival directors claimed that under their stewardship Golowan made money but, given the financial support required from various arts organisations and local authorities during its life, this can be interpreted as income exceeding budget forecasts. The festival was therefore increasingly dependent on publically funded support for its continuation, the justification being the amount of business generated for the locality rather than its celebration of local culture. Returning to Picard and Robinson's idea of festivals incorporating exchange, part of the justification for financial support is contained in Visit Cornwall's analysis of the economic impact of Golowan suggesting that it generated £1.3m of new money of which a third accrued to Penzance business.⁷²⁵ However, as Mendible points out, there is a paradox between the need for economic sponsorship provided by 'authority' and the carnival dimension of festival represented by 'spirited defiance' and 'popular rebellion',⁷²⁶ as illustrated by the election of a Mock Mayor. There is also the important point that *force majeure* arising from the reduction in local authority support meant that the organisers needed to draw

⁷²² A. Hazlehurst, interview 13th December 2013.

⁷²³ Ibid.

⁷²⁴ Penzance Town Council, Budgeted Net Expenditure 2011/12

⁷²⁵ Information from S. Hall, 9th January 2014.

⁷²⁶ M. Mendible, 1999, p.73.

on Penzance civil society more inventively. In 2012, responding to Cornwall Council's withdrawal of grant, a Friends of Golowan Group was established consisting of individuals and local businesses to 'get people involved and raise those much needed funds'.⁷²⁷

Organising Creativity

Part of the 'glorious mix' discourse is that Penzance civil society has a particularly rich artistic dimension consisting of closely knit networks of creative people:

I can't imagine many other towns where every other person is an artist or who has a background in performance. It's amazing the riches and talent which exists in the town.⁷²⁸

We have a lot of artistic children, artistic parents... we have a fantastic range of influences down here.⁷²⁹

This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons

Figure 7.7: Preparations for the Parade

Cornishman

⁷²⁷ *Cornishman*, 5th January 2012.

⁷²⁸ A. Hazlehurst, interview 13th December 2013.

⁷²⁹ A. Butler, interview 13th December 2013.

All three Golowan directors had a background in one or more branches of the arts and organisations like Kneehigh theatre played a prominent part at its inception, examples of the cultural elite identified by Husk and Williams.⁷³⁰ Butler describes how schools became involved with Alverton where she taught, wanting to engage the local community and welcoming an approach to participate in the festival, (Figure 7.7). One person from Kneehigh was assigned to each class to make banners and images:

for the school to be approached to do something for the town was great. Being the community we are, we have a lot of artistic children, artistic parents and we could do something which was not academically led... for a week we worked with paint, tissues, withies and glue to build a cart horse, tractor a carrot and huge cauliflower....⁷³¹

In parallel with the involvement of schools, part of the preparation for Golowan is a series of banner workshops held at a number of venues organised by artists to construct images for the parades and decorating the town. This preparatory activity is central to the process of preparing for the festival as it involves a wide range of volunteers including adults, children and families who can choose the colours and design of what they make which reinforces their commitment to Golowan. So although there is a small group of people who organise the festival, the large numbers who are involved in its design and preparation cement it within Penzance civil society. Quinn describes a 'local embeddedness' in the organisation of the Wexford festival where despite its focus on opera as an elite culture, local people were connected to its organisation by supporting its production.⁷³² They volunteered as singers, stage managers, set construction and numerous other roles. This meant that they had a stake in the event and supported the boost to the town's place identity so that although it represented high culture and, 'may not have satisfied artistic needs, or met the interests of many sectors or individuals within the town... it was seen to be in the best interests of the town as a whole'.⁷³³

⁷³⁰ K. Husk and M. Williams, 2012, p.254.

⁷³¹ A. Butler, interview 13th December 2013.

⁷³² B. Quinn, 2003, p.337.

⁷³³ Ibid, p.344.

Conflict and Change

But it is a mistake to assume that Golowan is a celebration of Penzance which is free from tensions. As we have seen, there are periodic objections to carnivalistic behaviour and from the beginning there was considerable scepticism within Penzance about holding the event. Sagar-Fenton claims it is endemic in the Cornish character to oppose anything new. Golowan was organised 'by a renegade group which was growing but over which those who opposed had no control'.⁷³⁴ He saw the initial opposition from Penwith DC.

Hall has a similar recollection:

The Council were not in favour; they didn't know what it was about. The tourism officer was cool...only when it started to be a success that the Town Council and Penwith DC began to take an interest.⁷³⁵

But this lack of enthusiasm as reported in the *Cornishman* was more general than they remember. A letter published after the first Golowan complains that:

I have just walked through Penzance during the afternoon – it's Mazey Day something someone invented for want of something better. The word means confusion, mental perplexity, to bewilder. Could not Penzance, if they need to hold a day for the public, celebrate Humphrey Davey who invented the miners' lamp [or festivals] such as Helston Flora and Trevithick Day held in other towns.⁷³⁶

The festival had still not attracted universal support by the third Golowan in 1993; something that the *Cornishman* suggested was only to be expected:

Mazey Day, of course, has its critics. Opinions on the street varied from "fabulous and fantastic" to "ridiculous and rubbish", but the children's' smiling faces...must surely have supplied the sceptics with an answer to their doubts.⁷³⁷

There were two main reasons for this opposition. Firstly it linked with the negative and conservative discourse about Penzance; to oppose change, that the town is in decline and that a festival has little relevance for solving its problems. A second and more specific reason was a belief, which was wider than the local authority, that the festival was being organised by a group of

⁷³⁴ M. Sagar Fenton, interview 18th September 2013.

⁷³⁵ S. Hall, interview 9th January 2014.

⁷³⁶ *Cornishman*, letter 4th July, 1991.

⁷³⁷ *Ibid*, Comment 1st July, 1993.

middle class artists who were presenting an interpretation of an element of Celtic culture associated with paganism. The controversy about the authenticity of the festival's representation of Cornish culture was conflated with its alleged promotion of paganism. Despite the decline in organised religion in Cornwall there remains a spiritual dimension which is reflected both in a residual Methodist tradition but also an interest in Celtic spirituality.⁷³⁸ Hence there have been objections to Golowan on religious grounds and a perception that it promotes pagan symbolism such as the festival logo, the prominent role for the 'Obby 'Oss, Penglaz, (Figure 7.8), and some of the ritual inherited from Gol Jowan like the serpent dance, repetitive drumming and parades. All this gave ammunition to those who were determined to see evidence of paganism. After the first Golowan festival the writer of the letter quoted above continued by stating:

I can tell you we have not moved one inch from the Old Testament Times. What has this Country turned into? I think someone should stand and denounce this paganism. How can children grow up in this Country with Christian values, when this sort of thing carries on?⁷³⁹

This letter triggered a response from the Pagan Federation in support of the celebration of mid-summer and outlining pagan philosophy. The exchange of correspondence might be dismissed as an isolated example but the debate has continued throughout the history of the festival. In 2011 the following letter appeared in the *Cornishman* illustrating conflicting interpretations of Cornishness:

As a Cornishman born and bred, I am heartily fed up with hearing... devil inspired nonsense being sold to Cornish people as Cornish culture; it's a shame that this very newspaper promulgates such nonsense. Mazey Day, Montol etc. are nothing to do with any Cornish culture that I or even my great-grandparents would recognise.⁷⁴⁰

and in 2015:

There is also...too much pagan and un-Christian attitudes and behaviour connected with this festival: the parading of a horse's skull, called

⁷³⁸ A. Hale, 'in D.C. Harvey, R. Jones, N. McInroy & C. Milligan, (eds.) 2002, A. Hale and P. Payton, 'Introduction', in A. Hale and P. Payton, (eds.) *New Directions in Celtic Studies*, Exeter, 2000', B. Bowman, 'Cardiac Celts: Images of the Celts in Paganism', in G. Harvey and C. Hardman, (eds.) *Paganism Today*, London 1996. See also quote by J Drew, Chapter 6, Page 160.

⁷³⁹ *Cornishman*, letter 4th July 1991.

⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid*, letter 24th March 2010.



Figure 7.8: Pagan Iconography? Penglaz and the Golowan Logo Ian Whitford, Artdept Design

Penglaz...down Chapel Street, for example is quite satanic in nature and has no place in a Christian country. This is merely one example of how heathen influences have taken over the whole affair and many are disturbed by the whole thing and are put off participating as a result.⁷⁴¹

Following the 2010 Golowan Festival and in the run up to the 2010 Montol celebrations, there were exchanges of correspondence, some from outside Cornwall, debating the degree to which both festivals represented elements of paganism. The controversy centred on the symbolism of the Penglaz Obby Oss and its convoluted history. This involved at least one alternative version of the 'Oss promoted by a group calling themselves the Penglaz cooperative, an interesting parallel with Padstow as discussed below⁷⁴². A number of writers challenged Hazlehurst's contention that a 'Obby 'Oss is not a religious icon but is a secular civic symbol, similar to the Padstow 'Oss, for the enjoyment of all.⁷⁴³ Other correspondents pointed out that despite the Penglaz cooperative stating that that their version of the 'Oss was secular; it had however attended a number of pagan conventions outside Cornwall. The controversy then deepened with Hazlehurst declaring that there should be only one 'Oss at Golowan 2011 as:

We try to keep the interpretation to the traditional one (i.e. as a civic symbol) and they, the Penglaz cooperative have decided to go in a different direction.⁷⁴⁴

Consequently he banned any 'Oss other than the official one from participating.

Hazlehurst makes the point that the controversy over the 'Oss was largely due to rivalry between two groups, the introduction of two 'Osses caused confusion, that many customs like guise dancing and the holding of mummers plays were performed, pre Second World War, by good Methodists who 'didn't have a pagan thought in their heads' and were celebrating their local culture.⁷⁴⁵ Despite this reassurance from the Golowan organisers, the festival

⁷⁴¹ *Cornishman* 'Mazey Madness', 22nd October 2015.

⁷⁴² A similar situation occurred in Padstow at the end of the First World War; see J.H. Gilligan 1990.

⁷⁴³ *Cornishman*, 4th July 2010.

⁷⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 11th November 2010.

⁷⁴⁵ A. Hazlehurst, interview 13th December 2013.

continues to expose different discourses about Cornishness and Cornish spirituality which are played out in a debate about paganism and authenticity.

There is a loose connection between the concerns about the influence of paganism and the growth of an outsider spiritual community in Cornwall⁷⁴⁶ recorded by several writers. It includes a number of elements such as New Ageism, Druidry, Paganism and Celtic Christianity and focuses on ancient sites, holy wells, Arthurian associations and oneness with nature and conflates these with the remoteness, romance and Celticity of Cornwall. The participants constitute a sub-set of counter-urbanists migrating to Cornwall and are represented by concerns about new age migrants seeking alternative lifestyles allegedly taking drugs and existing on benefits.⁷⁴⁷ Hale distinguishes between those who consider that they are affiliated to a Celtic heritage and 'those who participate in one of the many forms of Celtic spirituality'.⁷⁴⁸ Bowman, terms the latter group 'cardiac Celts'; people who feel they are Celts and whose 'spiritual nationality is a matter of elective affinity'.⁷⁴⁹ As a group they have been part of the inward migration of people to Cornwall seeking romance and difference but are ill defined representing a variety of often overlapping beliefs rather than one cohesive community.⁷⁵⁰ As Lowerson states: 'Vague underlying strands have been increasingly teased out and then woven into a Celticness...[which] has both pagan and Christian elements, often treated indiscriminately'.⁷⁵¹ Penwith is a key location for Celtic religious tourists who seek 'earth mysteries' relating to archaeological sites, standing stones and megalithic monuments. However, the spiritual Celt often sits uneasily alongside people who also consider that they are Celtic or 'ethnic Cornish' but identify with other, insider working class traditions such as Methodism or the industrial heritage of Cornwall. Hale argues that Celtic spirituality is largely a middle class phenomenon linked with neo-paganism

⁷⁴⁶ J. Semmens, 'Bucca Redivivus: History, Folklore and the Construction of Ethnic Identity within Modern Pagan Witchcraft in Cornwall', in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies 18*, Exeter, 2010, pp. 141-161 p. 142.

⁷⁴⁷ J Rhurmund, interview 20th December 2011.

⁷⁴⁸ A. Hale, in D.C. Harvey, R. Jones, N. McInroy & C. Milligan, (eds.) London 2002, p.158.

⁷⁴⁹ B. Bowman in G. Harvey and C. Hardman, (eds.) 1996, p. 246.

⁷⁵⁰ A. Hale, *ibid*, p. 159.

⁷⁵¹ J. Lowerson, 'Celtic Tourism – Some Recent Magnets', in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Two*, Exeter, 1994, p. 130.

which is in conflict with an insider view of the ‘unauthenticity’ of quasi-religious ritual practices with no historical precedent. This helps to explain some of the criticism of the Golowan as pagan and not representative of Cornish culture as it tries to reconcile historical antecedents with modern interpretations of Celticity which adds to the suspicion that its version of Cornishness is seen through a middle class lens.

A further element of conflict concerns how the festival is organised and financed. As it grew bigger in the early 2000’s and more expensive performers were booked, there was an increased risk to its finances should the size of audiences not meet expectation. As already seen, Hall refutes this analysis, believing that in 2005 the festival was doing well, that the marquee was an asset that allowed big bands to be booked, good relations had been established with schools and:

we’d started community education [and] were doing a range of things; guide books, community projects and outreach work...It was recognised that we had a brand and could provide work for people.⁷⁵²

He views the more recent developments as turning Golowan into

Mazey Day with bits on the end’.⁷⁵³ The festival has ‘lost its status. Where is the inspiration? The loss of the marquee was a major mistake...I don’t know that the same passion exists.’⁷⁵⁴

Hazlehurst, in contrast, contends that the marquee had been a financial drain on the previous Golowan and unless there were changes, a danger that the festival might not have continued.⁷⁵⁵ As already described, the festival now relies even more on volunteers and private sector sponsorship but there is a view that in the process it has lost some of its vibrancy.⁷⁵⁶ As a *Cornishman* correspondent put it:

Golowan should be special, Cornish and anarchic, and not some faded shadow of an event that would be very much at home in Reading or Coventry.⁷⁵⁷

⁷⁵² S. Hall, interview 9th January 2014.

⁷⁵³ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁵ A. Hazlehurst, interview 13 December 2013

⁷⁵⁶ N. Pengelly, interview 16th May, 2012.

⁷⁵⁷ *Cornishman* 4th November, 2010.

Montol: Inception

Montol emerged from the same self-selecting segment of civil society as Golowan although different personalities were involved. The following gives a flavour of how it began:

In Penzance things are conjured up out of thin air. In this area there are so many celebrations and people doing things for the community that funders like South West Arts are saying that we will not put anything into Penzance; they do it anyway. A festival is an excuse to dress up, revive the past and bring the future into it. A conversation in a pub can produce a festival.⁷⁵⁸

There is agreement that, following the success of Golowan, the motivation was to mirror it by holding a winter festival on the date of the winter solstice, 21st December. The name 'Montol' is derived from Kernewek, 'mantol' or balance reflecting the relationship between the summer and winter solstices. Different participants take credit for the organisation of the initial festival in 2007. It seems clear that some of the Golowan committee members, including Andy Hazlehurst were involved. Simon Reed was influential in designing the original format based on a number of winter traditions practised in Cornwall such as bonfires, guise dancing, mummers plays and a 'Obby 'Oss.⁷⁵⁹ Much of the content was based on practices recorded by antiquarians such as Bottrell, Hunt, Courtney, and Hamilton Jenkin which Reed has drawn together in *The Cornish Traditional Year*.⁷⁶⁰

What we were looking for was as authentic an experience as possible based on traditions which are distinctive to Cornwall. Guise dancing, the candle dance and chalking the mock are taken from Cornish traditions which I discovered in my research and put them in a community space.⁷⁶¹

Hazlehurst claims that many of these customs died out as recently as the Second World War and that the organisers were able to draw on the memory of the original participants as well as written sources from antiquarians. The festival was managed by a committee, originally chaired by Reed, and funding was initially available by direct grants from central government.⁷⁶² Like Golowan the festival is associated with a saint's day, St Thomas's Eve, as

⁷⁵⁸ H. Musser, interview 7 January, 2014.

⁷⁵⁹ A. Hazlehurst, interview 13 December 2013.

⁷⁶⁰ S. Reed, 2012.

⁷⁶¹ S. Reed, interview, 8th January 2014.

⁷⁶² Ibid.

well as the winter solstice. At its inception Montol was therefore very much an offshoot of Golowan. However, it was not based on a historical festival but rather a collection of recorded and remembered practices some, but not all, of which were associated with Penzance.

The Performed Festival

Fire is a theme running through the festival with a procession to a bonfire on Lescudjack Hill Fort, a lantern parade, a Lord of Misrule and the burning of the 'mock', a log on which an image of a man is chalked to symbolise the death of the old year and the arrival of the new. A further feature is the wearing of masks and the adoption of disguise which is accentuated since the festival takes place in darkness, (Figures 7.9, 7.10, 7.11). Disguise or guising is a key part of Montol. 'The whole world of guising embraces dancing, music and performance' which includes performing traditional mummers plays in pubs.⁷⁶³ Unlike Mazey Day, which encourages outsiders, Montol is a darker, more introspective festival than Golowan. Although tourists are not discouraged it is not a festival designed to bring people in from outside:

We certainly don't discourage outsiders from attending... [but] it's for the Town and Penwith and to revive the traditions which died off in Wesleyan times and during the War.⁷⁶⁴

Montol is a much smaller festival than Golowan, mainly concentrated on one evening with little in the way of a supporting cultural programme. The festival starts with a 'Rivers of Fire' procession from St George's Hall to Lescudjack Hill Fort, (Figure 7.10) led by the Turkey Rhubarb Band, an informal community band, (Figure 7.11) which:

people can join even if they can't play an instrument. You don't know who will turn up but they can be trained up... we can always find them something to play. It doesn't have to be prim and proper and you don't have to pass an audition. You can come and bang a drum or be a dancer.⁷⁶⁵

Dancing takes place around the bonfire or beacon at Lescudjack which is lit by the Lord of Misrule who then leads the masked dancers. The procession

⁷⁶³ H. Musser, interview 7th January 2014.

⁷⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁵ A. Hazlehurst, interview 13th December 2013.

returns to the town and proceeds to Chapel Street where entertainment takes place in pubs, on the street and in the Dock Inn car park where another beacon is lit. Guisers go from pub to pub to perform music, entertainment and dance, (Figure 7.9). The festival culminates with the chalking of the Mock by the Lord of Misrule. The burning of the Mock represents the death of the old year and the birth of the new.⁷⁶⁶ Like Golowan, Montol illustrates the liminal taking over of spaces and the blurring of public and private

Guise dancing involves wearing costume, masks and blacking the face to affect the disguise.⁷⁶⁷ Historically this has involved carnivalistic behaviour such as cross-dressing and inverting the social order. Hamilton Jenkin writing about guise dancing in the early twentieth century states that the villages around Penzance were:

...invaded by bands of young people attired in strange and grotesque costume. In almost every case the boys are dressed as girls and the girls as boys, some of them cleverly representing historical or local characters...⁷⁶⁸

Bottrall compares guise dancing in Penzance with an Italian carnival at which 'people of every class...came masked and disguised into the streets'.⁷⁶⁹ Mummers' plays would often be performed by the dignitaries of the town and there would be an inversion of hierarchy with the gentry taking subordinate parts and serving the workers.⁷⁷⁰ Something of these traditions survives. At Montol the disguise takes the form of animals; 'Old Ned' the crow, (Figure 7.11) and the Lord of Misrule who as lead guiser must not be a person in authority such as a local councillor, a MP or member of the House of Lords. The successful candidate is selected by drawing a red bean from a pouch of white beans.⁷⁷¹ From 2010 the festival has had its own 'Oss which is introduced later in the festivities at 10 pm. The anarchic atmosphere of Montol is more intense than Golowan. As Reed observes:

⁷⁶⁶ Personal observation, Montol 2011 and A. Dennis, 'A different View of Montol' *Cornish Story Magazine*, winter 2010, p. 63, S. Reed 2012, p. 58.

⁷⁶⁷ M. Davey, "Guising" Ancient Traditions and Modern Sensitivities' in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Fourteen*, 2006, pp.229-244.

⁷⁶⁸ A. K. Hamilton Jenkin, 1945, pp. 422-3.

⁷⁶⁹ W. Bottrall, *Traditions and Hearthsides Stories of West Cornwall*, Vol. II, Penzance 1873, p.2.

⁷⁷⁰ H. Musser, interview 7th January 2014.

⁷⁷¹ A. Dennis, *Cornish Story Magazine*, winter 2010, p. 63 and H. Musser, *ibid.*



Figure 7.9: Montol, Dancing in Chapel Street

R J P Harris



Figure 7.10: Montol, Bonfire at Lescudjack

Wikipedia.org



leejpalmer@outlook.co



R J P Harris



R J P Harris

Figure 7.11: Montol, Old Ned, Guising and the Turkey Rhubarb Band

Unlike Golowan there is more emphasis on participation than observing...children's processions you look at but you don't take part. For Montol you are someone else for the evening.⁷⁷²

Although Montol is centred on 21st December there are other events associated with the festival. Lantern workshops are organised for the parade to Lescudjack hill fort. On the Sunday before the event a church carol service is held where much of the music and arrangements are by Thomas Merritt a late nineteenth century composer from Illogan whose carols are considered part of a traditional Cornish Christmas. Consequently it attracts a congregation from across Cornwall.⁷⁷³ In addition a ceilidh is organised to raise money for the festival and mummers' plays are held in the days leading up to Montol in various pubs in the town to perform traditional plays such as St George and the Turkish Knight.⁷⁷⁴

The Financial, Social and Political Context

Montol is managed by a committee which was chaired by Reed for its first four years. Funding has always been limited. At present the Town Council contributes an annual grant of £500 and also assistance in kind with printing and negotiating permissions and street closures. Montol relies on a few enthusiasts and volunteers to organise lantern workshops and take Old Ned around schools to publicise the festival.⁷⁷⁵ But unlike Golowan, school children do not play a central part in Montol since it is held at night and after the schools have broken up for Christmas.

Montol has also been accused of fostering paganism by the adoption of costumes and masks, the introduction of an 'Obby 'Oss and the theme of fire. Hazlehurst says that 'People thought that Golowan was pagan but when we got to Montol the reaction was even stronger, it was even more pagan'.⁷⁷⁶ There also seems to have been a dispute within the organising Committee

⁷⁷² S. Reed, interview 8th January, 2014, and personal observation, Montol 2011.

⁷⁷³ A. Hazlehurst, interview 13th December 2013.

⁷⁷⁴ H. Musser, interview 7th January 2014.

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁶ A. Hazlehurst, *ibid.*

about how it has developed which centres on concerns about the emergence of carnivalesque behaviour in its latter stages. On one hand:

People need to let their hair down; have a break from the everyday; break down barriers; have something to look forward to and bring the community together,⁷⁷⁷

but on the other, there is a contrary view that this enthusiasm needs to be controlled:

Although we are reviving these customs...we have to be careful not to revive the anarchy which was common in the original celebrations. We need to think of the safety of the public, [the participants] can't turn over tables and chairs in public houses.⁷⁷⁸

This concern for restraint is criticised by those who consider that Montol has now become tame. 'There was an ambition to be more like the guise dancers of old...now the emphasis is more conservative ... to greater conformity, to become standardised'.⁷⁷⁹ Therefore moving some of the guise dancing indoors to St John's Hall in 2012 as a response to this fear of carnivalesque behaviour is considered by some to detract from the liberating experience of reclaiming streets and public spaces and the festival atmosphere in its later stages. But despite these controversies,

People want to do it again. Each year it has grown. There is interest from all over the world. For instance there is a fiddle player who comes all the way from the Orkneys. No one knows who she is, she just turns up. People come uninvited because it's something they just want to be part of. The public feel that it's a community event so it's primarily for themselves but, at the same time, they would be disappointed if nobody else took any notice.⁷⁸⁰

Continuing Invention: Pirates on the Prom

As Golowan has developed, family events have become increasingly concentrated on Mazey Day weekend. Golowan Sunday has changed in character with the maritime festival, the sailing of model boats and music at outdoor venues continuing but in recent years it has incorporated a mass event. In 2011 'Pirates on the Prom' was included as part of the programme where a world record attempt was made on the greatest gathering of pirates

⁷⁷⁷ H. Musser, interview 7th January 2014.

⁷⁷⁸ H. Musser, *ibid.*

⁷⁷⁹ S. Reed, interview 8th January 2014.

⁷⁸⁰ A. Hazlehurst, interview 13th December 2013.

in one place for entry in the *Guinness Book of Records*. Over eight thousand turned out in a mandatory dress code which included ‘a pirate style hat or bandana; striped shirt or white tee-shirt; pantaloons or tatty trousers...and an accessory such as a cutlass, parrot, hook, peg leg, [or] eye patch’⁷⁸¹ to achieve the record. This was followed in 2012 by a Golowan Golympix, a Cornish version of the Olympic games. In the late May Bank Holiday 2014 Pirates on the Prom was held again to regain the record which by now had been overtaken by Hastings. This time it was not a part of Golowan, but a festival in its own right with an accompanying programme of events leading up to the Bank Holiday including many of the same elements as the original festival such as costume making workshops, theatre performances, music sessions but with a pirate theme⁷⁸². Unfortunately the attempt on the world record of 14,231 fell short by 77, the *Cornishman* commenting that, despite the failure, Penzance should take pride in a ‘small town doing big town things’.⁷⁸³ Pirates on the Prom is another element of the ‘glorious mix’ discourse characterised, in this instance, by a mass event characterised like Mazey Day by reclaiming public spaces and providing the opportunity for carnivalesque behaviour and the celebration of low culture. The *Cornishman*

This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons

Figure 7.12: Pirates on the Prom

BBC.co.uk

⁷⁸¹ Golowan Official Programme, 18th-26th June 2011.

⁷⁸² *Cornishman*, Supplement 22nd May 2014.

⁷⁸³ *Ibid*, comment 29th May 2014

described it as raising 'Trelawney's Army...but they got there dreckly' to explain why the record was not broken but there was compensation in 'the fantastic atmosphere' and trade done by dock side pubs.⁷⁸⁴

Pirates on the Prom drew on the Gilbert and Sullivan opera first performed in New York in 1879, which has since been incorporated into the iconography of Penzance. It also contained references to more recent popular culture in the form of the *Pirates of the Caribbean* film franchise. Pirates are also part of the romantic discourse of smuggling and wrecking in Cornwall but, as already noted, (Page 119), the history of the town records its opposition to piracy. The alliteration of the title *The Pirates of Penzance* has evolved to associate the town with piracy, reflected in the name of the local rugby team and the coat of arms which replaced St John's head as the symbol of Penzance.⁷⁸⁵ These examples of globalised culture are part of the shifting place identity of Penzance but are also linked a local interpretation of the town's history. This relates to the discussion in Chapter Three on place, (Pages 89-91), that the global and local are interlinked and to repeat the quotation from Jenkins, 'the world is becoming smaller and larger at the same time: cultural space is both shrinking and expanding'. For Penzance, an invented version of Cornishness and place identity constructed by outsider interpretations and reinforced by tourism creates an opportunity to attract visitors to generate income and commodify heritage.⁷⁸⁶ Despite the reluctance of elements of Penzance civil society to embrace tourism these doubts are muted by the perceived economic benefits from an influx of up to twenty thousand visitors which 'can only be of benefit to us all as it keeps Penzance firmly on the tourist trail where we belong'.⁷⁸⁷ At the same time, the historical antecedents of festivals root them in the locality so that there is a thread from the historical celebration of mid-summer to Golowan and Mazey Day, mid-winter Montol and finally Pirates on the Prom which maintain a local identity and celebration of place albeit within the context of an increasingly globalised culture.

⁷⁸⁴ *Cornishman*, 29th May 2014

⁷⁸⁵ M. Sagar-Fenton, 2015, p.82.

⁷⁸⁶ P. Howard, *Heritage: Management, Interpretation, Identity*, London, 2003, p.204.

⁷⁸⁷ *Cornishman*, 7th July 2011.

Conclusion

There are a number of closely related points which emerge from this analysis. Despite being part of the positive discourse of 'glorious mix', the production of festivals contains within it tensions between authenticity and the invention of tradition, between spectacle and carnival, the different perspectives of place between insiders and outsiders and the processes which shape them played out within the politics of voluntary and community organisations. It illustrates the key issue addressed by this research that although festivals are apparently firmly in the sphere of traditional celebrations of Cornishness, there are complex responses towards how they are performed involving conflict over different interpretations of tradition, controversy over associations with new ageism, accusations of paganism and concerns about the degree to which carnivalistic behaviour should be a part of the celebrations. What might at first sight be obvious celebrations of ethnicity and place contain within them a number of contradictory and conflicting currents which contribute to the complexity of meaning which comprises Cornish identity.

Performed Ethnicity

The claims for authenticity of both Golowan and Montol are based on 'research' into local history. But as we have seen, this research is based on interpretations of practices filtered through antiquarians, folk memories and supposition. So their content and authenticity is selective and is further compromised by the hundred and twenty year break in continuity between performances, the need to adapt them to modern conditions, the emergence of new discourses about the romance and Celticity of Cornwall and the interpretation of the consumer, 'the tourist gaze'.⁷⁸⁸ Unlike long established festivals such as Padstow May Day celebrations or Helston Furry or Flora Day, which have themselves been subject to change,⁷⁸⁹ the evolution of authenticity in Golowan and Montol has been much more rapid with the Golowan Band now considered to be traditional and the image of the pirate now accepted as part of the authentic representation of Penzance. These

⁷⁸⁸ J Urry, 1995, pp.131-33.

⁷⁸⁹ H.G. Gilligan, in C.C. Harris (ed.) 1990.

features of space-time compression have happened despite all three former festival directors claiming that they have tried to preserve the traditions of Golowan by which they mean those elements which are considered to have been inherited from the nineteenth century. But they recognise that there is an evolutionary process at work, 'we're very happy to draw on traditions but not be totally defined by them. It's not a straight line; culture branches and evolves. You can't say you are doing what was done several hundred years ago'.⁷⁹⁰ So, in other words, the past has been re-interpreted through new practices which although based on history now form part of contemporary culture.

The Importance of Place

The principal motivation for all three festivals is the celebration of place and the place image of Penzance but also involves connections with other places. Golowan in particular regularly welcomes civic delegations from Concarneau and features Breton music and dancing. Pirates on the Prom engages in a friendly rivalry with Hastings. Special trains bring participants in both festivals from all over Cornwall. So part of the celebration of place is promoting Penzance to a wider audience and recognising its linkages with other places. As Quinn observes in relation to the Wexford Festival:

It is a clear example of how Massey...thinks of places as permeable spaces, particularly influenced by the interchanges and relationships which connect them to other places.⁷⁹¹

But it is also concerned with residents celebrating the local. Sagar-Fenton justifies the survival of Golowan as critical to the identity of Penzance: 'people can't bear to lose the festival. If everything else is going badly, we've still got Golowan'.⁷⁹² Musser sees Montol as 'giving you a sense of belonging; it involves people returning and holiday cottage owners; it makes them feel they belong. It gives a sense of history and where you are placed'.⁷⁹³ Hall saw the original motivation for Golowan as having 'pride in where we lived, [it was] a

⁷⁹⁰ A. Hazlehurst, interview 13th December 2013.

⁷⁹¹ B. Quinn, 2003, p.346.

⁷⁹² M. Sagar Fenton, interview 18th September 2013.

⁷⁹³ H. Musser, interview 7th January 2014.

celebration of place'.⁷⁹⁴ However, despite the support of the Chamber of Commerce for the festivals, the promotion of place identity is not always shared by businesses some of whom either believe that Mazey Day detracts from their normal Saturday trading or consider that because people are attracted to the town centre by the festivals they see no need to support them further by donations or by having guising in their pubs,⁷⁹⁵ further examples of the ambivalence of Penzance towards tourism. There is also a constituency in Penzance which does not support the place image projected by Golowan and Montol considering it irreligious and encouraging carnivalesque behaviour.

Civil Society

Festival organisation places considerable demands on civil society in organising the events and mobilising volunteers. The number of prime movers who sit on committees is small and drawn from a closely linked network of, middle class people with experience of performance and the creative arts. It is this group who select the festival programmes, liaise with schools, negotiate with the Town Council and organise volunteers. The performance of ethnicity is based on their selection and interpretation. Consequently they are in the position of needing to defend what is presented when challenged by alternative interpretations of Cornishness such as the controversy over paganism or the debates about the degree of licence permissible.

There are parallels between the processes of selection, negotiation and organisation which are conducted by an articulate and motivated minority and the early twentieth century revivalists gathering up fragments of cultural practices, reaching back into the past, focusing on language and, over time, creating an organisation to promote a Celtic version of Cornishness sometimes at odds with industrial, non-conformist and working class Cornwall. This element of high culture is, to an extent, perpetuated by the restricted consumption of the cultural part of Golowan which Hazlehurst recognised:

...was not attractive and meeting the needs of people on Treneere; they felt excluded. We asked what they liked so they said DJs. We put on something to

⁷⁹⁴ S. Hall, interview 9th January 2014.

⁷⁹⁵ H. Musser, *ibid.*

attract [them] at Sounds nightclub but it was difficult to get them off the estate.⁷⁹⁶

Mazey Day and the more carnivalesque elements of Montol and Pirates on the Prom are closer to Bakhtin's notion of low culture and are reflected in a Cornishness based on a working class tradition which is antiauthoritarian, anarchic and, in contemporary Cornwall, considers itself to be marginalised. It is reflected in a refusal to be bound by the dictates of outsiders, a willingness to relax rules of behaviour and to challenge authority and accepted practices. This explains the unease which the organisers feel about the latter stages of Montol where the Lord of Misrule holds sway. Reed makes the point that for him signifiers of Cornishness in the form of Cornish tartan and the St Piran's flag are different from traditional working class Cornishness and that:

Treneere people will not parade through Penzance with flags and banners but will have a piss-up on Mazey day... they don't participate in the artistic side at all.⁷⁹⁷

On the other hand Sagar-Fenton sees:

Golowan as having a deep tap root into the community. We had a delegation from Singapore; they were fascinated and didn't know how we got all the community involved. We had a look at their programme which mainly consisted of high culture. We said they were too rich, they had too much money. Golowan relies on community participation; the line between the audience and the performers is sometimes a hazy one.⁷⁹⁸

These differences in interpretation and tensions within civil society expose the essentially political nature of festivals identified by Picard and Robinson.⁷⁹⁹

Jeong and Santos see festivals functioning 'as a mechanism for particular groups to consolidate their privileged social status by controlling who participates in the construction of regional identity'⁸⁰⁰ by means of creating boundaries and deciding who is and who is not involved. They also analyse the processes which construct the relationships between participants which are concerned with, 'cultural politics, place identity, social control and resistance'. The controversies over 'Obby 'Osses, pagan symbolism and

⁷⁹⁶ A. Hazlehurst, interview 13th December 2013 and see Chapter Eight, Page 245-246.

⁷⁹⁷ S. Reed, interview 8th January, 2014.

⁷⁹⁸ M. Sagar-Fenton, interview 18th September 2013.

⁷⁹⁹ D. Picard and M. Robinson, (eds.) 2006, pp. 13-14.

⁸⁰⁰ S. Jeong and C. A. Santos, 2004, p.653.

programming, are examples from the Penzance festivals. Long established festivals which appear to be stable may change as a result of internal struggles between different discourses. Gilligan records, in connection with Padstow May Day celebrations, that since the end of the First World War there have been two 'Osses as a result of young men returning from the conflict challenging the established order in the form of the original 'Oss and wanting their own stake in the celebrations. Hence 'both 'Osses have remained in existence, throughout periods of relative mutual harmony and hostility, to this day'.⁸⁰¹ So although festivals may seek to establish tradition through ritual and ceremony, as collectives of individuals and organisations each with different objectives and agendas, there can be a tension between the maintenance of those traditions and their adaptation to meet new pressures and requirements. Conflicts may arise between different discourses about authenticity, representation and interpretation which can reflect power struggles within wider civil society. The part of the Penzance Strategic Plan dealing with culture recognises the high degree of voluntary involvement in the life of the town but recognises its vulnerability to faction and the need to avoid becoming cliquish and exclusive'.⁸⁰²

The history of festivals in Penzance is a good example of how practices of contemporary Cornishness are shaped by shifting cultural interpretations of ethnic identity. Pirates on the Prom is the culmination of a convoluted pathway from an historical feast day, the origins of which are based on the celebration of the summer solstice linked to a saints day, interpreted by a contemporary revival based on a selection of historical practices which in turn has spawned a mid-winter/Christmas festival and a further celebration based on an invented tradition from the late nineteenth century, diametrically at odds with recorded history. This continuing evolution shapes the place mythology and image of Penzance, from an administrative and commercial centre to a place for artistic expression and personal freedom which is reflected in its competing discourses. The performance of festivals reinforces the image of Penzance as

⁸⁰¹ H.G. Gilligan, in C.C. Harris (ed.) 1990.

⁸⁰² Cornwall County Council, *Penzance Strategic Plan, Theme 4, Culture Heritage and Identity*, 2007, p. 6

a place in the far west where Cornishness can be performed as its most authentic, where people can be themselves, where performance and artistic expression are part of the local culture, all supported by a middle class elite, forming part of the 'glorious mix'. But this contribution to the positive discourse is built on an interpretation of identity which is not shared by all who identify as Cornish and is also motivated by a commercial imperative which is important for the tourist economy of the town. There is a distinction between the carnivalesque consumption of culture at Mazey Day, Montol and Pirates on the Prom and the artistic programme at Golowan much of which celebrates Cornishness but is restricted in its popular appeal. Cornishness is performed at Penzance festivals but at different levels, to different audiences and by different participants illustrating how place, class and the micro politics of civil society influence its interpretation, contribute towards its complexity and challenge some of the more generalised perceptions about identity.

Chapter 8: Treneere; Community Cohesion, Place Identity and Concealed Ethnicity

In the mid 1990's there was a common perception that some of the council estates on the periphery of Penzance were centres of criminality with associated problems of unemployment, family breakdown and social deprivation. Policing these areas was difficult⁸⁰³ and it was believed that they had entered a spiral of decline which public agencies struggled to reverse. This is a long way from the image of the Cornwall of beaches, beautiful landscapes and heritage. As Malcolm Williams states:

If Cornwall's poverty were more visible, if a more authentic picture of Cornwall was available, then arguments for a different economic strategy to tourism and "light industry" might be more successful. Meanwhile, in the absence of an authentic picture, the media and the tourist industry have constructed a public face of quant West Country charm, with the Cornish themselves relegated to the role of exhibits in a cosy theme park.⁸⁰⁴

Treneere, a former council estate on the northern fringe of Penzance, (Figure 8.1), has over the past thirty years acquired a reputation as one of its worst estates. It is considered to be the most deprived the most affected by criminality and a centre for the supply and possession of drugs. Consequently it forms part of the town's negative discourse as sad and rundown.

As well as this negative place myth, there is a belief that such estates are populated by Cornish people who were relocated by slum clearance programmes before and after the Second World War and that they remain islands of ethnicity in a Cornwall which has been transformed by inward migration. The ethnographic data from a series of individual and group interviews with twenty residents and representatives of agencies working on the estate and supported by observations of group behaviour challenges a hegemonic discourse that social housing estates are clusters of deprivation, criminality and family breakdown which justifies their description as 'sink estates'. This research suggests a more nuanced picture of neighbourhood cohesion sustained by family and social ties and supported by an underlying

⁸⁰³ Inspector J. Phillips personal interview, 28th January 2013.

⁸⁰⁴ M. Williams, 'The Invisible People', *Radical Statistics* 52, 1992, pp.21-28.

but concealed Cornish ethnicity. These networks underpin a civil society which has been able to work with public agencies and take advantage of programmes designed to alleviate some of the symptoms of poverty supported by a sense of Cornishness based on kinship and length of residence. Unlike the practice of festivals, identity as a source of in-group solidarity is concealed rather than overt. However on Treneere, there are, as suggested by Williams, major structural economic and social issues which public policies struggle to alleviate and which are beyond the capability of the neighbourhood to resolve for itself.

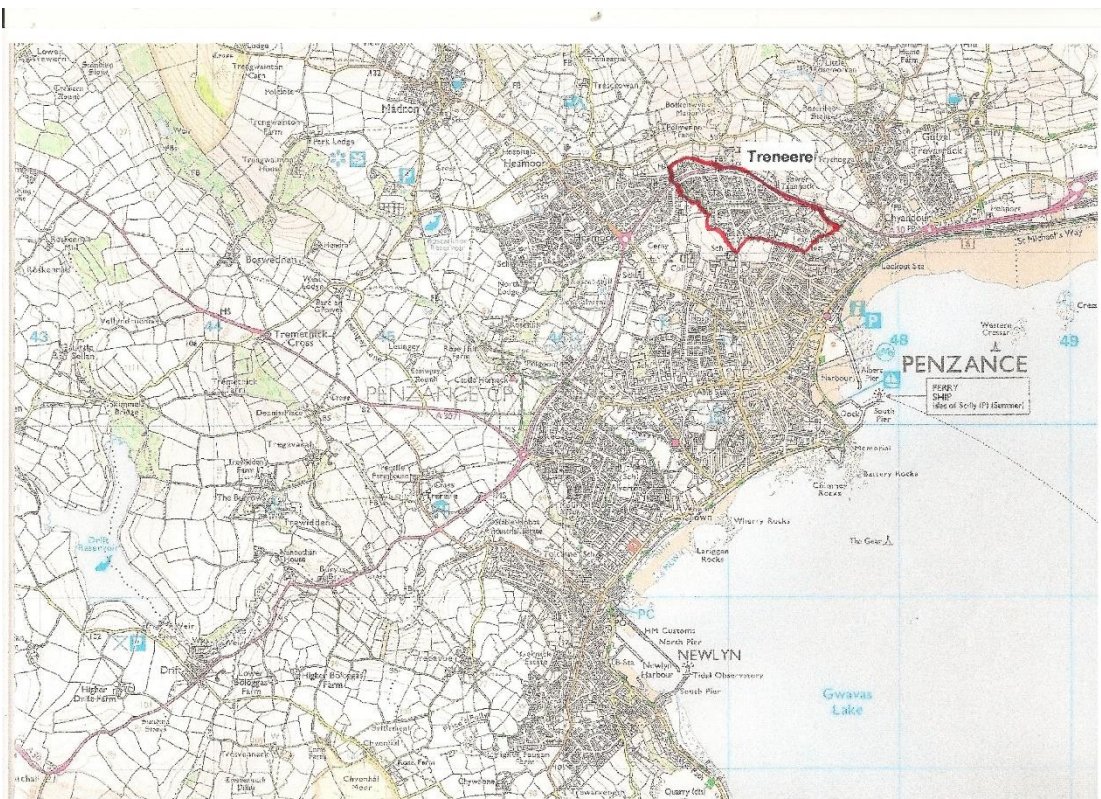


Figure 8.1: Treneere in relation to Penzance: -Contains OS Data © Crown Copyright

Social Housing in Cornwall

In his chapter on housing in *Cornwall since the War* Williams draws attention to public sector housing schemes built in the 1930's, 40's, and 50's to replace sub-standard housing and war damage. Most of these estates were built on the fringes of industrial towns; Truro, Camborne-Redruth, Falmouth and Penzance and coastal settlements such as Newlyn, Porthleven and St Ives.⁸⁰⁵

⁸⁰⁵ M. Williams, in P. Payton, (ed.) 1993, pp.157-8.

They were constructed for skilled and semi-skilled working class families, initially populated mainly by indigenous Cornish since large scale inward migration had not yet started, and were a route into housing for those unable or unwilling to buy their own homes. Ironically slum clearance did not necessarily mean demolition since the vacated housing was often improved, gentrified, and eventually sold to inward migrants, often as second homes.⁸⁰⁶ The explosion in the price of residential property in the last two decades of the twentieth century, which continued until the middle of the 2000's, the introduction of council house sales and a corresponding decline in building new social housing meant, as Williams concluded, that 'it seems possible many of the indigenous Cornish are being ghettoised'.⁸⁰⁷ He argued that a two tier housing market had been created consisting of inward migrants who are predominantly owner occupiers and an 'indigenous Cornish population characterised by over representation, through several generations, in Council or other rented housing'.⁸⁰⁸

Social housing in Cornwall has been discussed in the academic literature largely in the context of rising house prices, affordability and inward migration.⁸⁰⁹ The School of Policy Studies at the University of Bristol characterises rural areas like Cornwall as experiencing widespread low-level deprivation which is extensive rather than intensive, high levels of concealed homelessness indicated by sharing and overcrowding, seasonal employment and little acknowledgement by public agencies of the higher costs of rural life for services such as transport.⁸¹⁰ A further analysis by the University of Plymouth of housing and households in Cornwall concludes that:

long term residents are more likely to live in council housing, have more people seeking work and fewer wage earners in the household than those who have moved into Cornwall. They are more likely to suffer housing deprivation...and overcrowding.⁸¹¹

⁸⁰⁶ M. Williams, in P. Payton, (ed.) 1993, p.157-8. p.161.

⁸⁰⁷ Ibid, p.167.

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid, p.169. See also C. Williams, 'Housing in Cornwall: A Two-Tier System, in P. Payton, (ed.) *Cornish Studies Three*, Exeter 1995, pp. 194-206, p.199.

⁸⁰⁹ M. Williams, *ibid*.

⁸¹⁰ S. Payne, B. Henson, D. Gordon and R. Forrest, *Poverty and Deprivation in West Cornwall in the 1990's*, Bristol, 1996.

⁸¹¹ M. Buck, L. Bryant and M. Williams, *Housing and Households in Cornwall*, Plymouth, 1993, p.2.

This research indicates the housing market in Cornwall discriminates against the Cornish as because of the disparity between local incomes and house prices, which have been driven up by inward migration, housing poverty 'is more likely to affect Cornish people...it therefore seems likely that the long term residents of Cornwall - the Cornish- are the ones more likely to suffer housing shortage.'⁸¹²

But in the absence of large-scale surveys there has been little academic analysis of the social implications of this two-tier housing market and how the economic and social consequences play out in life on estates in Cornwall.⁸¹³ Issues like the allocation of tenancies or the nature and consequences of multiple deprivation have yet to be investigated. The limited research on Cornish families suggests links between kinship ties and accommodation. Studies which investigate whether the Cornish family is different have concluded that the extended family in Cornwall is characterised by multigenerational ties.⁸¹⁴ These are reinforced by a shared history, a sense of identity and more frequent kin assistance than experienced by inward migrants. It is also suggested that women take a more prominent role in decision making.⁸¹⁵ Whether ethnicity outweighs other factors in family behaviour such as class, occupation or location is debateable. However, many of these study conclusions, as the authors admit, are based on anecdote and are to an extent, speculative.⁸¹⁶ What appears to be common ground, and is supported by some evidence, is the slight over-representation in Cornwall of complex households consisting of multigenerational occupants suggesting the influence of kinship in providing accommodation.⁸¹⁷ This

⁸¹² M. Buck, L. Bryant and M. Williams, 1993, p.2.

⁸¹³ The University of Exeter's Truro Community Oral History project carried out a number of interviews across Truro's council estates during 2009 and 2010 with the aim of exploring a number of themes such as work, religion and local festivals and carnivals. These recordings are held in Cornwall Record Office but tend to be reflections on how estates functioned in the past rather than a source for understanding contemporary social housing.

⁸¹⁴ L. Bryant, 'The Cornish Family, in P. Payton, (ed.) 1993, pp.181-197.

⁸¹⁵ B. Deacon, *The Cornish Family*, Fowey, 2004, p. 53

⁸¹⁶ L. Bryant, *ibid*, p. 182.

⁸¹⁷ B. Deacon, *ibid*, p. 51.

manifests itself in overcrowding, the desire to locate near family and support from relatives in finding housing.

Both academic writing on social housing in Cornwall and fiction set in council estates often regard them as areas of failure. Deacon, for example contrasts lifestyle Cornwall characterised by gentrification in the form of expensive restaurants, high house prices and four-wheel drives with 'life struggle Cornwall, estates sunk into a spiral of despair and scarred by poor health, vandalism, drugs and petty crime, places where low incomes and deprivation are the norm.'⁸¹⁸ This picture is amplified in Kent's Charlie Curnow novels written in dialect about a fictional council estate, Trelawny, on the outskirts of Tron. Following a council regeneration scheme:

twas all naff plastic planters and fountains. A few even had railway sleeper beds, prob'ly stolen from over Pool. They still looked shit though-like the owners didn't have the time or money to do ut prop'ly. Despite the improvement scheme of a few years back, there were still 'eaved-out mouldering sofas, broken fences, dog shit, knackered swings, broken Woolworth's barbecues and Calor gas bottles in several of the gardens. Outside were boy-racer souped-up Novas an Fiestas-in fact any-fucking thing with a spoiler – just so you could pose goin' over Pool market. That wuz about top an' bottom ov ut.⁸¹⁹

The Cornish are humorously and sympathetically portrayed in Kent's trilogy, but notwithstanding his exaggerated descriptions of estate life, the discourse of poverty, vandalism, antisocial behaviour and criminality is reinforced and accepted as the normality of life for residents of social housing.

Although it would be an exaggeration to claim that there is something unique about estates in Cornwall built in the pre and immediate post Second World War era, nevertheless they have similar characteristics. Most have been designed as cottage estates, are low rise with relatively large plots, have a mix of house sizes and rarely contain more than 500 dwellings. But unlike some other parts of Britain they do not stand out as markedly different from their surrounding areas. Poverty is not confined to social housing estates. In many areas there are no major distinctions, except in terms of tenure and

⁸¹⁸ B. Deacon, 2007(b), p.227.

⁸¹⁹ A. M. Kent, *Electric Pastyland*, Wellington 2007, p.14.

house type, between estate residents and those in adjacent areas. The Battlefields area of Penzance, for example, next to Treneere, is a mix of rented and owner occupied nineteenth century housing. In the opinion of the local police inspector:

...Battlefields is little different from Treneere, but you don't drive through it...If we were to look at Battlefields you would find many of the same problems but no-one has looked and no-one has wanted to look.⁸²⁰

Of the eight Lower Area Super Output Areas⁸²¹ (LSOAs) which make up the Penzance study area, four are within the bottom 20% of the most deprived in England. Of the 6074 households in the study area 22% are housing association or council owned,⁸²² so it is a mistake to assume that deprivation is limited to former council estates. As Jean Phillips points out, because housing associations and councils are landlords there is inevitably a greater involvement in partnership working and intervention in places like Treneere but despite attempts to alleviate deprivation, its reputation has entered the place mythology of Penzance.

This similarity with adjacent areas is one of the characteristics of social housing in Cornwall. To put it simply, you are less likely to be aware of the contrast in wealth or opportunity between your area and another nearby when they differ only in degrees of deprivation. This may explain a belief that class is not a feature of Cornish society. Atkinson and Kintrea looking at individuals' life chances in deprived and non-deprived neighbourhoods in Glasgow and Edinburgh suggest that, within deprived neighbourhoods, poverty has a profound dis-benefit on outcomes such as education, employment and health but that this is amplified when a cluster of such neighbourhoods occurs.⁸²³ Unlike parts of South East England, where social housing areas are often islands of poverty within a sea of affluence, a number of deprived neighbourhoods contribute towards a synergy of deprivation irrespective of tenure. This helps explain relatively high levels of deprivation across Cornwall

⁸²⁰ Inspector J. Phillips, interview 28th January 2013.

⁸²¹ Lower Super Output Areas: See below for a more detailed definition.

⁸²² 2011 Census, Neighbourhood statistics, Tenure 2011 (KS402EW).

⁸²³ R. Atkinson and K. Kintrea, 'Disentangling Area Effects: Evidence from Deprived and Non-deprived Neighbourhoods', *Urban Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 12, 2001, pp. 2277-2298, p.2295.

and the position of Penzance as the most deprived coastal town studied in England.⁸²⁴

Municipal housing in Penzance

The period following the First World War saw the beginning of large scale municipal house building based on the need to tackle the problems of overcrowding and disrepair arising from slum landlordism coupled with a political will to address a nationwide housing shortage to provide 'homes fit for heroes'. Penzance Borough Council started to build houses in a small way in 1916,⁸²⁵ but the programme gained momentum with the 1930 Greenwood Act which gave direct subsidies to councils for the demolition of slums based on the number of people re-housed.⁸²⁶ A report from the Town Clerk in September 1933⁸²⁷ set out a housing policy for Penzance stating that the extension of the Borough's boundaries in 1934 would create the opportunity to build more dwellings to address overcrowding and slum clearance with the most suitable land 'to be found in the vicinity of Treneere, Lescudjack school and Coombe Lane' and also sites at Newlyn, Paul and Mousehole. It concluded that 'building activity should be spread out to ease the crowded character of the town' and reduce the number of insanitary and overcrowded dwellings particularly surrounding the harbour. Developing cleared sites was rejected by the Council as the vision was to build spacious well laid out estates on the fringes of the existing urban area. As the Town Clark reported, 'the time for simply dealing with individual houses has gone and the Council have appreciated that'.⁸²⁸

Housing on new estates was strongly influenced by the garden city movement which in turn borrowed from late nineteenth century industrialists' model villages such as Saltaire and Port Sunlight. These developments were the genesis of modern town planning,⁸²⁹ based on the ideas of pioneers like

⁸²⁴C. Beatty, S. Fothergill and I Wilson, 2009. See also Chapter Six, Pages 139-140.

⁸²⁵ P. A. S Pool, 1974, p.184.

⁸²⁶ A. Power, *Property before People*, Hemel Hempstead, 1987, p. 24.

⁸²⁷ Penzance Borough Council Housing Committee Minute 27th September 1933.

⁸²⁸ *The Cornishman*, 3rd February 1937, reporting on a speech at the annual banquet of the Penzance Chamber of Commerce.

⁸²⁹ A. Peritz, *Council Housing and Culture*, Abingdon, 2008, pp. 4-5.

Ebenezer Howard and Raymond Unwin, to bring the countryside into the town with low density quasi-rural developments.⁸³⁰ Dwellings were to be located on green field sites with generous amounts of landscaping and garden areas, the intention being to create an environment very different from the overcrowded, insanitary and cramped housing surrounding the harbours of Penzance and Newlyn. Consequently when the Borough boundaries were extended, one of the first acts of the authority was to acquire a large area of land surrounding Treneere Manor to the north of the town for residential development.

Treneere was built under the provisions of Part V of the 1925 Housing Act initially with eighteen acres acquired by compulsory purchase order in 1935. The houses themselves had modern amenities such as electric lighting, indoor toilets and bathrooms.⁸³¹ However, as Smyth and Robertson point out, the narrative of inter-war council house building assumes that the programmes initiated by local authorities were based on an objective view of housing need. But at the time, private landlords, often councillors, viewed with unease the inter-war proliferation of council house building which they saw as threatening their interests.⁸³² Letters to the *Cornishman* suggest that this also applied in Penzance, a 'much burdened ratepayer' commenting that:

We have built houses that are occupied by an entirely different class of tenant for which the money was borrowed and there are numbers of poor people asking to be housed in a class of house at a rental within their reach.⁸³³

suggesting that new dwellings should be reserved for those who were deserving good quality public housing. Similarly there was concern about the comparison between the rents of existing accommodation and those of the new council houses:

The ratepayers [of areas like the Battlefields] are called up to contribute to the cost of the erection of houses with gardens that are let at less rents and rates than are paid by the residents of the aforesaid localities.⁸³⁴

⁸³⁰ D. Bayliss, 'Revisiting the Cottage Council Estates: England 1919-39', *Planning Perspectives* 16, 2001, pp. 169-200.

⁸³¹ Penzance Borough Council Housing Committee Minute, November 1937.

⁸³² J. Smyth and D. Robertson, 'Local elites and social control: building council houses in Stirling between the wars', *Urban History*, Vol. 40.02, 2013, pp. 336-354.

⁸³³ *Cornishman*, 22nd July 1937.

⁸³⁴ *Ibid*, 23rd March 1938.

Despite these misgivings, thirty five years after it was constructed, Treneere was praised as a model estate: 'the house designs are good, there is skilful use of the traditional slate-hanging of West Cornwall' and the estate is considered to be an excellent example of municipal housing of the period.⁸³⁵ It was built in a number of phases and construction continued through-out the early war years. In June 1944 the Borough Council reviewed the project which by that time consisted of 318 houses and flats, 4 shops, 2 miles of roads, 2 miles of water mains covering 42 acres which in total had cost the authority £158,560.⁸³⁶ The report to the Housing Committee stated that the development was the 'most extensive ever undertaken by the Authority and had been carried out well below the anticipated cost'. It emphasised the garden suburb or suburban nature of the estate stating that:

The Treneere lay-out combines some of the advantages of normal suburban development and the "Village Green" layout, the small open spaces situated near the homes of the younger children enabling parents to keep children in sight are of great advantage and...superior to any large recreation ground... It is generally agreed that Treneere has proved a highly satisfactory undertaking. Many tributes have been paid to the general atmosphere of the estate and the way in which many rural features have been preserved.⁸³⁷

Elderly residents remember being told about their parents, as the initial tenants, going to visit the two show houses on the estate; 'how lovely it was to see gas lights' and how Penmere Road was lined with pink cherry blossom trees.⁸³⁸

Clearly Treneere, at this stage, was considered to be a desirable area to live. Although intended for the working classes, the Council resolved in January 1939 that 'the Deputy Borough Surveyor, [and at a later date the Borough Surveyor] and any other Borough official be given preferential treatment in the allocation of houses on the estate'.⁸³⁹ Hence, as Jones points out, despite the original intention, interwar council housing was often allocated not just for the

⁸³⁵ P. Laws, in P.A.S. Pool, 1974, p.203.

⁸³⁶ Penzance Borough Council Housing Committee Minute 1028, June 1944.

⁸³⁷ Ibid.

⁸³⁸ Yap and Yarn session, 27th March 2013.

⁸³⁹ Penzance Borough Council Housing Committee Minute 420, January 1939.

working class but also for lower middle class and skilled manual workers.⁸⁴⁰ Sometimes there was resistance to the demolition of old properties, the most famous local example being opposition to the Newlyn clearances culminating in the voyage of the *Rosebud* to London in 1937, but there were counter demonstrations by younger residents who welcomed the opportunity to live in modern housing.⁸⁴¹ The interwar slum clearance programme therefore contained within it a number of tensions involving the changing nature of the town and the breaking up of close knit communities, concerns about its expense measured against the need for new housing and conflict between landlordism and municipalisation.

Not all the new residents of Treneere welcomed their new environment and behaved in the way expected of them. It was reported to the Housing Committee in September 1944 that a complaint had been made about the breaking of a window at 28 Polmere Road by a gang of rowdy youths and 'that the inhabitants of this part of the estate had to put up with a great deal of hooliganism'.⁸⁴² In November 1944 the housing officer reported on the filthy condition of 11 Colinsey Place and was authorised to clean the property once four children had been removed.⁸⁴³ A little later he reported that there were:

Numerous cases of wilful damage [but]...in view of the reluctance of tenants who had witnessed some of the incidents complained of to be involved in legal proceedings, it would be difficult to substantiate prosecutions.⁸⁴⁴

The place image of the estate meant that early residents often had mixed views about moving to the area. Despite the quality of the housing:

we didn't want to go to Treneere; it was known as a rough area...we had a choice of going to live in a prefab or go to Gwavas and no way was I going to go to Gwavas.⁸⁴⁵

⁸⁴⁰ B. Jones, 'Slum Clearance, Privatization and Residualisation: the Practices and Politics of Council Housing in Mid-twentieth-century England', *Twentieth Century British History*, Vol. 21, No.4, 2010, pp. 510-539.

⁸⁴¹ See J. Mattingly, *Cornwall and the Coast: Mousehole and Newlyn* London 2009, pp. 158-162, and M. Sagar-Fenton, *The Rosebud and the Newlyn Clearances*, Mount Hawke, 2003.

⁸⁴² Penzance Borough Council Housing Committee Minute1317, 26 September 1944.

⁸⁴³ Ibid, Minute190, November 1944.

⁸⁴⁴ Ibid, Minute1440, November 1944.

⁸⁴⁵ Yap and Yarn session, 27th March 2013.

The trope of Treneere as a problem estate has its origins in these early perceptions.⁸⁴⁶ The focus on slum clearance, a re-housing ethos reflecting middle class idealism rather than working class culture, tenants' lack of influence over housing management and the paternalistic attitudes of housing authorities⁸⁴⁷ frequently created tensions which led to, what would be later called, anti-social behaviour.⁸⁴⁸ The image of the garden estate was not always shared by Treneere residents.

There was further development of Treneere at the end of the war with construction of temporary housing (prefabs) on the line of the proposed Penzance bypass (later the extended A30) and in June 1945 approval was given for an extension to the estate consisting of a further 71 houses of cavity wall and slate hung construction with downstairs and upstairs W.C.s, upstairs bathrooms and fitted wardrobes.⁸⁴⁹ In subsequent years there was some infill development on small sites together with the provision of a recreation ground but by 1950 Treneere was substantially complete.

The Present Day Estate

The core of the estate consists of a mix of one and two bedroom flats and three and four bedroom dwellings housing a population of 1471.⁸⁵⁰ The houses have front and rear gardens and are a combination of semi-detached dwellings and short terraces. A *flâneur*, seeking a sense of place would note the *Dracaenas* and 'Cornish Palms' which give some parts of Treneere an exotic touch, the generous widths of the estate roads with wide verges and the open countryside visible to the north combining to create a pleasant environment. Treweath Road which is the entrance from the A30 contains a small parade of shops. The Lescudjack Centre, a converted school, and Col Coombe centre provide community and social facilities for the estate. Just

⁸⁴⁶ B. Jones, 2010, p. 525.

⁸⁴⁷ See for example, Penzance Borough Council's concerns about uncultivated gardens, dirty houses and damage to trees, Penzance Borough Council Housing Committee Minute 609, March 1940.

⁸⁴⁸ A. Peritz, 2008, pp.5-6.

⁸⁴⁹ Penzance Borough Council Housing Committee Minute 1205, June 1945.

⁸⁵⁰ 2011 Census Key Statistics, LSOA Cornwall 067E
<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadKeyFigures> accessed 18th February 2013.



Figure 8.2: Terraced Housing on Treneere.

R J P Harris



Figure 8.3: 'Palm' Trees on Treneere.

R J P Harris



Figure 8.4: Generous Open Space Provision.

R J P Harris



Figure 8.5: New development on Treneere

R J P Harris

outside its boundary is the large well equipped Princess May recreation ground. As Figures 8.2, 8.3, 8.4 and 8.5 show, dwellings remain attractive, their immediate environment is well landscaped and reflects the original principles of garden city estates. Visually Treneere does not exhibit the sink estate imagery of Kent's Trelawney.

With the exception of a small group of houses at Parc Mellan, Treneere is bounded to the north by the A30 Penzance bypass built in 1989. To the south and east the boundary is less clear, the situation being complicated by more recent development and the sale of former council houses. A number of residents who were asked to define Treneere had a considerable debate about the location of its boundaries, (Figure 8.6).⁸⁵¹ Even to the north where the A30 forms a well-defined physical barrier there was considerable discussion about the status of Parc Mellan at the other side of the A30, originally part of Treneere, but is now separated by the road. Although it is still connected to Treneere by an underpass, it is now considered by some residents to have closer links with Heamoor. There is therefore, a degree of gate keeping, a process of selection as to what constitutes the estate which has an influence on how strongly a resident identifies and is identified with the area. The individuals' perception of their environment, their views about the benefits and disadvantages of the estate and their concerns about its reputation determinate the extent to which they feel a commitment to Treneere and imagine it as a community. This identification is influenced by both a resident's mental map of an area and also the strength of family connections and social networks.⁸⁵² Carole Bosworth and Jess Metcalfe defined the boundaries of Treneere as:

a line in your head determined in different ways; by housing type or the age of development or whether you are a resident or if you see it as the area for which grant was given.⁸⁵³

⁸⁵¹ Meeting with members of the Lescudjack Centre Management Committee, C. Bosworth, C. White, and J. Metcalfe, 18th December, 2012.

⁸⁵² A. E. Green and R. J. White, *Attachment to Place: Social Networks, Mobility and Prospects of Young People*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Warwick, 2007, pp. 28-49.

⁸⁵³ Lescudjack Centre Management Committee, *ibid.*

Treneere is therefore regarded by its residents as a representational space, the identity of which is formed from images and historical associations and shaped within boundaries. Although these may appear to take physical form as roads or other features for residents they are often porous and may fluctuate over time and in different contexts. But for the purposes of this study, which draws on both qualitative and quantitative data, Treneere is defined by LSOA E01018997 which includes the Parc Mellan area. It is mainly bounded by the A30 to the north; on the west and south west by Treneere Manor, Penwith Collage, and Humphrey Davy School which separate it from the main built up area of Penzance; to the south by the recreation ground and the Battlefields area of Penzance and to the east by Lescudjack Hill and Chyandour Coombe, (figure 8.6).



Figure 8.6: Treneere Estate, LSOA boundary 067E, 2011 Census: Contains OS data
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Housing Associations, the Right to Buy and the ‘Sink Estate’ Discourse

Employment in sectors such as agriculture, mining and manufacturing declined in Penwith by 35% between 1971 and 2001. The numbers in

employment class 4,⁸⁵⁴ semi-routine occupations, which would have been the group forming the majority of employed Teneere tenants in 1971 dropped by 18% during the same period.⁸⁵⁵ This erosion of the economic underpinning of council estates which was accelerated by the neoliberal policies of the Thatcher, Major and subsequent Labour governments meant that they increasingly became seen to be places with a multitude of economic and social issues including worklessness, poverty and social breakdown; areas with low levels of education achievement and health care which eventually evolved into a discourse of the sink estate. A further major change was the introduction of the right of tenants to buy council accommodation in 1980 which tapped into a latent demand for home ownership. This sell off of stock at discounts of up to 60% for houses and 70% for flats has been reflected on Teneere with about 25% of former council dwellings sold.

The reduction in the number of council houses coincided with the start of a rise in Cornish house prices fuelled by increasing inward migration. Renting in the private sector was an expensive alternative for many in West Cornwall as the impact of inward migration, holiday lets and the increasing number of second homes meant that rents for the cheapest properties were typically double that for social housing. The result of these policies working in tandem was that as the stock of affordable housing diminished, estates became gradually more run down and were seen as 'social dumping grounds [providing] much ammunition for the theory that Britain is divided into middle-class society and a working class chav rump suffering from an epidemic of self-inflicted problems.'⁸⁵⁶ The Cornish version of this analysis is a two tier housing structure with in 2007, 71% of all properties across Penwith owner occupied, which were rapidly increasing in value, in contrast with 29% either rented from a housing association or private landlord, mainly occupied by households who were on low incomes, unemployed and/or benefit dependant.⁸⁵⁷

⁸⁵⁴ 2001 Census, socio-economic classifications

http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/data_cube_page accessed 3rd October 2012.

⁸⁵⁵ http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/data_cube_page accessed 3rd October 2012.

⁸⁵⁶ O. Jones, *Chavs: The Demonisation of the Working Class*, London 2012, p. 35.

⁸⁵⁷ Opinion Research Services, 2008, p.28.

So against this background of increasing housing stress, in 1994 Penwith DC transferred its housing stock to Penwith Housing Association (PHA). Across Britain housing associations were seen as the answer to the municipalisation of council housing, a way of solving the lack of money for repairs and providing more rented accommodation by transferring to them local authority stock. Associations were able to borrow which, given their status as industrial and provident societies or limited companies, was not classed as contributing to public expenditure. They were also able to receive grants for new development through their regulatory body, the Housing Corporation. There were clearly ideological reasons for the policy as it reduced the local authority monopoly of social housing and was a way out of an irrational housing finance regime designed more 'as an assault on local government autonomy' rather than introduced for fiscal reasons.⁸⁵⁸ It was also seen by some commentators as privatising council housing by removing them from democratically elected local authorities and commodifying public assets.⁸⁵⁹

The stock transfer was not widely reported in the local press. *Peninsula Voice* only mentioned it after the ballot of tenants had taken place and was critical of the Labour Party for not opposing it.⁸⁶⁰ The *Cornishman* stated that people living on Treneere had expressed fears about rising rents and longer term effects of the change in ownership. Carol Bosworth, the then chair of the Treneere Residents and Community Association considered that the transfer was an erosion of the welfare state: 'all the things our fathers' fought the last war for are gone...the only thing we've got left are council houses'.⁸⁶¹ The paper itself was ambivalent commenting that the transfer would place the stock of council houses in the private sector, 'where their management will be

⁸⁵⁸ A. Ravetz, *Council Housing and Culture: The History of a Social Experiment*, Abingdon, 2001, p.202.

⁸⁵⁹ See S. Smyth, 'The privatization of council housing: Stock transfer and the struggle for accountable housing', *Critical Social Policy*, Vol. 33(1), 2012, pp. 37-56, and N. Ginsberg, 'The privatization of council housing', *Critical Social Policy*, Vol. 25(1), pp. 115-135.

⁸⁶⁰ *Peninsula Voice*, December/January 1993.

⁸⁶¹ *Cornishman*, 'Mixed reaction to homes plan', 2nd July 1992.

subject to the discipline of the market...It is time for the Council to spell out just what the benefits of such a transfer might be'.⁸⁶²

In addition to the stock transfer, the residualisation of social housing following the purchase of the most desirable properties contributed to a belief that the role of social housing is to accommodate poorer households clustered on sink estates; a metaphor for hopelessness and failure.⁸⁶³ Owen Jones sees this as a reflection of class, a stereotyping and Othering of poor people and a conflation of the perceived pathologies of working class communities with social housing as 'because of the sheer concentration of Britain's poorest living in social housing, council estates easily become associated with the so-called "chavs"'.⁸⁶⁴ He quotes a senior Conservative politician Chris Grayling citing extreme examples of behaviour which 'raises the curtain on a way of life in some of our most deprived estates, of entire households who have not had any productive life for generations'⁸⁶⁵. Successive governments, both Labour and Conservative, have, since the 1990's, reinforced this discourse. The working class and 'underclass' living on estates suffer from a 'poverty of aspiration' and 'people are poor because they lack moral fibre'.⁸⁶⁶ Commentators like Murray⁸⁶⁷ have added academic respectability to this discourse by identifying an underclass of delinquency and dependency, a culture of worklessness and a cycle of deprivation.⁸⁶⁸ Organisations like the Centre for Social Justice have 'developed the idea that poverty is not about lacking money; it is due to problems like lack of discipline, family break up and substance abuse'.⁸⁶⁹ The hegemonic order of discourse of the sink estate has wide-spread public support and is conflated with similar discourses on

⁸⁶² Ibid, 'Comment', 30th July 1993.

⁸⁶³ B. Jones, 2010, p.511.

⁸⁶⁴ O. Jones, 2012. p.35.

⁸⁶⁵ Quoted in O. Jones, *ibid*, with reference to the Karen Matthews kidnapping case in 2008, pp. 25-6. The reportage ignored the efforts by the local neighbourhood to find her daughter and support her family. For a more recent example see the reportage of the Michael Phillipot case 4th April 2013 regarding the deaths of six children in Derby and its linkage to benefit dependency.

⁸⁶⁶ *ibid*, p. 94.

⁸⁶⁷ C. Murray, *The Emerging British Underclass*, London, 1990.

⁸⁶⁸ D. R. Fletcher, 'Employment and Disconnection: Cultures of Worklessness in Neighbourhoods' in J. Flint and D. Robinson, (eds.) *Community Cohesion in Crisis?* Bristol, 2008, p.100-1.

⁸⁶⁹ O. Jones, *ibid*, p. 77.

anti-immigration and benefit dependency which overwhelm debates on the causes of poverty and social deprivation. The culmination of these views is reflected by the welfare reforms of the current government designed to reduce benefit dependency with the introduction of universal credit and limit social benefit payments to incentivise people into employment.

The dominant order of discourse of the sink estate is an illustration of the exercise of power in determining how places are seen. The image of the estate is constructed from ideas about poverty, criminality, housing tenure and social behaviour which classify and stereotype, emphasising difference and separation and are a good example of what Massey and Jess term a 'geography of power'.⁸⁷⁰ The place myth of the sink estate is formed by outsiders and contrasts with the sense of belonging and identity often found on clusters of social housing. While it is undeniable that in many cases, social housing estates accommodate the poor, contain high proportions of unemployed people and can exhibit a number of social pathologies, the public policy solutions to their problems focus on the symptoms they exhibit rather than the causes. The sink estate discourse does not recognise that much of the economic underpinning of working class communities in the form of skilled and semi-skilled employment has been replaced by poorly paid, often part time and lower status service jobs⁸⁷¹. But the characteristics of the present day, neoliberal labour market are ideologically interpreted by those in positions of power and fed into the discourse as a lack of a will to work, 'skivers' rather than 'strivers', supported by an overgenerous benefits system. This negative narrative of estates fails to recognise the fundamental structural changes both in the British economy and labour market since the 1970's where across swathes of Britain, including Cornwall, whole sectors of primary and manufacturing industry have disappeared.

⁸⁷⁰ D. Massey and P. Jess, in D. Massey and P. Jones (eds.) 1995, pp. 224-225.

⁸⁷¹ D. R. Fletcher, 2008, researching worklessness on the Manor estate in Sheffield, found strong evidence of a work ethic rooted in manual employment which has now largely disappeared. He identified a lack of access to appropriate low skilled jobs rather than cultural attitudes as the underlying issue coupled with an increasing casualisation of the workforce, the rise in part-time working and the precarious nature of available employment. L. McKenzie, *Getting By: Estates, Class and Culture in Austerity Britain*, Bristol, 2015 makes a similar point regarding employment stability in poorer neighbourhoods describing a short term cycle of low pay, no pay employment rather than long term unemployment.

The sink estate discourse also fails to acknowledge or understand the social and community aspects of estates. Flint and Robinson conclude that the underclass theory and its implementation through neoliberal policies ignore the 'valid forms of communal life and social responsibility exhibited on estates' and neglects the importance of place; 'the neighbourhood [which] is the arena [where] the dynamics of community and cohesion play out.'⁸⁷² The power of the stereotype imposed by politicians and policy makers assumes a uniformity which does not acknowledge the influence and agency of individuals and fails to differentiate between areas with very different histories or the 'complexity of local circumstances and the myriad of factors underpinning social cohesion or division.'⁸⁷³

A Socio-Economic Profile of Treneere

PHA currently manages 362 properties⁸⁷⁴ out of a total of approximately 500 dwellings on the estate so the predominant tenure on Treneere remains social housing. To give an indication of the relative positions of Treneere, Penzance and Cornwall, comparisons have also been made with England as shown in tables 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3, (Appendix Two).

There are three main data sources used:

- the 2010 index of multiple deprivation (IMD) is a compilation of domains measuring relative deprivation based mainly on the 2001 census and 2008 for other sources for health, crime, child poverty, and economic data published at LSOA level,⁸⁷⁵ (Table 8.1);
- the Office for National Statistics 2011 Census data at LSOA and ward level⁸⁷⁶, Statistics for Penzance⁸⁷⁷, Cornwall and England have been used for comparison purposes, (Table 8.2);

⁸⁷² J. Flint and D. Robinson, 'Conclusions' in J. Flint and Robinson, (eds.) 2008, pp. 262-3.

⁸⁷³ Ibid. p.263.

⁸⁷⁴ Penwith HA, January 2013.

⁸⁷⁵ Cornwall Council, LSOA neighbourhood profiles, 2012.

⁸⁷⁶ www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/

⁸⁷⁷ Penzance is defined as the three wards in the study area identified in Chapter Six, Promenade, East and Central.

- the Nomis official labour market statistics 2012, published by the Office for National Statistics which provides employment and claimant data at ward level,⁸⁷⁸ (Table 8.3).

As discussed in detail in Chapter Four, (Pages 110-111 and 113-114), data from a variety of sources needs to be used with circumspection. The 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), based on a wide range of indicators, shows Treenere in the bottom 3%, of the 32,482 LSOAs for England.⁸⁷⁹ Information disaggregated in this form is important as it is highly influential in determining where public agencies concentrate their investment. It is also a way of differentiating between and classifying and codifying neighbourhoods.⁸⁸⁰ But changes in the composition of indices for different years make it difficult to compare data from one period to the next. Definitions and the composition of data sets change over time so it is not possible, for example, to compare the 2007 IMD with 2010 or 2015. Hence, the 2010 IMD places Pengegon, a part of Camborne, as the most deprived area in Cornwall, a distinction formerly held by Treenere on the basis of the 2007 index⁸⁸¹ but Treenere regained its position in 2015. Cornwall Council points out the limitations of the IMD, particularly that the index is a relative measure, scores LSOAs in relation to each other rather against an absolute measure of deprivation (the bottom 20% are considered to be deprived) and defines areas on the basis of boundaries which may not be recognised by neighbourhoods.⁸⁸² Further problems concern minor differences in the ward boundaries used by the 2011 Census and the Nomis data set.

⁸⁷⁸ NOMIS, official labour market statistics, www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/imp/ward/ accessed 21st February 2013.

⁸⁷⁹ Lower layer super output areas (LSOAs) are a statistical geography created by the Office for National Statistics with a mean population of 1500. Data, from a wide variety of sources, for the whole of Cornwall is published by Cornwall Council's Community Intelligence Team, 2012, found on www.cornwall.gov.uk/community-and-living/

⁸⁸⁰ R. Burrows, 'Geodemographics and the Construction of Differentiated Neighbourhoods' in J. Flint and D. Robinson, (eds.), 2008, pp. 219-39.

⁸⁸¹ Cornwall Council, *Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010: Pengegon in now the most deprived area in Cornwall...or is it?* Truro, 2011.

⁸⁸² R. Burrows *ibid*, p. 220.

Despite these reservations, the combination of a number of quantitative data sets allows a reasonable statistical picture of contemporary Treenere to be formed, its main characteristics being:

- a high percentage of young people under 15, 26.6% in comparison with 16% for Penzance, (Table 8.2);
- a high percentage of long term sick or disabled residents at 14.9% in comparison with 5.6% for Penzance, (Table 8.2);
- in the bottom 4% for health deprivation and has 50% more of its population whose activities are limited a lot by health problems in comparison with the whole of Cornwall, (Tables 8.1 and 8.3);
- a high percentage of lone parent households with dependent children, at 15.4% which is twice the percentage for Penzance and three times that for Cornwall, (Table 8.2);
- the percentage of benefit claimants at 38% of the working age population is significantly higher than for Penzance and more than double the percentage for Cornwall. A high percentage of them claim Employment Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefit, the latter category claiming almost three times that for Cornwall,(table 8.3);
- the percentage of working age population registered as unemployed is almost double that for Cornwall although the percentage who are unemployed and have never worked is less than 1%, (table 8.2);
- 22% of residents between 16-74 are employed in routine and elementary occupations and a high proportion of males are in part-time employment, (table 8.2);
- data from the 2001 Census for approximated social grade shows a very different profile from both Cornwall and England with 57% of residents aged over sixteen in households either semi-skilled or unskilled manual workers, on state benefits, unemployed or the lowest grade of workers, (table 8.2);
- on Treenere 18.5% of pupils achieved 5+ A-C GCSE's including English and Mathematics in comparison with 55.2% for Cornwall, (table 8.2).

Recent local data on incomes is difficult to obtain particularly with the abolition of district councils. The latest (2012) average full time earnings figure per annum for Cornwall is £17,389 as opposed to £26,500 for England, the median weekly pay for Cornwall is £325.70 in comparison with £412.00 for England and the mean for Cornwall £370.60 contrasts with £498.70 for England.⁸⁸³ Income data is hedged with all sorts of caveats but for the purposes of this study these statistics confirm that Cornwall remains a low wage area. Previous data for Penwith DC suggested that incomes in West Cornwall were lower than the rest of Cornwall and that 'households living in Penzance and Camborne, Pool and Redruth are the least likely to have higher levels of household income.'⁸⁸⁴

In summary, Treneere residents are in significantly worse health than the rest of Penzance, a higher percentage is unemployed and those who are employed are almost twice as likely to be in routine and unskilled work. Benefit dependency is high and educational attainment is less than a third for Cornwall based on GCSE results. The majority of residents were categorised in social grades D and E in 2001. The IMD consists of a number of indicators arranged into domains which are combined to form the overall index. In the bottom 3% of LSOAs, Treneere is clearly deprived on the basis of a comparative quantitative analysis. However, there are separate scores for each domain which provide a more detailed picture (table 8.1). Treneere is in the bottom 2% for income deprivation, 2% for employment deprivation, 4% for health deprivation and disability and 9% for education, skills and training

In addition to ranking areas, geodemographic data is used to group and type populations within each LSOA. The Experian Mosaic consumer classification identifies three of the most prevalent categories of resident living on Treneere as;

- low income older couples long established in former council estates;
- families with varied structures living on low rise social housing estates;

⁸⁸³ ONS 2012 Prov-Work Geography, Table 7.1a Weekly Pay, gross 2012.

⁸⁸⁴ Opinion Research Services, Main Report of Study Findings, Swansea, 2007.

- vulnerable young parents needing substantial support.⁸⁸⁵

This information is used by public sector agencies to shape policies and target resources. For example, in dealing with young offenders, Cornwall Council has used the data to identify areas, including Treneere, where it considers interventions may be productive.⁸⁸⁶ Group 0, based on 2009 data, within which some Treneere residents fall and which is considered to be a category which is characterised by young offending, is described as:

“Families in low-rise housing with high levels of social need” which is described as containing ‘many of the most disadvantaged people... dependant on welfare benefits’ characterised by ‘low rise estates of terraced and semi-detached houses’ with ‘a high proportion of lone parent families’. ‘On these estates [there are] high levels of unemployment, low wages...combined with a wide range of social problems...residents not only suffer from specific forms of disadvantage, they also suffer from being surrounded by other residents in similar conditions to their own. As a result, deprivation becomes the norm and children in particular, but adults more generally, often have difficulty imagining pathways to their own self-sufficiency.’⁸⁸⁷

As Burrows⁸⁸⁸ points out such geo-demographic approaches are likely to increase in importance particularly as resources become more constrained and there is increased pressure on public agencies to focus them as effectively as possible. However, as can be seen from the above description, there is a danger that they reinforce the sink estate discourse. Inevitably, given the methodology, they are reductionist and tend to stereotype populations within boundaries which residents may not recognise as neighbourhoods, a further example of the geography of power.

Treneere as a Neighbourhood

Kearns and Parkinson see a neighbourhood ‘as the “home area” [which] is typically defined as an area of 5-10 minutes’ walk from one’s home.’⁸⁸⁹

Neighbourhood is about identity and a sense of belonging. It can be a place of

⁸⁸⁵ LSOA neighbourhood profile for E01018997 Penzance, Treneere, 2012.

⁸⁸⁶ Cornwall Council, *Kernow Matters*, 2010.

⁸⁸⁷ Ibid. p.3.

⁸⁸⁸ R. Burrows, in J. Flint and D. Robinson, (eds.), 2008.

⁸⁸⁹, ‘The Significance of Neighbourhood’, *Urban Studies*, Vol. 38, No, 12, 2001, pp. 2103-2113, p. 2013.

'relaxation and re-creation of self; making connections with others; fostering attachment and belonging; and demonstrating or reflecting one's own values.'⁸⁹⁰ At their best, neighbourhoods are places of mutual support where there is trust in institutions and their ability to address issues of concern.⁸⁹¹ But there are also plenty of examples of bad neighbourhoods and conflicts within them such as gang culture.⁸⁹²

The concept of neighbourhood implies a coherent geographical area and avoids some of the ambivalence and contradictions of community. Nevertheless community is an idea supported by a discourse which resonates within society and despite the fuzziness of the concept, is generally recognised as having currency. So when asked to describe the estate, interviewees from the neighbourhood, in the voluntary sector and in public agencies invariably spoke about the strength, closeness and mutual support of the Treneere community. For example:

There is a strong community network on Treneere; people have pride in the area...they are very engaged with their neighbourhood and what happens there is very important to them.⁸⁹³

I'm very proud to come from Treneere...all my friends and family live on Treneere...it has a really strong community... we have a thriving Residents' Association.⁸⁹⁴

It's a very strong community with an active Resident's Association. There's active participation with community events like garden tidies, litter picks and a celebration of the estate with an annual festival.⁸⁹⁵

Community therefore is part of a discourse which is regarded as positive by media and public policies but it can limit discussion of issues like boundaries, exclusion and the need to embrace difference. Hence, where possible, its use has been avoided in the analysis.

⁸⁹⁰ A. Kearns and M. Parkinson, 2001, p. 2013.

⁸⁹¹ P. Molyneux, 2007.

⁸⁹² C. Cahill, 'Street Literacy: Urban Teenagers' Strategies for Negotiating their Neighbourhood', *Journal of Youth Studies*, Vol.3, No.3, pp. 251-277.

⁸⁹³ L. Flower, interview 16th October 2012.

⁸⁹⁴ D. Sims, interview 19th June 2012.

⁸⁹⁵ S. Newby, interview 15th May, 2012.

As discussed in Chapter Three, (Page 83-85), place may be envisaged both as an intersection of activities and linkages but also as a location having boundaries which identify difference from other places and contribute towards classification, stereotyping and labelling. Treneere has been stigmatised with a poor reputation, particularly in the context of the wider area of Penzance where it has been seen as fitting the sink estate discourse:

Treneere has had a bad name in the past. Some people still think that this is so. It's had a reputation for crime and drug taking but many critics haven't been there; they don't know the area. I don't recognise the picture which is sometimes painted.⁸⁹⁶

There is still a perception about Treneere, for example, in connection with a recent benefit fraud case, where people say, "What do you expect; they come from Treneere." So some stigma remains.⁸⁹⁷

Those [of my mates] who don't come live on the estate think that Treneere is scabby and all and poor. But it's very nice; it's got two parks and the school. I can play football and basketball⁸⁹⁸

For many people living on the estate, their phenomenological perception values its physical environment, the closeness of its social relationships and its history. Public agencies which have been involved in the various programmes run in conjunction with public agencies and the voluntary sector recognise this sense of community and the recent progress the estate has achieved. Treneere 'has improved a lot over twelve years';⁸⁹⁹ 'it's a very strong community'⁹⁰⁰ and 'Treneere is a much more pleasant place.'⁹⁰¹ They refer to the leadership and direction of its civil society and its ability to engage with public agencies. Despite poverty, territoriality, unemployment and under employment, the programmes to alleviate the effects of these pathologies over the past fifteen years appear to have made an impact. One of the most perceptive comments about the estate from a long term resident was that:

There are some very subtle but important changes...when I was a teenager I wouldn't walk through Treneere. It was a no go area but now the outside perception has changed. It's a more comfortable and a safe place for everyone. Treneere has always had a very tight community feeling which

⁸⁹⁶ D. Sims, interview 19th June 2012.

⁸⁹⁷ C. White, interview 18 December 2012.

⁸⁹⁸ 'Darren', interview 18th December, 2012.

⁸⁹⁹ T. Coates, interview 17th October, 2012.

⁹⁰⁰ S. Newby interview 15th May 2012.

⁹⁰¹ Inspector J. Phillips, interview 28th January 2013.

some estates don't, but it's relaxed enough possibly due to the amount of community based work [on the estate].⁹⁰²

But this is largely an insider view. The qualities of the estate perceived by its residents are not always shared by outsiders some of whom continue to see it in a negative light. The estate has yet to entirely shake off its previous place image which has implications for residents' life chances, particularly their employment prospects.⁹⁰³

Strong place attachment means that boundaries are very important for Treneere residents. People are reluctant to join activities outside the estate and there is a great loyalty to the area⁹⁰⁴. Leander Flower from PHA points out that 'people do not want to go outside what they see as the parameters of the estate.'⁹⁰⁵ This commitment to neighbourhood is regarded as one of its strengths where residents are able to give mutual support. As Kintra and Suzuki point out, 'there is a strong link between the importance of place and the expression of territoriality over that place, and personal identity and wellbeing'.⁹⁰⁶ However, negative consequences of territoriality, based on research in Scotland, suggested 'that it denied young people access to amenities and services...and kept them in their own neighbourhoods where amenities were typically very limited'⁹⁰⁷. Kearns and Parkinson make a similar point stating that, 'large groups of young people are extremely territorial in their behaviour, so that their action spaces or wider neighbourhoods have very limited horizons.'⁹⁰⁸ Staff at Trelya, a charity working with disadvantaged young people, say that many of the children they deal with, despite having lived all their lives in Cornwall, have never visited a beach. Kintrea and Suzuki also point out that territoriality has a 'strong potential to result in a negative

⁹⁰² J. Metcalfe, interview 18th December 2012.

⁹⁰³ See R. Atkinson and K. Kintrea, 2001, p. 2290-2 regarding the impact of the stigma of place on employment prospects and also S. Cemlyn, E. Fahmy, D. Gordon and S. Bennett, *Poverty and Neighbourhood Renewal in West Cornwall: Main Report*, Chapter 3, Townsend Centre for International Poverty Research, Bristol, 2002.

⁹⁰⁴ D. Sims, interview 19th June 2012.

⁹⁰⁵ L. Flower, interview 16 October 2012.

⁹⁰⁶ K. Kintrea and N. Suzuki, 'Too much cohesion? Young people's territoriality in Glasgow and Edinburgh' in J. Flint and D. Robinson, (eds.) 2008, p. 201.

⁹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p. 210.

⁹⁰⁸ A. Kearns and M. Parkinson, 2001, p. 2016.

impact on the wider opportunities of young people as they make the key transitions to adulthood'.⁹⁰⁹ Lynsey Hanley describes the 'wall in the head', a mental barrier erected by residents on estates which provides security and makes sense of their world:

The wall in the head is built up slowly, brick by see-through brick, over the course of a lifetime. Your knowledge of what's out there, beyond the thick glass walls, is totally reliant on what you glean from the lives of the people you know, which usually means your own family members...The wall is about not knowing what's out there, or believing that what is out there is either entirely irrelevant to your life, or so complicated that it would go right over your head if you made an attempt to understand.⁹¹⁰

McKenzie makes a similar point that fear of stigmatisation, not knowing what lies outside the estate boundary and how you might be treated and viewed create, 'unhealthy emotional attachments...to a neighbourhood', a condition which she terms 'estatism' and consequently residents 'rarely make those external connections and networks, [so] their ideas and skills remain stunted'.⁹¹¹

As Kearns and Parkinson point out, in terms of collective behaviour, the closed nature of deprived neighbourhoods are more likely to be locations for social bonding 'that enables people to "get by" rather than as a platform for "bridging" social capital that enables people to "get on"'.⁹¹² In other words estate residents look inwards drawing support from the closeness of their immediate community rather than reaching out to areas which are unfamiliar, potentially threatening but open up potential for change, points which are developed further in the following discussion on social capital and neighbourhood development, (Pages 266-272).

Concealed Ethnicity

Initially it might be supposed that social identity in terms of ethnicity does not feature in life on Treneere. When asked whether Cornishness influenced social life on the estate, residents initially made it very clear that being Cornish did not play a part in being accepted but rather length of residency

⁹⁰⁹ K. Kintrea and N. Suzuki, *ibid*, p. 211.

⁹¹⁰ L. Hanley, *Estates*, London, 2012, pp.148-53.

⁹¹¹ L. McKenzie, 2015, pp. 162-162.

⁹¹² A. Kearns and M. Parkinson, 2001, p. 2015.

counted. Many Londoners arrived during the Second World War and they and their families are now regarded as insiders⁹¹³. Debbie Sims a community worker with PHA and estate resident pointed out that celebrating Cornishness at social events run in conjunction with PHA or other public agencies would be counter to the ethos of partnership working or the relations of ruling which stress inclusiveness.⁹¹⁴ PHA, for example:

provides start up and annual grants and there are criteria which groups have to meet. But we have to stress the importance of inclusion. It's not just about Cornish or not Cornish but also applies to sexuality or background. On Treneere this approach is accepted; people have got used to it.⁹¹⁵

And yet, the majority of estate residents who have positions of influence on the Residents' Association (RA) are Cornish and are recognised as such. The explanation given for this is that they are voted on because of kinship and although other non-Cornish people have been involved from time to time, 'they haven't lasted long'.⁹¹⁶ Being Cornish is conflated with family connections and length of residency. Although residents may be aware of a family history where parents and grandparents originally came from outside Cornwall, in the eyes of the neighbourhood, the passage of time qualifies them as Cornish. This seems to apply across generations.⁹¹⁷ Insiders see Cornishness as pride, 'it's what you are' and family history.⁹¹⁸ Representatives of agencies working on the estate interviewed, none of whom were Cornish, recognised its ethnicity and, therefore despite formal relations of ruling, understood the need to work with the grain of cultural difference. The Community Network Manager when asked a question about whether Cornishness is a reality and, if so, how would she define it, agreed that there is 'a most definite difference' which she considered is not always positive. She summed up Cornishness as cultural pride, stubbornness, feeling neglected, adopting the role of victim, negativity and closeness of community.⁹¹⁹

⁹¹³ C. Bosworth, interview 18th December 2012.

⁹¹⁴ D. Sims, interview 19th June 2012.

⁹¹⁵ L. Flower, interview 16th October 2012.

⁹¹⁶ Lescudjack Centre Management Committee members, C. Bosworth, C. White and J. Metcalf, interview, 18th December 2012.

⁹¹⁷ Trelya interviews 18th December 2012, 29th January and 26th March 2013 and Yap and Yarn discussion 27th March 2013.

⁹¹⁸ Trelya interview with 'Darren' at Trelya, 18th December 2012 and Yap and Yarn discussion 27th March 2013.

⁹¹⁹ S. Newby, interview 15th May, 2012.

Research by Bristol University on poverty and neighbourhood renewal in West Cornwall came to similar conclusions; that pride in Cornish identity was an important community attribute in areas of social deprivation but that this was given little formal recognition and as a consequence was 'more often unspoken than overt'.⁹²⁰ The Cornish often saw themselves as 'an oppressed minority ethnic group'. The research also identified 'insularity between different villages, estates and neighbourhoods' which inhibited learning from other experiences. Although it did not initially set out to address Cornish identity, this emerged during the investigation so that:

There was a clear view that Cornish identity is understated and it was suggested that this relates to the historical oppression of the Cornish... In the view of some interviewees, Cornish people are themselves an oppressed minority group.⁹²¹

Cornishness was conflated with place identity which was seen as a potential strength but often reflected resentment of a lack of recognition and opportunities for expression. Parochialism, as a further example of the conservative nature of Cornishness, inhibited receptiveness to new ideas and a willingness to look outside immediate neighbourhoods. Hence in the Bristol study, Cornish identity was often concealed rather than expressed overtly and not recognised or appreciated by the relations of ruling of public agencies or society in general.

The 2011 Census (Table 8.4) shows that 23% of Treneere residents claim some form of Cornish identity, a higher figure than for Penzance at 17% and is considerably more than the 13.8% for the whole of Cornwall. It would be a mistake to read too much into these figures because of 'the write' in nature of the Census question. Nevertheless the figure for Treneere is surprising given that it would not normally be expected to be an area which would respond to an opportunity to self-identify as Cornish by writing rather than ticking a box. These results support Malcolm William's hypothesis of estates like Treneere being the depositories of Cornish people moved by pre and post-war slum

⁹²⁰ S. Cemlyn, E. Fahmy, et al, Summary Report, 2002, p. 7.

⁹²¹ S. Cemlyn et al, *Main Report*, Ch. 3, 2002 p.11 and p.18.

clearance programmes. To test this further, Table 8.4 also includes data for LSOA 070D which contains the Gwavas estate in Newlyn. This was developed at about the same time as Treneere and is linked to the Newlyn clearances. LSOA 070D also includes an area of Newlyn village in addition to Gwavas but this is part of the old urban settlement which might also be expected to have a high proportion of its population claiming Cornish identity.⁹²² However, at 19.7% it has a lower percentage of Cornish identification than Treneere although higher than for Penzance. Another social housing estate, Pengegon in Camborne, which vies with Treneere as the most deprived part of Cornwall, is also included which again shows a high percentage of Cornish identification. So despite the data limitations, the 2011 Census returns suggest that social housing estates do contain higher percentages of people who self-identify as Cornish.

But there is only a weak connection between a sense of Cornishness and political support suggesting that ethnicity is concealed rather than overt. Treneere is part of the Penzance East ward where Mebyon Kernow did not stand in the 2009 local election for the new Unitary Authority. The MK candidate who stood in the 2013 unitary election achieved 7% of the vote as opposed to 5% for the party across the whole of Cornwall. He was however, the only MK candidate standing for the three Penzance wards in the study area but, in the same year, one MK councillor was elected onto the Town Council for the Penzance East ward which includes Treneere.

In what sense is ethnicity concealed? Jenkins makes the point that all identities may be regarded as social rather than individual,⁹²³ but Treneere residents make a clear distinction between their individual ethnicity and how this plays out within the community. Debbie Sims for example, stresses that in both her roles as representing the estate and community development she has to work with everyone; that programmes and policies have to be inclusive

⁹²² See the large number of publications about Newlyn's history, e.g. P. Lomax and R. Hogg, *Newlyn, Before the Artists Came*, Newlyn, 2009 recording its iconic role as the principal Cornish fishing port and its reputation as a close knit Cornish community.

⁹²³ See R. Jenkins, 2008(b) p.17.

and it would be inappropriate to express her identity. But she sees a collective Cornish identity in kinship ties and in festivals:

I'm proud to be Cornish; my husband is Cornish and my Dad was from Padstow. It's important to maintain customs like the Flora Dance and Mazey Day. We go to Padstow for May Day every year.⁹²⁴

Although residents make this distinction between the personal and social there is a degree of ambivalence in separating the two. Debbie Sims, despite working in an environment promoting inclusivity, believes that there are not many Cornish people left and that although she is very proud to be Cornish, 'when I go to meetings with my colleague, we realise that we are the only people who are Cornish'.⁹²⁵ So on one hand the ruling practices of partnership working between public agencies militate against overt expressions of identity but on the other there is a feeling that the processes involved impinge on personal identity and are dominated by outsiders. In addition, the direction of public policy in promoting inclusivity and fairness has a number of, perhaps unintended, consequences for working class neighbourhoods. Cornwall Council's housing allocation policies are an example, as tenants from other parts of Cornwall may be allocated properties on a basis other than kinship or links with the immediate locality. Recently introduced measures such as affordable rents and the bedroom tax also start to break the ties with locality as people may have to relocate from their neighbourhood to stay in social housing.⁹²⁶ As Somerville and Steele point out, 'landlords' allocation policies and practices may assign too high a priority to the needs of "outsiders", and this may undermine existing community practices and may even threaten the identity of the community itself'.⁹²⁷ In such circumstances the personal and the collective start to conflict and for Treneere:

Things are changing because of the way houses are allocated through the bidding system. Family members used to follow each other but now the new system means that housing is now allocated according to criteria. Before, you could ask the Council for a home near your family. There are people who have been here a long time but [now] you have a quarter of the estate who are not Cornish. Sometimes this causes a lot of friction...people don't react

⁹²⁴ D. Sims, interview 19th June 2012.

⁹²⁵ D. Sims, *ibid*, cf. C. Thomas, 1973, p. 21.

⁹²⁶ L. Flower, interview 16th October 2012.

⁹²⁷ P. Somerville and A. Steele, 'Making Oneself at Home: The Mediation of Residential Action', *International Journal of Regional Research* Vol.23, No.1 1999, pp, 90-102, p. 98.

after a Kernewek word meaning 'change'. Elementary Kernewek is taught at Penzans junior school which most Treneere children attend. Art produced by young people at Trelya often contains Cornish symbolism which is encouraged as it contributes to a feeling of belonging and identity which may be lacking elsewhere in their lives, (Figure 8.7). A discussion about being Cornish with a number of teenage girls showed they were aware of their ethnic identity. Cornishness is seen as a badge, 'you are part of a club, it makes you different', so much so that one, a recent arrival in Cornwall, asked plaintively, 'Can I be Cornish too?'⁹³⁰ So in negotiating social identity, ethnicity and a strong cultural background can be a source of self-esteem either because they may be seen as ascribing status to an individual or a sense of belonging as member of an in-group.⁹³¹ This may provide some of the explanation why, for some groups of young people, identification with Cornishness is increasing, (Page 47).

A complex example of ethnicity forming group solidarity in a deprived area of social housing is described by Lisa McKenzie citing the St Ann's estate Nottingham where a combination of white working class and Caribbean cultures gives status to white women with black partners and where blackness is equated with masculinity, 'coolness' and authenticity.⁹³²

The exchange of culture between the different groups of people who live in St Ann's is central both to how people find value within this community and to the strength of the local value system...discussed as the positive side of their physical, social and class positions which they... understood as being "at the bottom" in Nottingham.⁹³³

Clearly the St Ann's example is very different from Treneere; an estate in a highly urbanised setting with a distinctive hybrid culture based on racial differences. But it is an illustration of ethnicity marking out distinctions between places and also ascribing social support and status within a neighbourhood.

⁹³⁰ Visit to Trelya 26th March 2013.

⁹³¹ M. Brewer, 'The Social Self: On Being the Same and Different at the Same Time', and K.A. Ethier and K Deaux, 'Negotiating Social Identity When Contexts Change: Maintaining Identification and Responding to Threat', in M.A. Hogg and D. Abrams (eds.) *Intergroup Relations*, New York, 2001, pp. 247 and 262.

⁹³² L. McKenzie, 2015, pp. 130-131.

⁹³³ *Ibid*, p. 126.

The discussion on civil society in Chapter Two (Pages 37-38) suggests that the solidarity of an in-group is the desire to exclude and draw boundaries and, as already seen, the boundary is very important for the place identity of Treneere. But as Brewer states, despite the insularity of estates like Treneere:

‘many discriminatory perceptions and behaviours are motivated primarily by the desire to promote and maintain positive relationships within the in-group rather than by any direct antagonism toward out-groups’,⁹³⁴

which is an example of a group defined by similarity rather than difference. Hence a shared social category, such as poverty or ethnicity creates an in-group identity which is not necessarily reflected in out-group antagonism⁹³⁵ but rather contributes towards a shared identity based on common social characteristics which are associated with a particular place. As Tajfel⁹³⁶ points out, a common identity imposed by outside perceptions and attitudes coupled with an insider wish to preserve a separate identity which, in the case of Treneere is associated with common social attributes, ethnicity and identification with place, perpetuates the separateness of the estate but does not necessarily erect a barrier between it and the rest of society. The ‘wall in the head’ although appearing to an insurmountable barrier is often an insider construction which is not immutable but permeable and subject to interpretation and change.

Cornishness on Treneere is rooted in kinship networks and neighbourhood solidarity rather than overt cultural expressions. In this sense it is concealed within the neighbourhood, and is hidden from the ethos of agencies and partnership working and the effects of poverty. It takes the form of identity with place; a close connection with a particular part of Cornwall. Treneere residents’ principal allegiance is to their estate reinforced by the shared experiences of poverty, worklessness, low wages and at the same time a neighbourhood where everybody knows everybody else. Cornish identity is

⁹³⁴M. Brewer, ‘The Psychology of Prejudice: In-group love or Out-group Hate?’, *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 55, No.3, 1999, pp.429-444, p. 441.

⁹³⁵ S.H. Chuah, R. Hoffmann, B. Ramasamy and J. Tan, ‘Religion, ethnicity and cooperation: An experimental study’ *Journal of Economic Psychology* 45, 2014, pp. 33-43.

⁹³⁶ H. Tajfel, 1981, p 315.

therefore embedded in the neighbourhood and expresses itself as community solidarity rather than the working class symbolism of silver bands, choirs, rugby, surfing, revivalism or any of the other cultural manifestations of being Cornish. This does not mean that Treneere residents do not participate in these activities or fail to regard them as part of their identity but they are not the defining characteristics of ethnicity on the estate. Ethnicity is expressed covertly as identified by Dickinson, researching differences between farming communities in East and West Cornwall, who found that:

'[s]ome... felt that they did not need to advertise their Cornishness and preferred subtler means. Few had joined Cornish cultural groups or were interested in the Cornish language'

considering for example, that St Piran car stickers are 'over the top...we don't need that to identify us'.⁹³⁷

The Cornishness of Treneere resonates with the working class identity of pre 1960's Cornwall, or the proper Cornishness identified by Kennedy, before it was challenged by mass immigration and the tourist industry. As Mike Sagar-Fenton says, 'in the 1950's and 60's we didn't feel threatened. We didn't need to express our Cornishness because Cornwall was all around you.'⁹³⁸ Rather than exhibiting some of the more self-conscious expressions of Cornish ethnicity, Treneere residents still do not feel the need to overtly demonstrate their ethnicity in response to the perceived threats of globalisation and homogenisation.⁹³⁹ For them it is a strategy for survival to mitigate the challenges of worklessness, poverty and poor health by drawing on the support and resources of kinship and ethnic ties. It is debateable, however, how long this strong identity with place and neighbourhood will last in the face of continuing deprivation, well intentioned efforts of public agencies to alleviate social distress and the impact of recently introduced welfare reforms.

⁹³⁷ R. Dickinson, 2010, P.85.

⁹³⁸ M. Sagar-Fenton, interview, 20th December 2011.

⁹³⁹ B. Deacon, 'And Shall Trelawney Die? The Cornish Identity', in P. Payton, (ed.), *Cornwall Since the War*, Redruth, 1993, 220-223, pp. 208-210.

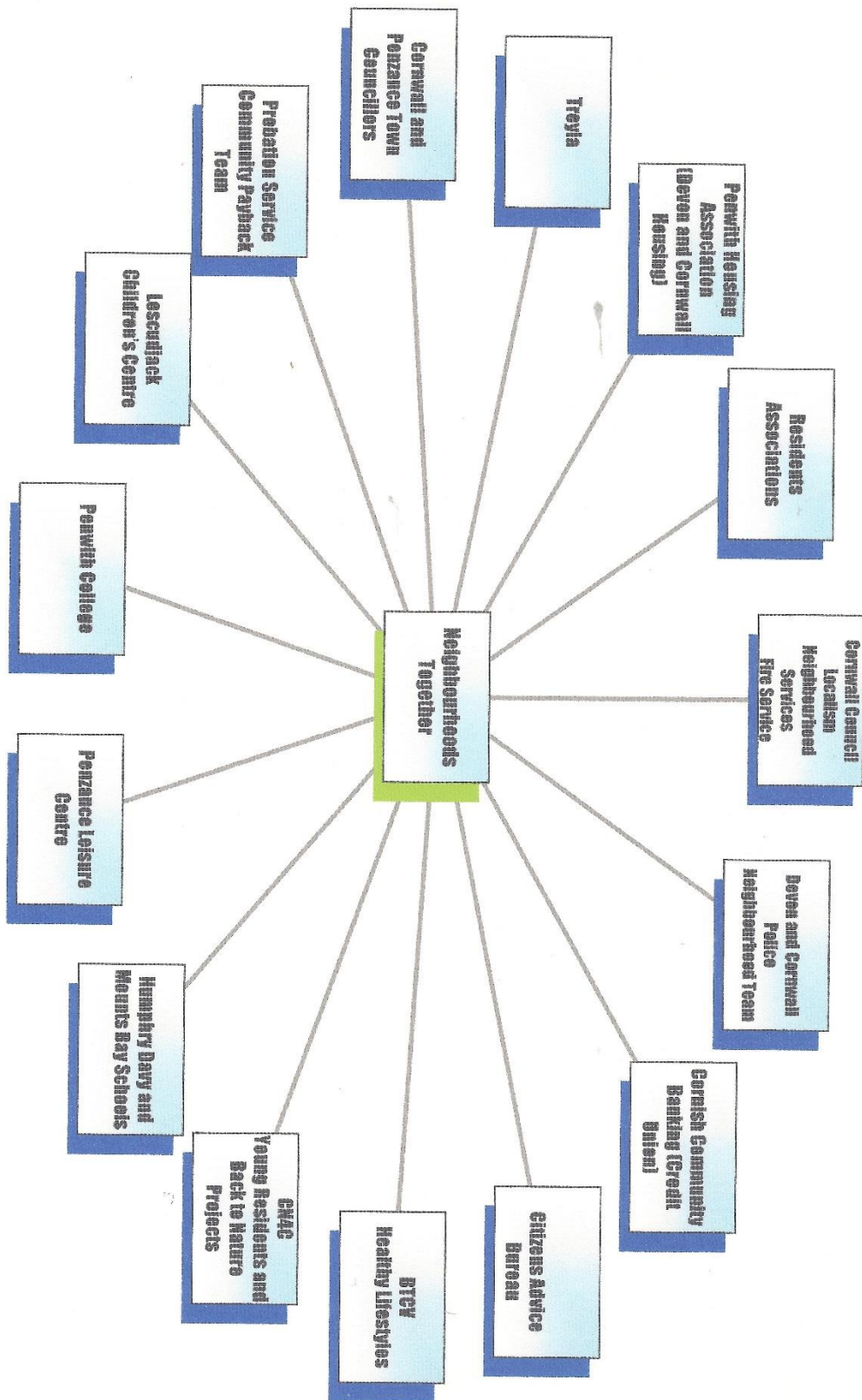


Figure 8.8: The Neighbourhoods Together Partnership Cornwall Council

Civil Society on Treneere

Work by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation suggests that civil society is critical in neighbourhood development, place shaping and building a local identity.⁹⁴⁰ Voluntary organisations have a role in representing the neighbourhood, maintaining its cohesiveness, understanding local needs and working with other agencies to respond to complex challenges. This study has not attempted a comprehensive inventory of voluntary organisations and institutions which work on Treneere but concentrates on the most important players which have contributed to addressing some of the social issues associated with deprivation. The principal relationships are shown in Figure 8.8.

A RA was first formed on Treneere in the early 1990s. Prior to that residents came together informally to organise street parties to celebrate events like the Coronation, hold dances or a sing-song and organise children's activities.⁹⁴¹ But by the 1990's the social cohesion of the estate had started to fracture. One of the motivations for the formation of the original RA was to deal with anti-social behaviour on the estate. 'Children were running wild and drug use was rife'.⁹⁴² The *Cornishman* reported that the police believed that there were organised gangs operating in the area and that there was a high level of drug abuse.⁹⁴³ The RA were instrumental in bringing together PHA, the police and education representatives and in the course of sharing information agencies realised that many children were being excluded from school which they believed contributed to the high levels of anti-social behaviour:

We called in the Housing Association, the police and education and we discovered between us that a lot of children were excluded from school. These children were getting no education so they called in youth workers and between us we solved the problem.⁹⁴⁴

⁹⁴⁰ P. Molyneaux, 2007, p. 9.

⁹⁴¹ Yap and Yarn, 24th March 2013.

⁹⁴² This account is based on a group interview with members of the Lescudjack Centre Management Committee, C. Bosworth, C. White, and J. Metcalfe, 18th December 2012.

⁹⁴³ *Cornishman*, 3rd September, 1993.

⁹⁴⁴ C. Bosworth, interview 18th December 2012.

Bertotti et al identify crime and the fear of crime as a major barrier to community cohesion,⁹⁴⁵ although this may be a matter of degree as Brown suggests that attempts to control anti-social behaviour can be interpreted as social landlords legitimising opposition to behaviour which in other contexts would not have been identified as crimes.⁹⁴⁶ Nevertheless, there was a perception that 'the Treneere label leads the police to treat residents of the estate as second class citizens'.⁹⁴⁷

The need to take action on Treneere clearly stemmed from an initiative by local residents rather than PHA. By involving a range of agencies the neighbourhood was able to take advantage of the Sure Start programme launched in 1998 which focused on child care, early education, health and family support and community development. One of the conditions for participation in Sure Start was involvement by local residents in its management. Following a bid developed by the RA which made proposals for supporting families and tackling anti-social behaviour, it was awarded £3.6m from the programme.⁹⁴⁸ The estate was engaged in a 'Planning for Real'⁹⁴⁹ exercise which was a bottom up approach to gather ideas from residents as to how the neighbourhood should develop. These were then collated into a delivery plan and negotiations were held with PHA to obtain a building as part of a redundant school later known as the Lescudjack Centre as a base for Sure Start (figure 8.9). The RA employed a project manager and staff to provide child care, dental and midwifery services at the centre without-reach workers and community development workers using it as a base. Assistance was sought from external advisors working in programmes like Early Years.⁹⁵⁰

⁹⁴⁵ M. Bertotti, F. Adams-Eaton, K. Sheridan and A. Renton, 'Key barriers to community cohesion: views from residents of 20 London deprived neighbourhoods' *GeoJournal*, 77, 2012, pp. 223-234.

⁹⁴⁶ P. Brown, 'Redefining Acceptable Conduct: Using Social Landlords to Control Behaviour', *Local Government Studies*, Vol. 25 No. 1, 1999, pp. 75-83.

⁹⁴⁷ *Cornishman*, 29th April, 1999.

⁹⁴⁸ Treneere Sure Start was wider than the estate and included the Battlefields area.

⁹⁴⁹ Planning for Real is a neighbourhood based exercise to identify community issues, explore special awareness and develop solutions based on residents' ideas.

⁹⁵⁰ Early Years is managed by the Department of Education

After a change of government policy in 2005, funding for Sure Start centres was switched from direct government grant to local authorities. The staff became the employees of the then County Council leaving the responsibility for managing the centre in the hands of a board of volunteers which had to fund its running costs through lettings rather than grants. While still operating under the Sure Start label, the centre now provides an extensive range of children's services across West Penwith together with others such as benefit and debt advice, counselling and family support.



Figure 8.9: The Lescudjack Centre

R J P Harris

With the appointment of the board the RA is no longer involved with the centre although it uses its facilities. Renamed as West Penwith Children's Centre, it is now seen as a facility for a wider area than Treneere and although used by a number of organisations such as a boxing club and conservation volunteers which draw some of their members from the estate, it is not regarded as an exclusively estate resource:

The Lescudjack centre is a good facility and would like to attract Treneere residents but it doesn't open at weekends so it's no good for young people...not many residents from Treneere use it.⁹⁵¹

So the linkage between the centre and the local neighbourhood has weakened with it assuming a wider role for Penwith and Cornwall Council taking responsibility for its management.⁹⁵²

Following the local authority assuming responsibility, the focus of the RA disappeared and it eventually disbanded. However, after a successful Neighbourhood Renewal Programme (NRP) bid by a partnership of public agencies to address problems of multiple deprivation on the estate; civil society on Treneere revived. The NRP award was £1.6m⁹⁵³ for a programme between 2006-10 to address issues such as worklessness, crime reduction, education and skills training, and poor health. To achieve this, the programme required a multi-agency approach and the involvement of residents from the neighbourhood.⁹⁵⁴ The programme called Treneere Together Partnership was managed by a board consisting of representatives of the principal agencies working on the estate including Penwith DC, Cornwall County Council, PHA, and the Police together with four elected resident members. In parallel with the NRP bid the RA was reconstituted and received funding from the programme adopting the name of 'Treneere Team Spirit', to represent the partnership between residents and public agencies.

Some of the award paid for two Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) with management support who were tasked to engage with the neighbourhood, particularly young people, spend quality time with residents, give feedback on action taken and instigate a 'positive cycle for crime reduction'.⁹⁵⁵ This commitment to policing started to address the initial

⁹⁵¹ D. Sims, interview 19th June 2012.

⁹⁵² With the reduction in funding by Cornwall Council on youth services some of the activities formerly carried out by Sure Start have merged with Trelya. Discussion with staff, September 2015.

⁹⁵³ Cornwall Council, *Neighbourhoods Together Partnership Funding Proposal*, 2011.

⁹⁵⁴ *A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal: National Strategy Action Plan*, Cabinet Office, 2000.

⁹⁵⁵ Inspector J. Phillips, interview 28th January 2013.

concerns of the RA. It was also supported by a number of other initiatives designed to promote neighbourhood renewal and community cohesion including 'Yap and Yarn' sessions mainly for older residents, access to advice on health and exercise, community events and the promotion of Credit Unions. In addition the programme was able to fund a number of capital projects including the redevelopment of the Princess May recreation ground on the edge of the estate, landscaping and environmental improvements and a new community building, the Col Coombe centre.

PHA made a former shop available on the estate to provide a base for the programme, an office for the staff involved and an advice centre for Treneere residents. However, its focal point was the RA assisted by the chair of the Association employed as a community development officer by PHA. So a relationship was established where:

We can explain how to go about getting action by reporting anti-social behaviour and explaining to people why things happen. Before [residents] might not have phoned because they were too scared and the way officials approached residents was often off putting.⁹⁵⁶

In 2010 a quality of life survey evaluated the effectiveness of the programme concluding that the area had become safer, there was a high level of participation of events on the estate, 91% considered that it was a better or much better place to live and that 86% agreed they had a say in decisions affecting their neighbourhood.⁹⁵⁷ Crime reduced from 98.5 per 1000 population in 2008/9 to 65.6 in 2010/11.⁹⁵⁸ The local police inspector comparing Treneere in the mid 1990's with the estate today described it as 'brilliant':

I worked here in the 1990's, in my twenties. Treneere was awful; it was that stereotypical location with cars on blocks, gardens full of old sofas and people would shout at the [police] car. Police were hated. We only went there if we had to, we fire brigaded it, we didn't solve any problems, we sticking plastered it.⁹⁵⁹

She believes that the reason for the change was that:

⁹⁵⁶ D. Sims, interview 19th June 2012.

⁹⁵⁷ S. Stopforth, *Treneere 2010 Quality of Life Survey, Executive Summary*, 2010.

⁹⁵⁸ LSOA E01018997 profiles 2010 and 2012.

⁹⁵⁹ Inspector J. Phillips, interview, 28th January 2013

the agencies addressed the needs of the community. We stopped telling people what they wanted but asked people what they wanted. We assumed we knew what people wanted, their gardens tidied up, rather than what their concerns were. They were as concerned as we were about the unruliness of the children and the mess on the streets. We didn't give them any reason to trust us. All agencies put resources in there which made them feel that the public cared and that the community was worth investing in.⁹⁶⁰

In 2009 with the inception of Cornwall Council and the approaching end of Neighbourhood Renewal Funding there were major changes to the relationship between civil society and public agencies. Encouraged by the success of the Treneere Together Partnership, Cornwall Council introduced a similar approach across Penwith, focusing on former council estates, in a new partnership, Neighbourhoods Together (Figure 8.8) with the aim of:

improving the quality of life for residents living in the most deprived neighbourhoods' and working with residents and service delivery partners to improve service delivery, generate cost savings and provide value for money.⁹⁶¹

This initiative also coincided with the creation of community networks by Cornwall Council as the basis for coordinating local services acting as a link between the Council and town and parish councils and replacing, to a degree, the void left by the disappearance of District Councils.⁹⁶² Initially it was possible to continue funding for the partnership from existing budgets via the community network. However, for 2012-13 the wider programme needed support by a grant from a local charity the Emily Bolitho Trust (an example of civil society stepping in to assist public agencies) as due to budgetary constraints neither Cornwall Council nor PHA could continue to support the Neighbourhoods Together Partnership. For 2013-14 PHA was able to provide funding at a reduced level. The community network for Penzance, Marazion and St Just continues to support the programme and the intention is to maintain policy coordination, influence budgets and pool resources within the context of the network framework.⁹⁶³

⁹⁶⁰ Inspector J. Phillips, interview, 28th January 2013.

⁹⁶¹ Cornwall Council, Neighbourhoods Together Funding Report, 2011, p.1.

⁹⁶² Chapter Six, Pages 150-151.

⁹⁶³ S. Newby, interview 15th May, 2012.

Trelya is another example of civil society operating on Treneere. It is a registered charity, formed to help young people in danger of being excluded from school or at risk from criminality. Trelya started in 1998 at about the same time that the RA was voicing its concerns about anti-social behaviour on the estate. Although it originally dealt with children, its programmes have extended on an individual basis to 18 to 25 year olds who seek access to housing, advice on maintaining a tenancy and help with budgeting and dealing with personal relationships, skills needed to transfer to adulthood.⁹⁶⁴ Many of the young people helped are victims of family breakdown, have little experience of employment, have acquired few social or practical skills and have often been raised in poverty. Trelya tries:

to help the children develop as adults; introduce them to new experiences and provide positive role models and help them recognise that there are choices in life; that there are alternatives to unemployment.⁹⁶⁵

Or in other words, to ‘negotiate the wreckage of the collapsed “economic scaffolding” that previously enabled a transition from adolescence to a stable, adult life.’⁹⁶⁶

As an independent charity Trelya does not receive any statutory funding on a regular basis but is financed from a variety of sources such as securing at the end of 2012, a grant for a three year project supported by the Department of Health to reduce teenage pregnancies, drug misuse and school truancy.⁹⁶⁷ The charity is based in Penzance but covers the whole of West Cornwall. It operates from a former school located between the town centre and Treneere. Because of its proximity to the estate, much of its activity, which is largely based on a detached youth work approach, has been focused on the estate’s young people who use it as a drop in centre. The centre is equipped with

⁹⁶⁴ T. Coates, interview 17th October 2012.

⁹⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶⁶ R. MacDonald, T. Shildrick, C. Webster and D. Simpson, ‘Growing Up in Poor Neighbourhoods: The Significance of Class and Place in the Extended Transitions of “Socially Excluded” Young Adults’, *Sociology*, 39:873, 2005, pp.873-891, p. 885.

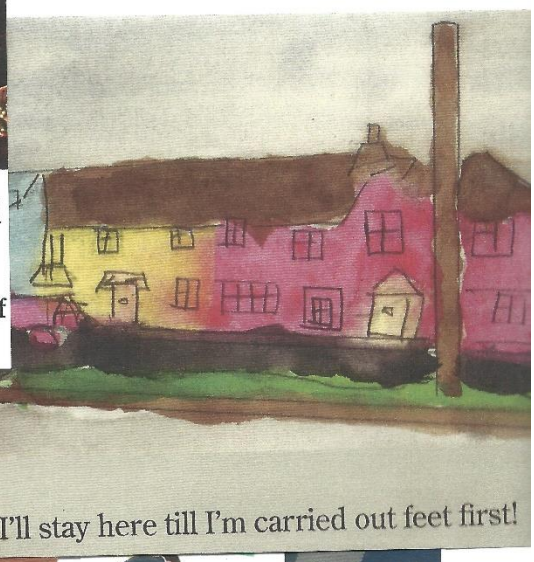
⁹⁶⁷ T. Coates, *ibid.*



a slice of treeneere

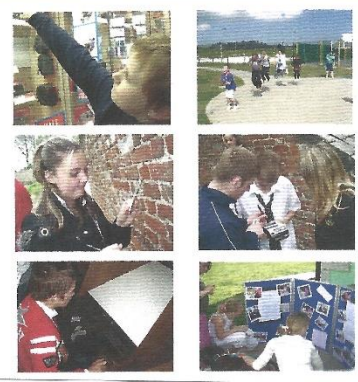
The sense of community here on Treeneere is still really strong, people look out for each other.

Everybody has their differences, but at the end of the day we stick together.



I'll stay here till I'm carried out feet first!

Why would we want to move?
We've got our garden that's special to us, we spend hours out there.
To my mind that's a piece of paradise.



This estate's reputation is damaged which is a shame because it's a nice estate.

I had no qualms about living on Treeneere, no qualms whatsoever know a lot of people say, "Oh, I wouldn't live there", but I never had any bad experiences, I've been ever so lucky. I always had lovely neighbours each side of me, always. Up Colinsey Road I had lovely neighbours, lovely. Down Parc Mellan I had lovely neighbours, all go out and have a cup of tea.

Figure 8.10: Extracts from 'A Slice of Treeneere'

Trelya

facilities for art, music, an indoor sports and performance area but, most importantly, it provides a space where young people can feel secure and

interact with members of staff.⁹⁶⁸ Programmes are offered on cooking, food hygiene, and encourage experience of outdoor activities in the surrounding environment through team building and developing self-confidence. Trelya tries therefore to widen the limited horizons imposed by territoriality and place identity by offering experiences outside the confines of the estate. A group interview with 10-12 year olds suggests that the issue of 'estatism' is very real with children well aware of stigmatisation; 'It would be embarrassing to say that you come from Treneere' and social contacts are mainly limited to the estate.⁹⁶⁹

A project, using funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, to counteract the stigma attached to the estate involved young people from Trelya producing, with the help of lottery funding, *A Slice of Treneere*, a high quality booklet looking at the background of Treneere, (Figure 8.10). The objective was to demonstrate to young people that they could be proud of their community, that it had a history and that long term residents viewed it with affection as a counter to the stereotypical place image of the estate. The publication describes the process of preparing it as:

We have taken photos, interviewed different people who live here, filmed around the estate and visited libraries and study centres to find some old newspapers and photos. We've appeared on the news, and even been on a flight over Treneere Estate.

The project demonstrates a pride in neighbourhood, an acknowledgement of the importance of place identity and a connection with its history which together attempt to challenge the place myth of Treneere as a sink estate. It does acknowledge however a degree of stereotyping, that:

This estate's reputation is damaged which is a pity because it's a nice estate. I wouldn't want to move, I've got it how I want it, I've got fish out there.

But overall, life on the estate is regarded positively:

⁹⁶⁸ For a detailed description and explanation of the work of Trelya see, Commission for Rural Communities, *Making Best Practice Stick: Rural Youth projects: Trelya, West Cornwall*, London, 2006.

⁹⁶⁹ Group interview with 10-12 year olds, Trelya, 18th December 2012.

The sense of community here on Treneere is still really strong; people look out for each other. Everybody has their differences, but at the end of the day we stick together.⁹⁷⁰

Social Capital and Neighbourhood Development

Social Capital

Despite Treneere exhibiting symptoms of acute deprivation, the recent history of the estate shows that the neighbourhood has the capacity to identify problems, organise action, work with public agencies and mobilise resources to address problems identified by residents. As briefly mentioned in Chapter Two (Page 30), Putman's ideas on social capital, drawing on theory first articulated by Bourdieu, have been influential in thinking about neighbourhood development. He defines the concept as 'features of social life, networks, norms and trust, that enable participants to act more effectively to pursue shared objectives',⁹⁷¹ which are developed through social networks. As Field amplifies:

'People connect through a series of networks and they tend to share common values with other members of these networks; to the extent these networks constitute a resource, they may be seen as forming a kind of capital.'⁹⁷²

Social capital resides in relationships between individuals, families and within neighbourhoods where it can be 'defined as networks of mutual obligations for outstanding favours, flows of information and enforceable shared norms.'⁹⁷³ It is therefore concerned with neighbourliness, emotional and economic support and group solidarity which are also components of civil society. The two sets of ideas are closely related.⁹⁷⁴ But the notion of social capital is open to challenge on the basis that 'capital' implies a transferrable value and that

⁹⁷⁰ Quotations from *A Slice of Treneere*, no date.

⁹⁷¹ R. D. Putman, 2000, p.20.

⁹⁷² J. Field, *Social Capital*, Abingdon, 2008, p.1

⁹⁷³ D. Purdue, 'Neighbourhood Governance: Leadership, Trust and Social capital', *Urban Studies*, 38, 2001, pp. 2211-2224, p. 2214.

⁹⁷⁴ See for example, D. McGhee, 'Moving to "our common ground – a critical examination of community cohesion discourse in twenty-first century Britain', *The Sociological Review*, 2003, pp. 376-404, V. Lowndes, 'Getting On or Getting By? Women, Social Capital and Political Participation' *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol. 6, 2004, pp. 45-64 and M. Woolcock, 'Social capital and economic development: Toward a theoretical synthesis and policy framework', *Theory and Society* 27: 1998, pp.151-208.

using economic terminology obscures issues of power and control.⁹⁷⁵ As Goulbourne and Solomos state, 'social capital is not actually exchangeable through other forms of free commodities; it has little meaning or use outside the group'.⁹⁷⁶ Hence it can be argued that the main reason why policy makers are enthusiasts for the idea of social capital is that it privileges the social over the economic thereby deflecting attention from the structural reasons for neighbourhood deprivation.⁹⁷⁷ Social capital may also require onerous obligations rather than mutual support and limit possibilities instead of enhancing them.⁹⁷⁸ As well as contributing towards neighbourhood cohesion, social networks may reinforce privilege and perpetuate disadvantage.

Putman's work is a useful framework for explaining the mechanics of neighbourhood networks. He makes the distinction between *bonding* consisting of close linkages between family friends and neighbours and *bridging*, involving wider but weaker linkages with similar people, acquaintances and workmates. Woolcock adds to Putman's analysis by introducing *linking* with people who are outside the neighbourhood to obtain a wider range of experiences and skills.⁹⁷⁹ We have seen in the preceding discussion, how bonding in the form of ethnicity and kinship ties is an important part of social capital on Treneere, that bridging social capital resides in the organisation of civil society, leadership and the role of women, and linking has developed and maintained partnerships with public agencies.

Carol Bosworth outlines how various forms of social capital were mobilised to establish Sure Start at the Lescudjack centre. She describes how a network of residents and agencies were formed to prepare a funding bid initiated by bonding and bridging with neighbours and residents sharing similar concerns;

We liaised with one of the head teachers on the estate and we were told about Sure Start and that we would stand a good chance of getting funding.⁹⁸⁰

⁹⁷⁵ J Field, 2008, p 158.

⁹⁷⁶ H. Goulbourne and J. Solomos, 'Families, Ethnicity and Social Capital', *Social Policy and Society*, Vol. 2: 04, 2003, pp. 329-338, p. 332.

⁹⁷⁷ J Field, *ibid*, p 160.

⁹⁷⁸ S. Goss, 2001, p. 53.

⁹⁷⁹ M. Woolcock, quoted in J Field, *ibid*, p 46.

⁹⁸⁰ C. Bosworth, interview 18 December 2012.

Following this success the RA linked with other organisations to seek out expertise:

We collected ideas and put together a delivery plan helped by people from Early Years. We then employed a project manager and negotiated with PHA to obtain a building, part of a redundant school, which we could buy as a centre for Sure Start.⁹⁸¹

and although the project was driven by the RA:

We had help from Early Years and we had a government advisor. Once we'd got the scheme off the ground - we didn't have a clue on how to run it - we had a government adviser who advised us plus a policeman.⁹⁸²

So from an initiative initiated by bonding and bridging between mothers sharing concerns on the estate, Sure Start was achieved by linking with outsiders to provide technical expertise and professional support to implement the project and secure the expertise to enable it to continue.

Willett applies the notion of social capital to the clay villages of Mid-Cornwall. She argues that although they experience relatively high levels of deprivation particularly regarding a lack of human capital in terms of education, learning and skills, nevertheless they exhibit, 'a solid foundation of social capital, sustainable and self-organising' based on high levels of community engagement.⁹⁸³ She suggests however that a lack of human capital prevents the area from fulfilling its potential. Although her study differs in terms of scale and locality and she did not directly address ethnicity nevertheless it gives further support to Goulbourne and Solomos's suggestion that there is a close relationship between family, ethnicity and social capital in the sense that they all share the characteristic of being recognised within a social collective, they have to be accessed within that collective and membership and acceptable behaviour is sanctioned through the collective.⁹⁸⁴ They propose that questions need to be asked 'about the conditions necessary for ethnic affinities to

⁹⁸¹ C. Bosworth, interview 18 December 2012.

⁹⁸² Ibid.

⁹⁸³ J Willett, in P. Payton, (ed.), 2009, p.153.

⁹⁸⁴ H. Goulbourne and J. Solomos, 2003, p.333.

become a family resource or a social commodity'⁹⁸⁵ a position which touches on the findings of the Townsend Bristol University study regarding ethnicity in West Cornwall. Unfortunately, although public agencies informally acknowledge that these relationships contribute to the social cohesion of estates like Treneere, this is not recognised by their ruling practices, so the delivery of services such as allocation of tenancies or anti-social behaviour policies are not influenced by ethnic or familial considerations.

The Role of Women

Crucial to the development of social capital is the role of women. The membership of the Treneere Team Spirit committee is all female (a couple of husbands help out) many of whom have children so have an important stake in how the estate functions. Jess Metcalfe is firm in her conviction that, 'aren't women the drivers of any community?'⁹⁸⁶ as though men would not be expected to be so involved. Studies of neighbourhood regeneration stress the role of women in estate regeneration and 'the power of mothers as catalysts for protest and action.'⁹⁸⁷ Power, discussing how estates cope with social change and counter anti-social behaviour, states that '[a] strong tenants' leader, invariably a woman, would sometimes emerge...with a clear belief that "enough is enough, we've got to stop it"⁹⁸⁸ which is a close approximation of how the Sure Start programme was initiated on Treneere and the leadership role of the RA. This follows a tradition in Cornwall of women taking key roles in social change particularly in connection with migration where they have been central both in the decision to migrate and in sustaining the resilience of family and community life in the neighbourhoods which remained.⁹⁸⁹

Dominelli, who sees community action from a feminist perspective, regards the neighbourhood as:

⁹⁸⁵ H. Goulbourne and J. Solomos, 2003, p.336.

⁹⁸⁶ J. Metcalfe, interview, 18 December 2012.

⁹⁸⁷ A. Ravetz, 2001, p.194 and pp. 221-2.

⁹⁸⁸ A. Power, 1987, p.223

⁹⁸⁹ S. P. Schwartz, 'Cornish Migration Studies: An Epistemological and Paradigmatic Critique', in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Ten*, Exeter, 2002, pp.146-149, and L. Trotter, "'Husband Abroad": Quantifying spousal separation associated with emigration in nineteenth-century Cornwall', in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Twenty*, Exeter, 2012, pp.180-198.

the site where women live, work and ensure the survival of the species. They do so by defending the right of their families to enjoy decent standards of living, to acquire facilities that enhance their lives and to be treated with dignity and respect. Women act as mediators between local communities and the nation state...⁹⁹⁰

But Lowndes suggests that the role of women, especially where there are multiple social problems, has been largely unrecognised in thinking about civil society. The social networks which are involved with child care are not considered an example of social capital but rather are regarded as part of the domestic sphere.⁹⁹¹ She argues that their importance is not some hangover from 1950's community studies but is emphasised by societal changes such as the increasing proportion of women in the work place and the decline of the extended family. Thus bridging is as important as bonding to sustain networks of mutual cooperation so that:

Women know and trust their neighbours to a greater degree than men, have more contact with friends and relatives and access informal networks of support that are embedded in neighbourhood solidarity...⁹⁹²

However, women, although far better than men at accessing support from social networks, tend to invest their social capital in 'getting by' rather than 'getting on';⁹⁹³ in other words, in dealing with day to day issues in their immediate environment rather than engaging in wider political activity.⁹⁹⁴

There are however many examples of women mobilising neighbourhoods in the areas like housing, childcare and community involvement and it would be a mistake to assume that their social capital is confined to the domestic sphere. Dominelli⁹⁹⁵ argues that women's activities which extend bonding into bridging capital to improve or develop their neighbourhood are a form of public associational activity or micro-politics which in the Treneere examples sit within civil society.

⁹⁹⁰ L. Dominelli, *Women and Community Action*, Bristol, 2006, p. 2.

⁹⁹¹ V. Lowndes, 'Women and Social Capital: A Comment on Hall's "Social Capital in Britain"', *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 30, No. 3, 2000, pp. 533-537.

⁹⁹² L. Dominelli, 2006, p. 42.

⁹⁹³ R. D. Putman, 2000, p. 23.

⁹⁹⁴ V. Lowndes, 2004, pp. 55-56.

⁹⁹⁵ L. Dominelli, *ibid*, p. 42.

Women therefore play a central role in the civil society on Treneere because they combine both bridging and bonding capital and their leaders have the confidence to link with institutions working on and outside the estate. Family networks are particularly important and appear to be accepted as legitimising a wider involvement in the neighbourhood.⁹⁹⁶ As an example, the mother of the present chair of Treneere Team Spirit was a past member of the original RA. These family connections are also bound up with ethnicity. The answer to the question, 'Why are all the members on the RA committee Cornish?' was:

They are all family; Debbie's and Trudy's mums were on the original RA. There have been other people [involved] but they haven't lasted long; it's difficult to slot into a group which is also a social group.⁹⁹⁷

So a complex relationship between ethnic identity, kinship, and social identity is important in determining who has influence on Treneere. In the opinion of residents, Cornishness is secondary to kin relationships and length of residence but they appear so closely associated that they are indistinguishable. On Treneere women have also organised themselves to link outside the estate to engage with schools, PHA and local authorities and participate in programmes like Sure Start and NRP. Social capital formed by bonding and bridging has been the platform for reaching out beyond the estate and linking with other agencies and areas of expertise giving legitimacy to Carol Bosworth and Debbie Sims as community leaders.

Leadership

A further element in the capacity of the neighbourhood to develop its civil society and respond to other agencies and organisations is leadership. The chair of Treneere Team Spirit is recognised as a major influence on the estate not only because of her position as chair but because of her role as a community development worker for the Neighbourhoods Together Partnership. So she manages to be both an insider as a resident on Treneere but also is employed by one of the principal agencies operating on the estate. This dual role could lead to a conflict of interest but this appears not to be the

⁹⁹⁶ See similar conclusions from 1950's and 60's community studies, R. Frankenberg, 1966.

⁹⁹⁷ Group interview with members of the Lescudjack Committee, C. Bosworth, C. White, and J. Metcalf, 18th December 2012.

case since the initiatives taken by the agencies working together on Treneere seem to have been generally welcomed by the neighbourhood. The RA, although funded by PHA, is open to all residents, whether tenants or owner occupiers, all of whom are eligible to vote for the Treneere Team Spirit committee. The RA meetings are well chaired, self-administered, and handle substantial sums of money.⁹⁹⁸ The Association publishes a monthly newsletter. A programme of events is organised for the estate such as a trip to Christmas lights, pantomime visit and a fun day. When questioned whether the RA is sufficiently robust to withstand a change of chair, the present chair insists that it has sufficient momentum to continue and that 'there are other people on the RA who could run the Association'⁹⁹⁹ but others 'query if Debbie wasn't involved then it's possible that what has been achieved so far may start to erode.'¹⁰⁰⁰

Purdue considers that 'the role of individuals as leaders has been underplayed in the literature on partnerships and regeneration.'¹⁰⁰¹ He distinguishes between transformational and transactional models of leadership where the former acts as a social entrepreneur leading by personality and charisma whereas a transactional leader acts as a representative by earning good will and trust.¹⁰⁰² In the context of partnerships which require sensitivity, negotiating skills and, in the case of Treneere, embeddedness in the neighbourhood, leadership on the estate tends towards the transactional model. But successful leadership also requires imagination and innovation. Civil society on the estate would have been moribund had there not been a number of determined women initiating Sure Start by adopting transformational as well as transactional leadership roles. Lynsey Hanley sums up her involvement in the processes of neighbourhood leadership and its contribution towards social capital as:

⁹⁹⁸ Attendance by the author at a committee meeting of Treneere Team Spirit on 5th September 2012.

⁹⁹⁹ D. Sims, telephone interview 19th September 2012. She has since resigned and the RA is now chaired by her sister.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Inspector J. Phillips, interview 28th January 2013.

¹⁰⁰¹ D. Purdue, 2001, p.2212.

¹⁰⁰² Ibid, pp.2215-6.

I was the person who had spent by far the fewest number of years living on the estate, sitting next to couples who had raised children and grown old here. Their articulacy made me proud and somewhat in awe of their lightly worn skills. The chairman didn't need telling that he was 'empowered' to lead the group: it seemed to come naturally to him,¹⁰⁰³

which was a similar reaction from the author when attending a meeting of Treneere Team Spirit.

The Role of Public Agencies

A criticism of Putman is that his analysis is too society centred and undervalues the role of the state.¹⁰⁰⁴ In the examples of both Sure Start and the NRP, the state in the form of both central and local government, the police, social housing landlord and other public bodies identified in Figure 8.8 was instrumental in the inception and implementation of both programmes. Lowndes and Wilson argue that social capital 'may be better understood in the context of a two-way relationship between civil society and the government'.¹⁰⁰⁵ The state shapes the conditions under which civil society operates and consequently influences the formation of social capital by its relations of ruling and how it enables citizens to access its services.¹⁰⁰⁶

So one of the reasons why interventions on Treneere appear to have been successful is that as part of the NRP, agencies introduced a presence on the estate. The allocation of dedicated PCSOs, already referred to, involved working with the neighbourhood:

It was about becoming known. Having continuity with a police presence; a known face, who feeds back on what has been done; to engage with the community, particularly the youngsters; listen to young people, introduce activities like street games and trips. It enabled PCSOs to spend quality time with residents. [As a result] our intelligence on criminality like drug taking improved; we found out where and when it was happening. The residents then see action taken; people arrested and can see a link between their requests and action starting a positive cycle for crime reduction.¹⁰⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰³ L. Hanley, 2012, p. 200.

¹⁰⁰⁴ V. Lowndes and D. Wilson, 'Social Capital and Local Governance: Exploring the Institutional Design Variable', *Political Studies*, Vol. 49, 2001, pp. 629-647.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 631.

¹⁰⁰⁶ S. Goss, 2001, p. 56

¹⁰⁰⁷ Inspector J. Phillips, interview 28th January 2013.

At the inception of the Treneere Together Partnership one of the estate shops was allocated as an office and advice centre dealing with information and complaints handling and is used by all the agencies working within the neighbourhood: 'The office is a focal point rather than residents dealing with officials. Things get dealt with a lot more quickly than before.'¹⁰⁰⁸ A further example of an estate resource is the Col Coombe centre, funded from the NRP bid and run by the RA, which has facilities for meetings, acting both as the social centre for the neighbourhood as well as a venue where residents can interact with other agencies. These measures to bring services to the estate have blurred the boundaries between the neighbourhood and public agencies, have improved communication between them and estate residents and reinforced networking between agencies. Consequently a high level of trust, a key element of social capital, has been generated between the various actors in the regeneration of the estate.¹⁰⁰⁹ Some of the academic literature, however, sees area based regeneration programmes as tokenistic, characterised by unequal power relations, top down agendas and inappropriate funding criteria.¹⁰¹⁰ But the evidence from The Quality of Life survey on the impact of interventions on Treneere suggests that the partnership has developed a two way relationship which both agencies and residents agree has fundamentally improved the estate. The survey indicated that life on Treneere had become better in terms of reductions in crime, levels of respect between neighbours, public services and over 90% considered it was a better or much better place to live.¹⁰¹¹

Partnerships are an opportunity for civil society to influence policy making. As stated by Taylor '[f]or the optimist, the move towards partnership has the potential to open up a new political space...to forge new forms of decision making, and [find] alternative...solutions'.¹⁰¹² However, the partnership

¹⁰⁰⁸ D. Sims, interview 19th June 2012; see also A. Power, 1987, on the benefits of area offices for housing management.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Both Jean Phillips and Leander Flower made the point about the development of trust with residents. 'It takes a long time to build up trust when [residents] meet something which is outside their normal experience', L. Flower, interview 16th October 2012.

¹⁰¹⁰ M. Ledworth, *Community Development: A Critical Approach*, Bristol, 2011, p.23.

¹⁰¹¹ S. Stopforth, 2010.

¹⁰¹² M. Taylor, 2003, p.114.

approach is not without concerns. Firstly, not all members of a partnership are equal. As Wilson suggests, 'while there is a certain plurality in the policy making process...these are rarely exchanges between equals'.¹⁰¹³ As Day points out in Chapter Two there are dangers of civil society becoming incorporated into the world of public agencies rather than representing the interests of its members, (Page 35). Secondly, a further concern is the complexity of partnerships (Figure 8.8) and a corresponding lack of accountability and transparency.¹⁰¹⁴ Thirdly, and most important for Neighbourhoods Together, is that the sustainability of the partnership depends not only on a shared objective but on the availability of funding. Initially Treneere was successful in attracting substantial sums from Sure Start and the Single Regeneration Fund but this was for a limited period only. The NRP money supported a four year programme, but there were difficulties in securing finance during its final two years. Following the transition from Treneere Together Partnership to Neighbourhoods Together the programme was supported by the partnership agencies finding the money from within their own budgets but these became increasingly under pressure and during 2012-13 could only continue with support from the Emily Bolitho Trust. Partnerships may be successful in bidding for additional funding but this is often short term and does not influence mainstream services or a re-allocation of mainstream resources.¹⁰¹⁵ Consequently when there is a need to reduce expenditure, projects which are seen as marginal are the first to be cut. There is also a related problem with obtaining funding in the voluntary sector as much of the energy of the senior management of Trelya is spent on preparing submissions to raise money.

Commentators on tackling community deprivation stress the importance of securing funding for voluntary organisations and that having the 'skills in being

¹⁰¹³ D. Wilson, 2003, p.335.

¹⁰¹⁴ G. Jones, and J. Stewart, 'Partnership Problems: October 10th' in Sir Michael Lyons and A. Crow, (eds.), *A Celebration of the 25 years Writing Partnership of George Jones and John Stewart*, Birmingham, 2004, p.57.

¹⁰¹⁵ S. Goss, 2001, p. 95.

able to put in good quality funding bids'¹⁰¹⁶ is a major problem for small organisations with limited resources. The lack of continuity in funding, the numerous and changing regeneration initiatives with different criteria to address deprivation and the attempts by public agencies to find resources explains why they have increasingly adopted a more prominent role in managing initiatives on the estate. We have seen how Sure Start commenced as a community led programme but because of changes in how it was administered and funded, the local authority took an increasingly predominant role so that the neighbourhood is no longer responsible for the delivery of services. Although the programme was originally:

envisaged as a process of community self-development, with the role of government being to facilitate this process...[I]n practice, however, Sure Start has been driven by governmental agendas, in particular relating to childcare and employability.¹⁰¹⁷

Similarly, with the transition from Treneere Together to the Neighbourhoods Together Partnership, the focus on the estate has been diluted as other areas vie for attention, resources are spread over a wider area and the Community Network takes an increasingly important role in their distribution. Despite the high level of involvement, the ultimate responsibility for programmes lies outside the neighbourhood as power resides in the agencies which fund them. This gradual erosion of neighbourhood involvement can be interpreted as an example of Gramscian hegemony where the subaltern demands are, for a time, acceded to by the hegemonic group. This achieves its support or acquiescence and may absorb and neutralise its leadership.¹⁰¹⁸ However, ultimately power is retained by Cornwall Council, PHA, and the Police service. Civil society on Treneere has little agency of its own other than that granted to it by the hegemonic network of organisations which interact with the estate.

We have also seen how Treneere is characterised by unemployment and low status jobs. Apart from initiatives like job clubs, further education training programmes and the work of Trelya with young people to encourage them to

¹⁰¹⁶ R. Macmillan, *Part of the picture: The voluntary and community sector across South Yorkshire*, Sheffield, 2006, p.7

¹⁰¹⁷ P. Somerville, 2011, p. 159.

¹⁰¹⁸ See the discussion on hegemony in Chapter Two, Page 34.

enter employment, partnerships have not addressed this issue. Yet the loss of working class employment is the principal reason for the decline of areas like Treneere. As Leander Flower says, 'employment is a huge issue'¹⁰¹⁹ by which she means not just unemployment but the quality of the employment on offer. Tiffany Coates makes the same point that a supply of reasonably well paid jobs would make the biggest difference to life on Treneere¹⁰²⁰ but this is beyond the capability of the agencies in the partnership to deliver and it is difficult to see how Willett's suggestion for generating human capital in the form of education and skills training¹⁰²¹ would help to address these weaknesses in the local economy other than to encourage people to move away. As Fletcher points out, the underlying problems of unemployment and under employment 'are primarily of a structural nature and are, therefore, external to the local communities where the effects are most acute...area-based approaches, whatever their achievements, are incapable of challenging the root causes of worklessness.'¹⁰²² Hence programmes like the Treneere Together Partnership inevitably tend to focus on the symptoms of neighbourhood malaise rather than address its underlying causes which are beyond their control.¹⁰²³

Conclusions

The Census and ONS data for Treneere confirm that it is one of the most deprived areas of Cornwall exhibiting related pathologies of poverty, worklessness, benefit dependency, ill health and educational underachievement. It fits the hegemonic discourse of a sink estate reinforced by the rhetoric differentiating between 'skivers' and 'strivers' or 'shirkers' and 'workers'. But while not minimising its problems, the estate is relatively small, it consists of well-built traditional housing, is located adjacent to pleasant countryside and it still retains, as its designers intended, the air of a garden estate. Its residents certainly do not believe the data reflects life on Treneere.

¹⁰¹⁹ T. Coates, interview 17th October 2012

¹⁰²⁰ L. Flower, interview 16th October 2012

¹⁰²¹ J. Willett, in P. Payton, (ed.), 2009, p.153.

¹⁰²² D.R. Fletcher, in J. Flint and D. Robinson, (eds.), 2008, p.112

¹⁰²³ J. Flint and D. Robinson, (eds.), 2008, p.265.

They acknowledge the estate has large numbers of unemployed, single parents and children on free school meals and that:

the statistics are true, people are finding it more and more difficult to live on a day to day basis but the statistics only paint a partial picture. Treneere is a strong community; you can have a strong community without any money.¹⁰²⁴

As Malcolm Williams points out, poverty and deprivation in Cornwall are not visible particularly when adjacent areas also exhibit similar characteristics. The underlying problem of the estate is the lack of well-paid permanent employment in West Cornwall which has not been addressed since structural changes in the local economy saw the decline of skilled and semiskilled jobs. The response of public agencies has been to target government promoted initiatives designed to alleviate social deprivation and couple this with joint working in coordinated programmes, initially centred on Treneere but eventually on estates across Penwith.

The Importance of Place

Despite the estate's place myth as a location for crime and anti-social behaviour which places it in the negative Penzance discourse, Treneere, has a very strong identity for its residents. It is where they feel comfortable and feel it 'as a great place to live'. However, although residents gain support from their allegiance to place, this can limit their ability to think beyond the confines of the estate and create a barrier to learning and opportunity. Young people in particular, are restricted in their horizons by what they know and for some this may be dominated by worklessness, family breakdown and criminality. Coupled with the importance of ethnicity as a marker of social recognition and esteem, it may be thought that this engenders an antagonism to the world outside the estate. But the ethnographic evidence suggests that such factors can contribute to positive relationships and in-group solidarity rather than hostility to outsiders. Rather, the reputation of the estate supported by the sink estate discourse tends to generate outsider hostility. The insider reaction is to defend it against outsider perceptions as illustrated

¹⁰²⁴ D. Sims, interview 19th June 2012.

by resident reaction to the latest IMD data which suggests that Treneere has regained its title as the most deprived part of Cornwall:

This is a fantastic community and we don't feel we are any worse off than any other areas in Penzance; the connotations of "most deprived" make children feel that they can't achieve as much which is very wrong.¹⁰²⁵

Civil Society

Ethnicity has been a major influence on the development of civil society on the estate but also important are the roles of women and the leadership shown by key residents. Having a Cornish background, kinship networks and a long period of residence place those with these attributes in positions of influence. Mainly women, they liaise with public agencies, run events and sit on committees. They are the organisers and doers and within them resides the social capital of the estate. Ethnographic evidence suggests that the mobilisation of civil society has been possible through a combination of Putman's bridging and Woolcock's linking social capital and that estate leaders have been able to build on this foundation to establish relationships with public agencies and seek professional expertise to help address some of the social issues on Treneere. However, the capacity of a neighbourhood to grow in this way is dependent on resources and a willingness of agencies to listen and share responsibility. Partnership working on Treneere has been more than tokenism but it is fragile because of the difficulty of continuing to secure funding. Despite the best of intentions, there is a propensity for agencies to control the partnership because of the need to secure finance, apply government legislation, impose their ruling practices and meet political criteria. However, none of the interventions by public agencies are likely to alleviate fundamental structural weakness in the local economy so although crime may reduce, improvements may be made to the local housing stock by PHA and the work of the Lescudjack children's centre address some of the family and societal issues on the estate, the principal reason for its poverty remains. Hence the mobilisation of social capital within civil society can only achieve limited results within a centrally imposed policy framework and cannot

¹⁰²⁵ *Cornishman*, 15th October 2015, 'Don't be put off by deprivation news'.

deal with the underlying structural issues responsible for poverty and social pathologies.

Concealed Ethnicity

The hypothesis that social housing estates contain clusters of residents who self-identify as Cornish is supported by the 2011 Census. Anecdotally there is also a belief that three quarters of Treneere families are Cornish,¹⁰²⁶ albeit this begs the question of definitions. Census returns suggest that Treneere residents are almost twice as likely to identify as Cornish as the overall population of Cornwall.¹⁰²⁷ Ethnographic evidence points to Cornishness on Treneere as central to personal identity, closely linked to kinship but extending beyond family relations to encompass wider social relations on the estate and, in some respects, has similarities with the Welsh *gwerin*.. However, for a number of reasons Cornish identity is concealed, partly because it is not recognised positively by the agencies working on the estate, partly because their ruling practices avoid any suggestion of partiality and partly because of a lack of confidence; a view that to be Cornish is to be part of an oppressed minority and subject to:

continuing disadvantages associated with peripherality, economic decline, inequalities between incomers and local people in the housing market and a resultant lowering of self-esteem.¹⁰²⁸

Hence ethnic identity, despite being a source of social capital can be associated with estatism, reluctance to change and limited opportunity, But for many, Cornishness, albeit concealed, is also for insiders a matter of individual pride, a source for neighbourhood cohesion and social capital as evidenced by strong kinship linkages and the prominence of individuals with a Cornish identity in the estate's civil society. Although the working class stream of Cornishness, defined by Kennedy as 'proper Cornish', has on Treneere been dissipated by the structural changes in the Cornish economy and a consequent decline in working class jobs, nevertheless it remains a resource for cohesion on the estate in the sense that it is reflected in civil society which

¹⁰²⁶ D. Sims, interview 19th June 2012.

¹⁰²⁷ See table 8.4.

¹⁰²⁸ S. Cemlyn et al, *Main Report*, Ch. 3, 2002, p.11.

is largely based on those residents with kinship ties, Cornish ancestry and a residual working class culture. In answer to the research question, it illustrates a very different way in which Cornishness is practiced based on familial ties and social capital rather than the revivalist historical reconstruction of the festivals and is a further example of the varied and complex ways in which ethnicity is expressed.

Despite exhibiting the characteristics of a deprived area, Treneere is not a sink estate. It does not fit the hegemonic discourse of a crime ridden, socially deprived and failed community. The capacity within the neighbourhood to organise, work with public agencies and develop a civil society based on leadership, kinship, and internally generated social capital has developed an environment where residents recognise it as a good place to live although outsiders may still be influenced by its former reputation. This does not imply a romantic view of life on Treneere. Despite the improvements there is still hardship, unemployment, poor health and family breakdown. Residents express views which are critical of their neighbours particularly regarding receipt of benefits

At the moment some people are better off on benefits. If it's more advantageous to sit at home and receive benefits than they are going to do it. We have to pay for everything but my sister doesn't work; her partner is disabled and they don't pay for anything. They're probably better off than we are.¹⁰²⁹

There must also be doubts whether improvements to life on Treneere will be sustained with the continuation of reductions in social welfare and housing allocation policies which are less localised, place less emphasis on neighbourhood cohesion and take less account of kinship networks. The threat to what has been achieved is that leadership is dependent on a few key players, the economy of Penwith is unlikely to generate sufficient wealth to address the issues of poverty and resources may not be available to continue the programmes which have helped Treneere so far. In this setting, ethnic identity is not an option to be assumed as a life-style choice but is a resource on which to draw to cope with living in poverty in twenty first century Cornwall.

¹⁰²⁹ Interview with Treneere resident

Chapter 9: Adopted Ethnicity or Privileging Place? Civil Society in Crisis: The Penzance Harbour Debate

For approximately twelve years between 2002 and 2014 the main topic which preoccupied Penzance and its civil society was the debate about the redevelopment of its harbour. As outlined in Chapter Six, a number of other issues also concerned the town during the first decade of the twenty-first century including the building of supermarkets, the perceived decline of its centre, the closure of the helicopter service to the Scilly Isles, the withdrawal of public services and their centralisation at Truro but nothing matched the passion roused by the proposals for the harbour. The debate, which at times broke into open conflict, mirrored the negative and positive Penzance discourses with supporters of the positive discourse who are comfortable with the town as it is arguing against the proposals suggesting that they would detract from the town's place image whereas the proponents saw them as helping to alleviate its moribund economy. .

The story of Penzance harbour is multifaceted, principally based around different perceptions of place articulated within its civil society, the role of local and national government, the behaviour of both local and national politicians all underlain by an enduring resistance to outside interference. The analysis of this setting, although focused on a specific part of Penzance also considers the town in a wider context embracing both national policies and Cornwall wide issues and exposes the complexity of decision making, the limitations of top-down policy making and the degree to which civil society can influence the political process. The principal sources of data are consultants' reports, the *Cornishman*, and interviews with both supporters of the harbour proposals including the chair of the Chamber of Commerce, Dick Cliffe and a member of Future Penzance, Nigel Pengelly, and opponents; John Maggs, the chair of the Friends of Penzance Harbour, Mike Sagar-Fenton, a local journalist, head of a local architectural practice, Keith Bell and the chair of the Sea Front forum, Hadrian Piggott. Local authority involvement was discussed in

interviews with the Penzance Town Clerk, Simon Glasson, and the Cornwall Councillor responsible for transportation Bert Biscoe.¹⁰³⁰

To make sense of a complicated narrative it has been divided into four phases which broadly follow the historical sequence of events. The first starts at the inception of the project in 2002 with the appointment of consultants to prepare options for developing the harbour. The second was a period between 2008 and 2010 of consultation and debate about possible solutions which lead to the granting of planning permission. The third phase between 2010 and 2012 involved unsuccessful efforts to secure funding which was followed by a fourth and final phase which attempted to salvage something from the failure of the original project. As the narrative develops four main themes are considered such as the process involved in selecting a scheme for the harbour, the reasons for opposition, the emergence of divisions within civil society and the political context for the debate. The Chapter concludes with an analysis of this setting in terms of civil society, identity with place and the influence and practice of ethnicity.

The harbour was briefly described in Chapter Six, (Pages 137-138) pointing out its disconnection with the town centre, its role as a working port and the unattractiveness of its environs in comparison with other coastal tourist centres in Cornwall. It consists of a number of elements, (Figure 9.1), some of which, such as the South Pier, are of considerable antiquity. To the visitor, the most prominent area is that for leisure craft adjacent to Wharf Road and enclosed by the Albert Pier which dries out at low tide. However, the most important part is the wet dock fronted by the Quay and enclosed by the North and South Piers which is controlled by gates providing a permanent deep water anchorage enabling it to accommodate larger draught vessels and the Isles of Scilly Steamship Company (IOSSC) ships (Figure 9.2). On the other side of the Quay, accessed by a swing bridge from the tidal harbour, is a ship

¹⁰³⁰ See Appendix One, list of interviewees.

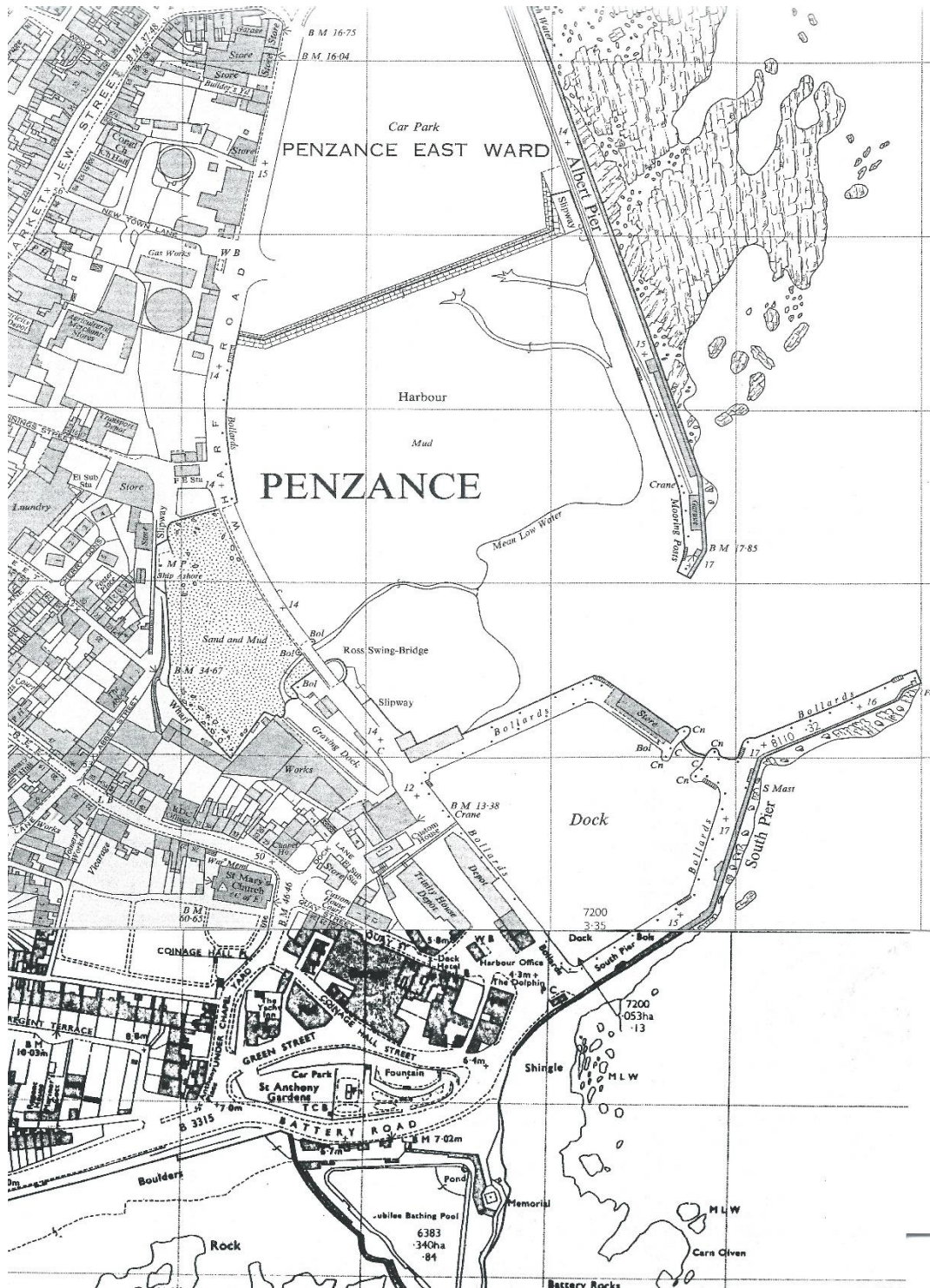


Fig. 9.1: Penzance Harbour Contains OS data © Crown copyright

repair facility consisting of a dry dock and surrounding workshops. The area surrounding the wet and dry docks is predominantly industrial, containing a number of commercial buildings associated with marine engineering located on a cramped site served by a narrow access road which bends sharply at the harbour entrance before reaching the Promenade. The Cornwall and Scilly

Urban Survey describes the area as, ‘exciting...but not necessarily always picturesque and certainly not quaint. The buildings are generally large and functional, free-standing sheds and warehouses of various dates and materials, interspersed with some smaller but no less interesting buildings...’¹⁰³¹ (Figure 9.3). Historically this industrial area extended along the length of Wharf Road as far as the railway station. Early twentieth century photographs of the frontage show a number of warehouses and a gas works which have been replaced gradually by a shopping centre and residential development but still leaving some sites undeveloped.



Figure 9.2: Penzance Harbour: The Wet Dock

R J P Harris

¹⁰³¹ N. Cahill and S. Russell, 2003, p.55.



Figure 9.3: Penzance Harbour side

R J P Harris

Phase I: 2002-8: The Inception of the Project; Establishment of the Route Partnership

In the early 2000s Penwith DC commissioned a number of coastal studies including one from Hyder Consulting Ltd. which in 2004 reported¹⁰³² on technical investigations of possible schemes within Mount's Bay including Penzance and Newlyn harbours, the Promenade and Penlee Quarry. At about the same time a collaborative body known as the Route Partnership was established with the aim of bringing together local authorities and key transport operators to develop a co-ordinated approach to freight and passenger transportation from the Scilly Isles to the mainland.¹⁰³³ The motivation for this initiative was a view that the IOSSC ships had a limited life and there were concerns about the continuing viability of the helicopter service from Penzance to St Mary's. The original Route Partnership members included Cornwall County Council, the Council of the Isles of Scilly, Penwith DC, the IOSSC operating both the sea link and aircraft from Lands' End airport, British International Helicopters Ltd., and the Duchy of Cornwall, the principal landowner on the Scillies. To coordinate the work of these bodies, the Route Partnership commissioned a study 'to develop a preferred plan for

¹⁰³² Hyder Consulting, *Penzance Harbour Option Review*, 2004(a) p.1-1

¹⁰³³ Hyder Consulting, *Isles of Scilly Link: Major Scheme Bid*, 2004(b) pp.1-2

addressing transport problems and opportunities and to subsequently prepare a Major Scheme bid submission to the Department of Transport' (DoT) to secure funding for the project'.¹⁰³⁴

The basic elements of the scheme involved replacing the two vessels which currently served the Islands, the Scillonian III and the Gry Maritha,¹⁰³⁵ with a larger combined freight and passenger ship. This would require the redevelopment of both the harbours at Penzance and St Marys on the Scillies to accommodate the larger ferry and enhanced passenger and freight handling facilities to handle approximately 80,000 passengers per annum.¹⁰³⁶ Originally the Route Partnership project was undertaken within the context of the Mounts Bay study but as it progressed, the proposals to redevelop Penzance harbour were seen as part of a wider scheme to improve the sea link with the Scilly Isles. Options for the redevelopment of Penzance harbour were published as part of the *Penzance Harbour Option Review*. Given the subsequent focus of the debate over the future of Penzance harbour, it is important to remember that the harbour proposals were always part of a wider scheme, the principal objective of which was to secure and improve transport links to the Scillies.

With the election of a Labour government in 1997, models of public policy making involving both public and private sectors such as the Route Partnership were very much encouraged, a similar approach to that adopted to address neighbourhood renewal discussed in the previous Chapter, (Pages 274-275). The move towards partnership working was accompanied by a new language of stakeholders, inclusiveness and consultation and was motivated by the increasing 'multiplication and fragmentation' of government functions

¹⁰³⁴ Hyder Consulting, 2004(b), p.1

¹⁰³⁵ The Scillonian III is a shallow draught bespoke ship designed to meet the operating requirements of the route, operating between March and October and is licensed to carry 435 passengers. The Gry Maritha is primarily a freight vessel with limited facilities for passengers sailing three days per week throughout the year.

¹⁰³⁶ Cornwall Council, Report to Cabinet, St Mary's and Penzance Harbours Improvements, November 27th 2013.

and the belief that participants can bring a range of skills and expertise often from the private and voluntary sectors.¹⁰³⁷



Figure 9.4: The Scillonian III

R J P Harris

Hence the Route Partnership membership comprised local authority, private sector and landowning interests. But despite the apparent opening up of the policy making process, partnerships have been criticised for increasing its complexity and obscuring lines of accountability. Partnerships may create an 'invisible element' in local governance and can 'be a means of concealing responsibility, indeed of evading it',¹⁰³⁸ and hence add to a democratic deficit 'in which non-elected bodies and self-selected representatives gain power at the expense of elected politicians'.¹⁰³⁹ In light of the subsequent history of the project, the omission of a mechanism for wider consultation beyond the Route Partnership members and the premature selection of alternative options for development created the conditions for future conflict.

¹⁰³⁷ M. Taylor, 2003, pp. 114-115.

¹⁰³⁸ G. Jones and J. Stewart in Sir Michael Lyons and A. Crow, (eds.), 2004, p.57.

¹⁰³⁹ V. Lowndes and C. Skelcher, 1998, p. 314.

The Development of Options

The Hyder Consulting report, building on a number of previous studies,¹⁰⁴⁰ identified a number of deficiencies which reduced the effectiveness of the harbour both as a commercial port and as a terminus for the Scilly link including:

- poor freight storage facilities;
- lack of space for the safe handling of freight operations;
- inadequate and cramped passenger handling facilities;
- difficulties of management and security because of the dispersal of facilities across the harbour area;
- the absence of an all-weather berth for large ships.¹⁰⁴¹

The report, after considering fourteen options for the future of the harbour costing between £5.2m and £57.6m, identified three for further study all of which focused on providing a new ferry terminal on reclaimed land either to the south or north of the dock area or to the south of the Lighthouse Pier (which is an extension of the South Pier; Figure 9.1) to address the problem of operating an enhanced ferry service from a restricted site.

The options were exhibited in Penzance and were also subject to a benefit-cost-ratio analysis, required by the DoT, which considered them in relation to the wider objective of improving the Scilly link.¹⁰⁴² From this process a preferred solution emerged to locate the ferry terminal to the south of the dock area on reclaimed land known as Battery Rocks but also included a South Pier extension and the placement of rock armour¹⁰⁴³ to protect the existing piers and prevent overtopping by waves during bad weather. Following the exhibition, a public consultation was held at St John's Hall in January 2005,

¹⁰⁴⁰ Previous reports by consultants included W.S. Atkins, *Penzance Harbour and Town Regeneration: Phase 1 Action Plan*, 2001 and Beckett Rankin Partnership, *Penzance Harbour Feasibility Study*, 2003.

¹⁰⁴¹ Hyder Consulting, 2004(b), pp. 1-1, 1-2.

¹⁰⁴² Halcrow Group Ltd, *Isles of Scilly Link Harbour Improvement Works: Penzance Harbour – Appraisal of Alternatives*, 2009, p.5.

¹⁰⁴³ Rock armour consists of large quantities of stone placed to break up the force of wave action on a shoreline and is criticised for its unsightly appearance.

the preferred option described as ‘the result of a wide ranging consultation with key stakeholders’.¹⁰⁴⁴

It was at this point that doubts began to be expressed about the direction the harbour proposals were taking and questions began to be raised about the benefits to Penzance of the whole concept behind the Route Partnership scheme. A letter from the former chair of the harbour users’ consultative committee suggested that the preferred solution would do nothing for Penzance and only benefit the Isles of Scilly holiday industry,¹⁰⁴⁵ a view reiterated by the Town Council at a meeting at the beginning of February 2005. However, ‘the Council pulled back from openly objecting to the scheme because it was better than nothing at all and if they objected they could lose it altogether’.¹⁰⁴⁶ So although the scheme had been in prospect for some time, there had been little public consultation on the criteria used to draw up and select the preferred option. Unidentified key stakeholders had been engaged in the process but the model of decision making used could best be described as decide-announce-defend, where Penzance opinion was being asked to rubber-stamp the one option on offer. This approach where there is an absence of public involvement in the initial stages of policy formation is almost guaranteed to generate opposition rather than support for a proposal.¹⁰⁴⁷ The 2005 exhibition was therefore seen as the presentation of a top-down *fait accompli* which at its inception had excluded key actors, where public engagement had been minimal¹⁰⁴⁸ and there had been no serious attempt to engender a sense of ownership by involving the locality or its civil society. However, since the preferred option was still very much in outline no organised opposition emerged at this stage.

¹⁰⁴⁴ *Cornishman*, January 13th 2005, ‘£10m harbour plan’s showcase’.

¹⁰⁴⁵ *Ibid*, January 20th 2005, letter from J. Mackie, ‘Plan for harbour misses the boat’.

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Ibid*, February 3rd 2005, ‘Anger at “short sighted” pier plans’.

¹⁰⁴⁷ K. Burningham, J. Barnett & D. Thrush, *The limitations of the NIMBY concept for understanding public engagement with renewable energy technologies: A literature review*, Manchester, <http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/research/beyond/nimbyism/>

¹⁰⁴⁸ C. Haggett, ‘“Planning and Persuasion”: Public Engagement in Renewable Energy Decision-making’, in P. Devine-Wright, (ed.) *Renewable Energy and the Public*, London, 2011, pp. 15-27.

These initial reactions are significant as they did not mention the environmental consequences for the place image of the harbour which later became a key issue for objectors. Rather they considered that the proposals failed to address its regeneration by, for example, excluding the possibility of a marina or other measures to promote Penzance as a tourist centre. The strategic importance of the Scilly link and its contribution to the local economy was secondary to the impact on Penzance in terms of attracting more leisure craft, an example of concerns for local issues which were to be repeated, albeit in different forms, by opponents of the scheme as the narrative progressed. Although there was common ground that there needed to be investment in the Scilly link, the initial criticism was that the proposed investment did nothing for Penzance. Several commentators point out that opposition to development considered by its promoters as contributing towards an important social benefit is often labelled as 'selfish local parochialism'¹⁰⁴⁹ and stigmatised as obstruction by a narrow minded group pursuing its own sectional interest.¹⁰⁵⁰ However, as discussed below, the objections to the harbour proposals were based largely on its impact on the place image of the town rather than personal interest.

The attitude of the Town Council also illustrates the dilemma throughout the narrative; that the ultimate decisions about the future of the Route Partnership would be taken outside Penzance as funding for the project depended on DoT and European Union support. Opposition, much of it resulting from a democratic deficit engendered by a lack of public involvement at its inception, could mean that this money would disappear so there was always this threat behind the negotiations to accept what was on offer. But at this point no organised opposition had emerged from within Penzance civil society. Accordingly, the preferred option proceeded through a number of stages which included lodging a harbour revision order (HRO) in September 2005 and it receiving conditional funding approval from the DoT in May 2007. In

¹⁰⁴⁹ R. W. Lake, 'Rethinking NIMBY', *Journal of the American Planning Association* Vol. 59 (1) 1993, pp. 87-92.

¹⁰⁵⁰ M. Wolsink, 'Near-shore wind power-protected seascapes, environmentalist's attitudes and the technocratic planning perspective' *Land Use Policy* 27, 2010, pp. 195-203.

March 2008 Birse Coastal was appointed by the Route Partnership to develop detailed harbour designs, obtain necessary consents for the work and prepare a planning application.

Phase II: Consultation and Opposition 2008-2010

The period between 2005 and 2008 is characterised by working up the preferred option into a firm scheme but also a gradual mobilisation of opposition to the proposed development once its details became clearer. To attempt to catalogue a detailed history of all the twists and turns of the saga would be both tedious and outside the scope of this research. Nevertheless, to make sense of the key relationships and the causes of the crisis within civil society, an outline of the sequence of the main events during the period and the role of the participating actors is necessary to explain particular interactions, highlight the positions taken by the main participants and to illustrate how different perceptions of identity and place influenced the debate.

At the end of September 2008 approximately three hundred residents attended a public consultation on the details of the preferred Route Partnership option at which a number of alternative ideas emerged. The Penzance Harbour Users Association argued for a 300 berth marina, a new pier, apartments and a water sports and conference centre. Charlie Cartwright, a former director of the IOSSC proposed replacing the Scillonian with a smaller, faster passenger vessel and a freight depot at Long Rock to the east of Penzance which would reduce road congestion at the port and obviate the need for land reclamation. The Civic Society called for a master plan to include the whole of the sea front from Chyandour to the Promenade and move the freight depot out of town. The local MP, Andrew George, perhaps sensing the degree of opposition the proposals had generated, asked for wider consultation and the Town Council considered itself 'insulted' at its lack of involvement in the project.¹⁰⁵¹ The principal objections were summarised as a loss of amenity caused by the increased traffic generated and the inappropriateness of the design of the freight and passenger

¹⁰⁵¹ *Cornishman*, October 2nd 2008.

terminals, the loss of a viewpoint across Mount's Bay, the lack of alternatives to the preferred scheme and the inadequacy of the consultation process.¹⁰⁵²

Many objections reflected an identity with place stressing a personal connection with the harbour and its importance to the place image of Penzance:

I first got involved as someone who thought the harbour proposal was insensitive to the fabric of the town. I felt this on a personal level as I swim off the small beach [which would have been largely built over; see below] and I enjoyed the ancient granite of the South Quay and the setting of that site. This is very important to me. I live here; it's two or three minutes' walk away from where I live; it's a daily or weekly experience. So when plans were put forward by Cornwall Council for consultation I was upset. My reaction was the same as many people...what was being proposed was a very short sighted scheme that wasn't going to serve Penzance well in the future.¹⁰⁵³

The arguments in favour of the scheme advanced by the Route Partnership were essentially technical, based on the requirements of a larger boat, which would require dredging and harbour modifications to accommodate it and enhanced passenger and freight handling facilities within the harbour itself. However, many of the objectors, particularly the Civic Society, questioned the assumptions behind the proposed solution because of its impact on the harbour as a place which they regarded as central to the identity of Penzance. No one challenged the need for a secure and stable maritime link to the Scillies. In addition, few, if any, of the objectors were personally affected in terms of their property or business, 'they were concerned about the historic fabric and its heritage but it wasn't about their view being spoilt'.¹⁰⁵⁴ As Feldman and Turner point out, 'partiality to place is not itself a form of selfishness, and it need not mean that the person's motivation for caring about the place is self-interest'.¹⁰⁵⁵ But the consultation process did not address the concern with place. Instead it marshalled arguments to demonstrate that other solutions which would have been environmentally more acceptable were either technically inferior or more expensive to operate,

¹⁰⁵² *Cornishman*, November 13th 2008.

¹⁰⁵³ H. Piggott, interview 8th December 2015.

¹⁰⁵⁴ J. Maggs, interview 15th June 2015.

¹⁰⁵⁵ S. Feldman and D. Turner, 'Why not NIMBY', *Ethics, Policy and Environment*, Vol. 13, No 3, 2010, pp. 251-266, p. 256.

echoing Wolsink's criticism of top-down technocratic approaches to planning.¹⁰⁵⁶ As Goss points out, in formal consultation processes, personal experience, memories or illustrative examples are often discounted whereas 'professionals' often 'fail because of an inability to empathise or to be imaginative' since their training requires making quantitative and evidence-based judgements.¹⁰⁵⁷ In other words, the relations of ruling adopted by the organisations promoting the project, which determined how the process was conducted, did not allow the concerns of the objectors to be addressed. In the presentation of proposals there is a divergence about what counts as knowledge and, as the Penzance Harbour case illustrates, more statistics and more 'hard' analysis will not convince a community which does not see this as evidence.

At this stage the Chamber of Commerce was a lone voice in support of the proposed scheme which it considered would safeguard jobs and the local tourist industry and warned about the possible loss of the Scilly link if the project did not go ahead.¹⁰⁵⁸ Although he was later to adopt an extremely antagonistic position towards the project, at this stage the *Cornishman's* columnist 'Old Mike' summarised the uncertainty caused by this first serious attempt at public consultation and reiterated the problem that we saw in Chapter Six, (Pages 155-158), of Penzance civil society failing to reconcile its two discourses:

Penzance has never whole heartedly backed any of the [proposed harbour] schemes. They haven't foundered for lack of funds or lack of practicality...but because Penzance can never make up its mind and speak with one voice...But that would mean being proactive instead of waiting for others to come up with something most of us don't like.¹⁰⁵⁹

What emerged early on in the opposition to the proposals and which was the basis of many objections to harbour redevelopment was the importance of the harbour to the place identity of Penzance. This is summed up by a correspondent in the *Cornishman* as:

¹⁰⁵⁶ M. Wolsink, 2010, p. 202.

¹⁰⁵⁷ S. Goss, 2001, pp. 191-3

¹⁰⁵⁸ *Cornishman*, December 4th 2008, 'Supporters vow to back harbour plan'.

¹⁰⁵⁹ *Ibid*, October 23rd 2008, 'Make up your mind and speak with one voice.'

Historically, Penzance owes its existence to the harbour. It possesses both economic and sentimental power. The huge blocks of granite that, over the centuries, have protected the vessels and trade have been listed for historical and architectural interest for a very good reason...The harbour wall is to Penzance as the Euston Arch was to London.¹⁰⁶⁰

Similarly, John Maggs who became a leader of much of the opposition to the harbour proposals states that the motivation was to protect Penzance as a place and the characteristics which give it its distinctiveness:

the location of the development was at the heart of where Penzance was founded; the holy headland...the pier and the harbour are what make Penzance what it is.¹⁰⁶¹

This letter and quotation illustrate some of the recurring themes of opponents of the harbour proposals; a desire for things to remain as they are (a resistance to time-space compression), an expectation that change will make things worse,¹⁰⁶² an appeal to heritage to support the status quo,¹⁰⁶³ and a belief that a sense of place is determined by iconographic physical forms¹⁰⁶⁴. These reservations are reflected in a summary of the results of the September consultation which reported that of the 267 completed feedback forms 57% objected to the proposals, 28% had concerns with 9% in support.¹⁰⁶⁵

The objections (perhaps better described as a furore) which emerged from this second consultation caused the Route Partnership to hold a third consultation in January 2009 providing more detailed information about the preferred option including the proposed design. It was considered by the promoters that the reason for the mounting opposition was a lack of understanding and misinformation disseminated about the scheme. The notice for the exhibition outlined the importance of the proposals as the 'loss of the service would have consequences for the economy of Penzance', there had been confusion over what is being proposed and that there would be a

¹⁰⁶⁰ *Cornishman*, letter, A. Bell, October 23rd 2008.

¹⁰⁶¹ J. Maggs, interview, 15th June 2015.

¹⁰⁶² D. Hayden, 1997

¹⁰⁶³ S. Lash and J. Urry, 2002

¹⁰⁶⁴ R.C. Stedman, 2003

¹⁰⁶⁵ Route partnership, *Isles of Scilly Link, Penzance & St Mary's Harbours Improvements*, 2008.

'team available to answer questions'.¹⁰⁶⁶ As suggested by Devine- Wright, the reason for opposition to development is often believed by the perpetrators to be based on an ignorance of the facts which can be resolved by further explanation.¹⁰⁶⁷ But opposition is often highly informed¹⁰⁶⁸ and, as already pointed out by Goss, the production of more 'facts' and analysis is likely to fail to resolve the issue if the consultation process is perceived to be unfair and does not address the reasons for opposition.

So if the Route Partnership thought that its more detailed explanation would allay fears about the development, they were to be disappointed. The third consultation seems to have exacerbated resistance to the proposed development. The *Cornishman* reported that of those attending, 71% supported the need for harbour regeneration but 50% disapproved of the proposed design and the location of the freight and passenger terminals.¹⁰⁶⁹ There were complaints about how the consultation was conducted citing a lack of alternatives, the issuing of confusing questionnaires and the bias of the questions asked.¹⁰⁷⁰ Claims and counter claims began to be made by supporters and opponents of the proposals. The Chamber of Commerce chairman suggested that protestors outside the venue opposing the scheme, prevented people from visiting the exhibition, a claim denied by 'Old Mike' (now firmly in the objectors' camp) as protestors were 'a friendly bunch' but 'were threatened with the police' by the organisers.¹⁰⁷¹ The MP continued to express concern that the scheme was being rushed through, asked for more time to consider the issues and was reported as meeting the Friends of Penzance Harbour (FofPZh),¹⁰⁷² which had emerged under the leadership of John Maggs as the main focus of opposition. At the same time there was a statement by Tim Wood, the County Council's project director that the DoT would withdraw funding if the scheme was unsupported.¹⁰⁷³

¹⁰⁶⁶ *Cornishman*, January 6th 2009.

¹⁰⁶⁷ P. Devine-Wright, 2009.

¹⁰⁶⁸ P. Devine-Wright, *ibid*, p.431. For example C. Cartwright, former chief executive of the IOSSC was a major objector.

¹⁰⁶⁹ *Cornishman*, January 29th 2009, 'Opinions still divided over harbour plans'.

¹⁰⁷⁰ *Ibid*, February 5th 2009, 'Harbour campaigners in official complaint'.

¹⁰⁷¹ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁷² *Ibid*, March 5th 2009, 'MP asks developers to delay for harbour plan "reflection"'.
¹⁰⁷³ *Ibid*, February 19th 2009.

In February 2009 the *Cornishman* expressed exasperation at the way the consultation had been handled¹⁰⁷⁴ echoing the propensity of the decision making process itself to generate opposition.¹⁰⁷⁵ Its comment column, under the headline 'People have a right to know' summarised the conflict and uncertainty about the project at this stage by stating that:

- assurances are needed that funding for the project will not disappear;
- consultation has revealed that many are not in favour of the Route Partnership proposals;
- the FofPZh ideas should be considered;
- the Route Partnership's refusal to agree to Andrew George chairing a public meeting is regrettable.¹⁰⁷⁶

The Development of Further Options and the Submission of a Planning Application

Despite this level of opposition, a planning application for the harbour work based on the Route Partnership option was submitted in March 2009 seeking listed building consent (as the South Pier was of historic importance¹⁰⁷⁷) and conservation area approval for the construction and layout of new facilities. At the same time 7,000 'Object Now' leaflets were distributed by the FofPZh. At the beginning of April the *Cornishman* reported that a large number of objections had been received and the volume was such that the deadline for submission had been extended.¹⁰⁷⁸ By mid-May, 700 letters of objection had been submitted¹⁰⁷⁹ and in the light of this response and the organised opposition to the project, Cornwall Council withdrew the application.

¹⁰⁷⁴ The *Cornishman* adopted a neutral position between the arguments for and against the harbour proposals. Its stance, as the paper for Scilly as well as West Penwith, was to achieve a viable link between the Islands and the mainland. It therefore promoted a 'Save Our Sea Link' campaign the aim of which was to encourage the various actors to come together to achieve a compromise solution.

¹⁰⁷⁵ K. Burningham, J. Barnett & D. Thrush, 2006, p.9.

¹⁰⁷⁶ *Cornishman*, February 5th 2009.

¹⁰⁷⁷ The pier was a grade II listed building resulting in English Heritage being a consultee on the application.

¹⁰⁷⁸ *Cornishman*, March 19th and April 2nd 2009, 'Hundreds objecting to harbour proposals.'

¹⁰⁷⁹ *Ibid*, May 21st 2009.

In the face of this degree of opposition the Route Partnership extended the consultation process by agreeing to consider three options. Following the reaction to the planning application, Andrew George negotiated a compromise between the Route Partnership and the FofPZh which involved examining two alternative proposals to the preferred option, one based on an out of town freight facility at Long Rock industrial estate plus the reuse of existing harbour side facilities for passengers and a second which made use of existing buildings in the vicinity of the harbour for both passengers and freight.¹⁰⁸⁰

These three options were labelled:

- A – Route Partnership Proposal with Reclamation (Figure 9.5);
- B – Trinity House and Waterside Meadery (reuse of existing buildings);
- C – Out of Town Freight Facility and Waterside Meadery (the FofPZh option, Figure 9.6);¹⁰⁸¹

which will be described by their initials in the subsequent narrative. The work was to be carried out by a further set of consultants, the Halcrow Group and Birse Coastal. Although the *Cornishman* hailed this as a U-turn by the Route Partnership and that the decision to examine more options signified ‘a glimmer of hope that the Route Partnership is finally listening’, the FofPZh considered that the scope of the additional work was too narrow as, for example, it was not considering the type of vessel to be used.¹⁰⁸² The report from Halcrow reporting in August 2009 concluded that although the costs of constructing the three options were comparable and that all three ‘are workable solutions to the requirement to upgrade the facilities at Penzance’, the operational costs of Options B and C were higher and hence it recommended ‘the continued adoption of Option A, due to the lower ongoing operational costs and the greater functionality of the single site solution’.¹⁰⁸³ In other words the relations of ruling for the project determined by the Route Partnership did not permit environmental considerations to be taken into consideration as the consultants were not asked to consider the impact of

¹⁰⁸⁰ Halcrow Group Ltd, 2009, p.6.

¹⁰⁸¹ Ibid, pp.8-12.

¹⁰⁸² *Cornishman*, May 21st 2009, ‘Drastic U-turn for harbour development’.

¹⁰⁸³ Halcrow Group Ltd, ibid, p.30.

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*Figure 9.5: Penzance Harbour Option A: Halcrow Group Ltd.
The green area shows proposed reclaimed land, the brown the location of rock armour and the yellow the area to be dredged.*

This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons

*Figure 9.6: Option C: Halcrow Group Ltd.
Showing the location of the freight depot at Long Rock.*

each of the schemes on Penzance as a whole. On the basis of this advice, Cornwall Council decided not to pursue further Options B or C and to resubmit the planning application for Option A which was considered by the Council's Strategic Planning Committee at a meeting in St John's Hall on 14th December. The application was refused but this decision was referred by the Council's cabinet¹⁰⁸⁴ back to the Committee in January 2010 for reconsideration.¹⁰⁸⁵ On 8th March 2010 the Strategic Planning committee, reversed its decision and approved the application for listed building consent. Prior to the meeting, supporters for Option A organised a petition in favour of the scheme; the *Cornishman* noting the sudden emergence of support for Option A by the 'silent majority' by commenting that:

as the campaign groups on either side multiplied, so did the divisions in the community. The attacks became personal and the campaign became all about the numbers. And, in the end, the town has been left wondering why all this had to happen, why it had to be divided in this way.¹⁰⁸⁶

The Policy Making Context

At this point in the narrative it is helpful to reflect on the relationships between the principal actors. There were three levels of governance connected with the project. The national government was involved from its inception in the shape of the DoT and the European Union as sources of funding. The County Council was the responsible authority for strategic transportation. Penwith DC owned the harbour. In addition a number of organised groups emerged from within civil society to either support or oppose the project. The MP was involved with all three levels of governance together with the groups opposing the development.

During this period there were major political, personnel and organisational changes. In April 2009 there was a reorganisation of local government in Cornwall with the creation of a unitary authority. This meant that Penwith DC ceased to exist and the ownership of the harbour transferred to Cornwall Council. It also changed the dynamic of the Route Partnership with the

¹⁰⁸⁴ Consisting of senior councillors with executive authority.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Minutes of the Route Partnership – Political Sub Group, 26th January 2010, No. 3a ii.

¹⁰⁸⁶ *Cornishman*, March 11th 2010, Comment, 'Time to end the divisions which marred the debate.'

Unitary Authority taking on a more prominent role having responsibility both for strategic transport and also the ownership and operational management of the Penzance end of the Scilly link. The other change was political with the Liberal Democrat/Independent coalition of the former County Council replaced by the Conservative/Independent administration of the Unitary Authority. This meant that Andrew George as a Liberal Democrat appeared to be less reluctant to criticise the Conservative led Council which in turn took a more aggressive stance to the process for developing the Route Partnership and was much less inclined to reach a compromise with the MP. Certain personalities, particularly the leader, Alec Robinson and Graeme Hicks, the Cabinet member for Highways and Transportation Planning, were increasingly robust in their reaction to opposition to the Route Partnership proposals:

What was frustrating was that so much of the project was unnecessary but we were constantly being told that there were no alternatives.¹⁰⁸⁷

The Town Council, which at this stage had not played a major role except as a consultee, maintained its muted criticism of the preferred option as it continued to be fearful of the possible withdrawal of funding and was acutely aware of the divisions appearing in Penzance civil society.

In the various arguments about the harbour it was largely forgotten that with the disappearance of Penwith DC, Cornwall Council were its owners and had a responsibility to ensure that there should be an effective and sustainable link with Scilly. Therefore it had a duty to take a wider view than simply focus on Penzance. However, it is difficult to dispute the *Cornishman's* editorial that the new Conservative administration adopted an aggressive and uncompromising position promoting Option A which intensified as the project progressed. But, as seen in Chapter Six, (Pages149-151), what was also a factor in the antagonism towards the Council was the loss of status perceived by Penzance as a result of the creation of the unitary authority. The harbour was *the* quintessential example of an issue which demonstrated its impotence and loss of influence over its future development. Hence as trust in the Route Partnership eroded, a position was reached where there was determined

¹⁰⁸⁷ K. Bell, interview 8th December 2015.

opposition to any proposal by Cornwall Council whatever its merits; the FofPZh accusing the strategic planning committee and supporters of Option A as being ‘persuaded by a tissue of misleading information, threats and false promises’.¹⁰⁸⁸

Divisions within Civil Society

At this stage the opposition had become organised under the banner of the FofPZh. John Maggs was described as a ‘campaigner and marine engineer’ with the objective of ‘stopping the Route Partnership plan’.¹⁰⁸⁹ They described themselves as a ‘group of concerned Penzance residents who came together in the aftermath of the September 2008 “pre-planning” exhibition to help organise opposition to the Route Partnership scheme’. They met regularly to discuss developments and plan activities with a general invitation for all to attend meetings.¹⁰⁹⁰ It was not formally constituted and its fifteen members were self-selected rather than representing other organisations.¹⁰⁹¹ They financed the cost of publicity material and the hire of premises for public meetings from their own resources. Its influence ‘came from our ability to understand public feeling’.¹⁰⁹² The ten principles which guided the group’s activities included protecting the character and heritage of the harbour and sea front and working towards regenerating the harbour ‘in a way which respects the old and sympathetically develops the new’.¹⁰⁹³ However, they also attempted to address what they regarded as the deficits in the decision making process by including *inter alia* aspirations to challenge public officials and consultants, to ensure that wherever possible decisions are taken locally and that the democratic process in Cornwall is honoured in the letter and spirit. The group cleverly exploited the weaknesses in the Route Partnership’s case, particularly questioning the need for one larger ship to replace the existing two, therefore challenging the case for extensive harbour alterations to accommodate it. It was also able to expose the flaws in the

¹⁰⁸⁸ www.friendsofpzharbour.org 9th March 2010, accessed 30th March 2010.

¹⁰⁸⁹ *Cornishman*, January 2009 15th ‘Harbour campaigners leaflet effort’.

¹⁰⁹⁰ www.friendsofpzharbour.org, accessed November 21st 2009

¹⁰⁹¹ J. Maggs, interview 15th June 2015

¹⁰⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹³ Friends of Penzance Harbour, *What we stand for*, February 2010, www.friendsofpzharbour.org, accessed 15th September, 2013.

attempts to promote Falmouth as an alternative to Penzance hence undermining the Route Partnership's credibility. The FofPZh was careful not to oppose the modernisation of the Scilly link stating that it recognised its importance but believed that the facilities could be improved 'in a manner that is less harmful to the environment and heritage assets of the town and that does not put the long-term economic wellbeing of Penzance at risk'.¹⁰⁹⁴ But its approach was not endorsed by all who opposed the proposals. Some of the objectors who were to later form the Sea Front Forum (see below) saw the FofPZh as essentially a negative protest group which did not have a positive vision about the harbour and sea front:

...for me straight forward public protest was not going to be the answer. What we needed to do was to make an effort by the community or part of the community to come up with alternative proposals to show a better way forward both for short term gain and long term promise.¹⁰⁹⁵

Also in opposition to Option A was Charlie Cartwright, formerly Chief Executive of the IOSSC, an ally of the FofPZh, who argued against one large ship and for the replacement of the existing vessels with one dedicated for freight and a second, a fast and more comfortable passenger ferry, therefore obviating the need to make major changes to the harbour. His ideas which were mainly technical were evaluated by L V Shipping Ltd. as part of the 2009 Halcrow appraisal of alternative options. However, although they were considered to have merit, the proposals were rejected, since the evaluation brief was restricted to one vessel rather than two,¹⁰⁹⁶ a further example of the refusal to consider alternatives outside the Route Partnership's relations of ruling. He continued to lobby strongly for a two ship solution.

A more longstanding organisation, the Penzance Civic Society also opposed Option A. Its chairman and town Councillor, John Moreland made its position clear at a consultation meeting prior to the initial rejection of the planning application in December 2009:

All our comments seem to have been ignored. We support the link 100% but we feel that alternatives have not been looked at. The planning process has

¹⁰⁹⁴ www.friendsofpzharbour.org, accessed November 21st 2009.

¹⁰⁹⁵ H. Piggott, interview 8th December 2015.

¹⁰⁹⁶ L V Shipping Ltd, *Isles of Scilly Project, Operational Options Assessment, Overall Summary*, 2009.

been a travesty and a con. This is the most attractive area of Penzance and that's why we're so concerned.¹⁰⁹⁷

The Society continued to maintain its opposition as the project developed. The Penzance Harbour Users Development Association although principally concerned with the leisure use of the harbour also opposed Option A and produced its own ambitious plans for a major expansion of the harbour area to include a 300 berth marina, plus water sports centre as well as a relocated ferry terminal at an estimated cost of £26m.¹⁰⁹⁸ But as the narrative progressed, the FofPZh became increasingly well organised and eventually became the umbrella organisation for much of the opposition to the harbour proposals.¹⁰⁹⁹

Support for Option A was based around those who wished to counter the negative Penzance discourse and who were fearful of the consequences if the Scilly link was not improved or failed altogether. The Chamber of Commerce representing local businesses were the main supporters, their combative chairman, Mike Waters, claiming that 'failure to approve the application could result in the loss of 500 jobs in Penzance in those business sectors that rely on the link; additionally an estimated £2.5m would be lost to the local economy' and warning that there was a danger that funding for the project would be withdrawn.¹¹⁰⁰ Throughout its history the Chamber continued to lobby strongly for the project arguing the case for investment in Penzance and opposing what it regarded as the Nimby attitude of the objectors to Option A..

But a number of other supporters emerged during the process, the most notable being the True Friends of Penzance and the Isles of Scilly who believed that Option A was an acceptable solution, that a decision not to proceed with the project was equally damaging for both Penzance and Scilly and that the debate had been overly influenced by objections from a highly

¹⁰⁹⁷ *Cornishman*, December 17th 2009, 'Objectors make their feelings clearly known at hard-hitting public meeting'.

¹⁰⁹⁸ *Ibid*, September 30th 2010, 'Harbour users put forward alternative to "flawed" plans'.

¹⁰⁹⁹ J. Maggs, interview 15th June 2015

¹¹⁰⁰ *Cornishman*, January 14th 2010, 'We must secure historic link with people of Scilly,

vocal minority.¹¹⁰¹ The True Friends were supported by the Chamber of Commerce, Penzance and District Tourism Association and A Future for Penzance.¹¹⁰² A list of contacts was published in the *Cornishman* along with an invitation to register support.

The various protagonists having already established web sites extended their on-line profile by the use of social media to support their respective positions. In mid-February the *Cornishman* reported that A Future for Penzance Facebook page, campaigning 'for the future prosperity of the town and against those trying to resist change' had attracted more than 3,000 supporters in a week which demonstrated that Penzance was not united against Option A.¹¹⁰³ The FofPZh countered by claiming that this was 'only an indicator of interest in the issue locally and not people's views one way or the other... that the number of active contributors to the site is very small' and there was only a passing interest in the subject.¹¹⁰⁴ But given the level of antagonism both reported at the time and remembered by those who took part,¹¹⁰⁵ it is difficult to substantiate John Magg's claim that, with the exception of the Chamber of Commerce, all the main actors such as local councillors, the Town Council and the political parties supported the FofPZh position.¹¹⁰⁶

The Intervention of Andrew George¹¹⁰⁷

The local MP had been involved throughout the process of selecting Option A and preparing the planning application, calling public meetings to discuss the progress of the project and, aware of the controversy, asking for more time to consider further options. He was an important influence in seeking a solution. It was largely thanks to his intervention that the Halcrow report was commissioned in spring 2009. But there were different interpretations of his

¹¹⁰¹ <http://www.truefriends.org.uk> accessed 30th March 2011.

¹¹⁰² See Chapter Six, Page 151 for further discussion on A Future for Penzance

¹¹⁰³ *Cornishman*, February 18th 2010, 'More than 3,000 back "Option A" plan online'

¹¹⁰⁴ [http:// www.friendsofpenzanceharbour.org.blog](http://www.friendsofpenzanceharbour.org.blog) 7th March 2010, accessed 30th March 2010

¹¹⁰⁵ S. Glasson, interview, 15 June 2015.

¹¹⁰⁶ J. Maggs, interview, 15th June 2015

¹¹⁰⁷ Unfortunately, after several attempts, it was not possible to arrange an interview with Andrew George who lost his seat in 2015. This section is based therefore on other interviews, published correspondence and newspaper reports.

role in balancing competing interests and managing the political process. The FofPZh did not feel that he initially supported its position but as the process developed he came to believe that there were better solutions than Option A:

It didn't seem that it felt that he was a supporter but at the same time he was fair...and provided opportunities to bring people together and discuss the issues. This was hugely helpful. He was trying to manage the politics of the situation.¹¹⁰⁸

Bert Biscoe, a Cornwall Councillor who later was to play a key role in finding a compromise, saw the role of the MP differently. His view is that an MP should not become involved in local politics and 'the dispute wasn't for Andrew to sort out; it was for local politicians to sort out and we did eventually'.¹¹⁰⁹

As the opposition towards Option A grew, the MP was believed to have encouraged the formation of yet another group, the Penzance Business Network which started to prepare alternative proposals for the harbour known as Option Penzance (Option PZ). It was accused by its opponents as claiming to be more representative of the town's business interests than the Chamber of Commerce, that it was 'a creation of the Liberal Democrat Party [and] comprises five active members and refuses membership to new applicants'.¹¹¹⁰ Those involved with the Business Network deny that it was associated with Andrew George:

Andrew was never part of the Penzance Business network. As the MP he was completely independent. He certainly had a great interest in the harbour. He saw that the issue was being dealt with in a heavy handed way and that local voices were being drowned out by the local authority irrespective of what those voices were saying,¹¹¹¹

and that its members were a few volunteers with no political affiliation as: 'in a small town like this the number of people who actively commit themselves to put in serious time is very, very small'.¹¹¹²

¹¹⁰⁸ J. Maggs, interview, 15th June 2015

¹¹⁰⁹ B. Biscoe, interview 17th June 2015.

¹¹¹⁰ *Cornishman*, June 16th 2011, letter from Charlie Cartwright, 'Can-do attitude needed to sort out the islands.'

¹¹¹¹ K. Bell, interview 8th December 2015.

¹¹¹² H. Piggott, interview 8th December 2015.

Option PZ did not involve reclaiming land in the Battery Rocks area but proposed locating a passenger terminal to the north of the Quay designed to open the harbour to the public, a 50 berth marina and concentrating engineering activities on the North Pier. Significantly it did not involve an out of town freight handling facility. However the proposals were, in outline and needed to be worked up in more detail. Its promoters recognised their limitations but explain that they received support from the MP as:

Andrew felt the injustice (strong word) of the scheme being foisted on the town and Option PZ showed that there was an alternative when they said there wasn't. We did Option PZ voluntarily: we had absolutely no money, we did it off our own bat without any support from anybody. We came up with proposals, which might have been in some respects flawed, which cost us nothing as opposed to the £5m spent on the harbour study.¹¹¹³

The Chamber of Commerce saw the Business Network as an attempt to weaken its claim to speak for the economic and business case supporting Option A¹¹¹⁴ and the insertion of another option at such a late stage in the planning process as 'a blatant last-ditch attempt to scupper Option A' and a cobbled together scheme which lacked support from funders or the Council or Whitehall.¹¹¹⁵ The Council of the Isles of Scilly regarded it as a political manoeuvre on the part of the MP to interfere with the process of considering Option A.¹¹¹⁶ But the strongest reaction was from the Cornwall Council which reacted with fury to the intervention. In a letter to the MP, the leader, Alex Robinson, accused him of:

trying to undermine the hard work the Council has done to retain the sea link in Penzance...you continue in misleading the public and unrealistically raising expectations... By promoting undeveloped ideas to "scupper Option A" you are dividing the Penzance community and running the risk that Penzance will lose funding support.¹¹¹⁷

In response George accused Robinson of quoting selectively the hyperbole from A Future for Penzance campaign to support the Council's case and

¹¹¹³ Keith Bell, interview 8th December 2015

¹¹¹⁴ D. Cliffe, interview 9th March 2012

¹¹¹⁵ S. Glasson, interview 15th June 2015

¹¹¹⁶ The Scilly Isles are part of George's constituency.

¹¹¹⁷ Letter from Alec Robinson to Andrew George March 3rd 2010, <http://pzbnetwork.com/in-the-press/113-andrew-george-reply-alec-robinson.html>

urged a 'change of direction from the disastrous course on which you are currently heading'.¹¹¹⁸

Why did the MP promote an alternative at such a late stage in the planning process? Until this point he had appeared to be ambivalent to the Route Partnership proposals, asking for more time to consider alternatives but not directly opposing Option A and also not openly supporting Option C. He initially played the role of mediator between the opposing views, organising public meetings, asking questions about the Route Partnership proposals and requiring more information. As the local MP he was also the link with the DoT and Transport Minister giving frequent assurances about the security of funding for the project.¹¹¹⁹ But as the opposition to Option A grew he became much more critical of the Route Partnership and its failure to consult more widely and insist that there were no alternatives. It is possible that, given the turmoil caused by the harbour debate, he considered that Option PZ, as a compromise, would be more acceptable to a wider spectrum of interests than Option A. It is also possible that he believed in principle that Option A was not an acceptable solution since he considered it another example of the pressures for inappropriate development in Cornwall. As a long standing opponent of the impact of second homes and holiday lets on the Cornish housing market, an advocate for sustainable planning policies and a concern for the impact of population growth¹¹²⁰ this would be consistent with his previous position. Lastly, there were clearly underlying political reasons why he continued to oppose the project as in his reply to Alec Robinson he 'believes the project is a vehicle for party political advantage' and that 'the Councils have taken their eye off the main ball which is to deliver the project and not lose the funding'.¹¹²¹

¹¹¹⁸ Letter from Andrew George to Alec Robinson, *ibid.*

¹¹¹⁹ For example, *Cornishman* April 4th 2011, 'Cash is still available for sea link.'

¹¹²⁰ See B. Deacon, A. George, and R. Perry, *Cornwall at the Crossroads?* Redruth, 1988.

¹¹²¹ Letter from Andrew George to Alec Robinson, <http://pzbnetwork.com/in-the-press/113-andrew-george-reply-alec-robinson.html>.

However it is difficult to understand his tactics. Option PZ was submitted late in the planning process after he had already achieved a delay in the approval of Option A by securing the consideration of further alternatives in the 2009 Halcrow report. He is not on record as saying that he found this analysis flawed but he also failed to endorse its conclusions. Consideration of Option PZ would have involved starting the process again by commissioning further detailed work, obtaining Route Partnership approval and seeking planning permission. As stated by Simon Glasson Option PZ, 'didn't have any credence, the proposals hadn't been costed, they were outline only when the DoT wanted concrete proposals'.¹¹²² This would have needed a comprehensive study during a period, with the formation a coalition government following the 2010 general election, when public expenditure was under increasing scrutiny and there was a growing risk that further delay would jeopardise funding for the project. More than any of the other actors in the narrative, he should have been aware of the probable attitude of the new government towards capital projects. Eventually the attempt to include another option was fruitless. Option PZ did not appear as a detailed proposal until March 2011¹¹²³ and although it was endorsed by the Town Council, by this time the debate had moved on. The Business Network was eventually dissolved in September 2011 as part of the process of setting up a Penzance Seafront Forum (see below).¹¹²⁴

Cornwall Council versus the Opposition

At this point there were three elements which emerged from a melange of accusation, claim and counterclaim and administrative confusion. Firstly Cornwall Council decided that Option A was the only one it wanted to pursue, senior members losing patience with a continuing clamour for alternatives and what it saw as attempts to derail the process.¹¹²⁵ Councillor Hicks made it clear 'that Option A is the only option the Cornwall Council will consider in

¹¹²² S. Glasson, interview 15th June 2015.

¹¹²³ Penzance Business Network, *An Improved Scheme for the Isles of Scilly Link*, March 2011.

¹¹²⁴ *Cornishman*, September 1st 2011, 'Penzance Business Network no longer needed and to be replaced with new Seafront Forum.'

¹¹²⁵ For example, an application for judicial review of the harbour revision order by Charlie Cartwright.

Penzance'.¹¹²⁶ Hence, although Andrew George tried to promote a compromise option, the arguments coalesced around the two alternatives; Option A promoted by Cornwall Council, and supported by the Chamber of Commerce and Option C championed by the FofPZh and a considerable section of Penzance public opinion.

Secondly, the possibility of Falmouth as a destination for the Scilly link began to be suggested, to demonstrate to the opposition in Penzance that the Route Partnership had alternative options. Councillor Hicks reported at a Route Partnership meeting on 26th January 2010 that a parallel study into Falmouth as a fall-back mainland port option had been authorised by Cornwall Council cabinet at a cost of £300.000.¹¹²⁷ The opponents of Option A responded to this threat with predictable scorn, Old Mike commenting:

Falmouth always was a mischievous game designed to scare us. The map doesn't lie. A ferry service from Falmouth would cripple Scilly, killing off the day trip trade, sending freight costs through the roof, and losing the operator his shirt...It couldn't happen.¹¹²⁸

Eventually the fall-back option of Falmouth became lost in the continuing recriminations between Cornwall Council and Penzance civil society, the Council eventually admitting that it was never a realistic option, suggesting that it was indeed a negotiating tactic rather than a serious proposition.

The third element was the bitter tone of the debate conducted via the local press, at times descending into personal abuse, and the increasingly divisive positions taken up by different elements of civil society. Councillor Hicks, in a letter to the *Cornishman*, describes the opposition to Option A as 'a compendium of ...wild and unsupported allegations, gross misrepresentations and factual inaccuracies', that the FofPZh are a 'discredited and an utterly despicable mob' and that Old Mike's claim that the opposition to Option A has the support of the whole community reminded him of 'extraordinary claims by Soviet and Nazi propagandists'.¹¹²⁹ He also attempted to brand the FofPZh

¹¹²⁶ Minutes of the Route Partnership – Political Sub Group, 23rd February, No. 5c.

¹¹²⁷ Minutes of the Route Partnership – Political Sub Group, 26th January 2010, No. 3a iii.

¹¹²⁸ *Cornishman*, February 25th 2010.

¹¹²⁹ *Ibid*, January 28th 2010, 'How can somebody be in support of such nonsense?'

as outsiders accusing John Maggs of calling on a 'band of up-country environmentalist supporters', a labelling and stereotyping which, as Wolsink points out, is not untypical of the response by authorities to opposition.¹¹³⁰

The political process was notable for its lack of involvement by local councillors who may have been able to mitigate the degree of antagonism generated. Cornwall Council operates a cabinet system of governance which makes it difficult for 'back bench' councillors to intervene in decision making. Bert Biscoe also points out that that the authority was very new at this stage and still finding its feet. Keith Bell, however, believes that greater involvement from local politicians would have made a difference:

Hicks was from Redruth and was dead set in not being defeated. Yes, I do think [a local councillor] would have made a difference. It would not have got as far as it did if there had been a truly local representative. It was very strongly felt; people always rail against consultants but here our representatives did not feel local,¹¹³¹

a combination of the localism characteristic of Cornish politics but also the undue influence of what Deacon calls a 'project class' on the consultation process. Deacon argues that local authorities in Cornwall have shown '[a] deeply ingrained deference [which has] over-estimated the ability of external experts and undermined confidence in local solutions'.¹¹³² He identifies the emergence of a project class engaged on regeneration projects fuelled by the availability of EU funding who make recommendations based on outsider perceptions of Cornish stereotypes based on remoteness, rurality and tourism.¹¹³³

Reasons for Opposition

It is helpful at this point to step back from the narrative and reflect in more detail on some of the reasons for the conflict. At various points the consultation process was seen as top-down, technocratic and insistent on a solution which was very similar to the original proposal. As Wolsink states in a general criticism of decision making for large scale developments, 'planning

¹¹³⁰ M. Wolsink, 2010, p.197.

¹¹³¹ K. Bell, interview 8th December 2015.

¹¹³² B. Deacon, 2007(b), p.222

¹¹³³ Ibid, pp.226-7

systems are seldom designed to handle the required involvement of civil society; in fact they are often designed to avoid this kind of involvement'.¹¹³⁴ In March, the *Cornishman* editorial criticised the democratic deficit in the process of identifying development options and submitting the planning application. Despite adopting a broadly neutral line in its reporting the harbour development proposals, the paper lost patience with the way the consultation had been handled, and after planning permission had been granted, claimed that:

'Many felt the lack of real consultation since the beginning was scandalous. The way in which the whole project was managed did nothing to engender support for it. Large groups in the town feel disenfranchised by all that has happened; many feel let down by a lack of communication...it appears rightly or wrongly that the [Cornwall] council was determined to plough ahead with Option A regardless of the opposition to it.'¹¹³⁵

This view was reiterated by the Penzance Town Clerk who considered that in general there had been an excessive amount of consultation about how the town should be planned but little feedback on the results. Some consultation had been a tick box exercise which did not 'reflect the various nuances and complexities involved in making the decision'.¹¹³⁶

A further criticism of the process was the appointment of a successive teams of consultants who were seen to have little understanding of Penzance and who were regarded as having ignored local knowledge; described by Old Mike as a 'phalanx of suited ladies and gentlemen...most of whom only visit Penzance when they're paid to, [and] won't want to hear what the yokels have to say',¹¹³⁷ illustrating the local resentment to outside interference by the project class.¹¹³⁸ As well as the method of consultation, the content was also questioned such as the series of assertions made by the Route Partnership which were then found to be incorrect and were retracted or forgotten as the

¹¹³⁴ M. Wolsink, 'Discourses on the implementation of wind power: Stakeholder views on public engagement', in P. Devine-Wright, (ed.) *Renewable Energy and the Public*, London, 2011, p. 76.

¹¹³⁵ *Cornishman*, March 11th 2010, Comment, 'Time to end the divisions which marred the debate.'

¹¹³⁶ S. Glasson, interview March 8th 2012.

¹¹³⁷ *Cornishman*, January 15th 2009, 'The consultation con we're all becoming so used to.'

¹¹³⁸ B. Deacon, 2007(b) p. 226.

project progressed. These included the short lived option to promote Falmouth as an alternative to Penzance and the eventual position taken by the IOSSC that, in contrast to the original Route Partnership proposals, the life of the existing ships could be extended beyond 2012.¹¹³⁹ These perceived deficiencies in terms of both process and content, coupled with the confusion and complexity in dealing with the planning application involving its initial refusal, subsequent referral back by cabinet and then eventual approval, meant that Cornwall Council was seen by the opponents of Option A as untrustworthy, duplicitous and determined to proceed with its proposal whatever the consultation results.

But as we have seen in Chapter Six, (Pages 154-156), resistance to change is part of the positive discourse about Penzance based on its remoteness and individuality. In the opinion of one of the supporters of Option A the objectors were predominantly older retired people and those counter-urbanists who had moved to Penzance.¹¹⁴⁰ John Maggs skilfully based his opposition in a way which would appeal to the elderly who tended to be opposed to change; 'there were few people at his meetings who were under fifty'.¹¹⁴¹ From the constant stream of correspondence to the *Cornishman* objecting to Option A and from the evidence of interviewees, many were well educated, middle class and articulate. Dick Cliffe, of the Chamber of Commerce summarised what he considered to be the nature of the opposition to the harbour proposals as:

a lot of people who are not economically active...they regard the harbour issue as heritage rather than vital for the local economy; they don't have an affinity with the local economy or the link to the islanders. They've bought into the view and environment and when a freight facility is proposed, it isn't what they aspire to. They came to Cornwall to get away from development. They are a well-educated incoming class who are ambivalent to some of the things you need in an up-to-date economy.¹¹⁴²

This suggests that the opposition was mainly from people who had retired to Cornwall and were against the redevelopment because it did not fit with their

¹¹³⁹ Eventually they were considered to have a life until 2018. Cornwall Council. *St Mary's and Penzance Harbour proposals: key messages*, 2013, p. 6.

¹¹⁴⁰ D. Cliffe, interview March 9th 2012.

¹¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹¹⁴² Ibid.

place image of Penzance. John Maggs disputes this view. His belief is that support for Option A was ‘manufactured’ and ‘misinformed’ by Cornwall Council from a small group which was not representative of public opinion; ‘the community wasn’t split’. The supporters of Option A ‘very cleverly constructed an alternative narrative on what would happen if Option A wasn’t accepted...which included the loss of the ferry link to Falmouth’.¹¹⁴³ Dick Cliffe uses similar language to describe the FofPZh which promoted the discourse that change was not necessary and that Option A was being forced through the Council. John Magg’s meetings ‘had a religious flavour about them’ and it was ‘difficult to mobilise a counter movement once his bandwagon had started’.¹¹⁴⁴

Was the opposition to the proposals simply a case of Nimbyism and the supporters of Option A, counter Nimbys?¹¹⁴⁵ There is a developing literature¹¹⁴⁶ questioning the idea that the motivation of objectors to development is always based on self interest in the form of economic or social dis-benefits such as reduced property values or fear of crime. As we have seen, opposition is frequently based on place attachment¹¹⁴⁷ triggered by a disruption to place such as the possibility of new development, a decline in a neighbourhood, gentrification, or questions about the appropriateness or suitability of what is being proposed¹¹⁴⁸ rather than potential personal detriment. Feldman and Turner go so far as to argue that there is a moral case for Nimbyism; that ‘concern for particular places does and should motivate us to protect them.’¹¹⁴⁹ Devine-Wright also points out that the idea of a back yard as a personal space is also problematic since the relationship between concern for place and distance from that place is complex and not

¹¹⁴³ J. Maggs, interview, 15th June 2015

¹¹⁴⁴ D. Cliffe, interview, March 9th 2012.

¹¹⁴⁵ Nimby, an acronym for Not In My Back Yard.

¹¹⁴⁶ Much of the literature is based on examples taken from opposition to renewable energy and wind power schemes and how this may be mitigated by changes to the way in which the public are consulted and how increase in citizen involvement may be increased. See P. Devine-Wright, ‘Public Engagement with Renewable Energy: Introduction’, in P. Devine-Wright, (ed.), *Renewable Energy and the Public: From NIMBY to Participation*, 2011, pp. xxii-xxx.

¹¹⁴⁷ S. Feldman and D. Turner, 2010, P. Devine-Wright, 2009

¹¹⁴⁸ V. Lyon-Callo, ‘Making Sense of NIMBY’, *City and Society* xiii (2) 2001, pp. 183-209.

¹¹⁴⁹ S. Feldman and D. Turner, 2010, p 257.

always based on proximity.¹¹⁵⁰ A back-yard can also extend to embrace wider spaces and places of public concern such as landscapes, sea vistas or, in the case of Penzance, a harbour.¹¹⁵¹ Wolsink concludes that the term Nimby should be avoided as it is based on an invalid theory of what motivates opposition to development; it implies selfishness, it incorrectly describes much of the opposition and the causes of objections are obscured by the Nimby label.¹¹⁵²

But since much of the literature about Nimbyism is based on debates about wind power and the public benefit arising from reducing reliance on carbon generating sources of energy, it often sidesteps difficult questions of environmental justice and how opposition is marshalled to resist development. Those who are able to organise, who have access to information and can mobilise civil society to influence the political system are in a better position to counter the disturbance which has triggered their objection. Feldman and Turner wrestle with this problem and although they argue a moral case for Nimbyism they, acknowledge that there can be 'bad' Nimby claims and even where a claim is 'good', wider considerations may apply. Therefore they maintain that arguments against wind farms need to acknowledge the need to mitigate global climate change and although concern for place matters, sometimes '*other things matter more*'.¹¹⁵³ So they concur with Wolsink that the term Nimby obscures both issues of environmental justice and the need to balance countervailing considerations when determining competing claims.

In one of the few cases in Cornwall where objections to development have been researched, Cope warns against conflating Nimby resistance with middle class opposition arguing that, in the case of the St Dennis incinerator, a range of groups were involved, principally concerned with wider health and

¹¹⁵⁰ M. Cotton & P. Devine-Wright, 'NIMBYism and Community Consultation in Electricity Transmission Network Planning', in P. Devine-Wright, (ed.) 2011, p. 117.

¹¹⁵¹ P. Devine-Wright, 'From Backyards to Places: Public Engagement and the Emplacement of Renewable Energy Technologies', in P. Devine-Wright, (ed.) 2011 pp. 61-62.

¹¹⁵² M. Wolsink, 'Invalid theory impedes our understanding: a critique on the persistence of the language of NIMBY' *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 31, 2006, pp. 85-91.

¹¹⁵³ S. Feldman and D. Turner, 2014, p. 115.

environmental issues rather than the personal impact of the development.¹¹⁵⁴ He refutes the claim that objectors in that instance were middle class Nimbys, but rather reflected the mixed social composition of the St Dennis locality. However, he accepts that middle class activists may speak on behalf of a wider range of opinion. A second example, resonating more closely with Penzance Harbour, is the objections by surfers to the Wave Hub project at Hayle where the installation of a device to generate energy in St Ives Bay triggered concerns about its impact on the height and quality of waves at one of the principal surfing locations in West Cornwall.¹¹⁵⁵ The arguments in opposition and in favour were, on one hand, concerns about a technological and commercial venture spoiling a pristine marine environment enjoyed by the surfing community which if disturbed would damage the Cornish economy. On the other, support for and local 'ownership' of a technologically advanced project would not only provide jobs for the local economy but would also add to Cornwall's reputation as a producer of green energy. This example illustrates again the balance of argument between the concerns of objectors and wider considerations; both are supportive of the environment (but from different perspectives) and both privilege place in terms of the impact on Cornwall.

It is clearly impossible to determine the motivation of all the objectors to the harbour proposals but from correspondence to the *Cornishman* many, although originally outsiders, had a strong attachment to place and had adopted Penzance, and by extension Cornwall, as part of their identity. The following is a typical example from a *Cornishman* correspondent, apparently a retiree:

I have lived here for five years, having visited this special place on holiday for nearly 40 years. What struck my family about Penzance when we first came was the sheer natural beauty of Mount's Bay as viewed from Penzance harbour and Battery Rocks. It's one reason why my family keep coming back...I understand Mount's Bay is in a list of the 10 most beautiful bays in the world. Why would Cornwall want to get rid of that claim? That is what will

¹¹⁵⁴ J. Cope, 'When is a NIMBY not a NIMBY?' in P. Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Eighteen*, Exeter, 2010, pp. 58-69.

¹¹⁵⁵ C. McLachlan, 'Symbolic Interpretations of Wave Energy in the UK: Surfers' Perspectives' in P. Devine-Wright, (ed.) 2010, pp. 275-288.

happen if the freight depot and lorry park are built on this unique, spiritual and historical area.¹¹⁵⁶

This correspondent sees Mounts Bay and by extension, the harbour as historic, beautiful, and spiritual and wishes to perpetuate the family memories of past holidays. The letter neatly encapsulates Gustafson's categorisation of how individuals relate to place by stressing in a few lines the distinctiveness of the local environment, what it means for the individual and family, continuity with visits and now residence and the threat posed by impending change. But other incomers who embrace change were also committed to Penzance and equally recognised the uniqueness of its environment and architecture; 'it's a human sized town which you can get to know; full of interesting nooks and crannies and a magnificent sea front'.¹¹⁵⁷ Many of these owned businesses or were involved in some way with the local economy. They saw a need for regeneration, were concerned about the future of the Scilly link and wanted investment in the infrastructure of the town as a way to counteract the image created by its negative discourse. Their views were best articulated by the Chamber of Commerce who were diametrically opposed to the position taken by the FofPZh. Civil society in Penzance developed two opposing visions of the harbour both linked to the wider discourses about the town.

The debate was therefore conducted between groups who were well organised, articulate and were able to mobilise public opinion using meetings, blogs and social media to promote their point of view. To view the debate in the context of Lefebvre's analysis, it was partly about different images of representational space, between Penzance harbour as it is, an essential part of the character of the town, something to be cherished and protected in contrast to its potential as an economic asset which would require major physical changes to create a modern, efficient port. But there were also different views on representations of space presented in the form of specific technical options in consultants reports requiring urgent decisions which clashed with the need to explore all the issues, 'to envisage what else could

¹¹⁵⁶ *Cornishman*, January 28th 2010, letters, D. Kirby, 'Why risk beauty?'

See also *Cornishman*, September 30th 2010, letters, M. Ambrose, 'Architectural vandalism.'

¹¹⁵⁷ D. Cliffe, interview March 9th 2012.

happen...what can we do to improve this, what can we add',¹¹⁵⁸ characterised by a view that if in doubt, 'sometimes it is better to do nothing. The wrong thing will bugger the place up for ever'.¹¹⁵⁹

As already seen in the St Dennis incinerator case, objections were broadly based but articulated by middle class activists. The problem with the concept of Nimby and class is that on one hand the term is associated with the 'dynamics of class-based and property-based exclusion under capitalism'¹¹⁶⁰ such as gentrification of residential areas where, for example, social housing is opposed on the basis of its inappropriateness in high value locations. Alternatively, it may be seen not as opposition to societal goals but challenging the interests of capital supported by the state¹¹⁶¹ or, as expressed by Lyon-Callo, the reaction of people who feel that they are marginalised disempowered and looked down upon and who believe that they have no control over their environment.¹¹⁶² There were elements of the latter in the concerns over the consultation process and the relationship with Cornwall Council but the fundamental issue was about different interpretations of place played out between competing ideas about Penzance rather than issues of class. The debate over the harbour was conducted between two competing parts of civil society, both marshalled by middle class activists, and their concerns reflected middle class interests with the local economy, protection of the environment and concern for place. As stated in Chapter One (Page 20) It would appear self-evident that those with the ability to organise are likely to be the leaders and shapers of civil society. A weakness in the literature on Nimbyism is that it focuses on opposition to the processes which determine development proposals but is largely silent on the power relationships which underlie this resistance.

¹¹⁵⁸ H. Piggott, interview 8th December, 2015.

¹¹⁵⁹ K. Bell. interview 8th December, 2015

¹¹⁶⁰ G. DeVerteuil, 'Where has NIMBY gone in urban social geography?', *Social and Cultural Geography* 14:6, 2013, pp 599-603, p. 601.

¹¹⁶¹ R. Lake, 1993, p.3.

¹¹⁶² V. Lyon-Callo, 2001, p.198.

Finally, what of the development itself? Architectural design is very much a matter of opinion but the personal view of the author is that the proposal for the passenger terminal shown in Figure 9.7 is not the monstrosity which the objectors claimed it to be. The site is not overlooked by residential development and did not obscure the views of Mount's Bay. It was certainly superior to many of the existing buildings surrounding the harbour. A more substantial objection was the complaint by the Civic Society that option A

This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons

Figure 9.7: Before and After Views of the Proposed Passenger Terminal: Halcrow Group

did not take into account the rest of the Penzance foreshore. Option A would have involved the obliteration of Battery Rocks and a rocky beach composed mostly of pebbles from which a number of *Cornishman* correspondents and Adrian Piggott stated that they swam daily. The emotional claims generated by the debate demonstrated the power of place attachment; that the harbour proposals were thought to involve the destruction of a major part of the Penzance seafront.

Phase III: 2010-12; Efforts to Secure Funding

In the third phase of the narrative the focus shifts away from the Route Partnership to the relationships between central government in the shape of the DoT, Cornwall Council and the MP and the efforts to secure funding for the scheme which was estimated, at this stage, to cost £62 million¹¹⁶³ the total including the purchase of a new ferry and work on both the St Marys Penzance Harbours. The FofPZh continued to oppose the planning application asking the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to call it in and hold a public inquiry,¹¹⁶⁴ a request which was refused. With the granting of planning permission, the DoT announced a conditional award of funding pending a final decision to be made in January 2011. However, as pointed out by the *Cornishman*, the ambiguity of the announcement which stated that the DoT would 'look carefully at the costs and scope of the scheme and explore possibilities to reduce costs and increase local contributions' gave hope to both supporters and opponents of Option A. The Route Partnership 'warmly welcomed' the news with Councillor Hicks commenting that 'This massive investment for Penzance and the Isles of Scilly is even more important in the current harsh economic climate'. John Maggs however, saw it as an opportunity to review the project and said that the Friends 'are delighted...that the Secretary of State has been wise enough to delay funding and take time to review the costs and scope of what is being proposed.'¹¹⁶⁵

Given the ambiguity over the future funding of the project, separate meetings were arranged by Andrew George at the end of 2010 with the DoT minister, Norman Baker for both the supporters and opponents of Option A. The supporters included Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Council and the Chamber of Commerce; the opponents the FofPZh, Penzance Business Network and the Town Council which were, at this stage, supporting Option PZ.¹¹⁶⁶ The

¹¹⁶³ Contributions towards the funding would come from the DoT £36m, Cornwall Council £15m and a EU convergence contribution of £11m.

¹¹⁶⁴ *Cornishman*, March 1st 2010, John Maggs, open letter re: Penzance Harbour South Pier proposal.

¹¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, October 28th 2010, 'Both sides in islands link welcome funding decision.'

¹¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*, December 23rd 2010, 'Both sides stay upbeat after sea link talks with minister.'

expected decision in January was delayed until April but in the intervening period it began to be realised that there was a possibility that there might not be approval for all the elements of Option A. At this stage, when it was clear that the coalition government would be looking critically at all major transportation projects, Andrew George stated that he would support Option A if it was the only scheme under consideration. He is reported as saying that 'If it is a case of that scheme or nothing, I want that project to succeed... I would rather have something than nothing'¹¹⁶⁷ indicating that there was a risk of the funding disappearing and that he would support a compromise. By March he was warning that other large transportation projects had had their budgets reduced and that the scheme would be likely to require substantial savings, to which Councillor Hicks responded that 'he could not see where any further savings could be made' and that 'we have pared down to the bone.'¹¹⁶⁸

At the end of March 2011 Norman Baker, wrote to Cornwall Council stating that the department could not support the proposed harbour development as although it recognised the importance of the Scilly link, it had to take account of 'the very poor appraisal value for money of the scheme' and urged the Council and other key stakeholders 'to develop a simpler, lower-cost solution...'.¹¹⁶⁹ The immediate reaction to this refusal ranged from dismay from the Chamber of Commerce, the True Friends, Future Penzance and the Isles of Scilly Council and enthusiastic support from the FofPZh and the Civic Society who welcomed the Minister's proposal to develop a more economic scheme.¹¹⁷⁰ The *Cornishman* letters pages were equally divided between supporters and defendants of Option A and the paper itself called for the various parties to come together to find 'a meaningful and satisfactory solution'.¹¹⁷¹ Andrew George claimed that he blamed himself for not persuading Cornwall Council to change its tactics. 'I did my utmost to persuade it against adopting the high risk gamble of refusing to look for the

¹¹⁶⁷ *Cornishman*, December 23rd 2010, 'Both sides stay upbeat after sea link talks with minister.'

¹¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, March 3rd, 2011, 'MP expects cuts before sea link wins approval.'

¹¹⁶⁹ Department of Transport, letter from Norman Baker to Councillor Graeme Hicks, March 31st 2011.

¹¹⁷⁰ *Cornishman*, April 7th, 'Fierce divisions emerged over £62m proposal.'

¹¹⁷¹ *Ibid*, Comment, 'Passion must drive harbour issues forward.'

cost-savings the Government sought...¹¹⁷² But he must have been aware that by increasingly allying himself with the opposition to Option A and promoting an alternative, uncosted scheme which was still at the inception stage would confuse the bidding process, show that opinion in Penzance was divided and run the risk of funding being reduced or withdrawn. Councillor Hicks reaction was to wash his hands of the scheme; 'This is the end for us. ...We will be handing this back to the Government. It is not our responsibility; it is theirs'.¹¹⁷³ In May this was confirmed by a letter from him to Norman Baker stating that the Council having spent approximately £6m on the Route Partnership scheme and despite working under the guidance of the DoT, the withdrawal of financial support meant that in the current financial climate it 'is unable to support any further work on the project'.¹¹⁷⁴

By this stage the relationship between the Council and MP had largely broken down with major political misjudgements on both sides fuelled by the turmoil in Penzance civil society. What none of the actors seem to have taken sufficiently into account are the consequences of an incoming coalition government seeking to reduce capital expenditure on transportation projects promoted by local authorities. As pointed out by Norman Baker other schemes had been reviewed and their budgets reduced.¹¹⁷⁵ The attitude of Cornwall Council which refused to reconsider the Route Partnership scheme led not only to funding being withdrawn but also as the 'proper authority' responsible for the transportation function, disengaging from the scheme was an abrogation of its responsibility. Again no Cornwall Councillor representing Penzance was publically involved in the debate or decision to withdraw. All the running was made by the town's civil society and although both George and Hicks recruited the opposing factions to support their case, they were unable to achieve the compromises that may have resulted in a solution. The combination of political misjudgement, pique resulting at failure to secure funding and a lack of local political leadership, were major contributors to the

¹¹⁷² *Cornishman*, 14th April 2011.

¹¹⁷³ *Ibid*, April 7th 2011.

¹¹⁷⁴ Cornwall Council, letter from Councillor Hicks to Norman Baker, May 3rd 2011.

¹¹⁷⁵ The two transportation schemes involving local authority sponsorship which survived after reducing their budgets were Reading Station and Walton Bridge in Surrey.

failure of the scheme. John Maggs, although not an unbiased observer, has a point when he states that:

There was a deficit of politics. ‘Can’t we sort these Penzance folk out’ was the attitude we met and I don’t call that politics. All we needed was someone who could solve the political problem...elected representatives should have worked to ensure that the public are kept on side and that what is delivered is broadly supported. They should have been negotiating and managing the process.¹¹⁷⁶

Why did the Project Fail?

Although three levels of governance were either directly or indirectly involved with the Route Partnership, we have seen how the flaws in the consultation process were exacerbated with the new unitary authority adopting an increasingly hierarchical and top down approach to the project. But several commentators suggest that policy making in the context of central-local relations is a more complicated and subtle process than suggested by top down models of decision making.¹¹⁷⁷ Rather than hierarchy they argue that an approach to governance based on networking between and within agencies and an understanding of the relationships within the spaces between different levels of decision making or as expressed by Hill and Hupe, ‘policy processes are in general an interplay between various actors and not centrally governed by government’.¹¹⁷⁸ Hence, following Foucault, ‘power is not reducible to agency, but instead is seen as part of a network of relations’.¹¹⁷⁹ So to start with the assumption that lower levels of governance are subordinate to higher ignores the point that successful policy implementation at a local level is ‘characterised by a complex web of cross-cutting and hierarchically arranged relationships’ involving negotiation, compromise and problem solving.¹¹⁸⁰ An important part of this network of relationships is with civil society and although it sits outside formal structures of governance, it is closely linked with them. As Smith comments: ‘State actors are also actors in civil society, they live in society and have contact with groups which represent societal interests’.¹¹⁸¹

¹¹⁷⁶ J. Maggs, interview, 15th June 2015.

¹¹⁷⁷ See for example, S. Goss, 2001 and R. A. W Rhodes, *Control and Power in Central-Local Government Relations*, Aldershot, 1999.

¹¹⁷⁸ M. Hill and P. Hupe, *Implementing Public Policy*, London, 2007, p.77.

¹¹⁷⁹ K. Jacobs 1999, p.203.

¹¹⁸⁰ D. Wilson, 2003, p.323.

¹¹⁸¹ Quoted in M. Hill and P Hupe, 2007, p. 60.

The fundamental reason why the project failed was Cornwall Council's top down approach meeting bottom up opposition mobilised by civil society. At the same time, the Government, seeking to reduce public expenditure, was given the opportunity by the failure to agree between the various parties involved. So the lack of a consensus within the complex network of decision makers and interests and the inability of politicians at all levels to manage the political process ultimately caused the original project to be cancelled.

Phase IV: The Search for a Compromise

After the withdrawal of funding, the narrative becomes even more confused. Cornwall Council absenting itself meant that initially there was no organisation to act as a focus on what to do next. Andrew George tried to fill some of this role by calling a series of meetings of stakeholders to explore a way forward.¹¹⁸² The Town Council, as the only democratically elected body remaining in the debate, also started to become involved with the intention of seeking a compromise solution. By July 2011 a Seafront Forum consisting of a number of different interests but mainly comprising members of the former Business Network and Town Council representatives, chaired by Hadrian Piggott had been established to consider the future of the whole of Penzance foreshore.

The Forum intended to look at a wider area than the harbour and achieve an acceptable solution for the majority of the various protagonists:

The main idea was to try and bring the warring factions of the town together. I was furious that the town was so divided over the issue. Cornwall Council were very manipulative about that. They divided and ruled. I was quite incensed. It was worth trying to put that aside and start again.¹¹⁸³

The Town Council granted £10,000 to explore a further low cost option for the harbour.¹¹⁸⁴ By autumn a Penzance Harbour Scheme Management Board (PHSMB)¹¹⁸⁵ had been established consisting of representatives from both sides of the debate including the FofPZh, the True Friends, the Seafront

¹¹⁸² *Cornishman*, April 21st 2011, 'Cash is still available for sea link.'

¹¹⁸³ H. Piggott, interview, 8th December 2015.

¹¹⁸⁴ *Cornishman*, July 21st 2011, 'Town council offers £10,000 to kick start link initiative.'

¹¹⁸⁵ PHSMB had the status of a committee of the Town Council.

Forum plus the Town Council together with observers and advisors from Cornwall Council, the Council of the Isles of Scilly and the IOSSC. This represented an attempt to bring together the remaining local government interests with those opposing elements of civil society. Its task was to consider options for the renovation of the harbour by commissioning an options review, again by Hyder Consultants, funded by a £69,000 grant from the DoT.¹¹⁸⁶ Significantly the MP was not involved. In this spirit of reconciliation the *Cornishman* commented that:

while we recognise that it is unlikely that there will ever be a scheme on which everyone can agree, people have to put old differences behind them and work together.¹¹⁸⁷

However, although the consultants started the process with ‘a blank sheet of paper’, it was recognised that resources for the project would be substantially reduced and the timescale for submitting ideas was ‘almost impossible’.¹¹⁸⁸ Most of those involved agreed that this was the last chance to achieve a solution which would attract DoT funding and, to avoid the former conflict, one of the criteria which any future proposal would need to meet would be to command ‘wide public support and not generate a level of opposition which would become a distraction to progress.’¹¹⁸⁹

These hopes were not to be realised. A fresh consultation process started at the end of 2011 with a number of sessions attended by residents and local businesses to contribute ideas and the holding of a workshop with Cornwall Council as an observer.¹¹⁹⁰ The deficiencies of the harbour were reiterated but this time it was assumed that the ferry operator would continue to operate two vessels.¹¹⁹¹ This exercise tried to adopt a bottom up approach involving

¹¹⁸⁶ *Cornishman*, November 10th 2011, ‘Harbour group’s bid for funding pays off’.

¹¹⁸⁷ *ibid.*

¹¹⁸⁸ *Ibid*, November 24th 2011 Comment, ‘Public input on harbour is to be welcomed.’ The reduction in funding amounted to £8m from the £14m originally allocated in Option A for Penzance harbour, *Cornishman* December 1st 2011 ‘Residents and businesses air views on plan for harbour.’

¹¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*, ‘Our last chance to get right plan for harbour, says MP.’

¹¹⁹⁰ Hyder Consulting, *Penzance Harbour Improvements – Option Short-listing*, 2012, p.22.

¹¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, p. 4.

the town's civil society at an early stage rather than appearing to impose a solution,¹¹⁹² described by Hadrian Piggott as a:

contrast between the approach taken by the big consultants and us trying to get a community voice into the process. We did pretty well. We managed to organise effective community consultation. We had a whole series of events. We started with "Give us your ideas" and it was terrific.¹¹⁹³

The consultation identified fourteen options which, following analysis, were reduced to three, two of which developed the existing harbour to allow improved freight and passenger facilities and the third, a new proposal, centred on the Albert Pier. But despite the *Cornishman* congratulating the PHSMB on providing 'several opportunities for real community consultation' the letters pages described the process and outcome for selecting new alternatives as a 'nip and tuck approach', unworkable and a 'proper Cornish lash up'.¹¹⁹⁴ John Maggs considered that:

The process didn't have time. The Town Council was nervous of being in the position of managing the project and made some pretty serious mistakes. They tried to exclude public input into the consultation process; people who were brought into the process had their efforts passed over.¹¹⁹⁵

One of the issues was the rejection of the Albert Pier option,¹¹⁹⁶ which had attracted considerable public support, on the grounds of its projected £19m cost, a view which was challenged by John Maggs who queried whether the costs could have been reduced by a more 'streamlined' scheme.¹¹⁹⁷ Future Penzance outlined a number of objections criticising the latest proposals as lacking ambition, not good enough for the town and argued for a scaled down version of Option A.¹¹⁹⁸ The public response to the scheme, eventually

¹¹⁹² The consultants used a Multi Attribute Decision Analysis which provided 'an open and transparent decision making process, with input from key stakeholders...used to evaluate complex projects...' *ibid*, p. 22.

¹¹⁹³ H. Piggott, interview 8th December 2015

¹¹⁹⁴ *Cornishman* February 16th 2012, Comment 'One step closer to deciding future of harbour', and letters page 'Cornish lash-up or workable solution?'

¹¹⁹⁵ J. Maggs, interview, 15th June 2015.

¹¹⁹⁶ *Cornishman*, December 19th 2011, '£19m plan to develop Albert Pier "not viable".'

¹¹⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 'Decision day for board's choice of harbour plans.'

¹¹⁹⁸ *Ibid*, February 23rd, 2012, letter, 'Good enough for town?'

recommended for approval by the PHSMB and ratified by the Town Council, was largely favourable.¹¹⁹⁹

Throughout this period there were still fundamental disagreements about representational space; different ideas about the place of the harbour in the context of the Penzance seafront. But there were also arguments about the nature of the process needed to arrive at a solution, secure planning permission and obtain funding. John Maggs believes that the Town Council was out of its depth:

They were taking something on which they weren't equipped to deal with. The whole process of working up an alternative and then being in a position to oversee it they found difficult.¹²⁰⁰

Hadrian Piggott largely agrees that the bureaucracy was obstructive in the process of developing alternatives or as he termed it the 'pragmatics concerned with funding limitations':

I found it pretty frustrating...I don't think there was the time and budget to explore all the issues. Throughout the process there was this constant whittling down [of options]. The refinement and optimisation of ideas never really happened. We ended up again half way to a good solution.¹²⁰¹

So despite the wish to consult more widely and achieve an acceptable solution there were major cultural clashes between the relations of ruling, which determined how a project like the harbour regeneration was to be evaluated and funded, and the objectives of the civil society representatives who saw the redevelopment as an opportunity to restore some of the ambiance of the eighteenth and nineteenth century harbour. This romantic and conservative view of what the harbour could be is difficult to reconcile with the requirements of a working port. It reflects the failure of many of those involved, despite their apparently sincere efforts to find a solution and their commitment to place, to recognise that periods for consultation are finite, that resources are limited and that final decisions rest outside Penzance. Rather than have a scheme that does not fit with their idea of representational space

¹¹⁹⁹ Ibid, 'Group makes its final pick of harbour plans'. Penzance Town Council, Penzance Seafront Forum and DoT, *Penzance Harbour: What Next? Exhibition and Community Consultation*, February 2012.

¹²⁰⁰ J. Maggs, interview 15th June 2015.

¹²⁰¹ H. Piggott, interview 8th December 2015.

and the place image of Penzance, (Figure 9.8), they see the negative outcome as a positive.

We haven't got anything which prevents other things from happening. So it was a success... The battle the community went through with the authorities out there was worth it.¹²⁰²



Figure 9.8: An enduring place image; Penzance Harbour in the 18th Century: Penlee House Gallery and Museum

However, to work up the outline scheme into a detailed proposal a further £200,000 was required and by the end of May 2012 this had not been found. The DoT pointed out the time-limited nature of EU funding, the permissions which were still required, the negotiations with property owners still to be completed; the Minister expressing concern about ‘the very tight timescale that remains...and the lack of progress so far in agreeing a firm plan for delivery’.¹²⁰³ At this point the Town Council started to make overtures to Cornwall Council for help to progress the project. The Unitary Authority, although the harbour owners, still maintained its distance from any further involvement with its redevelopment. Following initial talks which were at first described as ‘very positive’,¹²⁰⁴ there was soon a disagreement between the

¹²⁰² H. Piggott and K. Bell interviews, 8th December 2015.

¹²⁰³ *Cornishman*, May 31st 2012, ‘Timescale fears for harbour plan.’

¹²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, August 2nd 2012, ‘It’s a real possibility.’

two authorities on whether a further HRO was required,¹²⁰⁵ Councillor Hicks maintaining that he did ‘not want to sound pessimistic but this issue to me is all about the need for a HRO’.¹²⁰⁶ By September Cornwall Council had decided that it could not support the latest proposals, Councillor Robinson writing that:

While we remain fully supportive of a scheme, the proposal from the town council has a number of outstanding risks which Cornwall Council cannot accept or be accountable for.¹²⁰⁷

Eventually, separate letters were sent to the DoT, the Town Council continuing to support the Hyder scheme but Cornwall Council ‘suggesting only dredging and the possible use of rock armour’ along the South Pier and Lighthouse Quay.¹²⁰⁸ The issue of rock armour was a highly controversial feature of Option A and the position taken by Cornwall Council was seen as ‘revenge’ against Penzance civil society and an attempt to bully the town to accept features of Option A which had already been rejected.¹²⁰⁹

The Eventual Solution?

At the end of October 2012 there was a change of leadership at County Hall with Robertson replaced by Jim Currie and cabinet resignations by a number of cabinet members including Graeme Hicks.¹²¹⁰ Bert Biscoe, an Independent took responsibility for the transport portfolio and after he had visited Penzance and addressed meetings of the Town Council there immediately appeared to be a more conciliatory attitude towards the harbour issue,¹²¹¹ John Maggs describing it as ‘a huge difference; we now had a dialogue’.¹²¹² Bert Biscoe states that:

When I got there [to Penzance] there was great relief that they’d got someone who wanted to repair the relationship and would sit down with everyone. I’m a solutionist person and I don’t believe in *force majeure*. It’s no good saying to Penzance that the lynch pin of your prosperity is your maritime trade but

¹²⁰⁵ S. Glasson, interview, 15th June 2015.

¹²⁰⁶ *Cornishman*, August 9th 2012, ‘Councillors seek extension on harbour cash deadline.’

¹²⁰⁷ *Ibid*, September 13th 2012, quotation from a letter from Alex Robertson to Penzance mayor Phil Rendle, ‘Harbour scheme threatened’.

¹²⁰⁸ *Ibid*, September 20th 2012, ‘Harbour plans still workable.’

¹²⁰⁹ *Ibid*, October 18th 2012, ‘“Revenge” the motive for backing scheme.’

¹²¹⁰ The change in leadership was caused by controversy over plans to hive off council services to the private sector.

¹²¹¹ *Cornishman*, November 8th 2012, Comment, ‘Co-operation brings fresh hope.’

¹²¹² J. Maggs, interview, 15th June 2015.

we're going to take it to Falmouth if you don't comply with what we want...Cornwall was saying we know best but remember it is relatively immature; it's only been in existence for five years.¹²¹³

Cornwall Council reassumed its leadership of the project agreeing, in a letter to Norman Baker, to work with the Town Council and submit a business case before the end of the year. This conciliatory approach, a recognition that the attempt to impose a solution had failed and the realisation that the limited amount of available funding would only allow for minor modifications, took much of the heat out of the conflict. By November the Council resolved to accept the role as the 'accountable body' for the St Mary's and Penzance Harbours Improvements Project and include between £13.2m and £16.5m in its capital programme financed by grants from the DoT and the EU Convergence Programme.¹²¹⁴ In August 2014 the DoT announced 'a £10m package to improve sea links between Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, upgrade roads on the island and carry out ports repairs' which was very much a minimum solution in comparison with the proposals previously promoted by the Route Partnership (Figures. 9.8 and 9.9).¹²¹⁵

So what had been achieved by the conflict between local authorities, the damage to political reputations, the turmoil within civil society, and the expenditure of an estimated £6m on consultant's fees between 2002 and 2014? The bulk of the capital expenditure announced by the DoT was allocated to improvements to St Marys harbour. The modest improvements to Penzance involved enhanced pedestrian access, a bus/coach drop off zone, the possibility of a limited amount of rock armour and dredging the harbour to enable larger vessels to use the Lighthouse and Albert Piers. No funding was available for improved passenger and freight handling or for replacement ships. The aspirations of nearly all the parties involved in the debate were reduced to marginal changes which were one stage removed from the status

¹²¹³ B. Biscoe, interview, 17th June 2015.

¹²¹⁴ Cornwall Council, Report to Cabinet, St Mary's and Penzance Harbours Improvements, November 27th 2013

¹²¹⁵ www.gov.uk/government/news/10-million-transport-boost-for-cornwall-and-scilly, accessed October 10th 2014.

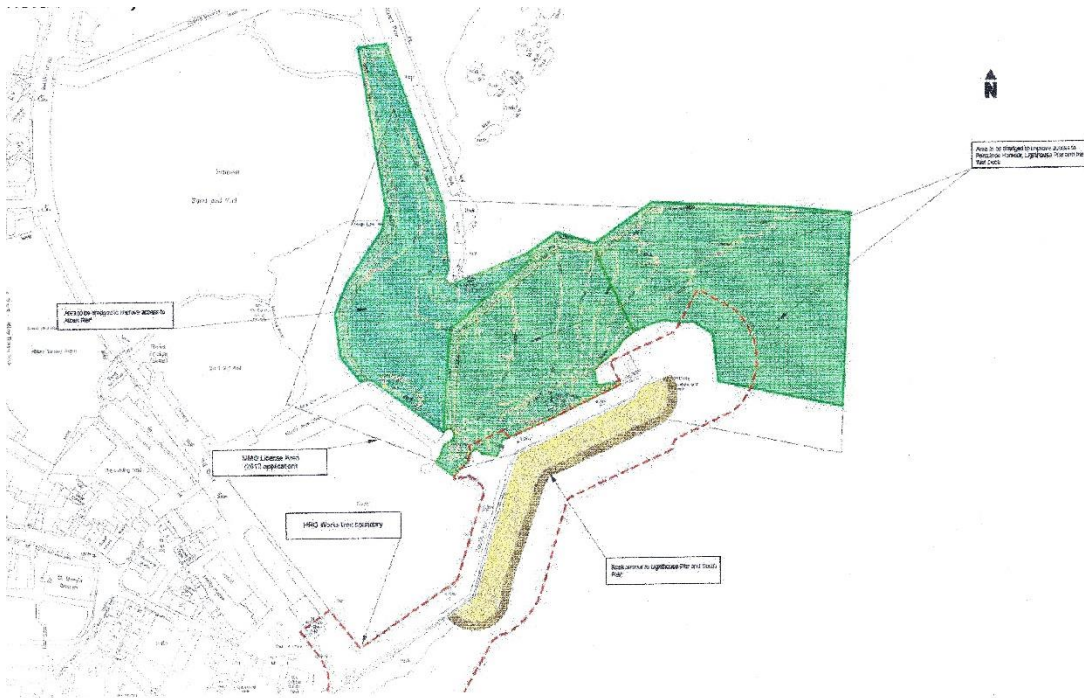


Figure 9.9: Area of the harbour to be dredged, Cornwall Council 2013.

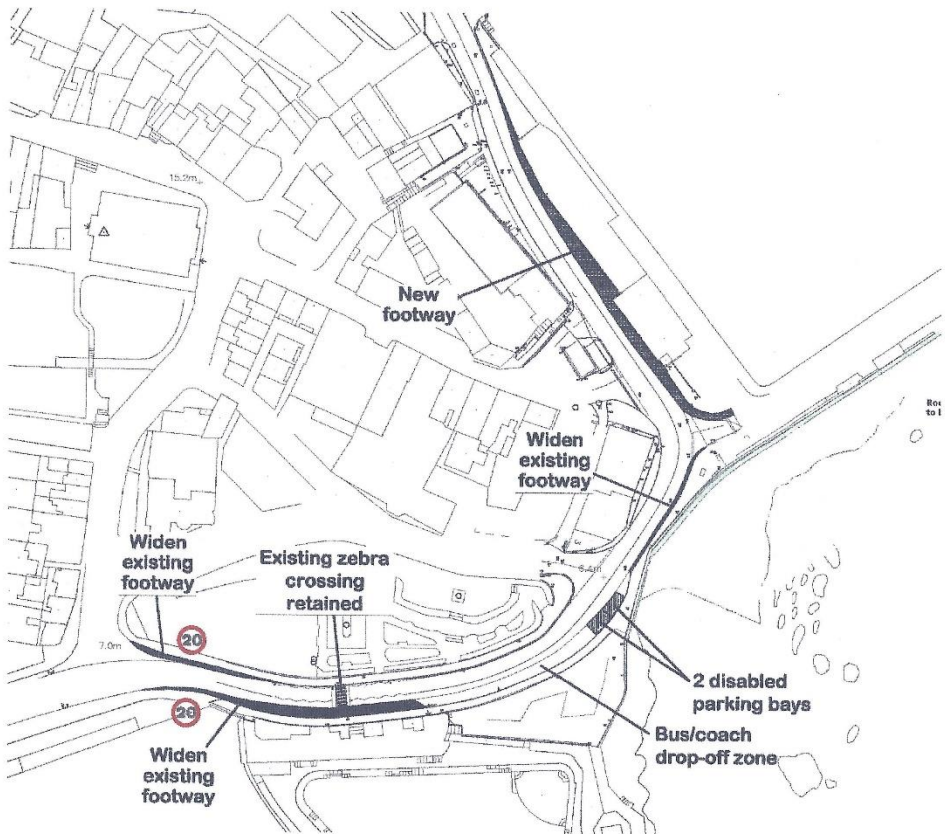


Figure 9.10: Highway Improvements, Cornwall Council 2013.

quo. None of the ideas reflected in Options A or C, Option PZ, the Harbour Users Development Association or the final Hyder scheme all of which involved improvements to the harbour facilities was realised. The DoT announcement, however, was greeted with relief rather than disappointment since, by this stage, the controversy seems to have exhausted the town. Penzance appeared grateful that at least a decision had been taken and some funding allocated.¹²¹⁶ The views of the principal actors in the narrative were not reported. Old Mike continued to grumble but even he asked that 'we can at last all stop sniping at each other and combine to support a positive way forward, now and for the future'.¹²¹⁷ Having been the main news item for over ten years the topic gradually slipped from the pages of the *Cornishman*.

The reaction to the eventual outcome of some of the actors in the narrative varies. Simon Glasson says that it depends on the positions originally taken but there was a sense on both sides that there had been a failure both by public authorities and within civil society:

The supporters of Option A regard it as an opportunity lost; I still hear that we threw away £65m. But amongst the opponents there is no sense of victory. As the dust settled, both sides realised that Penzance was the biggest loser. There was a growing realisation with all this argument and infighting that positions had become so entrenched that even the DoT thought it was all too difficult.¹²¹⁸

John Maggs regards the outcome with some ambivalence:

The original purpose was to stop the damage to the seafront and the pier so that has been a success. The rest of it is a missed opportunity. We worked pretty hard to get some nice ideas on the table which didn't come off and that's a shame. The conditions we were working under were not conducive to success, pressure of time, funding conditions, the economic situation meant there was not even a prospect of the town coming together to arrive at a solution...The project has to be seen in the context of regeneration; we wanted the large sums of money to benefit the town; the most obvious manifestation being the area around the harbour...to create a venue and give Penzance an attractive harbour area.¹²¹⁹

He again uses the expression 'missed opportunity' but interprets it very differently from Simon Glasson reflecting different interpretations of place and

¹²¹⁶ *Cornishman*, August 14th 2014, Comment, 'Penwith back on the agenda for investment.'

¹²¹⁷ *Ibid*, July 11th 2013, Old Mike 'Troubled Waters.'

¹²¹⁸ S. Glasson, interview 15th June 2015.

¹²¹⁹ J. Maggs, interview 15th June 2015.

what is meant by regeneration. The underlying conflict between the competing discourses continues.

Bert Biscoe sees that moving on from the debate over the harbour as part of a process which has to be attempted in stages and which needs to recognise that a working harbour needs facilities such as marine engineering which will detract from its visual appeal. He sees a neighbourhood plan or, as he terms it, a 'mega plan' for Penzance as the framework for its future development which will gradually shape its future¹²²⁰ and into which the future development of the harbour will fit. He also sees the need to engage the town and its civil society. Keith Bell who is involved in the process of preparing the plan has a similar view, that the neighbourhood plan can be a way of arriving at a consensus on the place identity of the town:

What is evident is that projects come forward with a group of people for, a group of people against. The silent majority are given little opportunity to be heard. We have an interesting community here; it's part of Penzance's charm and people want to have ownership of place and its future. What we discovered during the neighbourhood plan is that there is more consensus in the town than we would ever have imagined. People are more positive.¹²²¹

This may be a triumph of hope over experience. At present the conflict over the representational space of the harbour and sea front has been subsumed into the process for preparing the neighbourhood plan but, as outlined in Chapter Six, (Page 154), the history of Penzance is full of unfulfilled good intentions to resolve the continuing differences between the two discourses.

Conclusions

What does the saga of Penzance harbour say about the research question and the role of ethnicity in civil society? A number of issues have been identified as the narrative has progressed including the importance of place mythology and place image, the relationship between identity and place, the role of middle class activists in articulating both opposition and support, the involvement of politicians and their relationship with civil society, the complexity of policy making and the role of networks and the limitations and

¹²²⁰ B. Biscoe, interview 17th June 2015.

¹²²¹ K. Bell, interview 8th December 2015.

lack of agency of locality when seeking to influence investment decisions controlled by the centre.

Place Image: The Struggle Between Discourses

The objectors and supporters coalesced around the two discourses about place. Within the generally accepted order of discourse that Penzance is remote, at the end of the line, is a refuge from the complexity of urban life sit two contrasting discourses that development is detrimental to its identity which opposes the view that it is a town under threat, is poor and rundown and needs investment to address its high levels of deprivation. This conflict is reflected in a wider debate within Cornwall, centred on the implications of high levels of inward migration and the adoption of neoliberal policies prioritising market driven policies¹²²². Deacon, for example, argues that planning policies pursued by generations of Cornish politicians to encourage inward migration in the belief that this will bring prosperity, have failed. Cornwall has not become wealthier, and: 'Population growth feeds off and in its turn feeds the demand for more supermarkets and more infrastructure'.¹²²³ Although the harbour redevelopment was not directly linked to population growth it was seen by its opponents as one of the unwelcome changes to Penzance, an intrusion of modernity which detracted from their vision of place. These arguments have been debated ever since Cornwall has had a mass tourist industry¹²²⁴ but became increasingly urgent from the early 1970s with the rise of inward migration.¹²²⁵ Penzance is perhaps where these different views of place clash most acutely in Cornwall as it struggles to reconcile the tourist iconography of its coastal location and setting on the shores of Mount's Bay with its status as an important town but also one of the poorest in Cornwall.¹²²⁶

¹²²² B. Deacon, 2007(b), p. 222.

¹²²³ B. Deacon, 2013, p. 237.

¹²²⁴ W. H. Thompson (C.P.R.E.), *Cornwall: A Survey*, London, 1930.

¹²²⁵ C Thomas, 1973, B. Deacon, A. George, and R. Perry, 1988.

¹²²⁶ Department of Communities and Local Government, *England's Seaside Towns*, 2008 Table 23 average overall deprivation ranking. Penzance is the most deprived of the 37 towns studied.

Ethnicity/Adopted Ethnicity

What part did Cornishness play in the debate? The protagonists in the harbour example were a combination of Cornish born and outsiders.

References to ethnicity surfaced from time to time and were used abusively by both sides at various points, Old Mike commenting that:

You may have noticed that some who criticised the Penzance Friends are now appealing to patriotism when all else fails. “Nimbys, Incomers, Upcountry”...the delicate whiff of not-funny racism which pollutes the air when anyone who wasn’t lucky enough to be born this side of the Tamar raises their voice.¹²²⁷

Graeme Hicks claimed, as part of his letter to the *Cornishman* in January 2010, that the FofPZh were being advised by a ‘band of up-country environmentalist supporters.’¹²²⁸ However, the opponents of the scheme could also write that:

Penzance risks allowing an act of architectural vandalism to be committed – and by those who are neither Cornish nor concerned about anything other than the bottom line – from which it will never recover.¹²²⁹

The second set of Hyder proposals published at the end of 2011 were dismissed by Old Mike and others as a ‘proper Cornish lash up’.¹²³⁰ Social media posted some extreme ‘nasty and xenophobic’ views and Grahame Hicks, in particular, was subject to personal abuse but it was ‘lucky that he is Cornish.’¹²³¹ But rather than ethnicity, many of both the objectors and supporters had developed an allegiance to place, either as retirees or business people and many had adopted an affinity with Penzance and with Cornwall; as an incomer put it, ‘Cornish identity is distinctive; it’s one you can latch onto’.¹²³² Identity with place is not the same as ethnicity although it may be an element of it.¹²³³ So distinctions of ‘us and them’, ‘insider and outsider’, ‘incomer and native’ or ‘Cornish and English’ were not a major part of the debate. Rather, it was between the two discourses about place identity, personalised as:

¹²²⁷ *Cornishman*, Old Mike, July 1st 2010.

¹²²⁸ *Ibid*, letter, January 28th 2010

¹²²⁹ *Ibid*, September 30th 2010, M. Ambrose, letter ‘Architectural vandalism.’

¹²³⁰ *Ibid*, Old Mike, February 9th 2012, and letters February 16th.

¹²³¹ D. Cliffe, interview March 9th, 2012.

¹²³² *Ibid*.

¹²³³ See Chapter Three, Page 58 re. discussion of A.D. Smith, 1991, and 2010.

expats who have been away and are in a position to retire and believe that Penzance is a fantastic place to live – they buy into how they see Penzance should be, [and] others who wish to see Penzance as more than standing still,¹²³⁴

illustrating a clash between different interpretations of representations of space and representational spaces.

But although place rather than ethnicity defined the debate many of its underlying tensions demonstrate elements of how collective Cornish identity is practiced. Firstly, there was hostility to outside interference. The use of successive teams of consultants operating on a national or international basis were seen as outside ‘experts’ with little knowledge or understanding of the locality. This was exacerbated by the way they were used, often as the face of consultation rather than as advisers to elected representatives. At public meetings it was consultants who were seen as leading the case for technical solutions. The Route Partnership proposals for Penzance harbour may have been an example of stereotypical thinking by Deacon’s project class¹²³⁵ constrained by institutional relations of ruling but it was also an example of experts initially failing to engage with a locality and finding it almost impossible to retrieve the situation once options for the development of the harbour had been published.

A second characteristic is the turbulent nature of local politics in Cornwall. The narrative is full of examples of tension between Cornwall Council, the Town Council and the MP. Lee writing about Cornish local elections since 1945, states that voters march to a different drum influenced by a ‘form of extreme localism’ and that local identity as much as allegiance to a political party determines how people vote.¹²³⁶ This has continued with the formation of the unitary authority where: ‘Localism, weak party organisation and a continuing tradition of independence continue to be characteristic of local politics’.¹²³⁷ Hence local government in Cornwall demonstrates both volatility in voting

¹²³⁴ S. Glasson, interview May 8th 2012.

¹²³⁵ B. Deacon, 2007(b), pp. 226-7.

¹²³⁶ A. Lee, 1993, pp. 253-270.

¹²³⁷ R. Harris, in G. Tregidga (ed.), 2015 pp. 146-173.

behaviour and a lack of stability in local governance. From the inception of the harbour project to its conclusion there were three administrations at County Hall, from a Liberal Democrat dominated County Council until 2009 to a unitary authority which was Conservative led but which imploded in 2013 and, following local elections in the same year, reverting to a Liberal Democrat led administration. This turbulence confused and compromised the planning process.

As I have argued elsewhere, the creation of a centralist Unitary Authority goes against the grain of localism characteristic of Cornish political culture.¹²³⁸ This has caused tensions with Penzance which would have been difficult enough to resolve without the saga of the harbour regeneration. But relationships with the town deteriorated so that at one stage anything that Cornwall Council proposed, regardless of its merits, was rejected out of hand. The reasons for the conflict between Cornwall Council and Penzance over the harbour was perceived as outsiders having little understanding of coastal communities. Even supporters of the development were critical of the stance taken by the Council who 'were naïve in thinking that they could steam roller [the project] through'.¹²³⁹

Perry, writing about Cornwall in the period immediately after the Second World War describes the settlement pattern in Cornwall as superficially a network of small towns but acting as a collection of independent city states.¹²⁴⁰ Cornwall has experienced major changes during the succeeding seventy years. Yet many of the characteristics which Perry identifies remain part of Cornish culture and can be seen in present day Penzance. As Keith Bell points out;

“One and All” as the motto of Cornwall is ironic. Cornwall is the most disparate group of communities; they’re strong communities but not at County level and what we found was happening was that with Cornwall Council becoming a corporate entity, people had power over a place which they had no understanding or care for.¹²⁴¹

¹²³⁸ R. Harris 2015 for a further discussion on the tensions between localism and centralisation in Cornish local government.

¹²³⁹ D. Cliffe, interview, March 9th, 2012.

¹²⁴⁰ R. Perry, in P. Payton, (ed.), 1993, p. 28.

¹²⁴¹ K. Bell, interview 8th December 2015.

Although this culture of independence continues to be under threat from a range of economic, political and societal changes related to globalisation, the reaction has been to promote the local, to stress both the real and imagined differences and uniquenesses of place. It is arguable from the harbour example that inward migration has exacerbated localism; people come to Cornwall for its difference and wish to maintain the distinctiveness of the areas to which they relocate. An interpretation of the harbour debate is that it symbolises the connection between the global and the local so that paradoxically the homogenisation of place is counterbalanced by attempts to preserve difference.¹²⁴²

The resistance to outside interference, the continuation of a tradition of independence and the weakness of party political organisation has in part mitigated the impact of inward migration on collective Cornish identity. There is a coalescence of interests between those who wish to preserve their version of Cornishness and those who are attracted to Cornwall because of its difference, to a place where 'you are allowed to be yourself'. One of the motivations for collective identity is a focus on place and many incomers; both supporters and opponents of the harbour redevelopment had adopted a strong commitment to Penzance. So the harbour debate brought together those elements of collective Cornish identity encapsulating a culture of independence and the preservation of difference with incomers who had relocated to Penzance because of its environment and lifestyle combining a resistance to change and an innate conservatism articulated through civil society..

Migration and the Importance of Place

The discussion on Nimbyism and the influence of inward migrants into Cornwall (Pages 137-139) raises questions about the importance of place identity and its relationship with ethnicity. The 1980's research by Perry, Dean et al on inward migration to Cornwall suggested that incomers did not 'appear

¹²⁴² Chapter Three, Page 90.

to interest themselves in the indigenous heritage that surrounded them'.¹²⁴³ However, it identified the positive attitudes of migrants towards the places to which they had moved suggesting that there was a high level of affinity (over 90% in most cases) for their new residential environment.¹²⁴⁴ There are a number of subsequent studies investigating counter-urbanisation which confirm that:

it has become commonly accepted that the process of counter-urbanisation is underpinned by people moving to a rural locality in search of living space with lower levels of crime, a slower pace of life, a more agreeable environment, greater sense of community and other similar "anti-urban" characteristics,¹²⁴⁵

and that 'quality of life' and 'scenery' are important pull factors in making the decision to move.¹²⁴⁶ But as Stockdale points out the migration decision is often complex and based on a multiplicity of factors.¹²⁴⁷ The resistance to development although labelled as Nimby was not based on personal detriment but rather on commitment to place. The harbour was seen as a key part of the place image of Penzance which the development would both damage and inhibit a much more fundamental regeneration of the town's sea front. So although some of the key players in the Penzance harbour debate such as Hadrian Piggott and Dick Cliffe were not Cornish they took their respective positions on the basis of their commitment to place suggesting the need to make a clearer distinction between the reasons for the decision to migrate and the post-migration relationship with place.

Civil Society

The harbour narrative also raises some interesting conclusions about the nature of civil society. The emergence of five groups to either oppose or support the proposals plus the involvement of other existing organisations demonstrates that, given an issue which of sufficient concern and a sizable proportion of the population willing to engage, civil society can be mobilised to

¹²⁴³ R. Perry, K. Dean and B. Brown, 1986, p.129.

¹²⁴⁴ Ibid. p. 99.

¹²⁴⁵ N. Walford, 'Searching for a Residential Resting Place: Population In-Migration and Circulation on Mid-Wales, *Population, Space and Place* 10, 2004, pp. 311-329, p. 323.

¹²⁴⁶ J. Halliday and M. Coombes, 'In Search of Counterurbanisation: Some Evidence from Devon on the Relationship between Patterns of Migration and Motivation', *Journal of Rural Studies*, Vol.11, 1995, pp. 433-446.

¹²⁴⁷ A. Stockdale, 2014.

lobby and influence local and central government. Deacon queries whether given 'the lack of indigenous business or intellectual classes' in Cornwall, a 'civic culture' can flourish.¹²⁴⁸ The Penzance harbour example however, demonstrates that it can be an important influence on local politics mainly because there were middle class activists and business representatives who were prepared to engage with the issue when they considered their interests threatened. A significant number of Penzance residents including returnees such as Keith Bell are articulate, have professional backgrounds and 'know how things work'. There are limitations however, to the role that civil society can play other than outright opposition, when the power to grant permissions or approve or withhold funding lies with a local authority which refuses to engage with it. Unlike some working class areas of Cornwall, civil society in Penzance undoubtedly has to be taken into consideration by decision makers. It is significant that both FofPZh and the Chamber of Commerce were involved in ministerial meetings.¹²⁴⁹ In contrast, a case study in the Camborne-Redruth area, concluded that the reason for the lack of organised opposition or even involvement with regeneration proposals was that they 'took place in those areas where there are high levels of social deprivation and unemployment [and] where there is no middle class tradition of resistance'.¹²⁵⁰

The concept of the role of civil society in the public sphere advanced by Habermas as an area for argument, debate and political participation and as a site for the production of discourses is closest to the analysis of the behaviour of civil society in this setting. It can be argued that the vigorousness of the debate and the passion it engendered is indicative of a healthy democracy. But the narrative has described at various points the degree of conflict between opponents and supporters which at times threatened to cause permanent damage to Penzance civil society which politicians were unable to manage and questions the normative models such as 'strong democratic', 'good society' and 'communitarian' discussed in Chapter Two, (Pages 29-33).

¹²⁴⁸ B. Deacon, 2007(b), p.222 & 230.

¹²⁴⁹ For example the meetings with the Transport Secretary, Norman Baker.

¹²⁵⁰ R. Harris, 2009.

Several interviewees mentioned the ill feeling and harm done to the town by the conflict; 'the issue was very divisive';¹²⁵¹ the town 'has been riven by cliques and disputes'.¹²⁵² Keith Bell describes the arguments over the harbour as:

Like civil war – it was really shocking and for quite a while we rolled along the bottom

But he believes that:

There is now a resurgence in the town and a lot of positive things happening and lots of people celebrating Penzance's positive side rather than focusing on its less successful attributes. There is a sense that a lot of that energy has come out of the time when Penzance was tearing itself apart. Even when it was horrible people were still interested in this place.¹²⁵³

Despite this optimistic note, the history of the harbour debate challenges the uncritical position of many political theorists that an active civil society is inevitably a force for good, is a counter to state domination and has moral benefits. It is a long way from the benign communitarian view of civil society promoted by Putman. It illustrates however how it may be mobilised to both express difference but also create conflict and how the state plays a key role in both supporting and restricting the space it occupies.

To summarise and relate this setting to the research question, it can be seen that looking at social identity through the lens of civil society exposes a number of facets of the practice of ethnicity which Cornish Studies has yet to address. Perhaps the most important is the relationship between inward migration and place identity and its linkage with that strand of Cornishness which privileges place. A second is the different interpretations of identity, not only in discourses within place myths but also across Cornwall in the form of rivalry between different areas and overall hostility to Truro. A third is the nature of local politics where party organisation is weak, personality is important and which is characterised by turbulence and volatility. These are linked to a recurring theme of this research of attempting to resolve the conservative and progressive dimensions of Cornish identity. The Penzance

¹²⁵¹ J. Ruhmund, interview December 20th 2010.

¹²⁵² D Cliffe, interview March 9th, 2012.

¹²⁵³ K. Bell, interview 8th December 2015.

harbour setting is a good example of how this conflict illustrates many of the tensions and cleavages within the hybrid, complex and multi-layered nature of Cornishness.

Chapter 10: Does Civil Society in Cornwall Exhibit a Distinctive Cultural and Ethnic Difference?

This study has adopted a multidisciplinary approach drawing on a diverse spectrum of theory associated with ethnicity, place and civil society, represented by the work of writers such as Foucault, Lefebvre, Habermas, Gramsci and Tajfel. Within this diversity there are common themes, notably identity, power, social relations and class. This final chapter returns to the research question and assesses the extent to which it has been addressed. It looks at whether wider conclusions about Cornishness can be drawn from an analysis of civil society in three different settings in Penzance, questions some previous ideas about Cornish identity and suggests how the research contributes to a wider understanding of ethnicity. It concludes that Cornishness may be found in the social practices and micro-politics of the settings studied and that civil society in Penzance does exhibit a distinctive cultural and ethnic difference, But it also suggests the that idea of Cornish identity may be more fragmented than formally recognised; practiced in a variety of ways and having different meanings in different settings. These conclusions suggest areas for further research which might fruitfully investigate more closely the influence of ethnicity and culture on group behaviour, compare the evidence from this study with other parts of Cornwall and examine more closely the processes involved with the adoption of identity including the influence of place, the hybridisation of culture and the influence of inward migration.

The research has drawn on areas of theory which have not previously been applied to studies of Cornish identity and has brought together three different epistemologies of ethnicity, place and civil society located in the overlapping disciplines of sociology, politics, group psychology and geography. By situating the study in civil society, ethnicity has been treated as a group phenomenon enabling the research to explore the social relations and micro-politics of Penzance which has identified how, in particular settings, discourses are generated, conflicts resolved and power is modulated through relationships with the state and the influence of class. The analysis has been

informed by further bodies of social theory which are specific to each of the settings. Festival theory explains how historical cultural practices are reinterpreted to promote and celebrate place. It also draws on an interpretation of Bakhtin's high and low culture and the role of the carnivalesque in celebratory behaviour. On Treenere ethnicity is closely connected with kinship and social networks, is an important contribution to the social capital of the estate which has links with the communitarian approach to civil society promoted by Putman. Place theory provides the basis for understanding the reasons for resistance to the harbour redevelopment proposals. Different interpretations of place are central to the debate based on complex discourses within which elements of Cornish culture play a part such as resistance to outside interference and the influence of outsiders.

The Recognition of Cultural and Ethnic Difference

Of the forty people interviewed ¹²⁵⁴ all acknowledged that there is such a phenomenon as Cornishness, whether they were insiders who were born in Cornwall, had lived there for a long time or were incomers. They recognised a distinctive cultural and ethnic difference although they selected different elements and had varying ways of describing it. Those who both identified either as Cornish or were incomers saw Cornishness in terms of pride rooted in a history based on primary industries, non-conformity and a Celtic past, a language which still survives in place names, and a continuing cultural legacy. Burton's contention is that the combination of signs and symbols associated with Cornwall, although complicated and often contradictory, make 'a complex and often paradoxical text wherein lies the roots of Cornish identity'.¹²⁵⁵ But the persistence of Kernow scepticism suggests that, as Cornish identity is not represented by separate and distinctive social practices, those who claim Cornishness are not regarded by outsiders as markedly different from anywhere else in southern England. This research suggests however, that ethnicity does not necessarily reside in overt expressions of identity. Parry, Dean, et al looking at the relationship between inward migration and local

¹²⁵⁴ The numbers are not precise as those involved with group interviews at Trelya and with Yap and Yarn fluctuated and, particularly at Trelya, individuals participated periodically.

¹²⁵⁵ R. Burton, in P. Payton (ed.), 1997, p. 161.

Cornish culture confess that their research may have 'failed to penetrate...a local indigenous culture that was essentially spontaneous, informal and irregular'.¹²⁵⁶ In the context of everyday living, Cornish identity, particularly on Treneere, is phenomenological in nature based on images of place, kinship ties and common-place social relationships rather than overt cultural practices. A sense of difference is overtly celebrated by festivals, a commitment to place and the construction of discourses based on perceptions of locality and resistance to outside interference but much is hidden and concealed. As stated by an incomer: 'When you come in you don't see everything but then you start to notice the differences.'¹²⁵⁷

Where it is recognised by outsiders, Cornish ethnicity can be seen negatively as an obstacle to change and even for the Cornish themselves it may be hidden because of its associations with peripheral rurality, poverty and economic failure. But despite outsider scepticism, there is a revival in the number of those who seek to claim at least part of their identity as Cornish supported by the recent recognition of its minority status. For a sizable minority of the population of Cornwall, Cornishness continues to be a reality. All three settings demonstrate different ways in which collective Cornish identity is practiced which I have labelled performed, concealed and adopted.. These sit alongside the broad categories of Cornishness identified by Payton, Deacon, Hale and Kennedy which focus on its content rather than how it is expressed. The contribution of this research is that rather than seeing Cornish identity composed of a set of accepted tropes, a historical narrative or a collection of agreed symbols (although these form part of Cornishness) it proposes that it might better be regarded, as suggested by Burton, as a cultural text or a kaleidoscope of constantly shifting images, cultural practices and social relations some of which are overt but others hybrid, phenomenological and banal. The drivers which cause this mosaic of meaning to change and evolve are the continuing processes of cultural invention, responses, both resistance and incorporation, to the overriding

¹²⁵⁶ R. Perry, K. Dean, et al, 1986, p.129.

¹²⁵⁷ B. Turner, interview 7th March 2012.

hegemonic culture of southern England and a determination to maintain difference or proclaim a 'passion to exist'.

Different groups select from this cultural text elements which they feel represent their version of Cornishness which may conform to the above mentioned categories, may come from somewhere else or be a hybrid embracing several different elements. For the festivals, revived traditions are important but they also contain elements of invented and contemporary culture. On Treneere there are few overt expressions of Cornish identity but it is part of a culture based on kinship and social relationships which help sustain a neighbourhood suffering high levels of deprivation. For the defenders of Penzance Harbour, landscape and physical form are important but they are part of the myths and images of a locality which influence how people feel about place. So the cultural text of Cornish identity is broad, structured by the significance groups and individuals give to the choices they make from a menu of signs, signifiers, relationships, history and social practice. There may be a consensus about the cultural significance of pasties, St Piran's flag and iconic landscape symbols like St Michael's Mount and the Land's End but these hide a complexity of often contradictory and contested meanings.

How do these conclusions link with a more general understanding of ethnicity? Chapter Three (Page 61) outlines the mechanisms of boundary formation and external legitimisation which explain a rise in ethnic identification. There are examples in the settings studied of pull factors such as the emphasis on reinforcing the boundary of Treneere as a response against hegemonic stereotyping and leading to a strengthening of ethnic ties. On the other hand the revival of Gol Jowan is an example of widening ethnic boundaries lead by cultural entrepreneurs who have mined a historic festival to build new traditions. As Husk and Williams suggest, and confirmed by this research linking place and ethnicity, there is evidence that a larger group, including incomers, use the widening of ethnic boundaries to support their own sense of identity through the borrowing an adoption of cultural symbols and practices. They argue that although boundary expansion could lead to an

apparent medium-term strengthening of ethnicity as evident by the rise in the number of festivals and overt cultural expressions, it could result in a longer term decline resulting in a 'symbolic ethnicity'.¹²⁵⁸

Boundary formation explains some of the tensions seen between the conservative and progressive elements of Cornishness, (Chapter One, Page 15). Terlow¹²⁵⁹ differentiates between 'thick' and 'thin' identities where a thick identity is characterised by 'strong historic roots or distinctive cultures' as opposed to thin identities which are 'more network based, fluid and future oriented' exemplified by the 'Future Penzance objectives', (Chapter Six Page 156). The Penzance harbour setting illustrates how some of these tensions are played out between a thick, usually conservative identity, and one which is thin(ner), with a more progressive approach to change, suggesting that the broadening of boundaries, as suggested by Husk and Williams, may eventually reduce the 'thickness' of Cornish identity,

Ethnicity and Civil Society

The micro-politics of argument, conflict, negotiation and compromise are reflected in the civil society in all three settings. Civil society is where discussion about interpretations of culture takes place and where the overarching place mythology and image of Penzance is debated and challenged by positive and negative discourses about the town, brought into sharp relief by the controversy over the harbour. These discourses emerging from within its civil society represent different ideas, championed by competing centres of power, on one hand representing *inter alia* economic interests, on the other, opposition to development by those seeking to maintain the status quo. This lack of consensus about its the role and future of Penzance is influenced by aspects of collective Cornish identity such as a belief in the independence and separateness of individual towns and a resistance to perceived outside interference; all of which are bound up with the town's historiography. The place image of Penzance is maintained but

¹²⁵⁸ K. Husk and M. Williams, 2012, pp. 261-263.

¹²⁵⁹ K. Therlow, 'Rescaling regional Identities: Communicating Thick and Thin Regional Identities', *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Vol.9, No.3, 2009, 452-464.

also challenged by arguments between discourses debated within its civil society. Golowan and Montol declare its uniqueness, Cornishness and reputation for anarchic behaviour but there are disputes about interpretations of culture. Treneere is stereotyped by a hegemonic sink estate discourse which reinforces the town's negative image as one of the poorest parts of Cornwall but the estate is seen by its residents as a close and supportive neighbourhood. The basis of the harbour debate is an argument between the competing positive and negative discourses; whether the town's place image should be preserved and protected or regenerated by further development.

How does deconstructing ethnicity through the lens of civil society produce new insights into the understanding of Cornishness? Firstly, it exposes how civil society generates discourses. In Penzance the overarching order of discourse emphasises its remoteness, cultural importance, and Cornishness within which two rival discourses have emerged. Both of these have spawned organisations which support their vision for the town. Those connected with the festivals have promoted Penzance by reaching back into the past, drawing on interpretations within its cultural history. Within settings however, an apparent consensus within the same discourse has been challenged by different interpretations of that history and how it should be performed. There were clear divisions between those against the harbour redevelopment and its promoters but within the opposing groups there were differences between how their respective cases should be argued. So analysing the settings chosen by deconstructing civil society exposes the micro-politics within which lie many of the tensions and cleavages underlying life in Cornwall which are often hidden and not well understood.

A second area which emerged is the role of civil society in promoting social capital, its relationship with ethnicity and its potential to mobilise and channel social cohesion. The Treneere analysis concluded that Cornishness, expressed mainly through familial relationships, is a major element of neighbourhood cohesion on the estate although this is under threat from current neoliberal policies regarding housing management and social benefits. Civil society focuses and organises representation on the estate to address

some of the issues arising from multiple deprivation. The idea that Cornish identity can be a resource to sustain neighbourhoods under pressure from poverty and economic decline has been identified before by Kennedy and the University of Bristol but this study suggests that current policies weaken the social cohesion they purport to promote.

Thirdly, in all three settings the state sets the context within which civil society operates. Different elements are engaged either by granting or withholding funding, regulating or enabling activity or arbitrating between competing claims. The festivals and the involvement of residents on Treneere are dependent on state support and operate within the legal and regulatory frameworks it controls. Partnership working, as featured in the Treneere programmes is dependent on various arms of the state co-ordinating their activities and gaining the support of the leaders of the estate's civil society on the courses of action to be taken. The Gramscian interpretation of this process of incorporation is that the state relies on the consent of civil society to establish its hegemony by the dissemination of meanings and values and blurring the distinction between the exercise of political authority and everyday life.¹²⁶⁰ But when consent breaks down, as in the case of the Penzance harbour debate, the state resorts to coercion, not by the use of force but by withdrawing funding and ceasing to participate in the partnership.

The three settings also demonstrate that the boundaries between civil society and the state are blurred with overlapping membership between the Town Council and leading local organisations,¹²⁶¹ and the involvement of bodies like the FofPZh and the Chamber of Commerce in discussions with local and central government during the harbour negotiations. The reductive view of some scholars, who regard civil society as a layer between the individual and the state, is challenged by this and other studies which demonstrate that the boundaries between civil society and other spheres are porous and ill defined. This research suggests a much more complex relationship between them

¹²⁶⁰ S. Jones, 2006, p. 48.

¹²⁶¹ For example Town Council members Dick Cliffe with the Chamber of Commerce and John Moreland with the Civic Society

rather than an absence of civil society as suggested by Deacon. Instead of a strictly hierarchical relationship where the state imposes its will, power is diffused through networks of institutions and government is normally by consent but which, as seen in the harbour case, can fracture in periods of crisis. There is therefore a subtle and nuanced relationship between the two, sometimes supportive in the case of Treneere, sometime antagonistic; relationships which have yet to be recognised in Cornish studies yet which have major influences on how culture is supported and practiced and places are shaped.

Fourthly, the analysis exposed insights on inward migration suggesting that it has not been as negative an influence on Cornish identity as usually assumed. Several of the organisers and leaders of organisations in Penzance, as seen in the festivals and harbour settings, are incomers albeit often with a Cornish connection and have a commitment to both local culture and place suggesting that, in some instances, they have had the organisational skills to re-energise civil society in Penzance. This can lead to tensions within the micro politics of the locality but there was little evidence that a division between Cornish and non- Cornish were responsible for insiders and inward migrants taking different positions on competing discourses. Rather, incomers' enthusiasm and commitment to place were welcomed by the organisations they joined.

Fifthly, although the approach has drawn on elements of theory, in the main it has treated civil society as a heuristic device (Page 43); regarding it as a location for exploring collective Cornish identity rather than drawing parallels with normative concepts. Each of the settings is very different and none fits the theoretical models discussed in Chapter Two (Pages 29-33) although they exhibit elements of some. Civil society therefore is not homogeneous and is profoundly influenced by the state. Putman's approach usefully identifies many of the characteristics of neighbourhood networks but underplays its role in influencing civil society, the relationship between the neighbourhood and state institutions or the implications of partnerships. The Penzance harbour debate might be regarded as an example of bad civil society. Certainly many

of those involved thought so since it caused considerable anger, intimidation and damage to social relations in the town. However it can be argued that the catalyst for much of this reaction was as much due to the actions of the state which pursued a flawed consultation process and was overtly antagonistic to those elements of civil society which opposed its proposals. Efforts to produce 'an institutionalised area of discursive interaction'¹²⁶² as advocated by Habermas by means of public meetings and exhibitions failed because the state misjudged the strength of identity with place and the cultural resistance to change.

Finally many theoretical approaches underestimate the vulnerability of organisations within civil society. Except in extreme circumstances, such as war-time or within a dictatorship, it is difficult to imagine an absence of civil society, Gramsci for example, argues for the necessity of a civil society but the robustness of individual organisations within it is subject to a shared sense of identity, the willingness of members to work together, a common understanding of objectives, the effectiveness of leadership and financial support. All these elements are fragile and their vulnerability is illustrated by the sporadic history of the Treneere RA and disputes between the managements of Golowan and Montol over interpretations of culture and the degree of toleration or opposition to carnivalistic behaviour. Volunteers can walk away if they no longer believe it is in their interest to remain members. Similarly, for both the festivals and Treneere RA, financial support from the state and public agencies has been critical in the continuation of the organisations involved in the settings. To illustrate, since the data was collected for this research, Golowan has had two more directors, the Town Council has attempted to outsource its organisation to a private company but was forced to reconsider in the face of widespread opposition, funding restrictions have changed the relationships within civil society on Treneere and the neighbourhood plan for Penzance is currently promoted by Cornwall Council as a way of bringing together the town's competing discourses. So the composition and organisation of civil society is in a constant state of flux

¹²⁶² C.A. Bryant, in J. Hall, (ed.) 1995, p.144.

as it responds to social events, economic changes and the support or withdrawal of assistance from the state.

Place, Identity and Class

At the initial stages of the research the literature on place theory did not appear to have relevance for explaining the motivation for actions and responses to phenomena within civil society. It has not featured in Cornish Studies to date; it is mentioned only tangentially in relation to civil society theory and was therefore not initially perceived as 'a foreshadowed problem'.¹²⁶³ However, it became clear that the celebration of festivals, the dynamic of life on Treneere and the motivation for opposition to the harbour development are based on perceptions of place and that place identity as much as ethnicity is closely linked with the construction of discourses about Penzance. A further contribution of this research is therefore the application of place theory to Cornish Studies.

Places have their own histories, cultures and identities which create a mythology around which a number of discourses coalesce. To the outside world the mythology of Penzance is a place which is remote and peripheral, an isolated town situated romantically in the far west of Cornwall, a centre for artists and a gateway to the ancient and spiritually significant sites of Penwith. The town is a destination for counter-urbanists attracted by this mix of artistic and spiritual freedom; it's somewhere to express yourself, commune with the landscape and believe that you are less inhibited by the restrictions imposed by society. All these elements contribute to its place myth; its tenuous connection with piracy, a metaphor for a vague sense of it being outside the norm, reinforced by celebrations such as Golowan and Montol.

The connection between place myth and place image and migration is important and has been insufficiently researched. In the 1980's Perry, Dean, et al suggested that incomers were not interested in Cornish culture but did relate to the places to which they had moved. Hitherto the debate about

¹²⁶³ See Chapter Four, Page 97.

migration into Cornwall has been concerned with numbers of immigrants, its impact on infrastructure and the housing market and how the increase in population has diluted Cornish identity and encouraged a 'lifestyle Cornwall' based on the tourism and second homes. There has been little analysis of the extent to which incomers' identity with place is reflected in their attitude to Cornishness. This study, a generation later, suggests that at least some inward migrants and their children identify with Cornwall. Ethnographic evidence supports the longitudinal quantitative analysis showing increasing levels of Cornish identification among schoolchildren¹²⁶⁴ supporting a conclusion that the children of migrants born in Cornwall often identify as Cornish.¹²⁶⁵

There is also evidence from this study that some inward migrants involve themselves with elements of Cornish culture. Many of those involved with Golowan and Montol, the most overtly ethnic of the three settings, were not born in Cornwall although they often had a connection through marriage or another family relationship.¹²⁶⁶ Their motivation is an interest in the arts and performance within the context of the festivals. They recognise the distinctiveness of Cornish culture and see their contribution as helping to perpetuate it. As Perry, Dean et al found, this is not to suggest that the majority of incomers immerse themselves in local culture. The place image of Penzance as a centre for the arts and a destination for counter-urbanists may mean that people with these interests are over represented in its civil society. It is therefore difficult to disentangle attraction to place with a wish to embrace Cornishness. As Perry, Dean, et al and Stockdale¹²⁶⁷ have shown, first generation immigrants move for a complex variety of reasons, cheaper housing, improved job prospects and for a better environment but they also seek, 'a more leisured lifestyle with fewer external pressures and social problems and in many cases a greater degree of control over their own

¹²⁶⁴ School Census 2011, CIPTA EMS Pulse quoted in Cornwall Council, *Cornwall 2011, Demographic Evidence Base, Version 1.4*. p. 27, see Chapter Two, Page 47.

¹²⁶⁵ Interviews with B. Turner, D. Cliffe and H. Musser.

¹²⁶⁶ For example, H. Musser, A. Butler and A. Hazlehurst.

¹²⁶⁷ A. Stockdale, 2014.

destiny'.¹²⁶⁸ Overwhelmingly, in the Perry study, they considered that they had made the right decision to move and the majority had a positive perception of a distinct Cornish culture but this did not mean that they participated or engaged with it.¹²⁶⁹ So a possibility for further research is an investigation of the relationship between inward migration, place and Cornish identity to explore whether an initial identification with place may translate eventually into a degree of ethnic identity through subsequent generations.

Similarly class was not initially anticipated as phenomenon which would be encountered in the research. Perry and Williams and Harrison suggest that although the picture is complex and it is difficult to generalise, migrants to Cornwall seeking a more leisurely lifestyle tend to have higher educational qualifications, are more likely to be home owners and are in higher status jobs than the indigenous population.¹²⁷⁰ There is however, still a popular belief that Cornish society is classless,¹²⁷¹ that those elements of traditional Cornishness such as family ties, common cultural references and sense of humour, a Cornish version of *gwerin*, transcend occupation and wealth. But the two tier housing market and the ethnographic evidence suggest that class is a feature of civil society in Penzance. As Deacon points out, the Celtic revivalists of the early twentieth century were middle class scholars, linguists and professional people in contrast to the indigenous working class culture based on mining and industrialisation. There is a similar division between Kennedy's 'Proper Cornish' and 'Revived Cornish'. This dichotomy is illustrated by Golowan where Mazey Day is the opportunity for licence and carnivalistic behaviour and is attended by large numbers of people as opposed to the more cerebral cultural programme catering for minority interests which forms the greater part of the festival. Middle class organisers manage the processes to interpret and select the celebration of culture but the success of Golowan is partly due to their attempts to meld high and low cultures in one festival. Similarly the public agency and charity sector

¹²⁶⁸ R. Perry, K. Dean, et al., 1986, p. 126.

¹²⁶⁹ Ibid, Table 22, p. 99.

¹²⁷⁰ R. Perry, in P. Payton (ed.), 2002, pp. 180-181, and M. Williams and E. Harrison, in P. Payton (ed.) 1995, p.189.

¹²⁷¹ A. Butler, interview, 13th December 2013.

representatives working on Treneere are middle class professional immigrants as opposed to the low paid and unemployed of the estate. Both the opposition and support for the harbour proposals were organised by those who understood how things work and know how to exert influence. The vehemence of the debate was exacerbated by the ability of both sides to mobilise opinion. As discussed in Chapter Two, Page 20, civil society by its nature is dominated by those who are organised and articulate and hence have the potential to perpetuate inequalities.

But as Aldous's research suggests and the 2010 census results for Treneere indicate, those who most assert a Cornish identity are not, as might be expected, the better educated middle class but are more prevalent amongst working class communities, suggesting a 'subjective identity'¹²⁷² which has not been influenced by the revival of language or the pursuit of Celtic culture but is based on kinship ties, community and a way of being. Hence it seems likely that boundary contraction and expansion has class connotations which work in complex ways with contraction for example, as seen on Treneere, as a reaction against the hegemonic position of the majority but expansion adopted by the middle class as a way of protecting environment and life-style.

Perhaps a distinction should be drawn between the roles of those who organise civil society and the subtle way in which social behaviour linked to class is a feature of life in England. What seems to be meant by an absence of class distinction in Cornwall is that the nuances which characterise the myriad expressions of social distinction are not so prevalent in a small town where few are wealthy and there is an underlying perception that Cornishness is distinguished by its egalitarianism. What the research has shown is that ethnicity and class are fruitful areas for further research to explore the nature of collective Cornishness and investigate further for example, distinctions between revived and proper Cornishness, the impact of migration on the social composition of neighbourhoods and the micro-politics of localities..

¹²⁷²R. Dickenson, 2010, p.96.

Similarity and Difference

Each of the settings demonstrates very different aspects of life in Penzance. The festivals originate in the cultural and artistic life of the town, Treneere is an example of the poverty which is endemic across much of Cornwall and the harbour debate revolved around attachment to place and resistance to development. They also illustrate different ways in which Cornishness and place attachment is expressed from the performance and overt cultural expressions at Golowan and Montol, to concealed identity and withdrawal into place on Treneere and a combination of adopted identity with place, resistance to outside interference and reluctance to change in the harbour debate.

But there are similarities which run through each of them. Firstly, each demonstrates a version of Cornishness albeit practiced in different ways. Secondly, they also show a commitment to place bound up with mythology and place identity expressed as; 'this is our idea of Penzance which we wish to protect and defend' or 'Treneere is a strong community with which we identify and gain support from'. Thirdly, despite Penzance being a small town, the three settings represent to a large extent separate worlds which, although they are aware of each other, seldom overlap.¹²⁷³ Fourthly, each setting contains a network of organisations forming a civil society. Fifthly, the state in its various forms sets a context in the form of regulation, financial support and opportunity for engagement within which civil society operates.

As the above list shows, similarities and differences overlap and in some respects amount to the same thing. What they suggest however is a framework for further research into Cornish civil society which investigates the relationship between ethnicity and place, the role of voluntary associations and how they relate to each other and the influence of the framework set by the state. Investigating examples of settings within locations in other parts of Cornwall may show similarities and differences with those chosen in

¹²⁷³ For example, the author was asked to provide contacts on Treneere by the organisers of Pirates on the Prom.

Penzance, provide further insights into the complex and fractured nature of Cornishness, and expose further discourses within Cornish public life.

The Research Question

Does Civil Society in Cornwall exhibit a distinctive cultural and ethnic difference? In the examples studied, the research did not uncover a broad strand of Cornishness which has not already been identified in other studies. It confirmed however that Cornish identity is complex and multifaceted. What it revealed was different ways in which it is performed collectively and the importance of place as a part of the matrix of meaning which allows the adoption of identity by inward migrants. By basing the analysis on groups within civil society, it has explored the processes of boundary setting, stereotyping, kinship linkages, and internal and external identification. Its contribution has been to look at collective Cornish identity in terms of group solidarity, resistance to change, an innate conservatism and hostility to outside interference, characteristics which have been identified in previous work but not by local contemporary case studies.

By investigating examples of civil society in one town it has been possible to explore place mythology and identity, relate these to ethnicity and show the extent to which the two are linked. Place identity may be nested within a wider identity of Cornishness but does not necessarily embrace all the cultural attributes associated with it. It is possible to be passionate about Penzance but not necessarily Cornwall or Cornishness. On the other hand, St Michael's Mount, Mounts Bay and the iconography of Penzance are all part of the place image of Cornwall. There is a complex relationship between place, its connection with other places and its contribution to a wider place image which gives distinctiveness to a particular locality and contributes to its culture. Hence the place image of Penzance is part of the wider identity of Cornwall but it also has its own identity which is separate and unique. The cultural distinctiveness of civil society in Penzance is based as much on place as it is ethnicity.

Discourses emerge from within civil society, influence how the town is perceived and consequently how groups and organisations behave. They link all three elements in the form of an overarching order of discourse which perceives the town as remote, at the end of the line, the capital of Penwith and a cultural centre. Within this generality however, rival discourses contest the future of the town. One sees Penzance as somewhere which needs to be protected and where inappropriate change is to be resisted; the other to address poverty and deprivation by welcoming inward investment. It is the arguments between these discourses, both based on an image of place which give the town its distinctiveness. Both discourses represent the tensions between the conservative and progressive dimensions of Cornishness which are reflected in debates about place.

Examples of other towns in Cornwall need to be studied to explore these issues further and provide comparable data perhaps using the framework outlined above. How does the micro-politics of established festivals compare with more recent revivals? Does civil society in Pengegon differ from Treneere and what does a comparative study of social housing estates with neighbourhoods of privately rented accommodation tell us about poverty in Cornwall? How are the tensions between infrastructure development or the provision of housing and environmental protection and place identity played out elsewhere? If a next stage of Cornish Studies is to investigate differences across Cornwall then, on the evidence of this research, it is likely to find wide variations in local culture based on place image and discourses arising within civil societies which may reveal different interpretations and practices of ethnicity. There is also a need to examine in greater depth the influence of inward migration both in terms of how it contributes to the hybridity of Cornish culture, whether there emerge 'third spaces' as suggested by Bhabha, and give further consideration of the relationship between ethnicity and class. It is possible that a study of second generation immigrants might reveal a very different picture from that described by Perry, Dean, et al, opening up possibilities for looking at the processes involved in the evolution of Cornishness in response to the interplay between the global and the local.

This study has shown that the complexity of Cornish identity derives from its historical roots, its hybrid nature and its struggle against hegemonic discourses which position Cornishness on one hand as representative of remoteness, backwardness and peripherality but on the other as a place for self-expression and the opportunity to find a better life. Cornish identity is a reality for many who live in Cornwall, both those with long established connections and for incomers. Using civil society as a vehicle for investigating identity has opened up new insights and indicated new avenues for Cornish Studies to investigate its complexities. It suggests that we need to look more closely at how we should regard ourselves and what we might become, how a more nuanced view may be taken of inward migration and how a study of collective identity explains some of the contradictions, conflicts and cleavages of the kaleidoscope of twenty first century Cornishness.