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“All Together Now”: A sociological investigation into the local deliverance of the
Cycling Demonstration Towns Project ‘Cycle Chester’.

Dissertation submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of
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October 2014

“All Together Now”: A sociological investigation into the local deliverance of the
Cycling Demonstration Towns Project ‘Cycle Chester’.

Abstract

In 2007 it was announced by Cycling England that Chester was to become a Cycling Demonstration Town (Cycling England, 2010). Rather than the typical English local authority spend on cycling promotion, this meant that Chester would receive a sum of money similar to seemingly pro-cycling cities, such as Amsterdam (DfT, 2008). However there is yet to be an official evaluation of the second round of Cycling Demonstration Towns. This thesis is designed to demonstrate the context of delivering parties in one specific case-study, the Cycling Demonstration Towns Project ‘Cycle Chester’. Fifteen semi-structured interviews explored the views and experiences of various different concerned actors, both inside and outside the core delivery group. The concepts of figural sociology have been employed to help understand the findings. The principal finding was that the complex figuration in which deliverers were situated meant that the project encountered several unintended outcomes. In addition to this, two key areas were found to have the potential to further complicate the delivery process. Firstly the way in which potential towns and cities were encouraged to apply for funding was found to have large impacts on the project at a later stage. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, the differing goals of the many groups and individuals who were eventually involved with the project meant that interventions were often ‘watered-down’.

Declaration

I confirm that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or examination.

I have read and understood the University's regulations on plagiarism and I declare that this is my own original work.

Signed:

Date:

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Introduction

Understanding the problem

The pressure obesity places on the national budget comes across as a major concern within British government. In 2010 the Department of Health (DoH) announced a new strategy for public health, *Healthy Lives, Healthy People*. The principal aim of this strategy was to “build a stronger, and healthier Britain” (DoH, 2010, p. 3). Within this report the DoH placed considerable emphasis on what they perceived to be the ‘damaging’ nature of obesity, particularly with regards to the resources of the NHS. In fact the DoH speculated that obesity related conditions cost the NHS 4.2 billion each year (DoH, 2010). The scale of such figures are widely acknowledged in the UK, this led Gard and Wright (2005) to suggest that “the obesity ‘epidemic’ ... has infiltrated everyday talk” (p. 16). This is often purported to be influenced by the media who seem to have no questions over the seriousness of the current levels of obesity. However these statistics must not be taken at face value (Gard & Wright, 2005), experts often fuel the media when statistics on obesity and overweight are combined; this of course has the propensity to greatly expand figures. Despite this politicians and the press talk about the ‘issue’ with so much certainty. It could therefore be suggested that there is an element of ‘moral panic’ – a condition where an issue is perceived as a threat to societal values and interests – in these reports (Cohen, 2002). Nonetheless Bloyce and Smith (2010) argue that the plethora of evidence suggests that it is difficult to deny that the levels of obesity are indeed rising.

Addressing the problem

The role of physical activity in promoting health has risen up the government's agenda in recent times (Coalter, 2007). Importantly, the positive impacts of physical activity are also well supported amongst health professionals. These impacts include a reduction in the chance of developing coronary heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and indeed obesity (Rojas-Rueda, de Nazelle, Tainio, & Nieuwenhuijsen, 2010). This present study focuses on the implementation of active travel (AT) policies, in particular cycling projects, as a way of promoting physical activity. According to Cole, Burke, Leslie, Donald and Owen (2010) AT “refers to human-powered forms of travel” (p. 496). Unlike some of the emotive statements made about competitive sports (Coalter, 2007; Waddington, 2000), the benefits of AT are well researched and documented. Many professionals therefore consider AT interventions to have an important role in health promotion. For example, in a recent report from the Chief Medical Officer it was suggested that “encouraging more people to engage in active travel ... is crucial to improving the health of the nation and reducing the prevalence of obesity” (Davies, 2014, p. 16). This statement is supported by Nelson, Foley, Gorman, Monya, and Woods (2008) who argued that AT is an easy way to encourage physical activity as it can be incorporated into one's daily lifestyle. In addition to this, Rojas-Rueda et al. (2011) suggest that any concerns over the risk and danger of cycling, further intensified by the ‘panic’ surrounding recent cycling deaths in London, are firmly outweighed by the benefits of physical activity.

Despite the clear focus here, cycling is not only found to have a positive impact on health. From the 1990s onwards the promotion of cycling has been presented, certainly within pro-cycling lobby groups, as a 'win-win' situation tackling health *and*

environmental concerns. Indeed Lovelace, Beck, Watson, and Wild (2011) argue that transport policy has a number of important energy implications. Cars consume around 1/10th of the UK's primary energy supply (Department of Energy and Climate Change, 2014). When recognising that oil dependence leaves countries with a vulnerable economy (Lowe, 1990), it is easy to appreciate how cycling can help support in this area. However if only aimed towards environmental concerns, AT interventions are rather expensive when cost-benefit analysis is considered. It is not until we combine both areas of benefits that significant impacts can be realised (Ege & Crag, 2010). Nonetheless, what these papers do suggest is that cycling has a potential role to play in various governmental issues.

The above research has highlighted the overwhelmingly positive reasons for promoting AT. Importantly for the British Government it has been suggested that the promotion of AT can help to reduce the costs of physical inactivity. This is a salient point as most public policy decisions are said to be directed by the economic case (Davis, 2010). However there are many frustrations within the UK regarding the government's approach to AT. This is not only a contemporary issue but one which has been felt for over a decade. When recognising the available evidence that was available to them, the House of Commons Health Committee stated that "it seems ... entirely unacceptable that successive governments have been so remiss in effectively promoting active travel" (House of Commons Health Committee, 2004, p. 77).

The cycling problem

Certain European countries continue to uphold high cycling levels, the most notable being The Netherlands where cycling accounts for around 30% of all trips (All Party Political Cycling Group [APPCG], 2013). However in the UK, despite 30% of all journeys being under 2.5 Km (Pucher & Buehler, 2008), an achievable distance on a bicycle for many, only 2% of all journeys are made on a bicycle (Pucher & Buehler, 2012). The main contemporary difference between these two nations is that The Netherlands spend £24 per head each year, whilst outside of London only £2 is spent (APPCG, 2013). However there are also historical roots to the current cycling statistics found in the UK. During the 1950s cycling trips began to decrease in most nations, largely in response to the growth of the car (Douglas, Watkins, Gorman, & Higgins, 2011). However in the 1970s discrepancies began to develop between current low cycling nations, such as the UK, and higher percentage nations, such as The Netherlands. In the UK car use has continued to increase, whilst cycling levels have remained close to the mid-1970s record low (Lawlor, Ness, Cope, Davis, Insall, & Riddoch, 2003). Pucher and Buehler (2007) suggest that this is because the UK has often given the 'green light' to private car ownership, regardless of environmental, social and economic costs. Furthermore Douglas et al. (2011) argue that we have created an environment where those without a car can be limited in their prospects and lifestyles, a notable example being the separation of retail and housing. All of this has enabled a culture where cycling is poorly understood (Transport for London, 2010). Cycling in the UK is therefore mostly reserved for enthusiasts (APPCG, 2013).

It is clear from the above statistics that in The Netherlands the impact of the car on cycling numbers has been somewhat reversed. Since the 1970s cycling has increased in The Netherlands more clearly than anywhere else in Europe (Stoffers, 2012). Without underestimating the public support that was generated in The Netherlands during the 1970s, it is clear that the Dutch government had, and still have, a key role to play in the promotion of AT. “While history, culture, topography and climate are important, they do not necessarily determine the fate of cycling”, government policies have an equally important role (Pucher & Buehler, 2008, p. 496).

Active Travel Policy

Despite the fact that there have been three different Prime Ministers since the introduction of the UK’s first national cycling strategy in 1996 (Butcher, 2012), the current cycling figures demonstrate that any impact of subsequent policies has been extremely limited. Douglas et al. (2011) argue that policies which have thus far been implemented in the UK have too large an emphasis on the individual and direct accountability away from the government. This is something that is not unique to cycling policies; Crawford (1980) used the term ‘healthism’ when describing the emergence of health issues which were constantly situated at the level of the individual. Aldred (2012) suggested that the healthism agenda was surfacing at the same time cycling seemed to become a concern within the UK government, perhaps explaining the concerns of Douglas et al. (2011). What can also be found in latter policies is a focus on local deliverance (Aldred, 2012). However the direction for local officers has always been rather vague with no clear measurable targets, instead these are set by the local authorities (LAs) themselves. Cole et al. (2010) argued that

these processes of devolvement are largely due to the lack of professional interest and technical expertise within government. These factors mean that cycling remains on the periphery of 'main' transport business (Aldred, 2012). However there are now several MPs who hope to see this change. In 2012 we saw the formation of a parliamentary cycling group (APPCG). Soon after their formation this group released a report on cycling in the UK, a report which has subsequently largely influenced the government's 2014 *Cycling Delivery Plan* (DfT, 2014). However the true impact of the group is questionable, the new delivery plan has done little to expand on previous policies. We are still without genuine stipulations which ensure that all LAs develop their cycling provisions, instead this work is left to those who want it.

Cycle Chester

In 2005 the DfT established Cycling England with an aim to "increase [the number of] short urban trips by bike" (Cycling England, 2010, p. 3). In their inaugural year Cycling England announced that they were to hand out £7 million match-funding to seven individual towns, in order to enable LAs to deliver their cycling promotion plans (DfT, 2008). The base of this policy was thus synonymous with the localised focus discussed above. The successful towns were to be called Cycling Demonstration Towns (CDTs). The CDT funding meant that, rather than the typical English local authority spend, the CDTs would receive a sum similar to seemingly pro-cycling cities, such as Amsterdam. Cycling England worked with different authorities in the hope that they could demonstrate how higher levels of investment can increase cycling percentages (DfT, 2008).

In 2008 Chester was one of the 'Towns' to obtain three years of match-funding from the second round of the CDT project (Cycling England, 2010). A masterplan for the Chester project, named Cycle Chester, was published in 2008. In this plan an ambition to double the number of people cycling in the city was presented. The original costing was £7.15 million (Cycle Chester, 2009); however the project actually received around £4.4 million. £2.4 million was allocated from the DfT as a result of becoming a cycling demonstration town, the council then had to match this funding. This was helped by the £1.25 million that had already been promised by Sustrans to improve two key cycling routes into Chester. The rest of the funding then had to be allocated from various council budgets, however this money was not the £3-3.4 million that Cycle Chester had previously asked the council to under-write (Cheshire West and Chester [CWaC], 2008).

Much to the dismay of several cycling groups, Cycling England was disbanded by the new Coalition Government in 2010 (Darnton, 2011). However in 2013 the Coalition government committed to funding various Cycling City deals (DfT, 2013). Mirroring the Cycling Demonstration Towns, the aim was to help the cities who obtain funding to carry out their cycling plans. This research therefore has contemporary implications as it may be able to inform the delivery groups of these new projects.

Research Aims

The principal goal of this research is to supplement the current understanding of political struggles in small localised samples by exploring the micro-politics involved in the delivery of Cycle Chester. The hypothesis for this work is as follows: Despite

all involved parties seemingly fighting for the same cause, networks become extremely complex when they involve a variety of institutions at a variety of levels, each holding their own vested interests, this will impact on the delivery of the intended project aims. The first aim of this study is thus to explore any potential issues that arose between the several actors who belonged to the delivery group of Cycle Chester. By extension, the second aim of this research is to ascertain whether the complexities of the local policy network impacted on the delivery of Cycle Chester's original goals.

Layout of the dissertation

This introduction will be followed by a discussion of the central concepts of figural sociology, the sociological theory utilised here to assist in understanding the data. Chapter three will then review various pieces of research that relate to the research topic and will attempt to justify the place of this present study. The reason that this chapter follows the theory chapter is that some of the concepts of figural sociology have been drawn on to assist in highlighting areas of attention across current work. The methods chapter (Chapter four) will explain and justify the choices made in terms of data collection and data analysis. The sample and the ways in which the sample was located will also become clear in this chapter. The following chapter will then present the results and demonstrate how the principles of figural sociology have enabled a furthered understanding of the topic, namely how the ideas surrounding complex figurations have helped explain the diluted application of intended goals. Finally the dissertation will be concluded in Chapter six

with research implications, potential drawbacks of the study and future research suggestions all presented here.

Theory – Figural Sociology

This chapter will highlight the key concepts of figural sociology and how they may relate to the research topic. The use of theory is integral to this study, “without a theoretical approach, we do not even know what to look for when beginning a study or interpreting results at the end of the research” (Giddens & Sutton, 2013, p. 10).

Figural sociology, which was developed out of the original work of Norbert Elias, has now become a substantial theoretical framework (Bloyce, Smith, Mead & Morris, 2008). This is to such an extent that Malcolm (2008) has suggested that “the maturity of figural sociology is now such that we can move away from extended theoretical re-statements and assume that such information is readily available elsewhere” (p. 261). However it is appropriate here to demonstrate how the figural approach will be employed in this research. In doing so this chapter will explore the following figural concepts: figurations; habitus; interdependent relationships; unintended consequences; involvement-detachment. The final section of this chapter will then consider the above concepts alongside the research aims of this case-study.

Processes

The roots of figural sociology are concerned with processes and relationships (Dunning & Hughes, 2012). The processual focus of figural work is so integral to the theory that the whole field is sometimes referred to as process sociology. This section will discuss what is meant by a processual focus. “One of the main objectives of figural sociology as Elias saw it was to encourage sociologists to ‘think processually’ by always studying social relations as emerging and contingent

processes” (Murphy, Sheard, & Waddington, 2000, p. 93). What Elias meant by this was that relationships cannot be predicted in their entirety as all relationships are continually adapting and changing. This argument that social formations are shaped over time means that we cannot look at one moment in time in order to provide an explanation (Maguire & Tuck, 1998). Instead the adoption of a ‘processual’ outlook enables us to consider the developments of relationships. In addition to this, Elias was also concerned with the tendency of sociologists to ignore the prior developments that have influence over a given phenomenon (Dunning & Hughes, 2012). Elias would suggest that all actions are ‘historically produced’, meaning that we are all influenced by actions and decisions that have gone before us. Laws and legislations are clear examples of this; we all are obliged to abide by certain rules, some of which may have been decided way before our birth. To think ‘processually’ is therefore to also consider the influence of prior actions on present standings.

Figurations

Now that the concern of processes has been addressed, the second concern of relationships requires explanation. The central concept of figurational sociology is by no surprise the figuration itself. Elias (1994) described a figuration as “a structure of mutually oriented and dependent people” (p. 482). The term figuration was developed as an alternative to dichotomous classifications of the ‘individual’ and ‘society’. Instead Elias (1978) argues that “societies are nothing but composite units of which individual beings form the component parts” (p. 71). What this means is that society is the product of individuals, they should not be considered as two separate beings. This influences Elias’s contention that individuals cannot be viewed in

isolation, instead we must always consider the influence of others. Indeed the concept aims to demonstrate how humans are related to one another and shape each other's actions in a variety of ways (Goudsblom, 1977). Elias (1994) would go as far to say that humans "exist only ... only as pluralities, only in figurations" (p. 482). This is because "people are more or less dependent on each other first by nature and then through social learning, through education, socialization, and socially generated reciprocal needs" (Elias, 1994, p. 482). This argument is much in line with the 'processual' outlook discussed in the prior section as all these constructs, particularly education and socialisation, are influenced by prior actions and decisions.

Habitus

The concept of habitus was first used by Elias in *The Civilizing Process* (1994) but has become more commonly associated with the works of Pierre Bourdieu. For Elias (1978) habitus refers to basic dispositions that are formed through a process of socialisation. Furthermore, Dunning (2002) suggests that such dispositions are never concrete and are instead continually reinforced by the relationships we form with one another. Habitus is thus something that is developed from birth and constantly reinforced by those around us (van Krieken, 1998). Elias suggests that it is these basic dispositions, or second nature, that informs us in our interactions with others. It can therefore be said that people are attuned or linked to one another by their habitus (Elias, 1978). Further to this, figurational sociologists argue that human interdependency lies far beyond what individuals may actually be able to appreciate (Elias, 1978). If we acknowledge Dunning's point that habitus is informed by

relationships, habitus is thus influenced by those beyond our immediate family or close relationships.

Interdependent Relationships

This next section will recognise Elias's position on the important sociological issue of power. Regardless of the size of power differentials Elias (1978) argued that "power is not an amulet possessed by one person and not by another; it is a structural characteristic of a relationship – of all human relationships" (p. 74). This 'characteristic' is said to present from birth, for example a baby will immediately have power over its parents "not just the parents over the baby. At least the baby has power over them as long as they attach ... value to it" (Elias, 1978, p. 74). However, the power ratio between a baby and its parents will not remain constant; as the child grows older the extent to which they are dependent on their parents will fluctuate between different points in time. Indeed Elias (1978) suggests that power is of a processual nature, meaning it is susceptible to change and constantly in flux. However many relationships are even less predictable than those between a parent and child. Within human relationships, individuals are found constantly measuring their strength against each other via every day occurrences, eventually they "may arrive at a certain balance of power" (Elias, 1978, p. 74). According to figurational sociologists, it is this balance that enables interdependent bonds. What is meant by this is that shared power, to whatever degree, is what leads us to be dependent on one another. Even in extreme circumstances where certain individuals have been able to largely influence their society – Elias referred to Hitler as one example - there were still consequences that these individuals had not anticipated (Dunning &

Hughes, 2012). Elias would label such consequences which are not foreseen by the individual, unintended outcomes. These outcomes are viewed by figurational sociologists as an inevitable product of interdependent relationships within complex human figurations, as will be argued next.

Unintended Outcomes

Elias made use of competitive games to help explain the intricacies of power balances within a figuration of interdependent humans; he called these examples game models. The central point of this argument is that the more complex the game, or the more participants competing, the less able an individual or group may be able to carry out or complete their intended aims. Making use of competitive sports to emphasise this point, we can understand how the path of the match would be clearer to a tennis player in a singles match, only responding to the actions of one player, than a football player having to compete alongside twenty-one others. In an eleven-a-side game each player would have to enter a balance of abilities with all actors and by extension will have to respond to most, if not all, of the individual actions of everyone on the field. Even the most powerful player will have to respond to the actions of the weakest (Elias, 1978). However Elias (1978) suggested that there is a limit to the number of participants one person can respond to at a given time. In such a game it will therefore be rather "difficult for a player to put together a mental picture of the course of the game" (Elias, 1978, p. 84), and as the match becomes more complex "the direction of the game will become more and more opaque to the individual player" (Elias, 1978, p. 85). Eventually this will lead to the game becoming "increasingly disorganised" (Elias, 1978, p. 85). According to Elias (1978) it is the

lack of control each group holds over such complex figurations that will lead to outcomes that they had not intended.

Involvement-Detachment

With regards to actual conduct when carrying out research, Elias (1956) suggested that we must make attempts to detach ourselves from the issue that we are studying and look beyond a society's common conceptions and ideas. This is not to say that we should become completely free of value judgements (Elias, 1956) – a common misconception of Elias's argument – for we are researching in the world that we are living. What Elias actually suggested was that we should establish degrees of adequacy (Bloyce, 2004), meaning that our detachment from the issue should be adequate for the purpose of the research. The balance that we are encouraged to take is one between “being an everyday participant and a scientific enquirer” (Murphy et al., 2000, p. 94). The position we find adequate will therefore place us somewhere between full involvement and complete detachment. The certain steps that were taken in this study to ensure that my involvement was object-adequate are covered in the methods chapter.

Applying Elias

This section will look to demonstrate how the concepts of figurational sociology can be applied to the study area. As has been discussed above, Elias (1978) would argue that power is not absolute in any given situation, instead there is always a balance, or a ratio, of power. In the case of policy makers and implementers, we can therefore assume that such actors find themselves dependent on others if they are to

be successful in their aims. This is a salient point as LAs are increasingly found to be working with other partners to deliver their transport goals (Lawlor et al., 2003). It could therefore be speculated that transport policy networks contain rather complex and increasingly lengthening chains of interdependency. According to figurational sociologists it is this type of figuration that is susceptible to many unintended outcomes. Despite this, many researchers often fail to account for unplanned events, especially those which derive from the wider social context (Powell, Thurston & Bloyce, 2014). This is therefore another area of importance for the present case-study. However what is interesting about this case-study is that the actors within Cycle Chester were all, superficially at least, in support of the same cause. This makes the research sample fairly unique from Elias examples of games, where one side of the figuration is directly opposed to the other. In order to further our understanding of a given topic, Elias (1978) suggested that we should always look to 'test' our current arguments. This research will therefore test the value of Elias's concepts in the context of the CDT delivery group.

Literature Review

The introduction chapter highlighted growing concerns over the high levels of obesity currently found in the UK. It then explained how some groups view the promotion of AT as a vital tool in 'reversing' such a 'crisis'. However the successful implementation of AT interventions has thus far been limited, according to SQW Consulting (2008) "cycling has not fared well against the targets that were set by local authorities" (p. 35). This is typified by the results of the 2011 census which showed that cycling levels have not altered over the past ten years (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2014). The implementation of AT policies is therefore a key area of interest. This chapter will attempt to justify the research question by presenting recent implementation studies, most of which have been conducted in the UK. All 'implementation studies' included here are those which focus on groups tasked with implementing specific policies. Almost all of these studies are in the areas of either health or transport. However the type of group tasked with implementing policy is irrespective, what is important here is the lessons that can be learnt and the tools that can be used when trying to understand the results of this study. The central aim of this chapter is to demonstrate how the present study will make strides towards furthering our understanding of the policy process in a small and localised sample. The chapter will begin by presenting the most commonly cited approaches of understanding the policy process and policy implementation. The latter part of this chapter will then discuss various empirical studies of policy implementation in contexts similar to that of the present case-study.

The Policy Implementation Process

The production and implementation of policy has significant ramifications for most aspects of human life. This why Penney and Evans (2005) suggest that policy “forms and frames the fabric of our personal and professional lives” (p. 21). However due to its rather contested and ambiguous nature, it is difficult to find a definition that would fit all policies (Houlihan & White, 2002). In response to this, many political scientists often present the policy process in stages. Hogwood and Gunn’s (1984) nine stage model is one that is most commonly cited. They state that the following stages are key to an understanding of the policy process:

- (1) Deciding to decide (issue search or agenda setting)
- (2) Deciding how to decide (or issue infiltration)
- (3) Issue definition
- (4) Forecasting
- (5) Setting objectives and priorities
- (6) Option analysis
- (7) Policy implementation, monitoring, and control
- (8) Evaluation and review
- (9) Policy maintenance, succession, or termination

(Hogwood & Gunn, 1984, p. 4).

Hogwood and Gunn do not describe the processes that led them to produce this model; however they do discuss each stage in more detail. If we focus on the delivery of policies, as is the task of this chapter, Hogwood and Gunn suggest that there are six stages which preclude implementation. The first two stages of the process highlight how certain issues find their place on political agendas. These

issues are then said to be correctly defined and estimations on the 'scale' or impact of the problem are gathered (Stages 3 & 4). An example of this is the estimated cost of obesity on the resources of the NHS, as described in the introduction chapter. At this point Hogwood and Gunn (1984) suggest that policy-makers begin to set their objectives and decide on a 'preferred option' of implementation (Stages 5 & 6). The implementation of policy then only receives one stage. In this stage Hogwood and Gunn do not describe the process of delivery but instead provide reasons as to why 'perfectly delivery' is not achievable. Whilst this may be helpful to those looking to understand the context of those tasked with delivery, this 'stage' receives little attention when compared to the more substantial account of the early stages of policy formation. After this stage Hogwood and Gunn suggest that policy-makers ask "whether the policy has been successful in achieving the outcomes desired" (p. 9). In the final stage this evaluation informs decisions on whether to continue, adapt, or terminate the policy intervention.

Although these models can be helpful in telling us what we can hope to study and when (Hudson & Lowe, 2004), a criticism such models may encourage is that they are set out in a rather descriptive manner. Figurational sociologists would argue that policy does not occur in such a regimented manner as it suggested in the models utilised by many political scientists. "The reality is that, like colours in the colour spectrum, these aspects of the policy process shade into each other" (Bloyce & Smith, 2010, p. 13). Bloyce and Smith (2010, p. 13) thus describe policies in the following way:

All policies can be viewed as involving the following overlapping and interrelated features: human action aimed at achieving certain objectives; human action aimed at resolving, or at least ameliorating, an identified 'problem'; and human action aimed at maintaining or modifying relationships within an existing organization, between different organizations, or a human figuration of some other kind.

Further to this, West and Scott (2000) state that all policy decisions have intended purposes but out of this comes unintended responses. It is therefore rather naïve to label all policies under the same banner as each policy will experience different outcomes throughout the process. They are certainly never as 'neat' as may be presumed from reading the above model.

As was previously noted, only one of Hogwood and Gunn's nine stages refers directly to those tasked with the delivery of a given policy. This perhaps emphasises the potential of this model to underestimate the influence of other individuals and organisations involved in the making and implementing of policy (Birkland, 2011). Smith (1973) claimed that academics too often underestimate the importance of policy implementation. Green (2010) supports this by stating that the extent to which practitioners at the 'grass-roots' level can amend policy is often overlooked. From these arguments it could be said that policy formulation continues throughout the time of implementation (Hill, 2013). However this is not to suggest that there is a smooth process of succession, in fact academics suggest that there is often a 'policy-practice' gap (Hill & Hupe, 2009), specifically referring to the 'amendments'

made by deliverers (Green, 2010). These amendments may not sit at ease with policy-makers, however it should be a rather expected process.

Hill (2013) argues that a “top-down perspective is deeply rooted in the stages model” (p. 207). Within the top-down approach to policy analysis there is an assumption that certain bodies simply ‘possess’ power, particularly political groups, as emphasised in the following quote: “Power is conceptualised as largely a property of political institutions and a resource which enables ‘power-holders’ to achieve their particular goals” (Houlihan, 2003, p. 31). What this means of course is that those outside of these institutions hold little power over those within the policy making circle. It is therefore rather clear why those who take a top-down approach to policy analysis would have little problem with adopting Hogwood and Gunn’s model, which arguably places much more emphasis on the moments when policy is with the ‘power holding’ political institutions. However if we consider the above discussion on local ‘amendments’, it would perhaps be much better to understand these relationships in terms of interdependency.

Finally, Hill (2013) suggested that “the case for the stressing importance of implementation as distinct from the policy formation process, and as deserving attention in its own right, has tended to lead to an overemphasis on the distinctiveness of the two processes” (p. 206). There is thus a need to recognise that the two ‘areas’ are part of the same process. Hogwood and Gunn do state that the “interaction between policy-making and implementing is often very complex” (p. 9), meaning that there are several cross-overs, however their stage model could lead us

to think otherwise. Indeed the very same criticism could be laid on this chapter, where for pragmatic reasons only policy implementation studies have been considered. The primary reason behind this is that this case-study of Cycle Chester is focused on group relationships during implementation. Despite this, the above discussion has encouraged the empirical element of this thesis to consider the policy process as a whole.

Policy Implementation

Six clear themes have been highlighted throughout various implementation studies and are all discussed below. These themes are as follows: Success factors; Public support; State ideologies; Local ideologies; Wider dependency chains; Collective ideologies.

Success Factors

The first theme to be discussed here concerns success factors in policy implementation. In attempting to identify a broad set of specific implementation factors Noordegraaf, Annema and van Wee (2014) conducted a content analysis of 106 empirical academic papers, all of which set out to analyse the implementation of 'road price cases' over six different cities across the world. Each 'road price case' referred to the intended introduction of toll roads. Of all the thirty-six success factors that were highlighted in this paper, six were said to be common across each case. The most prominent factors were clear communication and marketing, public support and political support. However, whilst these factors were found across a vast number of papers, and are therefore too common to deny, some academics such as Gaffron

(2003) would take issue with such a wish-list approach. Gaffron would agree that there are a broad range of factors contributing to the success, or otherwise, of those tasked with implementing policy. However she would also suggest that there are no such 'panacea' factors that will work in all authorities. Perhaps then, more can be gleaned from studies which focus on the complexities involved in working relationships as opposed to those attempting to construct a paper which mirrors a delivery manual. Indeed most articles which assess the implementation of transport policy and health policy often focus on the supposed 'barriers' which prevent successful implementation (Powell et al., 2014; Dowling, Powell, & Glendinning, 2004).

The role of the individual(s)

Public Support

Much of the literature presented here examines the potential influence of individuals on the policy-implementation process; the central feature of this next section. The main reason for this focus is that we would be extremely naïve to analyse decisions without considering personalities and philosophies. The first theme discussed here concerns public support for interventions. The extent to which the public assume something to be an issue will often affect the attention an issue receives within governments, especially with regards to funding and legislation (Gatersleben & Uzzell, 2003). Public support has also been found to have a significant influence at a local level, as will now be discussed.

Docherty (2000) conducted twenty semi-structured interviews with members of two LAs, Merseyside and Strathclyde. The aim here was to demonstrate the development of transport policies, in this case rail policies. In support of the interviews Docherty also explored official documents from the respective areas. This ensured that he could appreciate policy objectives and gather an understanding of any policy debates which would then inform the interviews. This process of triangulation is of benefit to the study as Docherty has been able to cross-check findings and further his understanding of the area from an additional source. Based on these investigations, Docherty (2000) concluded that public support can help 'solve' internal conflicts by influencing certain decisions and project directions. This argument was produced on the basis that several participants suggested that public support for an intervention often enabled actors to "win the argument" (Docherty, 2000, p. 168), 'the argument' referring to deliberations over which specific intervention to deliver. As a result of this, public support then became 'the aspiration' of the local officers, meaning that they saw the worth of having the public behind their project. However, this study was conducted almost fifteen years ago. It will therefore be interesting to discover the effect of public support on the present case-study as it may be assumed that public perceptions towards cycling have changed over the past fifteen years.

State Ideologies

Certain studies have shown how the philosophies of those above the local level can effect local implementation. Cole et al. (2010) conducted a study in Australia which was centered on twenty-nine semi-structured interviews with senior and middle-level

administrators. These administrators were from bodies of the public and private sectors, all with a professional interest in AT. The principal finding of this study was that a lack of political will was found to impact on the work of local officers. The main reason behind the lack of political support was suggested to be that the car is continually the travel mode of choice throughout constituents. As a result of this there was said to be no clear AT strategy within the state. The suggested impact of this was that local officers do not see AT as part of their role and are happy to place the blame firmly with the government (Cole et al., 2010). As was discussed in the policy section of the introduction chapter, these findings may well resonate in the UK, where there has been a clear lack of tangible policy (Aldred 2012). This may explain the lack of literature accounting for 'slippage' among AT delivery groups. Slippage is a concept which refers to elements of policies which may be missed or misinterpreted, whether deliberate or not, by those tasked with delivery (Penney & Evans, 2005). Penney and Evans' arguments were formed on the basis of Penney's PhD thesis. The aim of this thesis was to explore the impact of the 1988 Education Reform Act on the provision of PE. Whilst this thesis may be dated, it demonstrates how the text of policies, in this case the National Curriculum for Physical Education, can be gradually "manipulated and transformed" (Penney & Evans, 2005, p. 68). The most significant difference between documents such as the National Curriculum and current AT policies is that there is no legal requirement to apply the majority of content within AT policies, 'slippage' may therefore be a much larger issue.

Local ideologies

This theme is constructed around papers which discuss the impact of local ideologies – referring to inherent thoughts and dispositions – on the delivery process.

The first study presented here demonstrates how the local presence of a ‘cycling champion’ can greatly impact on policy uptake. Gaffron (2003) conducted research with British local transport planners from 204 different LAs, asking each area to answer a questionnaire on their cycling strategies and targets. Gaffron’s conclusions suggest that there was a strong relationship between the employment of a cycling officers and the adoption of policies within LAs. What this demonstrates is that an ‘official’ interest in cycling helps to generate delivery. What these findings cannot do is tell us about the endeavours ‘cycle champions’ have to go through before a policy is adopted, qualitative data may have been more enlightening in that regard.

Nonetheless, the response rate of these questionnaires was around 45%, so on the face of it we can therefore take findings to be rather representative (Gaffron, 2003). However questions may be called over the extent to which the responding authorities were those who were most ‘cycling friendly’.

In order to gage an understanding of attitudes towards AT Gatersleben and Uzzell (2003) sent out postal-surveys to local authority officers, residents and local organisations within one community. This study found that local authority officer’s priorities for cycling were much in line with their residents. However the extent to which they saw themselves as policy-makers was limited. Further to this one third of the respondents felt that they could do absolutely nothing about their concerns over car use (Gatersleben & Uzzell, 2003). What this demonstrates is that LA officers feel

they can do little about AT concerns even if their intentions are to do so. It is again unfortunate that this study was solely based on a quantitative research design as it would have interesting to further explore the feelings of local officers and their perceived status within the policy process. Further to this, both of these above studies were carried out over a decade ago when LAs and AT concerns were under different contexts. Nonetheless many LAs still tend to not give cycling and walking issues the attention many academics would suggest they deserve (SQW Consulting, 2008). It will thus be interesting to explore this issue further. What we already know is that the reluctance of workers to become involved in policy implementation is not uncommon in other policy arenas. West and Scott (2000) suggest that nurses are often rather reluctant to get involved with policies as they do not see it to be part of their role. This is largely due to the fact that many nurses are suggested to remain close to their day to day duties and do not become involved in areas of work which they view to be within the role of management (West & Scott, 2000). However it must be noted that there is no empirical research directly supporting this argument, instead this paper is supported by previous literature. These conclusions are thus based on informed, but yet speculative, thinking.

Wider dependency chains

When cycling projects *are* implemented, Jones (2012) suggests that infrastructure is more successful if it is part of a multifaceted approach that includes pro-cycling events and restrictive interventions for cars. This is supported by Goodman, Sahlqvist, and Ogilvie (2013) who concluded that infrastructure projects may only attract existing cyclists if implemented without additional support. This conclusion

was gathered from 1,849 questionnaires “before and after the construction of walking and cycling infrastructure in three UK municipalities (Goodman et al., 2013, 518). Many of the respondents who said that they now used the infrastructure also stated that they were cyclists before the intervention. What this means for our understanding of the policy process is that some policies will have a rather limited effect until joined by other supporting interventions. The ‘success’ of some policies are thus also dependent on a wider network of actors who are working towards other policies.

Particularly in mainland Europe interventions that attempt to make cars the subordinate travel option have helped upkeep high cycling percentages (Gatersleben & Uzzell, 2003; Pucher & Buehler, 2007). Indeed there have been certain interventions in the UK that have had a similar effect, such as the congestion charge in central London. A study which has further explored this issue is that by Panter, Desousa and Ogilvie (2013). These authors have carried out several case studies in Cambridge. Their paper was based on a study which asked certain workers to detail a week’s worth of their daily commute, 1,142 people completed this seven day diary. For all of those who reported back, only two variables were found to be significant. The first being whether or not they had to pay to park their car, and the second, the extent to which their route to work is supportive of cyclists. What this shows is that non-cycling interventions, such as charging for car-parking can be equally as important as specific cycling interventions. However Cambridge is “the local authority with highest rate of cycling to work” (ONS, 2014, p. 1) in the whole of the UK, the extent to which such findings can be applied to other cities in the UK where cycling percentages are not as high, is therefore questionable.

Collective Ideologies

This final theme considers work which has focused on the relationships between delivery partners, a key field of research for understanding the aforementioned hypothesis. Partnership working is increasingly utilised when delivering various projects, especially those within the health and transport sectors (Aveling & Martin, 2013; Lawlor et al., 2003). As the number of partnerships between parties has increased, so has the amount of empirical research on such a topic. For instance, Dickinson and Glasby (2010) carried out a case-study within a mental health partnership with an aim to explore the potential pitfalls and problems such an arrangement may promote. The first stage of this was to invite all staff within the partnership to complete an online survey which explored how well staff thought the partnership was working; fifty-three members completed this survey. This was followed-up by eighteen interviews with senior staff and two focus groups with members of each side of the partnership (Dickinson & Glasby, 2010). The main discussion of this paper concerns the objectives that are set between partners. The most significant discovery was that predicted outcomes within partnerships are often unrealistic and fail to recognise the potential pitfalls, or unintended outcomes (Elias, 1978), a delivery group may encounter. Despite this important finding – which may have great relevance to the project within the present case-study – the researchers could be said to be too attached to their research question. For example, from the outset this research was searching for problems within the organisational structure of local partnerships, this is exemplified in the title of the article, *'Why Partnership Working Doesn't Work'*. However other research has also been able to highlight difficulties with regards to goals and objectives across partnerships. May and Marsden (2006) held eighteen interviews with 'senior' officers across three different

areas, London, Edinburgh and West Yorkshire. In this paper it is suggested that substantial difference between the objectives of different organisations often creates “tensions in the policy development and implementation process” (May & Marsden, p.31). This conclusion was based on the differences found between London, where there was a unitary authority with the power to lead different areas, and Edinburgh and West Yorkshire, where there was not. It is therefore suggested that such tensions may be ameliorated if authorities were to emulate the workings of London. However the chief criticism for this paper is that it is rather unhelpful to draw comparisons between the working patterns of these three areas, which are afforded significantly different levels of autonomy, and of course target rather different populations. Indeed the authors themselves recognise that London is a city unlike anywhere else in the UK (May & Marsden, 2006).

Focusing on a single localised region, Powell et al. (2014) sought to investigate the interrelationships between health promotion parties. The collection of data in this study was rather extensive and included 52 observations, documentary analysis and 32 semi-structured interviews. This case-study highlighted two key areas which limited the effectiveness of communication between the individual parties. Firstly Powell et al. (2014) found that certain individuals were drawn towards the ideologies of their working environment, labelled in the paper as ‘organisational pull’. This was found to be a constraint on their work with other groups as each group had their own ‘organisational pull’ and ideologies were thus rarely aligned. The second important finding was that knowledge and experience within a certain geographical area enabled many workers to exert power, or control, over other workers. In other words, those with greater ‘local status’ had more control over the path of their figuration.

This may be an interesting point to explore in the present study as some participants will come with great cycling experience whilst others may come from a management or transport perspective.

Whilst the study by Powell et al. (2014) tells us much about partnership working between parties across the public and private sector, it does not, due to the nature of the field of work, involve any actors from the voluntary sector, this may be an interesting dimension. Indeed Milbourne (2009) suggested that the public sector is increasingly engaging with the third sector. A paper which does explore the impact of volunteers is that by May, Harris and Collins (2013). They set out to explore the attitudes of sport volunteers towards policy. In a mixed method study approach that included questionnaires and twenty five semi-structured interviews, May et al. (2013) concluded that volunteers at sports clubs often have an indifference towards national sport policy and top-down delivery approaches. Consistent with the findings of White (2013) this demonstrates that policy makers, and perhaps those within LAs, are rather dependent on the seemingly less powerful volunteers. We can safely assume that “in an ideal world policy-makers would wish for themselves ‘complete control’ over the circumstances in which they find themselves” (Bloyce & Smith, 2010, p. 19). However it is clear that such a circumstance would never occur, instead such individuals as the volunteers described above have a marked influence on the delivery of a given policy. Considering that the ‘steering group’ of Cycle Chester – which will be further detailed in the following chapter – was made up of a large proportion of volunteers, this case-study may elaborate on issues of shared objectives. The intention is to provide a more adequate understanding of partnership working between the public, private and voluntary sectors, groups of individuals

which will all have their own historical ideologies and future objectives ('organisational pull').

Summary

The wealth of literature concerning implementation in the 'physical activity and built environment' field is still rather limited (Harris, Lecy, Hipp, Brownson, & Parra, 2013). This is particularly significant when considering that cycling figures in the UK have not increased, despite a growth in AT policies. Further to this, there has yet to be an official evaluation of the second round of CDTs. Coalter (2007) would suggest that is just one of many examples which illustrate how the government are more interested in 'take-offs' as opposed to 'landings', meaning that they often place a large emphasis on the introduction of a policy but rarely place the same focus on evaluations. However, whilst we may not have any evaluation documents to consider, most of the aforementioned literature has told us to expect to find several complexities within the deliverance of such a project.

With regards to the Cycle Chester project, policy results alone cannot tell us about the power struggles within the policy process, they only provide us with the outputs, some of which may not always be attributable to the specific policy intervention. Instead the present reasearch will explore the relationships between certain personnel who worked with and within the delivery group of the Cycle Chester project, this may highlight some of the enabling and constraining factors that come from working in partnership.

Research Methods

Introduction

The theory chapter outlined various concepts of Elias's figurational sociology, concepts which guide the framework of this thesis. This chapter now aims to demonstrate (i) how Elias's assumptions have impacted upon and guided the method choices of the present research; and (ii) how the study was conducted. In order to convey these aims the chapter will discuss the primary research method itself, semi-structured interviews. It will then present the participants of the study and how they came to be involved; the research procedures; ethical considerations; and finally, data analysis.

Semi-structured interviews

Elias suggested that we must always strive to find the most object-adequate method of gathering knowledge, meaning that the purpose of the research must guide the research approach (Bloyce, 2004). It was therefore intended that the methods used were those which best fit the research aims, as will now be discussed. The principal research strategy was the use of semi-structured interviews. Most would therefore suggest that the research design was qualitative. However figurational sociologists encourage the avoidance of such dichotomous terms as qualitative and quantitative (Bloyce, 2004). Waddington and Smith (2014) remind us that research is a process which rarely follows the path of textbook guidelines. In this case, the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research methods is not as clear as some texts would have us believe. For example, Roberts (2009) suggests that research designs

are not mutually exclusive; “they can be combined in the same project” (p. 222). Indeed this project also required an element of documentary analysis. As will be discussed later in this chapter, certain documents formed a large part of participant selection as they helped to highlight most of the significant actors within the Cycle Chester project. These documents were then further utilised to explain and understand participant responses. For example, I have used documents to elaborate on details that certain participants could not provide, such as logistics and funding.

Semi-structured interviews were used to explore the retrospective accounts of all participants. Each interview consisted of open-ended questions that were part of a pre-prepared structure (Appendix B). These questions were then followed-up by additional questions which were either more probing than the original question or used to clarify information (Roulston, 2010). The organised set of questions assisted with my aim of becoming adequately detached from the topic of research, as generic prompts were decided prior to the interview. This reduced the potential for any inclusion of leading questions informed by my personal views or research needs. However this does not guarantee complete detachment. In the theory chapter it was said that researchers must always find an adequate position on the involvement-detachment continuum. This is in the recognition that we cannot ever hope to become completely detached from a research topic. However this should not be seen as a shortcoming, Roulston (2010) suggests that it is actually essential that participants *have* experienced the topic of conversation, otherwise the interview would contain few relevant responses as the schedule and follow-up questions would contain a lack of specific content. In addition to the benefit of being able to ask follow-up questions, Denscombe (2011) states that semi-structured interviews help

explore personal accounts of experiences and feelings. This is largely due to the flexibility of semi-structured interviews which allow the participants to elaborate on areas of particular interest (Gratton & Jones, 2010). This enabled me to gather an understanding of the issues that were most important to the participants. Had the interviews been of a more structured nature, such experiences could not have been explored.

Participants

The sample consisted of those directly involved in delivering the Cycle Chester project and other actively interested parties such as charities and campaigners (see table 1 for more detail). This ensured that the sample was especially informative and was thus a purposive sample (Bryman, 2008). Responding to Elias's concept of the figuration and the idea that human actions must not be viewed in isolation (Elias, 1994; Goudsblom, 1977), it was essential that this research focused on the various parties who were openly involved in the project and not just a small number of key individuals. Considering that interdependency is far beyond what we can hope to appreciate (Elias, 1978), it was also imperative that interviews considered those who were not so openly involved with the project but still had a marked impact on the delivery group. The focus on one singular case-study meant that I had the time to uncover such insights, some of which may not have come to the surface had the research covered a series of projects (Denscombe, 2011). However the drawback of this case-study is that any findings should not be considered to be representative of CDTs nationwide. Nonetheless they may be able to tell us something about the context in which the delivery group were positioned.

Participants were identified by initially contacting those who were in charge of cycling provisions in Chester. Through speaking to these various actors, I was then able to locate project documents and begin to construct a potential sample. Locating these documents would have been significantly more difficult had contact not been made with these actors as the project was abruptly ended in conjunction with the abolishment of Cycling England in 2010, this has meant that most documents are now extremely difficult to gather. The Cycle Chester Masterplan (Cycle Chester, 2009) was published in 2009, in this document 18 'stakeholders' were presented. This group of stakeholders all sat on the Cycle Chester 'steering group' and met every two months throughout the three year project to discuss the best ways of promoting and improving cycling across Chester (Cycle Chester, 2009). Through discussions with key personnel, I was able to obtain the contact details of fifteen out of the eighteen members. The three unobtainable members had moved positions and could not be located. However these 'stakeholders' were not the only targeted group. As I began reading through official documents it became clear that there were certain individuals who came to have a notable influence on the project but were not a part of the stated steering group. This included project managers, who were detailed in project publications (CWaC, 2008; Cycle Chester, 2009), and members of various cycling organisations, whose support was recognised in documents such as project newsletters, all of these people were contacted. Furthermore, after each interview with the initial group of contacts, I always asked whether the participant thought there was anyone else who could be important to the study, this was thus a process of snowball sampling (Bryman, 2008). Seven participants were original members of the steering group, four were located through relevant project

documents (including the two project managers), and the final four participants were recommended by original participants.

Procedure

Of 15 participants, 14 took part in semi-structured interviews and one participant responded via email. The email response was to the exact same questions but could not be classed as truly qualitative as I was in no place to ask further questions. The majority of the interviews were conducted face-to-face in an agreed public place; however when travel distances or time constraints for the participants meant that this was not possible, interviews were conducted over the telephone. When this occurred it was imperative that the experience of the telephone interview was as close to the other interviews as was possible (King & Horrocks, 2010), the interview schedule was thus utilised in the exact same way. The drawback of such interviews is that it is not possible to pick up on 'body language', an important paradigm when trying to understand participant responses (Silverman, 2010). However in some cases telephone interviews may have turned out to be a positive of the procedure as certain participants requested a telephone interview to ensure that they did not have to leave their usual surroundings; this may have actually made them more comfortable with responses.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was gained prior to any interviews; the confirmation letter detailing this approval can be found in Appendix A. The main ethical considerations for this research project were the confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Anonymity

was deemed important as some of the participants still work in the same areas they did during the project or still hold relationships with other steering group parties. As a result of this all participants will be referred to using pseudonyms. This was expressed clearly on the participant information sheet (Appendix C) and participant consent form (Appendix D). If pseudonyms were not used some of the participants may not have felt comfortable to reveal some of their more controversial experiences. To further reduce this issue all transcripts were made available upon request; this was so that participants could check if there was any information they did not want included in this thesis. Participants were also told that they had a right to withdraw the entirety of their data from the study at any time.

Data Analysis

The themes that emerged from the semi-structured interviews were established through a process of thematic analysis. This process began by reading through transcripts and highlighting any areas of importance or interest (Roulston, 2010). These areas of importance were then classified into codes; all codes were structured by the assistance of qualitative data analysis software (MAXQDA 11). MAXQDA enabled me to highlight important responses and assign them to a code. Once this had been done for all the transcripts each code could be selected and all the previously highlighted responses which related to that code would be displayed. This ensures a smooth process when writing the discussion chapter as responses can be easily located. After this process codes were then grouped on similarity into categories and these categories were then grouped into themes (Roulston, 2010). Each theme identifies the recurrent and distinctive features of participants' accounts

that I considered relevant to the research question (King & Horrocks, 2010). The concepts of Elias and subsequent figurational sociologists have been extremely helpful when developing themes. The themes are as follows: Chains of Interdependency; Conflicting Habituses; Project Gigantism; The Invisible Wall; 'Localised' Knowledge; The Established – Outsider; Harmonious Goals. The next chapter will discuss these themes in great detail.

Table 1. The sample.

Participant Pseudonym	Steering Group (SG) Members?	Sector	Sex	Full-time role in transport?
Council - Planning	'Stakeholder' (S) *Did not sit on SG	Public	Male	No
Independent Member	Yes	Private	Male	No
Community Trust Representative	Yes	Third	Male	No
University Representative	Yes	Public	Female	No
Police Representative	Yes	Public	Male	No
Cycling Campaigner A	Yes	Third	Male	Yes
Cycling Campaigner B	Yes	Third	Male	No
Project Manager A	Yes	Public	Male	No
Project Manager C	Yes	Public	Female	Yes
Council – Temporary Project Manager	No	Public	Male	Yes
CDT Programme Manager	No	Public	Female	Yes
Council - Regeneration	No	Public	Male	No
Cycling Campaigner C	No	Third	Male	No
Cycling Club – Chair	No	Third	Male	No
Cycling Development Officer	No	Third	Male	Yes

Discussion

The following will explain how the concepts of figurational sociology have helped develop a more adequate understanding of the relationships between various individuals within a localised sample. Elias (1991) viewed all complex societies as both 'firm' and 'elastic'. For example we are all guided by national constraints which may in some way dictate what you can and cannot choose, this is the firm part of our lives. However there is also an element of individual action in most situations (Bloyce & Smith, 2010), this is what Elias refers to as the elastic side of figurations. If this was applied to the CDT project or by further extension LA projects in general, it is clear to see how there are often firm restrictions, or legal guidelines, on what is delivered, who it is delivered by, and how it is delivered. However there is also an element of individual action, room for movement, or elasticity on specific decisions. Therefore it is not for individuals to produce such opportunities but it is within them to either seize or miss these opportunities (Elias, 1991). This chapter will discuss the individual actions that may have led to a divergence from any original (firm) guidance.

(Unknown) Chains of Interdependency

This first theme is concerned with the elements of data that refer to the various complex chains of interdependencies that were discovered by the delivery group, many of which were not considered when original plans were being drawn together. Considering that Elias (1978) argued that human interdependence stretches far beyond what the individual may appreciate, this is a rather salient point. The first issue that the deliverers stumbled across was gaining public support for their

projects. Many participants were keen to discuss how their original views on public support began to change as their plans became more concrete. Specific problems were found when a community found out that cycling infrastructure was due to be built in their area. This is consistent with much of the literature outlined in Chapter three that suggested public support is vital to the implementation of cycling projects (Gatersleben & Uzzell, 2003).

I was a little naive and thought, you know, I always think of cyclists as very happy, who has got issues with cyclists? They are healthy and doing their bit for the environment, [laughs] no. It was quite a smack in the face to suddenly go we don't want cyclists, we don't want them in the city centre, we don't want them on the pavements, we don't want them on the roads.

Project Manager C

Certain groups managed to disrupt the development of programmes by voicing their concerns. A notable example was when various members of a sport club gathered together to argue against one of the major infrastructure plans, an extension to an already established foot-bridge. "They gave all sorts of reasons why they didn't want it outside the entrance to their... club and they put the blockers on it" (Cycling Campaigner B (SG)). This demonstrates the dependence that such a project can have on the wider community. Whilst the delivery group tried to peruse this project, the objections eventually meant that the plans had to be halted.

We ran into so much trouble that we couldn't go back and change it, it was too late in the day, we just had to scrap the idea... It just happened to be, members of that club... went to fight on behalf of the club, it was only half of the club but then we had no chance of it being built.

Council – Temporary Project Manager

Elias had great interest in the 'network phenomena' humans produce. According to Elias (1991) such phenomena is characterised by the process of humans changing and reshaping themselves in relation to one another. Here it can be said that the original project plans had to be 'reshaped' due to the influence of wider parties.

This next section will discuss how parties outside of the immediate geographical area also had a marked impact on the project. Meeting minutes demonstrate that several departments within the council were constructing bids to various funding agencies, not only in the North West, but across Europe; however none of these were successful (CWaC, 2008). This is perhaps understandable when considering that the recent economic crisis was extremely prominent at this time, of course something that could not have been truly foreseen at the time of the bid. Houlihan and Lindsay (2013) suggest that a growth in state controls over income has meant that LAs have become increasingly dependent on the central government. Considering that external funding could not be sourced to the extent to which was hoped, the dependence on the state was further increased. In the final programme report (CWaC, 2010) it was suggested that this was a large factor in the delivery of targets, and indeed one of the reasons behind the fact that only two of the four major infrastructure projects were completed as intended (Cycling England, 2010).

The 'success' of delivery was also found to be somewhat dependent on national interventions beyond funding, such as strategic decisions from Cycling England and DfT personnel. Once again this delayed elements of various projects: "You have to

have authorisations and they take six months and when it was a two to three year project you have no chance really. You can't design a scheme until you know you have authorisation, so there were delays in that aspect" (Council – Temporary Project Manager). Such thoughts were mirrored by one of the full-time project managers:

We have particular regulations, there are highways regulations, erm, financial regulations that we have to adhere to. What should be a straight forward lets go and put a line down a road and make a cycle path takes 12 months because you have to consult, and then you have to get state agreement to do certain things.

Project Manager C

However the impact of these two groups could not have been a surprise to the council staff, after all, Cycling England was the organisation tasked with leading the project by the DfT. What may not have been considered to the same extent was the impact of national changes outside of transport. Principally the enforced move towards a unitary council shortly after Chester City Council and Cheshire County Council had won the bid. According to various participants, the largest influence of this restructure was the disruptions to staffing. "When you restructure an organisation and people are unsure on what their roles are, new departments are being created and normal sort of communication channels are completely disrupted" (Cycling Campaigner B (SG)). Significantly these restructures meant that many staff changed roles in order to progress through the organisation. Such staff alterations eventually meant that Cycle Chester had four different project managers between the original bid and the conclusion of the project, certain participants commented on

how this impacted on delivery. “The lack of consistent leadership seemed to be problematic for delivery” (CDT Programme Manager). More specifically, a lack of progress was a highlighted outcome of the changes to leadership: “I suppose with there being very little continuation between the different project managers, very little of the funding had been spent by the time I came in” (Programme Manager C). With so much movement happening at the time, a member of the steering group suggested that this took certain council staff’s attention away from the project. “I think it was difficult because there was a time of turmoil and the focus for them was not on the delivery of the project” (Cycling Campaigner B (SG)). Such issues are consistent with the conclusions of Marsden and May (2006) who suggested that a three year long transition period must be anticipated after any major organisational reform. This was largely found to be due to the forming of new cultures and loss of certain previous contacts, connections, and relationships. What all of these aforementioned issues demonstrate is how unintended outcomes can arise from a level of dependence on the actions of other parties, actions which will have previously not been fully considered. It could therefore be suggested that such groups are dependent on far too many individuals for their plans to ever remain ‘firm’.

Conflicting Habituses

Elias (1978) would describe a person’s habitus as their ‘embodied social learning’ or ‘second nature’. This theme refers to the ways in which the habitus of certain key deliverers conflicted with the project’s intentions. This was deemed to have a rather significant effect on the eventual delivery: “That was one of the struggles at Cycle

Chester was that we didn't get the buy-in from the areas who had to deliver these schemes" (Council – Temporary Project Manager).

Certain participants noted how the habitus of the two organisations, who originally submitted the bid, slightly differed when it came to transport interventions. "The county council as a highway authority were very focused on the technical delivery in terms of highways standards and maintenance improvements, as a city council we were a lot more focused on, erm, the quality of the work in a historical city" (Council – Regeneration). A potential reason for this was provided by a steering group member, who suggested that there was an imbalance of transport focused individuals in the two authorities: "The county council was incredibly dominated by road engineers as most county councils are. The officers in the city didn't see transport as their issue anyway" (Cycling Campaigner A (SG)).

Issues connected to habitus were also found within departments of the unitary authority CWaC. One participant suggested that the sort of cycling interventions that were being promoted through the project were going against the normal practices of the road engineers within the council: "The engineers, they just wanted to build for cars because that is what we were always told to do" (Council – Temporary Project Manager). This meant that the project management came across issues when handing over their plans to engineers: "It just fell on deaf ears when we wanted to promote the more controversial stuff" (Council – Temporary Project Manager). This finding is consistent with that of Cole et al. (2010) who suggested that road engineers are often against AT interventions as they do not consider walking and cycling to be legitimate travel modes. In addition to this, two council officers

discussed how a lack of impetus from wider council members may have impacted on this issue. “To increase cycling you really have to decrease other areas, so basically cars. Cutting to the chase, was there really that ... possibly not” (Council – Regeneration). What this meant for the Temporary Project Manager was that the road engineers were always going to continue with their learnt practices until encouraged to do differently: “We need to get pedestrians and cyclists through the junction first, until they are told to do that they will always do cars first”. The same participant then went onto to suggest that this issue could have been overcome had such workers been consulted prior to the bid deadline.

The people who were going to deliver it weren't involved in the consultations ... so it just became extra workload for them... If they had been involved in the application process we would have made adjustments to the work force or the work load to accommodate it.

Council – Temporary Project Manager

In some regard the argument here is an extension of the previous theme, as a party, who according to certain participants were not correctly considered, have come to impact on the project outcomes.

Project Gigantism

The title of this theme is an extension of Bloyce and Smiths' (2010) concept 'Legacy Gigantism'. In reference to the Olympic Games, 'gigantism' is a term used to describe the process by which the number of sports at each Games has grown beyond what many feel is acceptable. Amid these concerns Bloyce and Smith (2010) suggest that the current bidding process cities must enter in order to win the rights to host the Olympic Games encourages cities to “promise more and long-lasting

benefits” (p. 158), this is the very process they refer to as ‘legacy gigantism’. Stoker (2004) suggests that there has been an increase in the number of funding streams that are allocated as a result of a competitive bidding process. This is said to be largely due to the competitive requirement for funding across the local sector. This theme will discuss the ways in which the CDT bidding process may have constrained potential ‘host’ cities to present ambitious plans.

Many recent AT policies have placed a large emphasis on localised targets, maintaining that local officers are in the best position to acknowledge ‘issues’ within their localised area (Butcher, 2012). However it may be argued that Cycling England could have been more helpful in the design stage by providing more guidance to the potential CDTs. Cycling England was not prescriptive about the measures each town should take to meet the challenge of getting more people cycling. Thus the towns “all adopted different strategies to get more people onto their bikes” (Butcher, 2012, p. 7). However some of these strategies were rather unrealistic, as will be demonstrated in this section. One steering group member who was highly involved in the Cycle Chester bid described the bidding process as a “beauty contest” (Cycling Campaigner A (SG)). Such a process involved all of the prospective towns putting over their best case to Cycling England. “We would basically go through the brief and try to tick all the boxes and say how fantastic we were and the exciting things we could do with the money from the... project” (Project Manager A). However several participants suggested that the need to impress the decision makers at Cycling England meant that the major project plans, which included two new bridges entering into Chester, were rather ambitious. “A new bridge would have been the first bridge since 1900. If you imagine Chester city hasn’t had a new bridge since that time, that

is quite ambitious; but equally in the bids if you didn't have ambition ... in the first place then you wouldn't have got the funding" (Project Manager A). It was not until the council received the funding that plans were said to become much more reality congruent. "Obviously the bid goes in with the best case scenario with a sort of level of detail... When you ... say we are actually doing it now, you then start to find either more detail or residents start to air their views" (Council – Regeneration). Further to this, one of the local cycling campaigners argued that the 'beauty contest' nature of this process also impacts on the relationship between potential 'host' towns and cities. "Before the bids go in there is no interaction and I think that is a big flaw" (Cycling Campaigner A (SG)). It was suggested that this was because bidding departments like to keep their plans within a close environment to help prevent other parties from producing a superior package.

Dickinson and Glasby (2010) suggested that partnership projects which are lacking clear outcomes are always likely to struggle. Followers of Elias may suggest that this is due to the unintended outcomes poorly defined projects are likely to promote. "The more fantasy-laden the basis for... interventions, the more likely... interventions are to have a higher degree of unintended relative to intended consequence" (Dunning & Hughes, 2012, p. 47). This point was largely reflected in the project, such 'beauty contest' bids do not account for the unintended consequences that derive from working within human figurations. This argument is emphasised in the following quote:

When you are trying to implement a complicated project ... things can slip because things come out of the woodwork that you hadn't really thought of.

There can be major objections that come out and go into a legal process. The

net result of that means that the whole time frame of getting things on the ground is skewed.

Cycling Campaigner C

It was also suggested by certain participants that the original bid failed to present a true reflection of costs. “You look at the plans and they say it will only cost a million pounds, suddenly it will cost 6 million pounds” (Council – Temporary Project Manager). Links can again be made to the Olympic Games, more specifically the London 2012 bid which did not account for any security costs (Bloyce & Smith, 2010; London 2012, 2005).

In part this theme is also a summary of the previous two themes as it goes a long way to explain some of the communication issues that have already been highlighted. In *Conflicting Habitus* it was discussed how certain key deliverers were not included in the bidding process. However several participants suggested that the time scale of the bid meant that this was not possible. “You don’t have time to consult with the community, you have 6 months to put together a bid based on what you know and your experiences on what is good, but we haven’t got time to check if the community want that” (Project Manager C). This process did not occur until after the council had been successful in their bid “We spent the first year asking people what they wanted really” (Council – Temporary Project Manager). Had certain parties been consulted prior to the project, the delivery group may not have come across some of the aforementioned issues. What this suggests is that the set-up of the bidding process continued to constrain the project after the funding had been won.

Whilst the bid was viewed as a 'best case scenario' amongst council staff, certain groups began to voice their frustrations when plans were not being carried out as was originally intended.

I think the people who sat on the steering group were frustrated with the processes and didn't understand the processes we had to go through... Why can't you deliver it? Well because it is against the law... There wasn't the technical expertise that went into the ideas, and it was a masterplan which is a document which is a bit of a wish-list.

Project Manager C

The project manager was right to suspect frustrations, as explained by one of the local cycling campaigners: "When things were put on the ground which weren't particularly good, you are going to criticise aren't you because they are just a load of crap" (Cycling Campaign C (SG)). To counteract such disappointments the final project manager suggested that bids should not be overly descriptive so as not to disappoint when almost inevitable unintended consequences occur. "One thing we learnt through Cycle Chester, is when you are writing together a programme, don't be too precise in what you are going to deliver because if you have we are going to build a bridge [in a certain area], there is no flexibility" (Project Manager C). However the seemingly competitive nature of local funding means that we may not see a change in the style of bids until the process itself is altered.

The Invisible Wall

The previous theme began to tease out the frustrations felt by several groups once the funding for the project had been secured. The next section will now discuss the

responses of participants who voiced their concerns over communication between council and non-council bodies. In a report that examined how LAs were managing their facilities, the Audit Commission (2006) found partnerships between LAs and the public sector to be 'rather disappointing'. This argument was certainly echoed by several participants: "It was very council driven, council we know what we are doing, let's not consult with the people at a voluntary level" (Cycling Club – Chair). Elias used the concept of the 'Invisible Wall' to describe a void often found between the self and the world (Elias, 1991). This is not the first time such a 'void' has been described in Elias's work. Elias's civilizing process refers to the "'privatisation' or 'pushing behind the scenes' of the performance of major bodily functions" (Dunning & Hughes, 2012, p. 95), as it felt no longer suitable to carry out these habits in public. In a similar fashion, the well-known symbolic interactionist Goffman (1959) might liken this process to a theatrical performance where internal thoughts, and perhaps in the case of this project, delivery decisions are left for the 'back stage'. However unlike the privatisation of habits, Elias suggests that this 'void' is applied both directly and indirectly, meaning that there are moments where such a stance is purposeful and others when it is not. Unfortunately Elias does not explain why an 'Invisible Wall' is present in the first place. This theme therefore suggests that an 'Invisible Wall' is adopted, whether purposefully or not, when situations become complex and the immediate action is to create this void.

In many responses from those outside of the council, council staff were accused of excluding other groups and keeping plans to themselves:

We were thinking we are getting nowhere here. We are going along to the meetings and we are hearing about things after the event and there is a lot of stuff going on that we don't know about. We are excluded, the council would have just gone on anyway... It wasn't a steering group, it was a report back group.

Cycling Campaigner B (SG)

One of the cycling campaigner's described the presence of an 'Invisible Wall' perfectly: "If you can't answer everything you get bogged down and the public get to you, so you just put this wall up; but I think Cheshire West do it too much, you can't do everything, but I just wish they would talk to us" (Cycling Campaigner C).

Importantly, a participant who worked with parties both inside and outside of the council provided a potential reason for this lack of communication, that being that is was to hide any disappointment with progress.

I think it was because they didn't want to lose face, but actually I think it made it look worse. Instead of holding your hands up and saying 'actually we are not sure about this, could you work with us on this?'... If they had done that from the start then we probably wouldn't have been in the situation we ended up in.

Cycling Development Officer

The 'situation' this participant was describing was the relationship between the council and the local cycling campaigning group. "That relationship broke down to such a point that they weren't really communicating with each other" (Cycling Development Officer). Further to this, it was speculated by one of the cycling campaigners that such a 'wall' was put up by the council staff so as not to fall into other discussions and perhaps delays. "It might be my conspiracy theory but I think

that there are people in the council, particularly officers, who say don't bother telling them stuff until the last minute because they are trouble" (Cycling Campaigner B (SG)). It could therefore be suggested that a level of scepticism regarding the motives of council staff was present amongst other groups.

From the perspective of a project manager it was suggested that the stage of delivery dictates the extent to which other parties can be involved. "The last 18 months was delivery time, and the steering group couldn't get involved with that because it was delivered from a local authority perspective... We couldn't achieve everything we wanted to, but there is only so much that you can sit and explain in meetings" (Project Manager C). Indeed Elias (1991) suggested that the 'Invisible Wall' is a symptom of the context. Whilst this may be true, reduced levels of communication clearly encouraged negative perceptions outside of the authority, regardless of the reasons behind this reduction. The original project manager therefore suggested that more clear communication should have occurred at the early stages of the project. "It is easy to say afterwards but there probably should have been ... a bit better engagement earlier on or you know, agreeing what each other's role was, that type of thing would have possibly helped" (Project Manager A).

'Localised' Knowledge

Perhaps a reason for any frustrations felt towards specific relationships between the council and outside parties was that the experienced cyclists thought they could use their cycling specific knowledge, or as described in the title of this theme, 'localised' knowledge, to the advantage of the project. "I think the council didn't try hard enough

to include local cyclists and the degree of expertise that we all had” (Cycling Development Officer). Most interested parties, inside and outside of the steering group, found the number of officers working on the project who were not overtly keen cyclists to be a rather important issue. “None of them to my knowledge were committed cyclists or had any real knowledge of cycling, erm, they thought they did but they didn’t” (Cycling Club – Chair). According to one of the council officers this feeling was recognised within the council departments. “You are just faced with that all the time, ‘it’s obvious a cyclists hasn’t designed this” (Council – Temporary Project Manager). One particular project manager was astute to this and found that a better relationship could be generated if he showed an interest in cycling. “You do get a bit of respect from cycle campaigns if you turn up and you are a cyclist yourself, that is the nature of the work” (Project Manager A). This issue could be linked to the concept ‘local’ status, born from the study of health promotion parties by Powell et al. (2014). In this paper it suggested that certain groups tried to use their knowledge of local populations to further their cause. “Local status was associated with having a good understanding of the population targeted by the initiative” (Powell et al., 2014, p. 15), the type of knowledge discussed here is similar in that regard. The Cycle Chester project may well be a different case as both parties were striving for cycling improvements, not necessarily trying to ‘out muscle’ one another in order to achieve targets. However it can be seen from the above quotes of this theme, and those previous, how the campaigning group tried to assert their knowledge on the council officers, and in turn were rather damning of the council’s knowledge of the delivery area.

One participant was keen to outline what he thought would be effect of non-cycling specific personnel working towards the delivery outputs:

It is all very much about we are the experts, we know what we are doing because we have the qualifications. The reality is that... you have people who think they know what they are doing and follow all the legal stuff but you end up with useless cycle infrastructure.

Cycling Campaigner B (SG)

Whilst recognising the context in which the council finds itself when attempting to deliver such provisions, this cycling campaigner then proceeds to underestimate the complexities involved in project delivery by somewhat suggesting that there are major alternatives. This point was key for several council staff who suggested that many groups fail to recognise the constraints that they are forced to work under. "These groups can be very single minded and very sort of miss-understanding of the wider picture" (Cycling Development Officer). Further to this, one of the council officers questioned the usefulness of the cycling specific knowledge. "They don't know why people don't cycle or what they don't like about cycling. Just because you don't cycle doesn't mean that you don't know anything about cycling" (Council – Temporary Project Manager). This could suggest that the council officers felt they could apply their previous experiences of encouraging uptake in interventions, to them this knowledge was more important than specific cycling knowledge. What the two sides of the argument here demonstrate is that there was a certain element of doubt surrounding the ability of the other group(s) to make a positive impression on the project.

The Established – Outsider

Regardless of the 'discontents' some groups may have had with their levels of involvement within the steering group, elements of this project demonstrate how some individual action can be greater than others; something this theme will address. During the 1950s and 60s Scotson carried out research in Winston Prava, a fictionally named suburb of Leicestershire with three different types of communities (Elias & Scotson, 1994). As the title of the study *The Established and the Outsiders* suggests, one segment of the community was viewed as the 'established' order whilst others were perceived to be 'outside' of this group. The study was concerned with discovering the resources of power that enabled the 'established' community "to assert their superiority and to cast a slur on the others as (people) of a lesser breed" (Elias & Scotson, 1994, p. 3-4). This section is designed to demonstrate the extent to which certain resources of power were used to benefit a group or individual.

The previous theme suggested that the experienced cyclists within the group saw their perceived knowledge as a powerful tool. Certainly within the bidding process, many of their ideas were utilised. "I was involved in commenting on the proposal as it was being submitted to Cycling England at the time" (Cycling Campaigner B (SG)). What this meant for a local group of cycling campaigners was the indication that they were going to have a high involvement with the project as it progressed. "I think bearing in mind that we were quite involved in submitting the bid, was that for once we are going to be a real partner, and that was our expectation" (Cycling Campaigner B (SG)). However other participants who sat on the steering group suggested that certain campaigners were not keen to share their impact with others.

“They didn’t want anyone sharing who wasn’t a cyclist, it got very bitchy at the start” (Council – Temporary Project Manager). In addition to this, another participant suggested that members of the local campaign group attempted to direct discussions towards their own ideologies. “You would get just a couple of dominating speakers that would take over the group and so you wouldn’t necessarily get, I feel, the best out of everybody... They were almost trying to drive the group to what they wanted, definitely” (University Representative (SG)). Elias (1978) made a prediction of this process in his work on power when he argued that certain individuals within complex figurations will work together to form a sub-group and make attempts to dominate proceedings. Furthermore these responses also suggest that the experienced cyclists within the group may have excluded other members due to their ‘inferior’ knowledge of cycling provisions, a process found in Winston Prava. “Exclusion and stigmatisation of the outsiders by the established group ... were two powerful weapons used by the latter to maintain their identity, to assert their superiority, keeping the others firmly in their place” (Elias & Scotson, 1994, p. 4).

In Winston Prava the power-superiority “was based on the high degree of cohesion of families who had known each other for two or three generations, in contrast to the newcomers who were strangers in relation not only to the old residents but also to each other. It was thanks to their greater potential for cohesion and its activation by social control that the old residents were able to reserve offices in their local organisations” (Elias & Scotson, 1994, p.4). In this instance, the local campaign group took up several positions on the steering group, both directly or through the organisations they worked for. They were then able to work together to reinforce their superiority over the other members of the group who had much to do to before

they became a cohesive group worthy of 'challenging' the direction of proceedings. Further to this, when describing power balances within a given figuration, figurational sociologists Dunning and Hughes (2012) suggest that the ability for a group or individual to gain a degree of influence is often dependent on the symmetry of power relations. "In the case of those figurations which involve relatively high degrees of asymmetry in dominant power relations, the capacity for those in positions of relative advantage to exercise rational and conscious 'control' is considerably greater than within figurations characterised by more symmetrical power ratios" (Dunning & Hughes, 2012, p. 47). Understanding that the group was high in the favour of experienced cyclists, we can appreciate how the campaign group was able to obtain a high influence at the early stages of the project. In line with this, several participants suggested that the group was made up of the 'wrong' people, some particularly referring to the 'balance' of the group. "It was almost like organisations said they are keen cyclists send them, when really they weren't necessarily the right people to be sat around the table" (University Representative (SG)).

Although the above discussion suggests that the members of the local cycling group were able to assert pressure on the rest of the group, figurational sociology tells us that power is never 'possessed' by a single party. Influence over a group is always based on degrees of influence and never a case of 'control' or 'no control' (Dunning & Hughes, 2012). In relation to this, Powell et al. (2014) suggested that 'established' and 'outsider' status was never fixed within their sample. The same could be said for this study where positions often shifted. Even the group (campaign group) who were deemed to be powerful by those outside of it, were disappointed with their eventual involvement. "Consistently all the way through we were saying we are really

supporting this, please use our network, please use our knowledge, can we help? And it seemed to fall on deaf ears really” (Cycling Campaigner B (SG)). Their lack of direct influence was also recognised by one of the project managers: “They were there shouting from the side-lines saying you need to do this and you need to do that” (Project Manager C). Further to this, in *The Established and the Outsiders* it is suggested that the ‘Established’ group held control over the content and level of ‘gossip’ within the community (Elias & Scotson, 1994). If we apply this to the above theme, *The Invisible Wall*, it could be suggested that the council held certain ‘gossip’, or in this case knowledge of proceedings, within their own network, much to the frustration to of local campaigners. Such arguments would suggest that the local campaign group could not be labelled as truly ‘established’, even though others within the steering group perceived them to be powerful players. Indeed Bloyce and Murphy (2008) suggested that the use of the terms ‘established’ and ‘outsiders’ is rather falsely dichotomous, meaning that these terms present a ‘black and white’ classification that is not a true reflection of reality. Instead Bloyce and Murphy (2008) argued that Elias already had more adequate terms to describe this process, that being figurations, or more specifically the balances of power within inter-dependent human relationships. The concept of ‘The Established’ and ‘The Outsiders’ has been useful in illustrating the use of power resources within a small and localised policy network. However, whilst the local campaigning group may have been described to be more ‘established’ than others, they could never be classed as true ‘insiders’. It is clear that positions were constantly in flux and those who could at one point be labelled an outsider could be presented as established under different circumstances. That is why I have labelled this group, who often fluctuated somewhere between the premise of both titles, the Established-Outsider. In

conclusion power balances within this project are better understood by emphasising degrees of 'establishment' within the figuration, instead of labelling a group one way or the other (Bloyce & Murphy, 2008).

Harmonious Goals

"Elias's approach recognises that human action is, to a greater or lesser extent, directed consciously towards achieving certain goals" (Bloyce, Smith, Mead, & Morris, 2008, p. 361). This next section will discuss the issues that arose from the project as a result of differing goals. The title of this theme is inspired by the following quote from Elias's *The Society of Individuals*. "People only live together harmoniously as a society if their socially formed needs and goals as individuals can find a high level of fulfilment... But in practice, societies, particularly in complex industrial states, have not advanced very far in this direction" (Elias, 1991, p. 147). Of course the reverse of this means that a lack of 'harmonious goals' can lead to a disruption of individual fulfilment. In connection to this, Freud's book *Civilisation and its Discontents* (1930) is one of the texts that influenced Elias when writing *The Civilizing Process* (Dunning & Hughes, 2012). According to Dunning and Hughes (2012) one of the central features of Freud's text - that is missed in the English translation - was that "'discomforts' are integral to culture – that they are its inevitable and inescapable consequences" (p.168). It is therefore of no surprise that the differing goals of various participants led to certain 'discomforts' amongst the steering group and beyond. "There are always conflicts but that is part of project management to make sure that everybody is happy ... with the work that you are doing and they are getting out of it what their priorities were" (Project Manager A).

Even though all actors within this policy network were striving for improved cycling interventions, certain council staff discussed how the views of different cyclists can be rather contrasting. “Cycling is an interesting fraternity [laughs], you know lots of people with different views on what they want to do, not always agreeing, or very rarely agreeing” (Project Manager A). Bicycles can be used for travel, leisure and competitive sport, among other uses, we can assume from the above quote that all of these users will have different ideologies and different needs. The final project manager argued that the varying preferences of cyclists means it is rare that an intervention is supported by all types of cyclists. “Cycling is a very, very personal activity erm, so just because you build a piece of infrastructure does not mean that people will use it, there are massive different ideas about what should be put in place” (Project Manager C).

As was discussed in the *Established-Outsider* theme, certain campaigners had a rather large influence on the original project aims, most of which were contained in the CDT bid document. However other participants who sat on the steering group suggested that some of their intentions were not necessarily for ‘the good’ of cycling across the city. “I think some of them were coming in with pretty personal agendas” (University Representative (SG)). Some of these specific interventions, which had been highlighted by those with perceived ‘localised’ knowledge, were eventually halted by Cycling England. “When Cycling England turned up to speak about what they wanted, they said we are not interested in you basically, we are interested in those who aren’t here but want to cycle... They might make it better for them but if it doesn’t encourage more cycling then there is no point.” (Council – Temporary

Project Manager). These conflicts of aspirations were said to impact on the previously discussed relationship between council and non-council bodies. “We had a, I think it was fair to say, a challenging relationship with them at times ... whilst they had been engaged all the way through ... I think their aspirations were different to ours. We wanted to do the same things but as an authority there are things we can do, and things we can’t” (Project Manager A).

When looking at the difficulties of forming a local forum Houlihan and White (2012) suggested that part of the problem derives from the sheer number of parties that need to be involved. When considering this alongside the wider pressures, such as public support, one of the council officers involved in the project suggested that the outcomes are often diluted in their focus. “One extreme to another, one ban cycling and cyclists, and the other ban cars. You have to find a happy medium that is often vanilla flavoured, it’s all right, nobody loves it, nobody hates it. (Council – Regeneration). May and Marsden (2006) also found that ‘vanilla’ outcomes, or as they describe it, the “lowest common denominator outcomes” (p. 25), are often the result when several parties are involved. Conflicting aspirations can have such an effect that some interventions are never implemented at all; as can be seen in the aforementioned case of the bridge extension being ‘blocked’ by public concerns. “Sometimes things just don’t get done because someone is not happy. So you have the conundrum really, are you better off keeping 95% people happy and 5% not, or just not do anything, that is just the conundrum of public life” (Council – Regeneration).

From viewing societies of the early 1900s Elias saw how “parliamentary ways of resolving differences, based on negotiation, changing alliances and fronts, moderate relationships, moderate enmities and frequent compromises, can easily become a source of annoyance” (Elias, 2006, p. 299). Whilst this argument was based on societies which were accustomed to simple antitheses, such as the definite lines between a friend and an enemy (Elias, 2006), it is easy to see how such compromises were the source of frustration in this project. Finally then, what this and all other themes demonstrate is that the contents of the original bid document, and subsequent ‘masterplan’ (Cycle Chester, 2009), became rather diluted, adapted, and in some cases halted, due to the complex figuration in which it was being implemented, this ultimately led to several further conflicts between key groups.

Conclusion

From a theoretical perspective the main question to ask when concluding this study is how helpful has the work of Elias been in understanding the presented findings? It must be said that the answer to this question is extremely positive. Elias's considerations of power have been especially important when trying to make sense of the rather adapted and diluted policy interventions. Even though the project was implemented within a localised region, all themes point towards the fact that the large number of complex interdependencies surrounding the Cycle Chester project greatly limited the ability of the original delivery group to carry out their intended aims. As one of the participants perfectly stated, "the more bodies that are involved, then potentially the more complex some of these projects can be" (Council – Planning (S)). Future policy makers should therefore be careful with their expectations of local delivery. Further to this, Milbourne (2009) has noted that "collaborative work often depends heavily on the commitment, dispositions and networks of individuals" (p. 291). This was found to be true within the context of Cycle Chester where differing philosophies further complicated the policy network. An important finding was that some of these philosophies, or aims, were reinforced by original policy documents. Disappointment then came from the fact most intentions were not carried out exactly as was first proposed. Whilst many council staff members shared this disappointment, they were very keen to suggest that other parties did not understand or appreciate the impact of the complex figuration in which they were working. The detailed discussion of complexities that has been provided in this study could therefore be helpful in managing people's expectations.

Study limitations and future recommendations

Researchers are rarely in charge of the order in which participants are interviewed. It may therefore be the case that sometime along the interview process you discover key information that you would like to go back and discuss with a certain participant. Thus a limitation of this study is that time restrictions prevented me from carrying out follow-up interviews. Further to this, the theme *Conflicting Habitus* demonstrates how certain information often comes to light about participants you had not originally considered. Although all 'stakeholders' were asked if they may be able to suggest an individual who they thought would be beneficial to the study, time did not allow for interviews with a whole team of road engineers. Had these individuals been included, the theme would not have been based on second-hand accounts.

When referring to the implementation of transport policies in general, Marsden and May (2006) suggested that application is rather inconsistent from one city to the next. There is thus not only a need to explore the accounts of more individuals, but also a need to explore the delivery contexts of other CDTs. This would aid our understanding on two accounts, first it would demonstrate whether the findings here are applicable elsewhere, and secondly, it may go some way to show how and why certain towns demonstrate more 'success' than others (Goodman et al., 2013; Harris et al., 2013).

Finally, the Cycle Chester 'steering group' was structured high in the favour of the transport sector. Therefore the influence and interest of the health industry cannot be deciphered from this study. This is particularly important considering the health benefits cycling can provide, both financially, and of course physically. Future

research into this area may further expand our knowledge of what we can expect from cross-sector partnership work.

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Appendix

Appendix A - Ethical Approval Letter

Appendix B - Interview Schedule

Appendix C - Participant Information Sheet

Appendix D - Participant Consent Form

Appendix A

Faculty of Life Sciences
Research Ethics Committee

frec@chester.ac.uk

Christopher White

25th March 2014

Dear Christopher,

Study title: **All together for Cycle Chester? A sociological investigation into the local deliverance of a state funded project.**

FREC reference: **878/14/CW/SES**

Version number: **2**

Thank you for sending your application to the Faculty of Life Sciences Research Ethics Committee for review.

I am pleased to confirm ethical approval for the above research, provided that you comply with the conditions set out in the attached document, and adhere to the processes described in your application form and supporting documentation.

The final list of documents reviewed and approved by the Committee is as follows:

Document	Version	Date
Application Form	1	February 2014
Appendix A – List of References	1	February 2014
Appendix B – C.V. for Lead Researcher	1	February 2014
Appendix C – Letter of Invitation to Participants	1	February 2014
Appendix D – Participant Information Sheet	1	February 2014
Appendix E – Participant Consent Form	1	February 2014

Appendix F – Interview Schedule	1	February 2014
Response to FREC request for further information or clarification		March 2014
Application Form	2	March 2014
Appendix A – List of References	2	March 2014
Appendix C – Letter of Invitation to Participants	2	March 2014
Appendix D – Participant Information Sheet	4	March 2014
Appendix E – Participant Consent Form	2	March 2014

Please note that this approval is given in accordance with the requirements of English law only. For research taking place wholly or partly within other jurisdictions (including Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland), you should seek further advice from the Committee Chair / Secretary or the Research and Knowledge Transfer Office and may need additional approval from the appropriate agencies in the country (or countries) in which the research will take place.

With the Committee's best wishes for the success of this project.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Stephen Fallows

Chair, Faculty Research Ethics Committee

Enclosures: Standard conditions of approval.

Cc. Supervisor/FREC Representative

Appendix B

Follow-up Questions:

Quote response then...

What do you mean by...?

Can you tell me more about...?

Can you explain what you mean by...?

Can you give an example of...?

How did...come about?

What do/did you think about...?

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study, can I ask you to confirm that you have read and understood the participant information forms and are therefore aware of the potential use of this data.

This interview aims to gather your views and experiences of the delivery of the Cycle Chester project.

Are we able to begin the interview?

Roles in Cycling

Can I now ask you for a general description of your involvement with cycling in Chester and the Cheshire area?

- What is your current role (whether voluntary or paid) in cycling?
- How long have you been involved?
- What sparked your involvement?
- What geographical areas have you specifically worked in?

What was your involvement in the Cycle Chester project?

Please can you tell me what you know about the state of cycling and cycling provisions in and around Chester before the project began?

Experiences of Cycle Chester

What experiences did you have, if any, of the bidding process in order to become a Cycling Demonstration Town?

- Who was involved?

- What part did you have to play?

Are you aware of what encouraged a bid from Chester?

- Was the project supported by other parties?
- What was their involvement?

What did you take to be the main aims of the project?

Did all of this come to fruition?

- What were the reasons behind this?

What changes did the project provoke?

- When compared to the provisions that were previously in place.
- Do you think there has been an increase in physical activity?
- Do you think it has been made easier for people to cycle to work and schools?

What legacy would you say Cycle Chester has left behind?

Views and attitudes towards the planning and delivery of Cycle Chester

What were your personal expectations of the Cycle Chester project?

- Was this based on your experiences of other projects?

To what extent were your expectations realised?

How prepared do you think the delivery group were?

- How much planning was previously in place?

Were there any changes amongst the staffing of the delivery of the project?

- What effect did this have?
- Do you think the split in council had any effect on the success of the project?
- Why? What happened after this split?

Throughout the three years of the project, how well did you think the delivery group performed?

- Why was this?

Was there anything that you were particularly disappointed with or pleased by, with regards to the delivery of the project?

- Do you think the project was run as efficiently as it possibly could be?

Is there anything that happened that surprised you?

Working with others to deliver the project

How many organisations do you think were working towards the project?

What was the impact of this?

- Funding was provided by different organisations, did this have any impact on the project?

Did you partake in any consultation between deliverers and interested parties?

- Who did you work with?
- When?
- What was said/agreed?
- What are the benefits of this?

How successful were these consultations? Did plans alter as a result of the meetings?

Were you aware of any advice or guidance from the government or the Department of Transport?

- How do you feel about this?
- How was this translated to the people involved in the project?

Based on your experiences of Cycle Chester, what do you think are the positives and negatives of working with others to deliver a project? Please provide examples where at all possible.

Summary

[IF NOT CLEARLY ANSWERED BEFORE] How do you think the project could have been run in an ideal world?

- How did this differ from your experiences?

The interview will now be transcribed and will then be read over to pick out themes. Before I do this I would like to ask you what you think were the main themes of this interview.

Finally, I have asked all the questions that I would like to ask, do you think there is anything that I have missed if I am trying to gather your views and experiences of the delivery of the Cycle Chester project, the legacy of the project and the complexities of working with other interested parties?

Thank you for your time.

Appendix C

Participant information sheet

A sociological investigation into the local deliverance of a state funded project.

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish.

Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the study?

The study plans to explore the relationships between various concerned parties and local deliverers of the Cycling Demonstration Town strategy in Chester whilst also addressing the complexities that may derive from the local deliverance of a national project.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen because of your direct involvement and interest in cycling provisions in Chester during the time of the Cycling Demonstration Town project.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect you in any way.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will take part in an interview that will last between 40-60 minutes; the interviewer will ask you about your knowledge and experiences of the local delivery of the Chester Demonstration Town/Cycle Chester project. These will occur at a venue suggested by you, the participant or if time and travel distances do not make this possible, this can be done over the phone. Interviews will be of a semi-structured nature meaning that the interviewer will have a set amount of questions and ask you to provide responses that are based on your experiences.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no disadvantages or risks foreseen in taking part in the study.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

The study will enable you to reflect on your experiences with cycling provisions personally and/or in your work, which may help develop a greater understanding of the implementation of such policy in future.

What if something goes wrong?

If you wish to complain or have any concerns about any aspect of the way you have been approached or treated during the course of this study, please contact Professor Sarah Andrew, Dean of the Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Chester, Parkgate Road, Chester, CH1 4BJ, 01244 513055.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

All information that is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential so that only the researcher carrying out the research will have access to such information. In the research all participants will be given pseudonyms, however, given the nature of your role, absolute anonymity may not be possible. For example it could be possible to narrow down certain participants to two or three people if someone wanted to make the effort to find out.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results will be written up into a dissertation for my final project of my MSc and may be used in a subsequent research paper.

Who is organising the research?

The research is conducted as part of a MSc in the Sociology of Sport and Exercise within the Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences at the University of Chester. The study is organised with supervision from the department, by Christopher White, an MSc student.

Who may I contact for further information?

If you would like more information about the research before you decide whether or not you would be willing to take part, please contact:

Christopher White @chester.ac.uk

Thank you for your interest in this research.

Appendix D

Title of Project: A sociological investigation into the local deliverance of a state funded project.

Name of Researcher: Christopher White

Please initial box

1. Do you confirm that you have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask any questions you may have?
2. Your name and personal details will not appear in any report or subsequent publication of this research, you will instead be referred to using a pseudonym. However do you understand that due to the nature of your role or interest in providing cycling provisions you may be identifiable?
3. Do you understand that your participation is voluntary and that you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without your legal rights being affected?
4. Do you agree to the interview being audio recorded for the purposes of the research project?
5. Do you agree to take part in the above study?

Name of participant

Date