Community Development, Tourism and the Sustainable Development Fund within the Brecon Beacons National Park

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Abstract

This research is situated within the Brecon Beacons National Park (BBNP), it explores the role of community driven initiatives in encouraging sustainable rural communities, whilst assessing the relevance of tourism to such schemes. The National Park (NP) provide funding for community led sustainability programmes, known as the Sustainable Development Fund, the examination of this funding led to findings which challenge the common assumption that funding for community led schemes will be of net benefit at the local level.

Through the use of a survey, focus groups and interviews it was observed that certain components reflected in most rural development programmes such as the integration of tourism, participation and the development of social capital are still barriers to rural development and continue to hamper the effectiveness of not only the Sustainable Development Funding (SDF) schemes, but the communities striving for sustainability. There is evidence to suggest that community development with a significant emphasis on tourism may be an important element in the survival and revival of the economy of the BBNP as traditional agriculture continues to decline. Tourism, in policy terms, is perceived as a suitable form of economic development for rural areas within the NP. However, as communities turn to tourism as a means to raising income and employment, a lack of understanding of tourism and its impacts has been identified as a barrier to a holistic and cohesive development strategy for communities. Consequently, the use of publicly funded schemes that strive towards community development have failed to embrace the opportunities that tourism offers.

Overall, this thesis concludes that, whilst funding via the SDF scheme was facilitating one-off individual community projects, the wider geographic community was not being enhanced or made more sustainable or developed either as a policy output or an output of the SDF projects. The knowledge and skills necessary to acquire funding enabled expert communities to participate and develop isolated pockets of social capital. However, this was at the exclusion of the wider geographic community, who were not as practised at such techniques and processes, consequently, denying them of such opportunities for development. As such, it questions whether current mechanisms of funding for isolated, community driven sustainability initiatives coupled with a lack of integration within the existing tourism structures and policies are assisting sustainable community development within the NP. The research concludes with a model which seeks to identify the key elements that may help develop sustainable communities within the NP and the relationship between these elements. The model could be tested, in future research, and other national parks in the UK that implement the SDF scheme to assess its wider applicability.

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Abbreviations

BBNP   Brecon Beacons National Park

BBNPA   Brecon Beacon National Park Authority

BBT   Brecon Beacons Tourism

DEFRA   Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

NP   National Park

NPAs   National Park Authorities

SDF   Sustainable Development Funding

SDFO   Sustainable Development Funding Officer

SDFOs   Sustainable Development Funding Officers

PART I

Setting the Scene

Rationale for Research

1.1   Introduction

There is insufficient empirical work providing insight and in-depth analysis of publicly funded development schemes such as the Sustainable Development Funding (SDF) scheme. The SDF scheme was established and managed by National Parks (NPs) in the UK since 2001. This scheme funds rural communities that want to undertake a sustainability initiative that helps to create a sustainable community. Strzelecka and Wicks (2010) identified that there are roles for development agencies in assisting rural regions to transform themselves, often using tourism as a tool of transformation. However, there is a gap in the academic literature as to how publicly funded schemes, such as the SDF, contribute to creating a sustainable rural community where tourism is not the primary concern of the scheme, but where tourism is required to sustain the scheme.

This research will recognise the key factors for success (or failure) in the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of publicly funded regeneration schemes in rural areas. The notion of sustainability has been the central driving force for these schemes and hence the research will focus on the three central indicators that could be used to assist in rural development, namely, the community, tourism and sustainability. This research will evaluate the influence of these three concepts surrounding publicly funded schemes within the rural development arena. The relevance to the wider world of the proposed research will be the value added to the existing knowledge on how policies and practices are implemented at the ground level. The analysis of sustainability on local community development will also contribute to a greater understanding of the key factors that have led to success (or failure) of revenue pumped into a region in order to enhance or maintain sustainable communities, lifestyles and the environment.

This research using the Brecon Beacon National Park (BBNP) as a focus of study, will analyse how the macro issues (e.g. rural development) filter into the meta-issues (e.g. sustainable communities). Consequently, this research will provide an insight into how public agencies, communities and individuals interpret policies and put them into practice. The research concludes with insights that could be applied to other NPs that use SDF. In doing so, it could

help these authorities to evaluate what type of capital and resources are being developed and deployed in their region to create sustainable communities. The research will explain how SDF schemes can enhance and strengthen the different types of capital available at the disposal of a rural community focusing on how social capital is utilised. This research may, therefore, be of benefit to those engaged in tourism, planning, or individuals of rural communities seeking to utilise publicly funded schemes, and of course, all National Park Authorities (NPAs).

The relevance of focusing on the BBNP is that it they are using the SDF scheme whilst facing many of the issues that rural communities are challenged with concerning rural sustainable development. Their traditional agricultural industries are in decline and tourism is becoming an increasing facet of the region. Marquart-Pyatt (2012) noted that any attempt to enable communities to become sustainable should be considered within their local context, hence the use of the BBNP as a focus for this study. The context in which a community takes action will as Jackson (2008) noted define their behaviour. This suggests that community action is dependent upon the nature of the society and the experiences they have been exposed to. Klijn (2008) deliberated that structures of government funding for community based programmes intrinsically help to strengthen a community. In traditional rural societies the bonds of communities are often presumed to be clearly apparent due to the longevity of the people that have lived there (Woods, 2005). Therefore, programmes designed to enable and sustain communities should assist in strengthening these bonds. The research will therefore investigate what a community is, how they interpret sustainability and how these concepts are translated into reality via the SDF schemes. This research will focus on the socio and economic dimensions of community sustainability, rather than the environmental dimension. This reflects the current thinking within the BBNP which is focused on achieving sustainable communities through the creation of SDF schemes that place an emphasis on social and economic activities. The SDF scheme currently mirrors the neoliberal emphasis of extracting value from resources rather than valuing resources *per se*.

The current global hegemony of free-market capitalism means that, at a national and international level, human activities pivot around maximising the production and consumption of goods and services in order to fuel economies and generate continual economic growth, an ambition that is necessarily embodied in the lifestyles of the individuals and communities living within these societies (Hallin, 1995; White and Stirling 2013). In September 2015, at the United

Nations Headquarters the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (and 169 targets) were agreed upon to address the need for development and sustainability to complement one another. As the exponential increases in material exchange over recent years have exerted – and continue to exert – unprecedented pressure on these resources and communities around the world (Jackson, 2009), present global sustainability issues have been repeatedly attributed to the dominance of 'an anthropogenic worldview', which is, "*the idea that humans are the measure of all value, and the earth and its natural resources are valuable insofar as they satisfy human needs*" (Scott and Willits, 1994, p. 239). This means resources are there to generate a return even in National Parks which pushes the concept of sustainability away from the conservation of resources to projects being economically sustainable.

However, public awareness and involvement regarding issues of 'sustainability' have also risen in recent times. Government policies have filtered down to the local level to reflect these concerns and assist in preserving the environment whilst also providing communities opportunities to enhance their social and economic prosperity. The UK sustainability strategy developed in 1999 ('A Better Quality of Life'), has since been revised, first in 2005 ('Securing the Future'), and, most recently, in 2011 ('Mainstreaming Sustainable Development') (Defra, 2011a, 2011b). One such scheme derived from the 1999 strategy is SDF which has, since 2001 been offered to communities within National Parks to help them address the issues of environment, economy and community sustainability. These communities, which are striving for sustainability (in its many different forms), have as Stone and Nyaupane (2013) suggested, been grappling with the meaning and interpretation of sustainability as their understanding of it has evolved over the last 16 years.

Rural development has changed the way in which people live and changed the nature of rural areas. Dicks (2000) noted that rural areas have experienced much change in the use of land, from eroding traditional based industries such as mining, to the newer industries such as tourism which rely in part on the quality of the landscape. For example, the number of tourism related industries in all NPs in the UK has increased by 33% during the period of 2004 to 2009, whilst agriculture has declined by 15% in the same time frame (ONS, 2011). Therefore, tourism has filled an economic vacuum providing new sources of income and jobs. However, unlike traditional agrarian economies, tourism is partly considered an intangible asset that often defies ownership. Arguably, this indicates that there needs to be transparency about how a community and destination is to be developed, managed and assessed in order to provide a

clear direction for future equitable growth. The increase in the number of sustainable policies (such as sustainable tourism policies) initiated by NPs in England and Wales has meant that the relationship that local people have with their rural environment is changing. One of the mechanisms through which this change has been achieved has been the creation of publicly funded schemes. Consequently, these schemes involve local people bidding for funds to enable them to create sustainable initiatives that change their rurality (physically, economically or environmentally) utilising the different types of capital at their disposal. Moreover, the manner in which the SDF scheme is implemented, delivered and evaluated is key to the nature of these changes and rural communities' sustainability in the future.

The demographics of the BBNP have evolved in the past 20 years. The growths of incomers, the changing local economy including the rise of tourism are partly responsible for the changing appearance and population of this NP. The BBNP has seen a rise in the average age of a resident. Morgan (2015) noted that the average age of a resident in the Park was 53.2 in 2013 with an estimated 5110 people moving into the park from the rest of the UK and at the same time 5170 estimated to move out of the park to other parts of the UK. Morgan goes on to note that the majority (over 82%) of people moving out of the park were between the ages of 18 to 29, whilst the majority of people moving into the park were between the ages of 45 to 59 (over 75%). The nature of these changing demographics will have an impact on the social fabric of the BBNP. The nature of the "community" for such an area facing so many changes well itself change. For example, the increase of second home ownership has almost doubled in the last 20 years, so much so, that in Talybont on Usk 96% of dwellings are second homes (Jones 2016) although this is fairly rare in the BBNP this indicates the trend in growth of second homes. What is considered sustainable by such communities divided by age, permanence and origins will be contested or at least it will vary over time, space and interests.

SDF schemes are situated in NPs. Therefore, a brief overview of the purpose of these parks will help to elucidate why given the broad nature of possible projects, the variety of interests involved that an analysis of their dynamics is overdue. NPs in England and Wales were created by the 1949 National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act. The first ten parks were set up between 1951 and 1957. Their twin purposes were to protect areas of spectacular landscape and to provide recreation opportunities for the general public (nationalparks.gov.uk). This was

revised under the Environment Act 1995 (nationalparks.gov.uk) and National Parks now have additional statutory purposes:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park
- To promote opportunities for public enjoyment and understanding of the special qualities of the National Park
- To foster the economic and social well-being of communities living within the National Park

The New Labour Government in 1997 established the SDF programme which was created to help rural areas address current issues, such as rural regeneration, economic growth as well as revitalise the area both physically and socially. The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA) receives £200,000 from the Welsh Government each year (beacons-npa.gov.uk) to provide financial and practical support for projects in the Park. These funds are used mainly as pump priming funds for projects which are hoped will become financially self-supporting.

The SDF aims to support projects which:

- Take into account economic, environmental, community and cultural issues, and which improve quality of life for communities in the Park.
- Have the support and involvement of communities within the National Park.
- Bring people together in partnerships to tackle problems.
- Derive support from, and provide support to local businesses.
- Demonstrate innovation and best practice.
- Encourage social inclusion.
- Support community based transport initiatives designed to reduce the carbon footprint.
- Support sustainable visitor transport initiatives, including access to "hot spots".

Support sustainable food marketing and the promotion & consumption of local produce.

(beacons-npa.gov.uk, 2016)

1.2 Theoretical Background

This thesis is conceptually based around three *"essentially contested concepts"* (Gallie, 1956, p.167) of community, sustainability and tourism. According to Collier *et al* (2010) it is quite common in social science research to deal with conceptual confusion as "sustainability", "community" and "tourism" are not only contestable, but intrinsically irresolvable, due to *"differing "conceptions of the concept" - legitimate, yet incompatible and contested, interpretations of how the concept should be put into practice"* (Connelly, 2007, p.262). The discussions and analysis of these terms form an important part of the thesis and are discussed in chapters 3, 4 and 5. However, a brief introduction to these terms in the context of this research is presented forthwith in order to establish the aim and objectives of this research.

The academic literature validating the value of community driven action to enable and assist sustainable lifestyles locally is quite substantial (McKenzie-Mohr, 2000; Church and Elster, 2002; Holland, 2004; Peters and Jackson, 2008; Connors and McDonald, 2010; Middlemiss, 2011a; Middlemiss 2011b; Connelly *et al*, 2011) and these authors commonly note that in rural locations there is a stronger sense of community than in urban areas (Crow, 2010). In remote, fairly undeveloped areas such as National Parks in the UK this may be expected to be even more the case as rural areas have traditionally had less movement of people and stronger social bonds than urban areas. The communities chosen for this study in the BBNP have been selected as they have been involved in SDF schemes and it is assumed that in doing so that these initiatives were an expression of the local community to address issues around the promotion of creating a sustainable community.

The wealth of literature on sustainable communities and how these communities use tourism in creating sustainability is well versed (Masser, 1996: Hoff, 1998; Carroll and Stanfield, 2001; Dresner, 2002; Roseland, 2005; Walker, 2007). Arguably, what is lacking from the literature is an understanding that tourism is part of the 'bigger picture' and it cannot be treated in isolation or cannot be used as an instrument by itself to create sustainable communities. The literature suggests some ideas about how communities can take control of tourism and become sustainable but tourism can negatively affect the environment and use scarce resources (Ricci, 1976; Pearce, 1989; Becken, 2010). Assets that are used by local communities themselves often originate from where communities often find their identity. This begs the questions: Can

tourism be used as an instrument to create sustainable communities? If so, what resources are required to enable communities to take advantage of tourism and to who's cost and benefit?

However, as with the concepts of sustainability and community, tourism is also a contested concept. It can be considered as an industry which is a system of interrelated parts, and the use of tourism to create sustainable livelihoods is therefore quite logical (Bayliss, 2004). Arguably, however, the relationships of all the actors involved in the production of tourism processes and products requires consideration. Some of the actors will be looking for short-term rewards (e.g. business owners) and others looking for long-term benefits (e.g. the BBNPA). Despite this, there are certain aspects of tourism that are much longer term in their nature, for example some destinations rely on their heritage and/or history. Arguably tourism is not sustainable but the attributes of a destination (i.e. the heritage or history) are sustainable. Therefore, due to the nebulous and contested nature of the term "tourism" in practice, as well as theoretically it is hard to sustain it, as we do not know precisely what it is.

1.3   Research Aim and Objectives

This thesis has the following research aim which is purposefully broad:

- *To gain in-depth and detailed insights into whether the SDF as a community driven initiative assists in the creation of more sustainable communities.*

The use of rural development, sustainable community and sustainable tourism theory will provide the foundation and concepts that will be synthesised tested and discussed in the thesis. As suggested earlier in this chapter, the questions of "what is being sustained" and for "whose benefit" as well as "who is involved" and "why are they participating" in SDF are the underlying themes of this thesis. In order to develop a greater understanding of these issues further exploration of various concepts is required. Firstly there needs to be a more devolved explanation of what a community in the BBNP is. Therefore, the first research objective is:

- *Understand how the concept of "community" manifests itself through Sustainable Development Funding programmes within the BBNP?*

In addressing this objective there will need to be a more developed knowledge of how the SDF schemes operate and how communities use their assets and utilise SDF to contribute towards enabling sustainable community development. Therefore, the second research objective is:

- *To analyse and evaluate how the Sustainable Development funding framework contributes to creating sustainable rural communities in the changing BBNP economy.*

The use of tourism as an enabling instrument in the process of creating sustainable rural communities at a time of local economic change will also be investigated. The SDF schemes which tend to rely on heritage, small-scale development (such as the construction of walking trails), wildlife conservation and education all participate in tourism, albeit unconsciously. Therefore, the use of tourism, the involvement of the actors concerned with tourism and how they are connected to the SDF warrants the third research objective:

- *To evaluate the use of tourism to assist in the development of sustainable communities via the SDF in the BBNP.*

1.4   Research Philosophy

The chosen philosophy is Constructivist Realism (Cupchik, 2001). This approach contends that the wisdom of positivism's realism, whereby reality is both "real" and "apprehendable", can be reconciled with constructivism, which maintains that meaning is generated by individuals and groups (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). The constructivist realism is an alternative ontology that accommodates positivism and constructivism and the methods that they subtend. It does this by acknowledging a social world that is reflected in the natural attitude of daily life and exists prior to and independent of either positivist or constructivist analysis; hence realism. Phenomena are understood as processes which cut across the physical, social, and personal (self) worlds. Qualitative and quantitative researchers examine these phenomena, offering rich descriptive accounts or precise analyses of functional relations, respectively. It is assumed that both approaches to research practice face the problem of constructing "data" and are

therefore, subject to potential bias. Qualitative methods offer an in-depth account of underlying processes and can help frame concepts that test functional relationships, while empirical findings related to processes can suggest areas which might benefit from detailed descriptive examination. Jackson (2004) maintained that identities and values were more important determinants of policy than the constraints and opportunities of the external environment. He suggests two ways in which the realist and constructivist traditions can, and need to, work in tandem. The first pertains to the modalities that govern the ends actors seek and the means they use to achieve these ends; the second involves the kinds of worlds in which realist assumptions give us the most analytical leverage. Constructivist approaches can provide insights, if not answers, to both questions. Indeed, they are really different facets of the same question. This unity provides a compelling reason for considering realist, and constructivist paradigms that are capable of providing separate but interlocking pieces that fit together to help solve a larger puzzle.

Consequently, the constructivist realism approach allows us to consider that our values, interests, and experiences filter our understanding of the world. The structures (whether perceived or not), institutions (our ways of and reasons for doing things) and cultures to which we are exposed, shape these factors and the strategies adopted to effect action. The methodology is appropriate as the populace being studied vary in their conceptions of the nature of their communities, how they wish it to change and their ability to influence that change. It is important, therefore, that this research seeks to understand the 'reality' that the research subjects inhabit. It is contended, that it is this reality that shapes their rural wants and the strategies they adopt in seeking to turn these wants into outputs. Constructivist realism is particularly suited to the study of interest groups and stakeholders as it seeks to transcend the dualism between structure and agency and see them in a dynamic, historic-social context that affects both the agency of actors and the structures within which they work.

1.5   Research methods Used

Three main research methods were employed for this research: questionnaires, focus groups and in-depth interviews. This strategy provided an ever more focused and detailed set of data from the following stakeholders:

1) Questionnaires aimed at local residents in the BBNP to gain an insight into the three contested concepts central to this research.

2) Focus groups with the local residents, members from the Women's Institute, business owners and the members of the National Farmers' Association in three case study settlements within the BBNP in order to delve deeper into the subject area.

3) Interviews with the key players in the National Park and a number of local people who have participated in the application and delivery of SDF schemes within the BBNP.

1.6   Thesis Structure

The thesis was organised as follows:

Chapter 1:   *Introduction;* provides the rationale for the research.

Chapter 2:   *Research Context*; sets the scene of the geographical area of study, the BBNP, and provides background information of the SDF scheme.

Chapter 3:   *Dynamics of Rural Development*; provides an analysis of the three contested concepts of community, sustainability and tourism.

Chapter 4:   *Rural Community Development*; outlines the concepts of policy, participation, place attachment, social capital and funding community development.

Chapter 5:   *The Context of Tourism within Sustainability and Rural Community Development*; situates the integration of tourism within the sustainability and rural community development analysis.

Chapter 6:   *Research Philosophy and Methodology*; outlines the ontological and epistemological issues concerning the constructivist realism philosophy and discusses the research methods used in pursuing this research.

Chapter 7:   *The Dynamics of Rural Sustainability in the Brecon Beacons National Park;* provides the research findings and discussion on the SDF policies, community, participation, place attachment and social capital.

Chapter 8:   *The Place of Tourism as an Instrument for Development in the Brecon Beacons National Park;* provides the findings and discussion on the role and integration of tourism within the research context.

Chapter 9:   *Conclusions and Reflections*; provides the contributions of this research, whilst providing reflections on the methods employed and indicates areas for future avenues of research.

Chapter Two

Research Context

This chapter will explain the location of the research that has taken place. It will explain the characteristics of the BBNP and outline how the BBNPA implement SDF in the park. In order to assist in the understanding of how tourism is currently used in the NP, an outline of the tourism products and delivery structures will be presented. To illustrate how these policies and structures combine to produce deliverable community based outcomes this chapter will outline examples of SDF projects that have been delivered in the NP. The chapter concludes with the generation of a static synthetic model that will evolve as it is tested by the research undertaken in this thesis.

2.1 The Brecon Beacons National Park

The BBNP was established in 1957 (Morgan, 2015). With its designation as a UK National Park, the Brecon Beacons joined a growing international family of protected areas. Protected areas fall into two general categories: those designated for the strict protection of the natural world and those designated for the purposes of maintaining sustainable relationships between humans and nature. NPs of the UK belong to the latter category and also differ from NPs in other parts of the world because they are largely privately owned whilst many parks in other nations are owned primarily by the State. (Countryside Council for Wales, 2006).

The Brecon Beacons was the tenth NP in Wales and England to be designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949, Figure 2.1 provides a map of the region. This action confirmed its importance nationally, conferring the UK's highest status for conservation of landscape and natural beauty. The Welsh Assembly has further emphasised the Park's importance in the national context through its Vision for the Welsh National Parks in the 21st century:

"The Welsh National Parks are protected landscapes of international importance which capture much of what is distinct and special about rural Wales, environmentally and culturally. Although predominantly rural in nature, the Parks contain a resident population of over 80,000, are close

to important urban communities and have significant potential to enrich the lives of the people of, and visitors to, Wales and to contribute positively to public health and well-being and to the Welsh economy. They are living landscapes, moulded by their communities over thousands of years. They are places where sustainable development is promoted for the benefit of the environment, the economy and for Park communities. They are places that experiment with new approaches in sustainable development and environmental conservation, providing exemplars of best practice for wider Wales, and helping to shape and lead future rural policy and practice. They are also places where all who can influence the future of the Parks work together to conserve and enhance their natural beauty, biodiversity and cultural identity, in line with sustainable development principles. Guided by the Park Authorities, these special areas are becoming progressively richer and more diverse in terms of landscape, wildlife and heritage and are enjoyed and cherished by a full cross section of society" Welsh Assembly Government (2007).

2.1.1 Economic and Social Characteristics

At the end of 2014 there were 5745 active businesses in Powys (Morgan 2015). 465 businesses were started and 450 businesses closed during this year. Productive industries contributed 16.3% of the total gross value added in the regional accounts for Powys, the construction industry contributed 9.4%. In September 2014, an estimated 11% of the Powys workforce aged 16 to 64 were employed in agriculture and fishing, 2% in energy and water, 11% in manufacturing, 10% in construction, 16% in distribution, hotels and restaurants, 4% in transport and communications, 9% in banking finance and insurance, and 30% in the public sector, the remainder were employed in other services (Morgan 2015). An estimated 54.2% of residents aged 16 to 64 in June 2014 were in full-time employment, 21.7% in part-time employment, 2.6 were unemployed and 20.6 were economically inactive, 19.1% was self-employed (Morgan 2015).

In 2014, an estimated 48% of Powys residents lived in areas ranked the worst 10% in Wales for access to services on foot or by bus (Morgan, 2015). The rurality of Mid Wales was also highlighted as a potential problem by ADAS who were commissioned to provide a report to the Welsh assembly in 2010 (p.229), "*whilst this rurality is attractive to the tourist, it can create major difficulties for people living in Mid Wales. It necessitates a dependence on personal*

transport and requires travelling long distances to work, school, social and community facilities. For those who do not have access to a car it can mean isolation". Surprisingly, with the limited public transport facilities in such a rural county, 16.7% of households in Powys had no car available in 2011 (2011 Census of Population), which presumably increases the level of isolation experienced by these households. The problems of communications and isolation may also contribute to the lack of opportunities in the area.

Figure 2.1: Map of BBNP, *Source:* http://www.brecon-beacons.com/how-to-get-here.htm

According to Tyler (2016) 65% of park lands are privately owned by estate owners, farmers and, to a lesser extent, householders. There are several large public and charitable landowners as well. The BBNPA owns 14% of the park, more than any other park authority in the UK. It is the single largest landowner in the NP. BBNPA owned lands comprise mainly upland common land purchased with the help of grants to manage it for the benefit of the public (Tyler, 2016). Whilst the BBNPA owns the land, it does not manage all of it directly; this is done primarily by local farmers and graziers. The BBNPA is committed to working closely with graziers and other users of the land owned and/or managed by the Authority for the continued provision of public benefits and in the interest of sustainable management of these resources. The park is home to

33,000 people, and has a strong Welsh heritage and rich economic, social and cultural life (Tyler, 2016). The largest settlement is the cathedral town of Brecon (population 7,900). Together with Brecon, the settlements of Crickhowell, Gilwern, Hay-on-Wye and Talgarth account for approximately 46% of the park's inhabitants.

Tyler (2016) indicates that public administration, education and health professions account for 33% of the park's employment opportunities, which is not surprising considering Brecon is an important administrative centre for Powys County Council, Dyfed Powys Police, the BBNPA and the Ministry of Defence. Other significant employment sectors within the park include: distribution, hotels and restaurants (21%); manufacturing (11%); banking, finance and insurance (10.5%) and agriculture (7%).

Brecon is also a central hub for local authority activity. The NPA, police and Ministry of Defence have offices in the town centre. This means that the employment structure of the park reflects this centralisation of local authority activity with 33% of employment in public administration, education and health. The tourism sector (distribution, hotels and restaurants) is the next largest employer of the area at 21%. Manufacturing (at 11%) and financial institutions such as banking (at 10.5%) followed by agriculture at 7%. Between 2010 and 2015 the proportion of working in agriculture fell by 3% whilst tourism sectors increased by about 2%.

2.1.2 Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan

The National Park Management Plan is the single most important policy document for the NP area and all those who have an influence over its future. The plan coordinates and integrates other plans, strategies and actions in the NP that affect the two park purposes and its duty. No major decisions are taken affecting the future of the park without reference to the management plan. The plan sets a vision for the future of the park and specifies actions and outcomes to pursue in a five year period to bring the park closer to this shared vision. The plan promotes coordinated implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these activities collectively across a wide range of partners and stakeholders. In essence, it creates a framework for park management, guiding decision-making and developing priorities for everyone involved.

The BBNPA state their key strategic activities from the management plan are:

- The evolution of the Brecon Beacons Strategic Tourism Partnership into a Sustainable Tourism Partnership, strengthening opportunities for partnership working and development and co-ordination of work programmes.
- The emergence of Brecon Beacons Tourism (BBT) as a fully established and highly regarded trade body representing over 200 private sector members.
- Formal recognition by Visit Wales of the Brecon Beacons as a destination, with associated funding for a programme of destination management, including a partnership based marketing programme.
- Establishing a 3-year visitor transport initiative and a dedicated website for travel to and around the National Park
- Establishing a Brecon Beacons marketing co-ordination group and preparing a 3-year marketing strategy.
- Maintaining support for tourism businesses through regular communication, training opportunities and an annual 'Tourism in Action' conference.

Source: *BBNPA Management Plan 2012-2016*

The BBNPA works closely with both public and private entities to help them develop tourism in a sustainable way that ideally not only protects, but also enhances the natural attributes of the region for which the NP is designated.

2.2 Tourism in the Brecon Beacons National Park

Over three and a half million people a year come to the BBNP to enjoy this area. The mountains, uplands and valleys are well known as good walking terrain. Visitors and residents also enjoy horse riding, cycling, mountain biking, fishing, kayaking and other water based activities. There are major tourist attractions such as the Dan yr og of Show caves, and festivals such as the Brecon Jazz Festival, the Green Man Festival, the Hay Festival of Literature, the Crickhowell Walking Festival and celebrations of locally produced food.

The BBNP has international, national and local importance as a protected landscape. The BBNPA's funding help the park serve as a test-bed for sustainable, innovative development and

management that may be applied in a broader context. Some examples illustrated by the BBNP improvement plan (2009) of the benefits to society include:

• Contributions to international food security through local food production;

• An understanding of the past and context for today's culture through on-going conservation of the historic environment;

• Maintenance of the quality and flow of regional water resources;

• Opportunities to reduce stress through recreation, leisure and culinary experiences;

• Awareness and understanding of the integral link between people and their environment;

• Innovative approaches to renewable energy generation and energy efficiency practices that can be adopted elsewhere.

In 2016 the Brecon Beacons Sustainable Tourism Partnership approved a Sustainable Tourism Strategy for the BBNP. The Partnership involves a wide variety of stakeholders, from private businesses to unitary authorities and tourism bodies. The strategy was developed over 18 months of intensive consultation and discussions. It is for all partners to implement and is based on the sustainable management of the destination as a whole - not just the development of tourism as such but the management of that tourism and the impacts it has so as to protect the environment on which it is based.

The vision for the Tourism Strategy is:

"By 2020 the area will be an exemplar of sustainable tourism development in protected areas, building on: a strong sense of place, the indigenous natural and cultural heritage of the Brecon Beacons, and a reputation for quality built upon communities, public sector and business interests working closely together to exceed the expectations of visitors." Tyler (2016)

The strategic objectives of sustainable tourism for the BBNPA are:

1. *Invest in well researched, planned and coordinated product development based on the natural strengths and culture of the area.*

2. *Continue to improve the understanding of tourism trends, market behaviour and the business of tourism in and around the National Park.*

3. *Refine the tourism organisational structure to help create a stronger partnership approach involving all key stakeholders.*

4. *Encourage collaborative marketing activities based upon the Brecon Beacons brand.*

5. *Enhance the National Park experience for all people, residents and visitors alike.*

6. *Manage the impacts of tourism*.

Source: Tyler (2016)

2.2.1 Tourism Resources in the Park

The overall tourism offer of the Brecon Beacons as a destination is based around its natural and cultural heritage, but the first point of contact for many visitors will be with one of the many enterprises providing a service that meets one or more of their needs and/or those of local residents.

The bed stock analysis (STEAM Report 2010) suggests that over 10,000 sleeping spaces are available in serviced and non-serviced accommodation across the Brecon Beacons. Non-serviced accommodation accounts for almost four times as many bed spaces as serviced accommodation. The largest category of accommodation is touring caravans/camping, accounting for almost one half (47%) of all bed spaces, many of which may be seasonal. Self-catering accommodation, even excluding all camping and caravans, accounts for more bed spaces than all serviced accommodation. This data is highlighted in Table 2.1 below.

Accommodation Category	Establishments	Beds/Sleeping Spaces
Serviced Accommodation		
+50 room hotels	-	-
11-50 room hotels	23	993
>10 room hotels/others	148	1127
Serviced Total	171	2120
Non Serviced Accommodation		
Self-Catering	283	2361
Static caravans/camping	5	360
Touring caravans/camping	60	4725
Not-for-hire statics	-	476
Non - Serviced Total	348	7922
Total	519	10042

Table 2.1: Bed Stock Analysis, *Source:* Brecon Beacons National Park STEAM Report 2010

The tourism industry is made up of a large number of generally small enterprises. Brecon Beacons Tourism numbers 171 accommodation providers amongst its members, including members representing significant numbers of properties, such as Brecon Beacons Holiday Cottages (384 properties), the Youth Hostel Association (3 hostels) and the Association of Bunkhouse Operators. The majority of hotels in and around the Brecon Beacons are in membership (15 members), together with around 60 Bed and Breakfasts, 70 self-catering properties, and 19 bunkhouses/hostels. The five camping/caravan sites in membership significantly under-represents the presence of this important sector in the NP.

There are perhaps 22 larger accommodation establishments (6+ rooms) in and around the park which associate themselves in some way with Brecon Beacons Tourism or the NP. Together, they provide just short of 400 rooms, of which 70% are quality assured (10% graded 5*; 24% graded 4*; 37% graded 3*). There is slightly higher representation of 5* and 4* accommodation amongst smaller Bed &Breakfasts. Six establishments, including one of sixteen hotels, received a Visit Wales Gold Award in recognition of outstanding quality, exceptional comfort and hospitality in the serviced sector in Wales. Serviced accommodation is most prevalent in the eastern half of the park. (Steam report 2010)

The Green Tourism business scheme has been recognised in Wales as an alternative to the Green Dragon environmental management scheme. Over 20 businesses have been assessed, with 7 achieving the Gold standard and 12 Silver awards. Self-catering accommodation is a product strength for the park, with many high quality properties often located in stunning settings, offering accommodation for 2 people up to large groups, spread throughout the park. Brecon Beacons Holiday Cottages is a long-established agency based within the NP, offering over 380 graded properties in and around the area. A more recent addition, Sugar and Loaf is based in Abergavenny and has been building a portfolio of more than 30 properties in the Brecon Beacons and Black Mountains.

The Association of Bunkhouse Operators has existed for over 15 years; it started in the Brecon Beacons, where the bulk of its membership remains, but has now expanded to cover the whole of Wales. 22 bunkhouses are located in or near to the BBNP. Camping and caravanning is an important sector, with a significant number of touring and static pitches across the park. At least 3 sites are graded 5* and 3 hold a David Bellamy Gold Conservation Award. They range from

small certificated sites with 5 seasonal pitches to large sites of 144 pitches, and at least one large site that is open all year.

Attraction	Number of Visits	Entry	Open
Big Pit National Coal Museum	155631	Free	Year Round
Brecon Beacons NP Visitor Centre	142809	Free	Year Round
Garwnant Visitor Centre	110000	Free	Year Round
Craig-y-nos Country Park	97814	Free	Year Round
Brecon Mountain Railway	71298	Paid	Year Round (not November)
Dan Yr Ogof, National Showcaves Centre for Wales	69057	Paid	Seasonal
Newton house, Dinefwr Park & Castle	68160	Paid	Year Round
Cyfartha Castle Museum & Art Gallery	66874	Free	Year Round
Llancaiach Fawr Manor	45587	Paid	Year Round
Cantref Adventure Farm Park	4200	Paid	Seasonal
Brecon Cathedral & Heritage Centre	30000	Free	Year Round
Blaenavon World Heritage Centre	29181	Free	Year Round
Pontypool Museum	28435	Paid	Year Round
Brynich Play Bam Brecon	28000	Paid	Variable
Abergavenny Museum & Castle	25827	Free	Year Round
Aberdulais Falls	25705	Paid	Year Round
Blaenavon Ironworks	23135	Paid	Year Round
Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery	20629	Free	Year Round
Carreg Cennan Castle	19650	Paid	Year Round
Waterfalls Centre, Pontneddfechan	17829	Free	Year Round
South Wales Borders Regimental Museum	15693	Paid	Year Round
Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway	13767	Paid	Year Round
Tretower Court	13636	Paid	Year Round
Blaenavon Cheddar Co & Mountain Tours	2474	Free	Year Round
Shell Grotto	1362	Free	Year Round
Penderyn Distillery		Paid	Year Round

Erwood Station Craft Centre		Free	Year Round
Llantony Priory		Free	Year Round
Llandovery heritage Centre		Free	Year Round
Black Mountain Red Kite Feeding Station		Paid	Year Round
Goytre Wharf & Canal Visitor Centre		Free	Year Round

Table 2.2: Visitor Attractions in the BBNP, *Source:* Visits to Tourist Attractions Visit Wales 2009

Table 2.2 illustrates the main visitor attractions in the BBNP, the four most heavily visited attractions are free at the point of entry and are owned and managed by the public sector, two of which are the responsibility of the NPA. The most frequently visited attraction is Big Pit, located at Blaenavon just outside the NP. The other three most visited attractions combine an outside experience with indoor facilities. Two are on the southern edge of the park, close to centres of population. The NP Visitor Centre performs exceptionally well, given its rather more remote location. The visitor centre at Craigy-Nos has now closed, but access to the Country Park continues and new catering facilities have recently opened in its place (Visits to Tourist Attractions Visit Wales 2009).

Two private sector operations, Brecon Mountain Railway and the National Showcaves Centre, each attracted around 70,000 visits in 2014 (Tyler, 2016). Cultural attractions, including Brecon Cathedral and the Brecknock Museum and Art Gallery6, attract a reasonable number of visitors, but arguably, have capacity to cope with many more. Taken together, there is a high number of visits to the cluster of attractions associated with the World Heritage Site. Some smaller heritage properties, especially those in a rural setting such as Carreg Cennan Castle, Llanthony Abbey or Tretower Court, add considerably to visitor interest. There are interesting churches in towns, villages and hamlets across the whole area. The first visitor attraction in the Brecon Beacons to join the Green Tourism Business Scheme, the Barn at Brynich and the Play Barn, is currently awaiting grading. The National Showcaves Centre for Wales has plans to become the first visitor attraction in Britain to be completely self-sufficient in energy, with the introduction of a new hydro plant. By far the majority of the main visitor attractions are open year round, although some have restricted opening hours in winter. In contrast with some other rural destinations, there is good access in general outside the main season. Brecknock Wildlife Trust manage a number of varied nature reserves across the Brecon Beacons; although none of them offers any particular visitor facilities, some have simple car parking and waymarked trails.

2.2.2 Tourism Delivery Structures

The BBNPA is the statutory body with responsibility for conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Brecon Beacons, promoting understanding and enjoyment of the area's special qualities and with a duty to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities (http://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/the-authority/who-we-are/). The BBNPA has had a specific involvement with sustainable tourism since appointing a dedicated officer in 2002, and the subsequent appointment of a Tourism Growth Area Officer. More recently, European funding has supported a new round of tourism activity and enabled expansion of the NPA team. However, it is important to recognise that a wide range of the Authority's activities make an essential contribution to the performance of the area as a tourism destination, including management and provision of countryside access and infrastructure, provision of information, interpretation and ranger services, and looking after the fine landscapes and biodiversity that visitors come to enjoy.

BBT is a membership association of 225 tourism businesses, working together since 2006 to market and support all tourism businesses across the BBNP and providing a strong tourism voice to represent the views of the industry. The organisation has evolved from a less formal group of operators into a company limited by guarantee.

Members are invited to endorse a statement of shared values, as follows:
- Work harder together to provide a distinctive experience for our visitors.
- Care more for our visitors and the landscape that attracts them.
- Aim further in our aspirations for a sustainable destination.
- Share knowledge and expertise for the benefit of all.

The Vision of BBT is '*to actively work together with our business network and partners to ensure a focus on developing successful and sustainable tourism in the Brecon Beacons*.' In order to achieve this, BBT intends:

- To harness and focus the energy for tourism in the Brecon Beacons in order to encourage delivery of a high quality visitor experience.
- To be the voice for tourism in the Brecon Beacons.

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- To facilitate effective marketing and tourism management in the Brecon Beacons.
- To influence the long term marketing and development of the Brecon Beacons as a destination.
- To support and assist the development of tourism businesses.
- To represent our businesses and liaise with a range of organisations to encourage positive change, development and provide coordination.
- To support and consult our businesses on an ongoing basis.

The BBNPA and BBT have signed a memorandum of understanding to underpin the way the two organisations relate to each other. As the key private sector partner, BBT took the lead for the Brecon Beacons marketing co-ordination group in managing the marketing strategy in 2010. In order to work as an effective and strategic partner in the marketing and management of the Brecon Beacons, BBT also interacts with the three Regional Tourism Partnerships, Mid-Wales (the lead), South East Wales and South West Wales, as well as Visit Wales and Wales Tourism Alliance. A new national framework for destination management, marketing and investment sets out a clear allocation of responsibilities between local destinations and Visit Wales and recommendations for partnership working within and between the public, private and community sectors (Tyler, 2016).

This section has reviewed the detail of the tourism products and highlighted that it is operated by small and medium sized entrepreneurs, with a focus on green and sustainable tourism, whilst the accommodation sector is dominated by self-catering and owner run facilities. Attention shall now turn towards providing an overview of SDF in the NP and highlight how tourism is used within these schemes.

2.3 Sustainable Development Funding in the Brecon Beacons National Park

The SDF is a grant scheme that supports new ways of living and working within NPs in a sustainable manner. The funding is provided by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and is managed by the NPAs and the Broads Authority. Sustainable development encompasses projects that can demonstrate social, economic and environmental development. In July 2002, the then Minister of State for Rural Affairs, Alun Michael, launched a Sustainable Development Fund for English National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority as a programme to provide a flexible and non-bureaucratic means of funding projects to "*aid*

the achievement of National Park purposes by encouraging individuals, community groups and businesses to develop practical sustainable solutions to the management of their activities". (BBNP Management Plan, 2009, p.18). The aim and objectives of the SDF are outlined in table 2.3 on page 25.

The SDF is open to individuals or organisations from the public, private or voluntary sectors from within or outside each NP. The level of grant support offered may be up to 75% of total costs (including contributions in kind) for the voluntary sector and up to 50% for other bodies. Applicants are expected to explore complementary grant sources to provide at least 25% of the total project costs, either from their own money or other sources. The rationale for this strategy of match funding (or addionality) is to enhance the value to SDF projects so that they extend beyond public funding. In exceptional circumstances up to 100% funding may be allocated, though this would normally require some contribution in kind, such as volunteer time, or loan of equipment, premises or land. The BBNPA expects that a high proportion of SDF grants will be relatively small in order to assist a large number of groups.

In all cases, applicants must demonstrate that their project will:
- further National Park purposes;
- be sustainable (against the test of economic, social and environmental sustainability);
- have the support or involvement of communities;
- be complementary to key local and national strategies, e.g. Local Agenda 21;
- not breach state aid rules.

The key question posed by the SDF is "*whether a proposed project will change the attitude and behaviour of individuals and communities in ways that enhance understanding of sustainable development and the role of the National Park while promoting cooperation and social inclusion"*.

Aim
Through partnership, to develop and test ways of achieving a more sustainable way of living in a countryside of great natural beauty and diversity in which the local characteristics of culture, wildlife, landscape, land use and community are conserved and enhanced.

Objectives
• To explore ways of meeting concurrently the four principles of sustainability and of breaking down barriers that can act as obstacles to sustainability.
• To develop models for the sustainable management of the countryside that could be applied more widely in Wales.
• To generate greater awareness and understanding of sustainability.

Four sustainability principles:
• Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
• Effective protection of the environment;
• Prudent use of natural resources; and
• Maintenance of high & stable economic growth & employment.

Eligibility
Projects will have to:
• Be sustainable - link social, environmental, cultural and economic issues through public participation;
• Demonstrate genuine support or involvement of communities within the Park;
• Support one or more of the objectives of the scheme;
• Be complementary to key local and national strategies;
• Bring organisations together in partnership to tackle problems;
• Be compliant with the principle of treating the English and Welsh languages on a basis of equality in dealings with the public (e.g., publicity, literature and signage) as set out in the Welsh Assembly Government's Welsh Language Scheme.

Priority will be given to projects that:
• Overcome institutional arrangements, relationships and cultures that may be creating barriers to sustainability;
• Demonstrate innovation or best practice;
• Involve young people;
• Support community based sustainable transport initiatives designed to reduce their carbon footprint;
• Support sustainable visitor transport initiatives, including access to visitor "hot spots";
• Support sustainable food marketing and the promotion and consumption of local produce;
• Promote the sustainable use of water resources, through the support of projects designed to promote access to water;
• For which no other resources exist;
• Which lever in contributions from other sources (in cash or kind);
• Add value or new dimensions to existing sustainability projects;
• Promote wider understanding of sustainability;
• Support local disadvantage and disabled groups;
• Derive support from and provide support to local businesses;
• Encourage social inclusion.

Table 2.3: Aims and Objectives of SDF, *Source:* BBNP Management Plan (2009)

Innovation and originality are as much features of SDF delivery mechanisms as are the local initiatives that the funding is intended to foster. The SDF prospectus asks NPAs to develop their own procedures and structures appropriate to local circumstances, with the aim of encouraging

innovation and high levels of participation by park communities. Each park is required to establish a small SDF grant advisory panel to take decisions about allocation of the fund. The SDF panel can include representatives of local and regional community, business, environmental, wildlife, agriculture, tourism and recreational interests, but should be small with the main requirement that panel members can think laterally and promote innovation. The Panel is required to develop working methods that allow a speedy response to requests for grants, and to place a high level of trust in the ability of applicants to carry forward proposed projects. The percentage of decisions on completed applications notified to applicants within 14 days of consideration by the panel for applications over £1,000 was 100% for the BBNPA in 2014-2015 (Tyler, 2016). For applications under £1,000 the turnaround time was 28 days from receipt of completed applications.

The SDF Prospectus declares that monitoring and evaluation are to involve a *"very light touch regime"*. Auditing of individual projects by the SDF panel is to be achieved mainly by maintaining close contact with the projects as they develop; whilst responsibility may be delegated, panel members are encouraged to take a personal interest in projects. Each NPA is required to submit to the Minister of State for Rural Affairs (and to copy to the Countryside Agency) an annual report, which should summarise the performance of the fund against performance indicators. These indicators are not specified in the prospectus; they should focus primarily on output measures to be developed by NPAs themselves in the light of their involvement of the fund. NPAs are encouraged to learn from the experience of delivering the Fund and to promote the results to a wider rural audience.

2.3.1 Sustainable Development Funding in the Park

The past seventeen years has seen a variety of activities in the BBNP for the SDF schemes. The summary of their activities during 2002-2009 is summarised in Table 2.4.

Total number of projects completed 1,235
Total value of Sustainable Development Fund investment £9.9 million
Total value of Cash Match Funding £42.5 million
Ratio of Sustainable Development Fund to cash match funding 1 : 4.3
Ratio of Sustainable Development Fund to cash and in-kind match funding 1 : 4.6
Engages local communities and/or volunteers in planning, delivery and operation 72%
Involves young people 52%
Engages people from an urban centre with the National Park 52%
Adds value or new dimensions to an existing sustainability project 41%
Brings different organisations together to tackle rural problems in the spirit of partnership 64%
Exemplar of Sustainable Development 43%
Develops models for sustainable living in the countryside that can be applied elsewhere 43%
Involves the sustainable management of land
(e.g. irrigation, peat bog management, reforestation) 24%
Educates and raises awareness of the need for sustainable development and safeguarding the environment 74%
Number of projects that created employment 198
Number of jobs created 340
Percentage of projects working with the tourism industry 43%
Percentage of projects involving public access to the National Park 40%
Percentage of projects that addressed climate change during 2003/2004 5%
Percentage of projects that addressed climate change during 2008/2009 20%

Table 2.4: Summary of SDF 2002–2009, *Source:* BBNP Management Plan (2009)

In 2014/15 23 new projects were awarded grants of £252,510 in total. Every £1 of SDF invested has attracted an additionality of £3 in match funding. In terms of total cash paid out in the year 33 projects received funding of £204,933. Since its inception the Fund has supported 319 projects with grants of £2.8m, pulling in additional match funding of over £9m.

Approaching 1300 people have taken up the opportunity to volunteer on projects supported by SDF in 2014/15. These volunteers have worked 43,880 hours on the projects, giving an approximate benefit to community groups/projects of over £300,000. These projects, claiming grants in 2014/15 have also led to the creation of 11 jobs and the protection of a further 19 jobs.

SDF Officers have a fundamental role in development of projects both at the initial stages and throughout the project's life, continuing to support projects and groups towards full sustainability through robust business planning. Two projects supported by SDF in 2014/15 have been awarded major recognition and cash to invest in their projects. The Eco Travel Network (ETN) was awarded £50,000, and the Pip Woolf project was presented the £2,000 Park Protector award from the Council for NPs for their SDF scheme entitled "The Woollen Line."

Year	Number of Projects	Value of grant (£)	Matched Resources (£)
2000/01	36	393,054	59,728
2001/02	32	278,389	671350
2002/03	16	192,104	78,9574
2003/04	27	216,250	756,813
2004/05	22	166,016	644,616
2005/06	31	103,327	25,9037
2006/07	41	418,157	1,100,207
2007/08	22	238,380	592,534
2008/09	18	171,434	780,663
2009/10	12	65,944	188,774
2010/11	18	150,317	1,00,5205
2011/12	21	150,456	646,416
2012/13	23	252,510	741,138
Total	**319**	**2,804,338**	**9,036,055**

Figure 2.3: SDF in the BBNP 2000 – 2013: Grants Awarded by Year

Figure 2.3 illustrates how £1 of SDF has attracted £3.22 in match funding from other sources. SDF often provides the essential seed corn funding which allows projects to develop. However, communities are expected to find funding from other sources in order to take advantage of the SDF programme.

SDF Grant Spend 2013/2015 by Category

- Archaeology
- Arts and community
- Biodiversity
- Business support
- Community support
- Community hall
- Culture
- Food
- Information and health promotion
- Recycling
- Renewable energy
- Social inclusion
- Sustainable housing
- Sustainable tourism
- Transport

Transport 4%
Archaeology 3%
Arts and community 6%
Biodiversity 7%
Business support 3%
Community support 13%
Community hall 3%
Culture 13%
Food 6%
Information and health promotion 8%
Recycling 2%
Renewable energy 11%
Social inclusion 10%
Sustainable housing 3%
Sustainable tourism 8%

Figure 2.4: SDF Grant Spend by Category 2013 – 2015

Over the years support for community facilities such as halls and supporting communities to provide services within their communities have been the largest recipients of SDF grants. Social inclusion projects which ensure that support is given to local disadvantaged and disabled groups, in line with the fund's operation guidelines, has been and continues to be a major focus for the fund. Ensuring equality throughout all projects is a key consideration for the Fund. Figure 2.5 shows the diversity of projects supported by SDF highlighting the ability of the fund to deliver on the vision for a Sustainable Wales.

2.3.2 Sustainable Development Funding in the Park 2015-2016

SDF Project	Description of SDF Project
Homemakers Bulky Collection	Homemakers Community Recycling, an Abergavenny charity, is focused on the recycling of furniture and white goods, and raising awareness of environmental issues and providing training for a variety of disadvantaged people.
Preserving the Hill Ponies	This project is researching the genetic make-up of hill ponies to identify a differential of them and to run a premium scheme to ensure that these conservation grazers continue to graze on the commons in the National Park.
Black Mountains Upland Volunteers	This programme is building the capacity within volunteer groups to maintain upland paths in the Black Mountains.
Ystradowen Community Transport	This project has helped to employ a bus driver to ensure that people without transport within the Ystradowen and Brynaman areas are able to access the community centre and other facilities.
Canal & Rivers Trust Waterways Trail	SDF has helped the Trust to develop interpretation for the Waterways Trail along the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal.
Libanus Recreational Space	This project involves the whole community in providing a space to integrate the whole community in a natural setting.
Brecon Advice Centre Continuation	To provide advice, especially on debt, on a drop in basis, in a face to face manner.
Brecon Baroque Festival	This community engagement project ensured that the Festival has become more inclusive and has increased the future sustainability of the Festival by creating new income streams.
Brecon Jazz 2015	This project has ensured that there were street activities during the Festival to ensure whole community engagement. The Festival is critically important to the area economically and culturally.
Talgarth Young Farmers Craft Fair	Enabling the young farmers to run a craft fair and entertainment as part of The Talgarth Festival.
Meteor Impact at Llanddeusant Youth Hostel	This Science project is enabling the YHA to educate children from within and outside the Park.

Community Juicing III	This community project has developed with communities from across the Park now able to press their own juice from a glut of fruit. This project has enabled the purchase of pasteurisation equipment.
Corn Exchange Investment Project Crickhowell	The local community has come together here to prevent a supermarket buying up a local pub. This project will help the community to determine the future strategy for the building.
Pontsticill Village Regeneration	With reducing levels of service in their area from the Local Authority this group have come together to raise money and to volunteer to provide and enhance the facilities in their community, an important gateway into the National Park.
Hay Castle Archaeology Project	Support for archaeological investigations will enable Hay Castle Trust to establish information which will support technical design going forward.
Take Part – Participate	This project is looking to facilitate participation between the local community, MOD regular service personnel and Ghurkha families.
Talgarth Woodland Group	This project will increase the capacity within the group to manage a Woodland Trust wood in the Talgarth area.
Brecon Youth Festival	This project will increase awareness for Welsh urban youth and make them aware of leisure opportunities in rural areas by highlighting key rural activities.

Table 2.5: Summary of SDF projects in BBNP

Table 2.6 and 2.7 illustrate the type of issues that SDF schemes hope to address in creating community sustainability and rural development. Notably, table 2.7 identifies that 43% of projects work with the tourism industry.

Engages local community and/or volunteers in planning, delivery and operation	72%
Involves young people	52%
Engages people from an urban centre with a NP	52%
Adds value or new dimensions to an existing sustainability project	41%
Brings different organisations together to tackle rural problems in the spirit of partnership	64%
Exemplar of sustainable development	43%
Develops models for sustainable living in the countryside that can be applied elsewhere	43%
Involves the sustainable management of land (e.g. irrigation, land management or reforestation)	47%
Educates and raises awareness of the need for sustainable development and safeguarding the environment	74%

Table 2.6: Percentage of total sustainable development fund projects delivering the DEFRA priorities established in 2002

Number of projects that created employment	21
Number of jobs created	18
Percentage of projects working with the tourism industry	43%
Percentage of projects involving public access to the NP	40%
Percentage of projects that addressed climate change during 2006/2007	8%
Percentage of projects that addressed climate change during 2009/2010	22%

Table 2.7: Additional Information about SDF during 2009-2015

An evaluation into the SDF undertaken by DEFRA in 2009 identified that the SDF has helped NPs to deliver their duty to foster social and economic well-being. One of the strengths of the SDF is its approach on a "bottom-up" delivery system which attempts to meet the needs identified by local communities and businesses. However, the "top-down" priorities from the NP management plan has to be balanced from this opposing approach. DEFRA also noted that the scheme is highly accessible and was designed to minimise the administrative burden on people wishing to put forward a bid. Due to the nature of the bids put forward the SDF scheme gives priority to innovative ideas and takes risks on projects with no proven track record thereby supporting initiatives that would otherwise fall between the gaps of other funds. It was noted by DEFRA that the SDF often provides the first offer of funding from which other support is generated. The SDF scheme also involves partnership working to help develop and foster relationships between communities, businesses and local authorities. The SDF has also helped to develop a new perception of the NP designation. The role of the Authorities has evolved away from a regulating, statutory planning body towards a more enabling organisation.

DEFRA also noted that the scheme could make more of the test bedding role in order to better share project information. They suggest that this could be achieved through the use of the wider NPs website to demonstrate innovative projects and novel approaches illuminating best practice. They also noted that there needs to be more proactive engagement with communities outside of the NP boundaries. DEFRA also wants there to be further support of completed projects and an increase in awareness of successful projects after completion. They believe that NPAs should consider how they can celebrate the achievements in a stronger fashion (such as awards or website recognition).

2.4 The Static Synthetic Model of the Dynamics of Rural Sustainability in the BBNP

This chapter has provided the context in which the primary research was undertaken. The BBNP like many other NPs has been (and is) going through a transformation. This change has impacted communities, economies and the natural environment. The economic and social characteristics of the NP have been outlined. The relevance of tourism has been purported, including a description of the various resources and structures within the NP. An account of SDF within the NP, including the role and nature of SDF schemes has been provided. In order to provide a framework upon which to review the dynamics of rural sustainability, Figure 2.6 was created (illustrated on the next page). The model combines the key themes of this chapter to create a static synthetic model of the dynamics of rural sustainability within the BBNP. It is a top-down model, where the nationwide policies filter down to the BBNP management plan, which in turn help to formulate the local development plan. Incorporated within the management plan and local development plan, is the SDF, which, for the purpose of this thesis is the primary tool which will be analysed, that is endeavouring to bring about sustainability for the NP. The BBNP plans refer to sustainable communities, sustainable tourism, the tourism resources and delivery structures. With these components in place the BBNP seek to create rural sustainability.
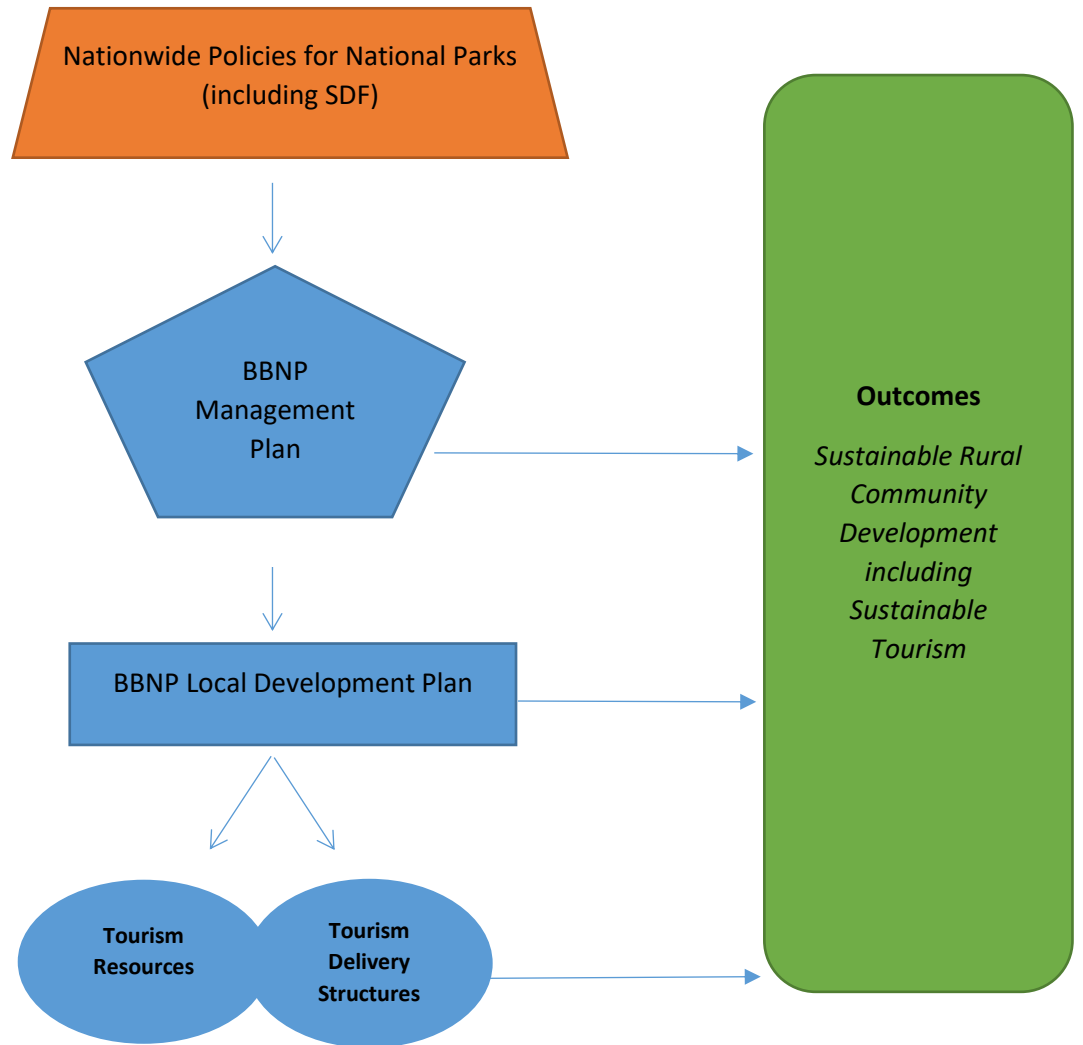
Figure 2.5: Static Synthetic Model of the Structures of Rural Sustainability in the BBNP, *Source*: Author

Having established the static components that incorporate the existing structures within the BBNP, the next chapter will present the academic underpinning for this thesis in relation to rural sustainability, community and tourism development.

Chapter Three

Dynamics of Rural Development

This chapter reviews the literature on the dynamics of rural sustainability as related to the implementation of SDF in the BBNP. The first section focuses on rural sustainable development, the second sustainable communities and the third the concept of sustainable tourism relevant to the BBNP and SDF. The concepts of sustainable rural development, community and tourism are central to this thesis.

3.1 The Rise of Rural Sustainable Development

Rural areas support human existence both in terms of their capacity to supply the resources necessary to support life, but also in their capacity to absorb the impacts of human activity (Jackson, 2009). However, the relationship between individuals and the natural environment upon which they depend is thought to be weakening, as traditional rural industries decline and populations move to urban areas (Chambers, 2008). Therefore, the ongoing health and vitality of rural communities has been bought into question and has given rise to the rural sustainability debate.

The current rural development discourse was established in 1987, with an increase in environmental concerns, the Brundtland Commission produced the report entitled "Our Common Future" (WCED, 1987). The WCED's consideration of the impacts of environmental degradation on the potential for economic growth challenged the neo-classical view. The latter was forced to acknowledge the finite nature of the earth's resources. This view has been summarised by the WCED (1987, p. 5) as follows,

 "*We have in the past been concerned about the impacts of economic growth upon the environment. We are now forced to concern ourselves with the impacts of ecological stress…upon our economic prospects".*

The Brundtland Report established a systematic relationship between environmental and development issues for the very first time. It urged a marriage of economics, society and ecology. It stated that sustainable development is not a fixed state of harmony, but rather a

process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are made consistent with future as well as present needs (Nelissen *et al,* 1997). We have to live, in other words, within our environmental means (Jacobs, 1995). Environmental protection and economic development need to be promoted as a complementary rather than antagonistic process. Thus, sustainability signifies that the demands placed upon the environment need to be met without reducing the capacity of the environment to provide for future generations. In this sense, economic growth must be based on policies that sustain and expand the environmental resource base. Meeting the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations involves the equitable sharing of resources within and between generations. Greater distributional equity is key to the achievement of sustainability and a test of whether or not development is sustainable (Ko, 2005).

Baker *et al* (1997) argued that the entwining of economic and environmental thinking would not have been attained had it not been for a wider social movement for change and integration that developed in the late 1980s and early 1990s. This identified the changing nature of sustainable development and recognised the concepts evolution as our knowledge of ecological systems advanced. Therefore, definitions of sustainable development provide only a snapshot of how society views it at any particular point in time. The dynamism of this concept is also noted by Costanza (1991) who commented that while social change will affect what we understand "development" to mean, it will also be limited by the environment and the extent to which we can develop it.

Sustainable development is generally characterised as having a greater focus on understanding and achieving the environmental and economic aspects of sustainability rather than the social aspect (Akgun *et al,* 2015). Arguably this stems from the fact that sustainable development has predominantly been applied within either an environmental or a business context, where there is evidence that bias exists towards either environmental or economic interests respectively (McKenzie-Mohr, 2004). However, there is now recognition of the role that social factors play in achieving sustainable development outcomes. In addition to addressing environmental concerns, sustainable development:

"…is also about the pursuit of fundamental social, economic and cultural objectives. These objectives include the need to secure basic human needs, equity, social justice and cultural diversity" (Barker, 2005 p 12).

Akgun *et al* (2015) argued that the reason for such divergent views on sustainable development is that in its attempts to reconcile the imperatives of growth and development with sustainability, 'sustainable development' is, essentially, a contradiction in terms. When applied within a business or government context, there is an inherent assumption that the notion of 'sustainable development' incorporates sustained economic growth, whilst within an academic context, human development is not necessarily considered to be coupled only to an increasing Gross Domestic Product (Robinson, 2004). The past two decades have, therefore, seen numerous attempts at establishing an improved expression of the meanings of 'sustainable development' and 'sustainability' in various contexts. However, the prevailing result of these efforts has been to substantiate the view that the notion of sustainability itself – rather than the Brundtland definition *per se* – is inexplicit and pluralistic. The inherent degree of subjectivity in individuals' perceptions resulting from their own system of societal values and the cultural contexts they inhabit (Clifton, 2010) means that sustainability is an intrinsically "*slippery concept*" (Eden, 2000 p. 111), which will unavoidably be translated differently by different people (Johnson, 2010).

In response to these criticisms of the vagueness of sustainability, it can be argued that it is, in fact, this flexibility of meaning that makes sustainability such a powerful and popular concept. As Parris and Kates (2003) stated, "*the oxymoron-like character of sustainable development can be so inclusive must surely lie in its inherent ambiguity…*" (p.560). Being open to a degree of interpretation, the fundamental notion of 'sustainability' is accessible to all actors at all levels in society, from individuals and communities, to businesses and governments. Sustainable development is a global-level concept (Adamson and Bromiley, 2013). It cannot be, nor does it profess to be, a 'one-size-fits-all' or 'silver bullet' solution to all global problems. Instead, the fundamental basis of sustainable development – that future development needs to integrate long-term environmental, social, and economic concerns – can provide flexible guiding principles within which action can be tailored to the parameters of specific context in which it occurs (Kemp and Martens, 2007; Robinson, 2004). Therefore, embedded within the

overarching global concept of sustainable development, increasingly bespoke interpretations can be made as the scale of operation reduces, for example, from global to national, to regional to local and to individual. As such, sustainable development has been embraced by policymakers across the world, arguably pioneered by successive UK governments (Carson *et al,* 2014). However, the vagueness of the definition also means that it is a highly contested and political concept as opposing parties (e.g. business versus environmental groups) seek to argue for their favoured balance between the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainability.

Sustaining rural development (economic, environmental and/or social) is a persistent challenge for rural areas. Irwin *et al* (2010) indicated that the decline in the farming economy and community has prompted the requirement for rural regions to consider alternative income streams and employment opportunities. This pattern of decline has also been felt by other traditional rural economy activities such as mining, forestry and manufacturing (Deller and Goetz, 2009). Finding different strategies to sustain rural areas has been a key theme in the sustainable rural development discourse. One strategy that has emerged, focused on enticing people to spend their leisure time in rural areas (Butler, 1997). At the same time, rural areas are trying to attract people to come and inhabit these localities, be they commuters, retirees or the "creative class". The idea is that "jobs (and wealth) follow people" rather than the other way round (Pender *et al*, 2012).

Pender *et al* (2014) suggested that the likelihood of these strategies succeeding was very low. This they claim is because sustainable development is a continual process of creativity and change rather than a fixed state. They argued that the possibility of succeeding is increased the stronger the assets and unique characteristics of a rural area are, especially, if as Reeder and Brown (2005) argued there is an enhanced infrastructure, skilled workforce and political acceptance of this approach.

Rural society is going through a transformation. Economic restructuring, an increase in mobility, the movement of products and people and information has assisted in the corrosion of many rural communities and their cultures, but at the same time has opened up areas such as the BBNP to new uses (Daalhuizen *et al,* 2003). These alterations in the construction of rural

communities have had positive impacts, such as an increase in knowledge informing new techniques in using agricultural landscape and increasing output (Beck, 2003). At the same time various disadvantages, such as an increase in pollution, congestion and littering of the landscape is caused by visitors from the new economies of tourism and leisure who place strains on the landscape (McGranahan *et al*, 2011).

Effective rural development strategies often seek to enhance the different type of resources and capital available. These include the natural, physical financial, human and social capitals to increase the overall health of a rural area. Debates about which capital is the most important to enhance are ongoing. However, Putnam (1993) noted that the enhancement of social norms, trust and networks, or "social capital" in determining economic development is a strategy followed by many rural areas that have seen demographics change, inasmuch, as new people bring with them new ambitions and conceptualisations and interpretation as to what sustainable rural development could mean.

The ambitions of rural sustainable development policy are far-reaching (Baldock *et al,* 2001). These may focus on diversifying the agricultural base (Hjalager, 1999) or finding different functions for agriculture by improving the social, environmental or cultural purposes of agriculture (Morgan *et al*, 2010). For Ayres and McCalla (1996) sustainability issues were concerned with food security and generating higher levels of output or production. The need to create jobs and generate income streams is cited by Shortall and Shucksmith (2001). While Szlanyinka (2009) considered the conservation of natural as well as environmental, social and cultural resources as desired outputs of sustainability. However, the binding outcome of all these ambitions is to create a cohesive, interconnected and stable rural community that possess viable economies and communities. In doing so, rural areas seek to be in a position to entice and preserve a capable workforce who have the skills and knowledge to contribute to its growth and development (Shortall and Shucksmith, 2001).

The changes in rural communities, such as offering new facilities and services whilst moving away from their traditional agricultural activities, has signalled the need to consider using sustainability as a guiding principle for rural regeneration (Akgun *et al,* 2015). A key question, is how can a rural area diversify its economy whilst ensuring its sustainability? This question is one

academics are struggling to answer (Akgun *et al,* 2012; MacDonald, 2013). Akgun *et al* (2015) suggest a possible response to this question. They noted, in relation to local communities, that there are five factors that can drive sustainable rural development: first, the physical system made up of the infrastructure, technology, accessibility and built environment; second the social system consisting of the openness of communities, their social relations and participation; third, the economic system in which the community has established, the diversity, entrepreneurship and human resources available for exploitation; fourth, the locality (i.e. the natural landscape the culture and tacit knowledge); fifth, the creative systems available to communities and hence their ability to convert knowledge into actions. Developing these five factors could prove challenging for rural communities for as Nijkamp *et al* (1997) suggested rural societies are generally considered closed social communities, which, while arguably maybe one of their strengths in assisting the formation and maintenance of a strong identity, may also present challenges in the acquisition of new assets or capitals. However, although traditional rural communities may not possess fluid membership, they do have tradition, heritage and cultures as assets ripe for consumption. Alker and Stone (2005, p.29) noted that;

"the retention of heritage structures and other attributes related to former industrial uses may be critical in order to maximize opportunities for the development of tourism and leisure, particularly in locations inappropriate for alternative land uses".

The efforts of public agencies to promote sustainable rural development by generating economic activity, whilst maintaining local assets, have been much in evidence in recent times (Alessa *et al*, 2008) as communities pit themselves against each other in their struggle to compete for investment and earn wider recognition (Fishbein, 2008). In order to achieve these ambitions, the development of networking and co-operative relationships has been promoted. However, given the closed nature of social communities there is much work to be done to realise these ambitions (Gratton, 2007). Arguably, schemes should seek to capitalise upon factors of physical, social, economic, locality and creative systems (Akgun *et al,* 2015).

3.2 Sustainable Communities

Richards and Hall (2000) noted that community as a concept has saturated the sustainability literature. There are very few community development policies that do not discuss the relevance of long term benefits for the "community". Therefore, two questions arise: what is a sustainable community and how are such communities created?

A review of the literature shows that there is little agreement on the definition of community. It may be that a community is geographically bound by physical location, built on heritage or mutual cultural values (Joppe, 1996). Delanty (2003) suggested that a community is a structured entity with a clear identity sharing commonality of purpose. Green and Haines (2007) defined community as including three components:

- Territory or place;
- Social organisations or institutions that provide regular interaction among residents;
- Social interaction on matters concerning a common interest.

Communities tend to have positive connotations as they illicit notions of togetherness, caring, warmth or people who are understanding of one another (Amin, 2005). Communities often have a set of shared values or commitments with social cohesion or solidarity being a central part of their constituents. The sense of belonging as noted by Benson (1997, p.2) creates "*the vision of a healthy community focusing on creating a normative culture in which adults, organizations, and community institutions unite to take action guided by a shared vision*". The relevance of collective beliefs is arguably one of the most important features of community sustainability (Gardner, 1995), because communities that have shared values will work together in a cohesive fashion towards long term common goals.

Pretty (1995) noted that a community includes people who share a place and an interdependent relationship. These relationships occur in the context of a continuously changing community affected by global forces, which tend to make people feel isolated, disconnected and alone. However, if community is a group of people whose relationships are tied to a common geographic location or have a communal historic background with shared values or participate together in various activities, and have a high degree of solidarity, then community members

need to be involved in discussions and decisions about the most desirable form of collective life for themselves. Community, from this perspective, involves the idea of collective, participatory engagement of people in the determination of the affairs that directly concern them (Winther, 2016).

A full understanding of the term and dynamics of sustainable community cannot, therefore, be gained without applying meso-level concepts such as power, agency, engagement, capacity, community health, community knowledge, learning and world-views, with an ability to reflect on and develop all of these, leading to sustainable behaviours. Therefore, building on this Baker (2001, p.30-31) defined a sustainable community as:

"*Those communities that continue to evolve and develop sustainably, whereby their development does not harm, potentially enhances and is an integral part of the environment; and enables ethical and equitable distribution of resources and opportunities today (intra-generational) and in the future (inter-generational). Sustainable communities: take on the economic, social, ecological and ethical aspirations and aspects of sustainable development, as defined in the WCED (1987) definition and possess the power, agency and learning capability to realise their capacity for sustainable development and change*".

Hence, the nature of community itself is highly complex involving interactions at the micro and macro levels of society across time and space (Ledwith 2005). Communities are not static phenomena, but are complex, dynamic and constantly changing. They represent an ongoing process, created by the action of living (Delanty 2003) and may vary in spatial scale (local to global), in nature (virtual or physically) and temporally.

Dobson (2010) suggested that this change in communities should be founded on the resilience of social and local networks whilst pursuing locally preferred developments that are aligned with differing formal and informal social relationships within the community, such as family, work or religion. Dobson argued that rather than the imposition of standardised models of change imported by external actors, local capabilities ought to be developed in conjunction with resources readily available. Dobson goes on to note that this should prevent damage to the local social fabric and assist to ascertain longer lasting benefits, patience and investment in efforts

that are required to bring about change. Two central elements in the creation and development of a sustainable community is effective community action and democratic participation in making decisions (Bridger and Luloff 2001). Winther (2016) suggested that this interactional approach to sustainable community development should be grounded on a transparent demarcation of the various social sub-groups (or fields) that comprise the specific community, what their roles are in agenda setting and decision-making and what the linkages are between these sub-groups or social fields.

Connelly *et al* (2011) noted that a community may have differing competing biographies (lives) based on multiple virtual or physical interests to which a community belongs or aspires. The allegiance of a community to any particular concern may change at any time, depending on the circumstances in which the community finds itself (Beck 2000). Therefore, is a spatial definition of a community relevant in today's society when considering the nature of a sustainable community?

In his book, 'Community', Delanty (2003) argued that communities are no longer 'rooted' in place. However, this in itself does not imply spatial irrelevance for sustainable communities. People live and work in specific places and their behaviour and social practices are very likely to be affected by their dwelling place, for example, socialising and transport choices (Svensson 2012). Place is important for ecological awareness, as people 'rooted' to where they live are more likely to be ecologically aware of their surroundings (Kearns & Turok 2003) and have their psyche embedded in the landscape in which they dwell (Key & Kerr 2011). This is important as spirituality and emotional attachment are important for creating well-being and empowering a community (McIntosh 2008). Becoming disengaged from nature is a criticism of modern society (Giddens 1991) and creating ecological awareness through reconnecting with nature may assist in community development. This link between ecology and human well-being gives reason to reconsider the role of place-based (i.e. where people dwell) communities in creating well-being (Ward and Brown, 2009). Thus, the focus of this rural sustainability study is on place-based communities and consideration of their spatial boundaries for the understanding of sustainability issues.

The central elements of community described above are often considered to be linked, in a mutually reinforcing relationship, employing communities in the delivery of sustainability initiatives which is thought help tease out, enable and develop social capital, thus increasing the community's capacity to take action (Wallace, 2010). This process should then generate a constructive feedback loop where a community is empowered to pursue further local plans in the future (Assadourian, 2008). Collins (2004) noted that a development scheme which specifically supports community led projects could be viewed as a good example of this rationale within policy-making. However, Collins suggested that translating theory into practice can be complicated and challenging.

Taylor (2003) indicated that a community can be an effective tool through which to encourage and deliver sustainability initiatives. There are several considerations as to why a community may be a particularly useful conduit for this. First, the community is considered to be a suitable level where communication can take place about sustainability initiatives. This may be because community members will listen more effectively and trust messages that originate from other community members when compared to government representatives, the media or NPAs (Reeves *et al,* 2011), but more so, due to the location of where communication takes place (i.e. the local environment) which is considered to become more significant to community members when they engage with social life in their locality. Subsequently, by framing community concerns at this local level, whereby individuals have a particular familiarity of the world which they inhabit, increases their probability of associating with community concerns for nature and encourage sustainability decisions (Macnaghten, 2003).

Peters and Jackson (2008) suggested that the community is a valid mechanism for providing and enabling the correct social context within which to enable sustainability initiatives. The "social organisation" of communities which includes the construction and maintenance of certain descriptive norms is believed to be a key influence on behaviour and lifestyles. The size and scale of a community has been noted by Waligo *et al* (2013) as providing an important location for social and cultural innovative ideas and investigation. Bullock and Lawson (2007) noted that the community is a place where unconventional answers for sustainable development initiatives can materialise. Ideas and schemes led by communities often generate innovation

and are more specific to a community because they are based around the values, concerns and interests of those communities driving the initiatives in question.

Communities are transient, multi-layered and heterogeneous (Taylor, 2003). They are not static, they are a subjective and elastic concept, they are ambiguous, indistinct and romantic (e.g. Plants, 1974, Bauman, 2001). The research conducted by Stone and Nyaupane (2013) indicated that a community usually comprises of various, sometimes conflicting, factions and interest groups. The literature on community sociology indicates that there is evidence that this dynamic is a pervasive character of everyday life in communities (Crow *et al,* 2001). However, it is not a simple dynamic to define because the nature of communities is fluid and subjective with multiple "communities within communities". Therefore, if the perception of a community as a single homogenous unit is recognised to be a naïve and simplistic understanding of reality, questions emerge as to how a "community " is expected to achieve tangible, policy orientated outputs through initiatives such as the SDF.

3.3 Sustainable Tourism

In the 1960s the tourism industry was largely viewed as an economic panacea and with little impacts deriving from it (Butler, 1993). It was often termed a "smokeless" industry distancing itself from the polluting factories of the time (Dicks, 2000). However, as Stankovic (1979, p.25) noted:

 "It is a characteristic of tourism that it can, more than many other activities, use and valorise such parts and elements of nature as are of almost no value for other economic branches and activities".

The entwining of sustainable development and sustainable tourism literature seemed inevitable given that both concepts came to the academic arena at the same time and this has created confusion in the various definitions of sustainable tourism. It was Garrod & Fyall (1998, p. 199) who stated that *"defining sustainable development in the context of tourism has become something of a cottage industry in the academic literature"* and they had a desire to move

arguments of sustainable tourism away from sustainable development ideology. Butler (1993, p.29) defined sustainable tourism as "*tourism which is in a form which can maintain its viability in an area for an indefinite period of time*". Baker (2001) goes on to suggest that sustainable development in this context is "*tourism which is developed and maintained in an area in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment (human and physical) in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the successful development and well-being of other activities and processes*" (Baker, 2001, p.29). The World Tourism Organisation (1995, p.30) used a similar definition which refers to sustainable tourism development as tourism that:

"*meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems*".

This definition of sustainable tourism development perceives it as a force that contributes to sustainable development rather than as a standalone process that is responsible for all development in an area. The tourism industry has been seen as a "soft option" that delivers much at the expense of little (Wahab & Pigram, 1997). The decline of traditional industries and agriculture has forced many rural areas to turn to tourism given the wealth of opportunities leading to economic growth and diversification promised by such a strategy (Hall, 2005). Blackstock (2005) suggested that as a result, tourism is now one of the target industries for communities of all sizes wishing to integrate into their overall comprehensive planning strategy. Although rural tourism development is not a panacea to all the ailments of a rural destination, it has great potential when integrated into broader community development efforts. Hanna (2008, p.150) suggested that sustainable tourism could be interpreted as "*an emerging form of ethical consumption as it adopts social, environmental and economic concerns which are also expressed through the form of consumption*". Consequently, the diversification of such an economic base provides opportunities for social, economic, environmental and cultural development whilst also ensuring greater security for the community (Murphy and Murphy, 2004).

It is generally admitted that sustainable tourism owes many of its concepts and principles to sustainable development, so these two concepts may have similar historical backgrounds. Although, as Wight (1998) noted, tourism cannot be blamed for the environmental degradation caused by inconsiderate decisions rather than real visitor impacts, the tourism sector not only has interests in sustainable development but also needs to share some responsibilities for it. Wight (1998) suggested four reasons why tourism should be incorporated in to sustainable development:

- Tourism is a growing industry and has great economic importance;
- Tourism influences a wide range of other industries;
- Tourism also depends on the unique environment, heritage, culture and diversity of landscape; and
- Tourism brings about wide impacts (negative and positive) on natural environment and host society.

With regard to the linkage between sustainable development and tourism, there have been various arguments about the implications of sustainability in terms of tourism. McCool & Moisey (2001) illustrated three types of views on sustainable tourism development. A review of the three approaches suggested by Turner *et al* (1994), McCool and Moisy (2000) and Hunter (1997) regarding sustainability and sustainable tourism allows the relationships between those approaches to be shown in Figure 3.1.

Tourism and development centric   **Eco and preservation centric**

Very Weak	Weak	Strong	Very Strong	
Tourism imperative	Product-led tourism	Environment-led tourism	Neotenous tourism	
Sustaining tourism		Sustainable tourism	Tourism as a tool for sustainable development	
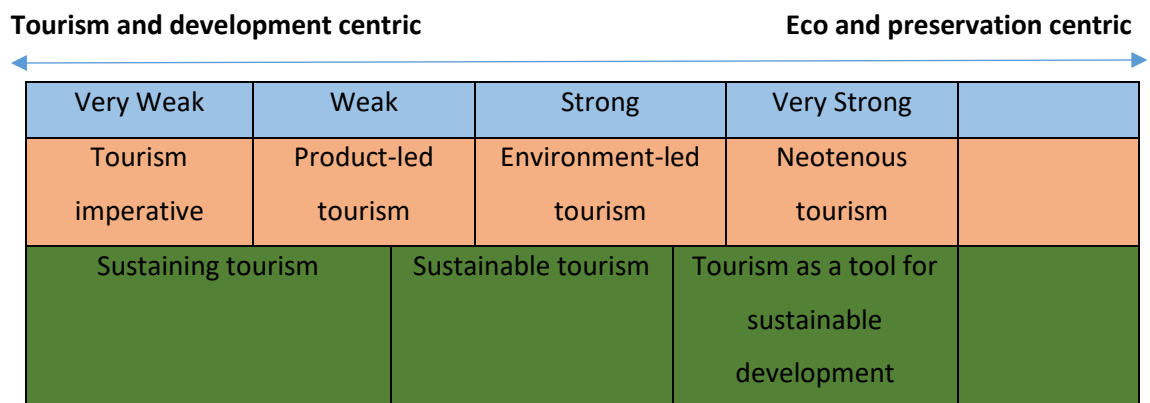
Figure 3.1: Relationships between conceptual frameworks regarding sustainable tourism development, *Source:* Adapted from Turner *et al* (1994), Hunter (1997) and McCool and Molsey (2000)

The first view is sustaining tourism, which mainly concerns the constant increase of tourist numbers and their expenditure. The main concern of this view is how to maintain the tourism industry businesses over a long time frame, and, thus, this view reflects the interests of the tourism industry. The problem of this perspective, in terms of sustainable development, is that it does not necessarily recognise tourism as a tool for the enhancement of economic opportunity, protecting a community's cultural and natural heritage and maintaining a desired quality of life. In this case, if sustainable development is perceived to be a reduction in development or fewer tourists, then the concept is not supported enthusiastically by the tourism industry, because its primary concern is with maintaining the long-term viability of the economy of the region being considered, rather than the viability of the physical and social environment (Butler, 1998).

The second one is sustainable tourism, which prefers a 'kinder' form of tourism, designed to benefit local people and protect the resources upon which the tourism and recreation industry is built. This approach mainly concerns how the negative economic, environmental and socio-cultural impacts of tourism activity can be reduced. This approach places great emphasis on preserving natural and cultural resources because they are critical elements for the continued growth of the tourism industry. The concept of sustainable tourism defined by World Tourism Organisation (1998) can be included in this approach, for instance, the principle suggested by WTO for sustainable tourism development:

"The natural, historical, cultural and other resources for tourism are conserved for continuous use in the future, which still bring[s] benefits to the present society (WTO, 1998, p.21).

This second approach, however, also has a limitation for ensuring sustainable development, because it does not take into account the holistic point of view by which the tourism industry is regarded as a part of the economic system. The third view is to regard tourism as a method to enhance sustainable development. This view allows tourism to be considered as one of several alternatives that can help a community overcome its weaknesses and preserve its strengths. It views tourism as a tool and not as an end. Based on the third view, tourism development can be abandoned if it is seen to be incompatible with the overall sustainability of the society.

Hunter (1997) also tries to establish a theoretical framework for the relationship between tourism and sustainable development by suggesting the following four sustainable tourism approaches. The first approach is "sustainable development through tourism imperative", which is primarily concerned with satisfying the needs and desires of tourists and tourism operators. In this approach, therefore, a certain degree of loss of natural resources can be compromised to develop tourism as in the case of "very week sustainability". The second one is "sustainable development through product-led tourism". This approach is, in many ways, compatible with a weak interpretation of sustainable development. According to this approach, a wide range of environmental and social concerns may be seen as important within the destination area, but only in so far as these acts contribute to developing and sustaining tourism products. The third one is "sustainable development through environmental-led tourism". The main concern of this approach is maintaining the status of the environment by promoting certain types of tourism, which specifically and overtly rely on the sustaining of a high quality natural environment and cultural experiences. Although there is still a very strong product focus with this approach, it differs from product-led tourism in prioritising environmental concerns over marketing opportunities. The fourth approach is "sustainable development through neotenous tourism". According to this approach, which strongly skews towards environmental concern, tourism can be sacrificed or discouraged for environmental protection and the functional integrity of natural ecosystems at the destination area.

With regard to the above sustainable tourism spectrum, it is generally argued that the tourism (or development) centric approach needs to be avoided if sustainability is to be achieved. As Butler noted, "*While some destinations may be considered sustainable in terms of their ability to maintain their tourist industry, they may not always be thought of as sustainable in an environmental or socio-cultural sense*" (1999, p.23). Many authors also criticized the pitfalls of a tourism-centric approach, which is mainly concerned with protecting the immediate resource base that will allow tourism development to be sustained (Wall, 1993; Sofield and Li, 1998; Ioannides, 2001).

Hunter (1995) argued that the predominant sustainable tourism development paradigm, which is an overly tourism centric approach, fails to address many of the issues essential to the more general concept of sustainable development and may even actually work against the general requirements of sustainable development. Therefore, in order to safeguard the requirement of

future generations, tourism within a context of sustainability should recognise the need for comprehensive and holistic approaches that balance tourism development with that of other activities. Within the context of tourism as a tool for sustainable rural development, the tourism industry needs to compete against other sectors to ensure sufficient resources on which the tourism industry is built. Therefore, presumably sustainable tourism can be affected by even more complicated and intensive political factors than other sectors, because tourism is not only a highly fragmented industry, where diverse stakeholders have their own interests and compete for the limited resources, but it also has to compete against other sectors to acquire proper tourism resources, information and infrastructure.
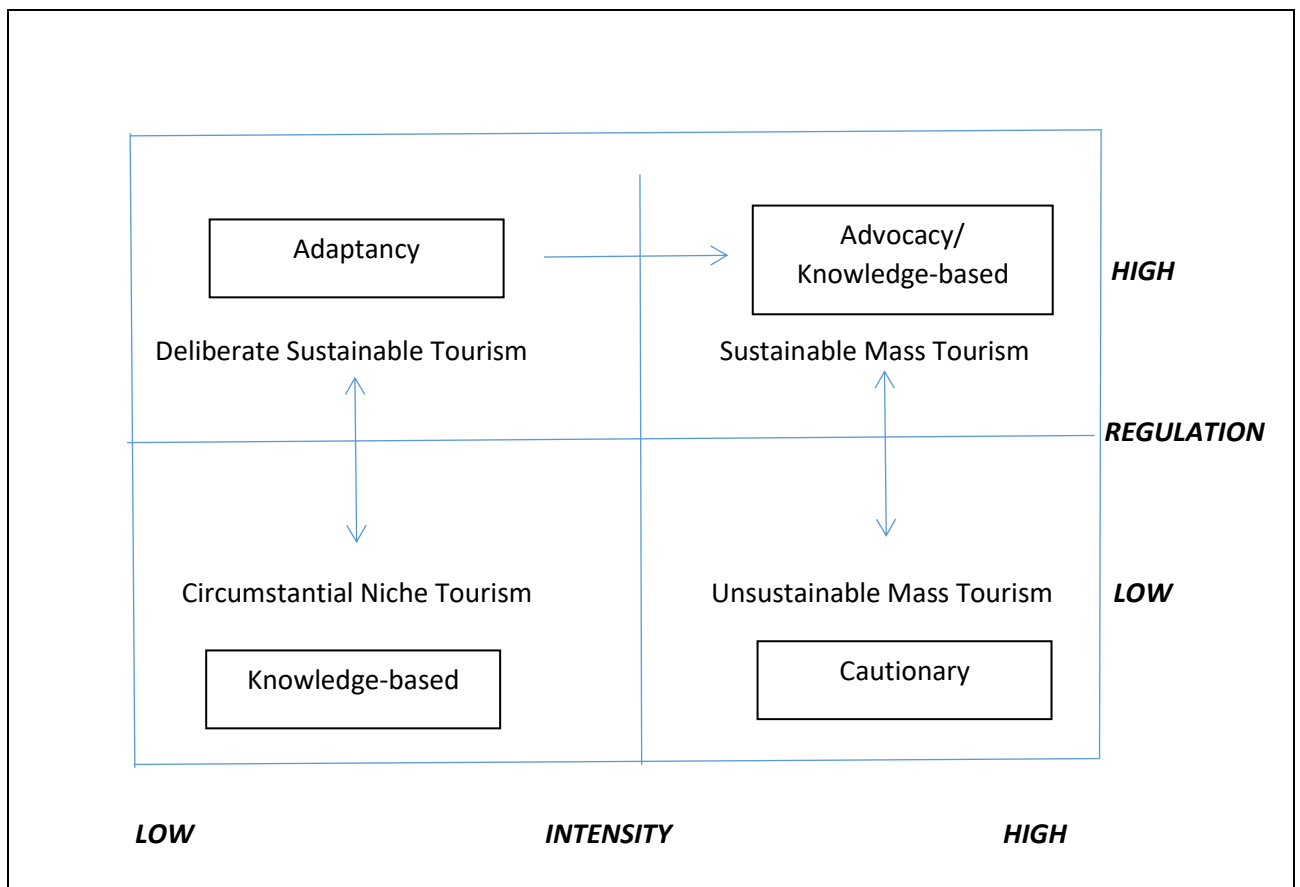
Figure 3.2: Development of Sustainable Tourism in the BBNP, *Source:* Adapted from Four Stages in the Development of Sustainable Tourism, *Source:* Weaver & Lawton (1999)

Figure 3.2 illustrates where tourism is currently situated within the BBNP based on the adapted model originally developed by Weaver and Lawton (1999). Their original model suggested that tourism that was knowledge-based or adapting seeks to move to mass tourism, however, this is not the case for tourism within the BBNP. They are seeking to achieve deliberate sustainable

tourism, and, arguably currently provide circumstantial niche tourism by happenstance. This is because they are reflecting the current power structures (of the NPAs), knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours and concerns that currently exist within communities. In order to shift from knowledge-based to deliberate sustainable tourism the park will need to adapt. This model demonstrates that different forms of tourism can be sustainable although the direction of development is somewhat uncontrollable. Questions arise as to how this change may occur, and it will be argued in the next chapter that the development of dynamic drivers, might bring about this change. If the park yearns for sustainability, then the advance of practices such as community empowerment, the expansion of social capital, and, economic and social change could be addressed.

3.4 Summary

This chapter has highlighted the central themes to this thesis, namely, the issue of sustainability for rural areas, communities and tourism. The SDF (as discussed in chapter 2) is one tactic employed to engage communities in addressing rural sustainability and their development. The SDF seeks to encourage communities to obtain funding to further community initiatives that sustain and enhance their existence. The changing nature of the economics and demographics of the park indicate that the growth of tourism as a regeneration tool is being utilised by the BBNPA. Having established the practices and elements of the dynamics of rural sustainability within the BBNP, attention must turn to the dynamic drivers, and how they may stimulate the rhetoric into reality.

Chapter Four

Rural Community Development

This chapter discusses sub-components that will be integrated into the static synthetic model outlined at the end of chapter two. Having established the "engine" of the model (namely, the structures and policies), the argument now moves on to consider the "fuel" that will feed the engine. This will transform the static model into a dynamic one by adding the "drivers" relevant to this study. Therefore, this chapter provides a picture of the mechanisms and how they fit into the static model.   To achieve this, a review of national policy filtering down to the BBNP will be outlined. This will be followed by presenting the "on the ground" practices found in the park, namely, participation, place attachment, social capital, empowerment and funding. These practices will then be integrated into the development of the synthetic model which concludes this chapter.

4.1 National Policy, Rural Community Development and the Brecon Beacons National Park

The governance of Wales has seen a shift in the last 10 years. Prior to 2006 the Welsh Development Agency was responsible for development policy. After 2006 this responsibility was part of the Welsh Government Rural Communities' Programme, more specifically the Rural Development Programme established in 2014 and expected to carry on until 2020 (www.gov.wales). The Rural Community Development Fund offers grants to local action based groups and other community based organisations, to draw up community development plans and invest in information technology. The fund also offers investment aimed at recreational or tourist infrastructure and activities to improve health and the quality of life. Jessop (2008) suggested that although such programmes assist in the regional development they do not directly address the issues faced by individual communities in the rural areas. Jessop further suggested that it is in fact the UK government that is taking the primary role in policy making at a macro level by developing strategies from a global perspective that are rolled out nationally, regionally and locally.

Across the United Kingdom, participation with civil society has become an increasing dominant element of public policies and government rhetoric. However, focus has generally been on

policy advances originating from Westminster. Woolvin *et al.* (2014) commented that the focus of these policies tend to relate to England rather than the policies and governance "spaces" evolving in the devolved administrations such as Wales. These policies tend to focus on the structure of the development strategies and the structures put in place rather than on the communities themselves.

Greer (2009) noted that there is a growth in social sciences academia on alternative public policies and governance across the local authorities of the UK. These included the role of rural communities in the delivery of public schemes such as the "Big Society" developed in 2010 by the Coalition Government (Alcock, 2012). Although the Big Society opened up new "governance spaces" across the devolved administrations, less attention was provided to the situation of rural communities and rural community development in a progressively devolving policy and governance context (Woolvin and Hardill 2013).

The Big Society was not just about supporting social action (Cameron 2010), it was an ideology and a wide-ranging political programme, '*a series of interlocking ideas . . . a concerted and wide-ranging attempt to engage with the twin challenges of social and economic decline and move us to a more connected society*' (Norman 2010, p.210). The schema embraced rural community development providing local authorities and communities with the power to make judgements and develop their geographic area. It created cooperation between public and private sectors, supported social enterprise, whilst at the same time allowing all these actors to compete in the provision of services and social action. Thereby, it stimulated and inspired people to take a more dynamic role in their community. The unique aim of the Big Society was social action at the community level. Providing finance and time was highlighted in the White Paper which identified and encouraged innovative ideas that integrated market-based approaches with support for community development (Cabinet Office, 2013, Giving of Time and Money).

The Coalition Government having dismantled the regional tier of government that Labour introduced, focused on localism, which is often considered the central theme of the Big Society (Shaw, 2012). The Localism Act of 2012 set the agenda for the transition of leadership and control away from central government and towards local communities, neighbourhoods and individuals, especially concerning the assets owned by a community. The ethos also encouraged

participation in community development by insisting upon transparency in local government (Alcock, 2012). However, Mohan (2012) suggested that not all rural communities are prepared to take on this control and accountability from the public sector and that greater sensitivity and understanding in the progress of the Big Society programme was necessary from central government.

The establishment of the National Assembly for Wales in 1999 cemented an instant association with rural community development policies (Dicks, 2000). The formation of The Third Dimension: a strategic action plan for Wales, helped to create stronger rural communities by being a force for improvement that challenged complementing and extending roles played by the public and private sectors (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008). The Welsh Assembly claimed a role with regards to rural community development inasmuch that they '*confirmed that a profound shift had taken place in the way Welsh people view their place in the world . . . the key reference point is now an autonomous civic institution, embracing Wales as a whole*' (Welsh Assembly Government 2008, p.3). This attitude has been echoed through a variety of Welsh Government policies (e.g. Welsh Government Rural Communities and the Wales Rural Network) regarding rural community development. The Welsh Government have been committed to delivering citizen-centred policies encouraging greater participation and collaboration with local rural communities (Day 2006).

The Welsh government emphasised the nation's historical connections to the Big Society ideology believing that they already do what the Big Society advocated. As Johnson (2010, p.7) noted "*it has been argued that the traditions of community action, mutual aid and co-operation are part of the social and cultural history of Wales*". Consequently, the Welsh Government took no action to partake in any Big Society initiatives, stipulating that placing individuals and rural communities was already a central focus of their programmes for public policy improvement. However, Ishkanian and Szreter (2012) noted that there was a "Big Society ripple effect" whereby the spending cuts for local authorities initiated in 2011 by the central government was at odds with the rhetoric concerning the "Big Society".

Therefore, in Wales, a clear position was made with regards to Big Society and rural communities, as the Welsh Assembly believed they were already following these practices. Additionally, the Welsh government established various mechanisms (similar to the SDF) to

support local communities and by extension, the nation, cementing rural community development within its policies.

The responsibility that local authorities have is more specifically aimed at the local community level. For example, POWYS County council take responsibility for the development of local initiatives on which they have been working with the BBNPA to help develop schemes, such as the SDF (www.powys.gov.uk). The relationship between POWYS and the BBNPA reveals that the powers they share are quite extensive, with the ability to make grants and loans or to acquire land and encourage new businesses to start up. They are also able to invest in farming, agriculture and land development as well as tourism and recreation. This relationship has widely been regarded as successful, although they have not been immune from expenditure cuts since 2012 (Morgan, 2015). Kokx and Van Kempen (2010) noted that the role of government has reduced as the political direction has changed towards governance, with a growing role for smaller local agencies, public-private partnerships and the charitable/voluntary sector. Newman and Clarke (2009) noted that at the same time, the power of politics shrunk as public trust and engagement with politics declined. Conversely, a growth in public forums and consultation at a local level increased. However, the state still plays a major role as a statutory body with the ability to control rural development.

4.2 Participation in Community Development

Communities have been identified as having the potential to be a particularly effective level at which to encourage and facilitate more sustainable initiatives as this is thought to be a scale at which interventions hold the most influence over choices made by a society regarding decisions about resources allocation (Middlemiss, 2011b; Peters and Jackson, 2008; Mulugetta *et al*, 2010). However, the manner in which this is achieved is questionable, as Connors and McDonald (2010) suggested, there is a positive relationship between participation and community, the easier participation is for members then the stronger the community could be. Civic activity informs individuals how to think publicly as citizens in a wider society (Hawkins and Wang, 2012). Community, therefore, requires that individuals be dynamically involved in civic activities in order to develop civic skills in common decision making, taking action and talking collectively

(Barber, 1984; Bellah *et al*, 1985). Thus, it becomes necessary to inspire residents to care for their community.

Participation has become an increasingly fashionable word to convey a more passionately desired change in the planning process (Connelly, *et al,* 2011). In effect, participation has been taken to mean some kind of involvement of the people who had earlier been regarded as passive, planned-for publics, in the definition and solution of planning problems, and in the implementation of measures (Bailey, 1975). It is only by participating that people can ensure that their interests are defended and promoted (Pretty, 1995). Participation is thus, not so much a relationship between an individual and a group, as it is a mode of being together with others in such a way that something entirely new is engendered (Deutsch, 1991; Tosun, 2005) and emphasises the insertion of an "agent" who aims to involve people in defining and solving community problems (Kilpatrich *et al*, 2002).

There is considerable literature that addresses the definition and the potential value of community participation. Gonzales (1998) compiled the following list of community participation definitions, from the 1973-1989 rural development literature:

- The involvement in community activities is a voluntary effort by people and that the public initiatives are supposed to contribute to development. Local people are required to take an active role in this development and they are expected to comment or criticise it. (Economic Commission for Latin America, 1973, p.63).

- Community participation sensitises people and therefore a growth in receptiveness and the ability of rural communities to react to development programmes and to encourage local initiatives (Lele, 1975, p.9).

- Community participation is an organised effort that enables a control over local assets and in some cases regulative authority on the part of communities that have hitherto been excluded from such control (Pearse and Stiefel, 1979. p.8).

- Popular participation in development should be broadly understood as the active involvement of people in the policymaking process in as much as it affects them (Uphoff and Cohen, 1979: p.47).

- Participation may comprise of an individual's ability to make decisions, or implement strategies and then reap the rewards of these strategies. (Lisk, 1981, p.3).

- Participation is considered to be a dynamic process, involving the community to take initiatives and assert their autonomy to do so (Rahman, 1981, p.146).

- Community participation suggests that communities have both the right and the obligation to contribute in solving their own problems. They have more responsibilities in mobilising local resources as well as creating and maintaining local organisation (WHO, 1982, p.35).

- Community participation is a process by which beneficiary groups (people whom the project is expected to serve) actively guide the route and implementation of projects with a view to enhancing their own welfare (Paul, 1987, p.20).

- Community participation means the influence of recipients to the choices or labour involved in the delivery of schemes (Finsterbusch and Van Wicklin, 1989, p.575).

The literature noted above suggests that through awareness, engagement, innovation, and participation, communities can shape the direction that they wish to take. Ideally in such an approach the community residents discuss, propose and design actions that will transform their community and progress the lives of those living in it.

Moseley (1982) argued that there is a threefold requirement for participation: first, the individual must believe that the issue affects him/her; second he/she has to be aware of the opportunities to participate; and third he/she must believe that their presence and participation will have an effect. A fourth condition for participation should be added, not only must the person perceive the relevance of the issue, an opportunity to participate and a feeling that it might be worthwhile, but he/she must also feel some sort of need or obligation to do so (Moseley, 1982).

Richardson (1983) suggested that participation can increase people's ability to cope with a wide range of concerns and enable confidence in their ability to address and resolve problems in other spheres. "*Through discussion and consideration of varying types of issues, people are given a chance to learn about new problems and solutions to them; if they make a few mistakes, they will also learn from them. Participation is not only about making the participants more fulfilled; it is also about making them more fully developed human beings*" (Richardson, 1983, p.55). Liu (2006) goes further in arguing that dynamic local involvement in making decisions is a precondition for benefits reaching communities. Liu noted that even if there is weak participation in the decision-making process, the local community will still gain benefits.

Another main cause for difficulties in obtaining local community participation is the conflicting interests in a community. Often the notion of community is a myth because as Webster (1990) suggested membership can contain young and old, employees or employers with a range of conflicting concerns and issues. The interests of one may not coincide with, or may be completely opposed to, the interests of another (Butcher, 1997). Localities are complex in character. This means that different individuals and social groups have different views and interests in a place, as well as in terms of how they view development. The interests of individuals and groups are, therefore, heterogeneous (Verbole, 1999). Local patterns of power and domination (Verbole, 1999) make the obtaining of equitable community participation difficult as well. Bramwell and Sharman (2000) noted that how resources are distributed, or how local authority initiatives and practices are entrenched within society, place a limit on the scope of influence communities have on shaping their own planning process. These inequalities that exist between the various stakeholders and the varying power relationships have a dynamic impact on the outcomes of community development.

4.2.1 Participation in Rural Tourism development

In order for a rural development strategy to be successful and sustainable, it should be both community led and participatory (Toson and Timothy, 2001). They suggested that when it comes to rural tourism development and planning, the most successful examples of tourism take place in communities where there is a broad base of resident participation in the planning and development of tourism projects. In other words, for tourism and community development

to be sustainable, local control over public decision-making and planning is needed (Pender *et al,* 2012). For Marcus and Brennan (2008) involving communities in decision making creates interaction within that community, this consequently creates social capital which enhances the development process and in doing so helps to strengthen and sustain that community. If the public authorities can assist communities by providing them with some structure or framework through which the incorporation of partnerships with private, public and non-profit sectors within the broader community were created, then this would help to realise sustainability outcomes of community driven initiatives.

Pender (2012) contended that collaborative relationships between concerned parties involved in working towards a common goal in a tourist destination are critical in assisting the industry to move towards sustainability. Nyamori *et al* (2012) noted that when an individual commits to a process that this should comprise of an obligation to carry out a policy, either through an intellectual commitment or emotional one. Therefore, commitment is a crucial part of any long-term strategy and may involve some form of sacrifice on the part of the people involved.

Bramwell and Sharman (1999) investigated how collaboration was achieved in developing a visitor management plan for the Hope Valley in Britain's Peak District NP. They suggested a framework which is based on three issues: the nature and purpose of the collaboration; the amount of collaborative activity involved from participants; and the degree to which consensus emerges. Bramwell and Sharman (1999) suggested that these three issues will have an impact on the ability of a local community to function in a collaborative fashion with a governmental organisation. They highlighted that the level of support for a project, the inclusion of facilitators as well as the representativeness of the participants and their level of backing for the scheme (including the ideas of having shared aspirations and objectives) will have an impact on the success of their collaborative engagement. They go on to note that clear perceptions of the benefits to be accrued from the process of collaboration were necessary in order for such programmes to be successful. However, they noted that should there be an imbalance in relationships amongst the stakeholders, or lack of accountability from all the parties involved, then such projects may end up not being sustainable.

Braithwaite *et al* (1994) found that one of the greatest attributes of participation is the ability to mobilise an entire community rather than engaging people on an individual basis or not engaging them at all. The ability to create more effective results through participation "*is more likely to be successful and permanent when the people it affects are involved in initiating and promoting it*" (Thompson and Kinne, 1990, p. 46). Therefore, a critical part of engaging the community is the participation of individuals, communities and institutions that will be affected by such an effort. Consequently, participation is "*a major method for improving the quality of the physical environment, enhancing services, preventing crime, and improving social conditions*" (Chavis and Wandersman, 1990, p.56). Florin *et al* (1990) suggest that participation may bring about improvements in communities and livelihoods by creating a stronger social fabric between members of society.

Haukeland *et al* (2011) noted that tourism development has multiple actors with diverse concerns which together make up a complex framework based on patterns of interaction and behaviour. The development of tourism can create clashes between tourism businesses, who wish to expand their products and services, and local people who wish to protect their landscape or traditions (Wray *et al*, 2010). Tourism is considered fragmented and uneven with a relatively narrow focus on risk which is generally viewed in terms of negative outcomes to be avoided by destinations (Williams and Balaz, 2015). Generally, tourism relies on disposable or discretionary income and is, therefore, prone to risks from exogenous crises (Mistilis and Sheldon, 2006). Consequently, any community should consider carefully the consequences of increasing the reliance on income from the tourism industry.

Attitudes to tourism development are often affected by the extent to which a resident's individual or household income was dependent on tourism. It is suggested (Liu, 2003; Sharpley and Pearce, 2007) that residents dependent on tourism for their livelihood will be more likely to participate and support tourism development. Such opinions could be influenced by the expectations of standards of living created as a result of tourism development. The presence of tourists may bring more benefits to communities. Tourists may have a key role within the social structure of rural areas by the social interaction that takes place with local residents. This role emerges from the decline of remote communities due to the exodus of youth and the depletion of local services and activities. Consequently, tourism may lead to new infrastructure, services

and activities that could possibly satisfy the social needs for interaction in the community between local people and with tourists.

Milne (2004) identified that local communities needed to be involved in developing tourism projects in their own areas. Despite the various advantages of community participation for successful sustainable tourism partnerships, examples of successful implementation of this are rare because of some disadvantages and limitations. As Swarbrooke (1999) argued, including the local people not only can increase the period of time needed to carry out projects, but can also provide local residents with opportunities that obstruct outsiders from gaining access to employment and leisure opportunities. In practical terms, it would be wise to address the limitations of achieving effective community participation in tourism development. There are internal limitations which come from communities themselves: poor economic conditions, lack of understanding, time constraints and limited access to information about the process have all been suggested as limitations (Timothy, 1999; Jamal & Getz, 2000; Garrod, 2003). Altman (1989) also suggested the problematic situation, which community residents face with regard to trade-offs between tourism growth and socio-cultural and environmental costs, as another limitation. Timothy (1999) noted that lack of expertise of tourism planning officials makes community involvement difficult. In addition to the lack of expertise and techniques to deal with community participation, while Reed (1997) argued that the conventional power elite's traditionally negative attitudes towards empowerment for a community can hinder community participation. In terms of tactical problems, Jamal and Getz (1995) questioned the possibility of representing the silent majority of the community in the process of tourism development because of the power of the visible minority.

However, questions about sustained participation present one of the biggest challenges for different outcomes communities receive (Taylor, 2003). According to Goodwin (1998) apathy, nonparticipation or participation attrition occurs when there is uncertainty over the motives of organisations or actors in participatory initiatives in addressing what local communities considered to be the "real" issues. In this regard, people perceive their participation as a cost to themselves with no expectation of their involvement being rewarded. Consequently, as a result many residents choose not to participate. For this reason Lankford, Knowles-Lankford and Povey (1996, p.330) concluded that "*critical to achieving high levels of participation is the*

creation of an environment where stakeholders believe that they have a stake in the course of events and that their participation can affect the course of events". O'Riordan (1977), however, saw the process of attrition as an endemic feature of participation noting that only the devoted "hard-core" of civic society will remain. In rural areas where survival is a predominant feature to the lives of everyday people, they may not have the luxury of time to attend meetings or engage in participation which can be very time consuming.

It is axiomatic that residents deciding to contribute in participation processes do so as they may have some involvement or something to defend or just want to understand how they will be affected by a proposed development. Therefore, they engage in participation with a degree of expectation that there will be some outcome or benefit for them. However, the translation of these expectations into tangible beneficial outcomes is not simple. Participation rests upon indicators that some worthwhile purpose is being achieved. Community members actively engaging in the planning process would need to know that their efforts produce something with tangible results. If confidence in the planning process diminishes the motivation for participation will also decrease (Sewell and Coppock, 1977). Community participation for the progression of destinations towards sustainability practices must, therefore, go beyond moral and ideological sentiments about participation and find pathways to ensuring that the outcomes are beneficial to the residents who are integral to the success of the tourism industry.

Sustainable community is persistently criticised as a niche pursuit of the middle class (Connors and McDonald, 2010; Middlemiss, 2011b; Barr and Devine-Wright, 2012). The tendency for a particular select group of people to be involved was highlighted by Mohan (2012) who aligns this select group with the "civic core", stating, "*these people tend to be middle-age, well-educated and live in prosperous areas. They are well resourced - financially, educationally and with time…"* (p.1124). Arguably, this is an unavoidable inevitability of community driven schemes highlighting a fundamental flaw of the mechanisms of public participation in governance initiatives (McAreavey, 2009). From a community development perspective, Mansuri and Rao (2003) identified that, even in the most egalitarian societies, a community driven initiative is likely to be dominated by "social elites" as they tend to be well educated with plenty of time to spare and consequently have the greatest to gain from participation.

In contemplating the potential impact this may have on community driven projects, it is interesting to consider the analysis of McAreavey (2009), in her examination of the community regeneration programme funded through the UK government. The programme in question placed an emphasis on the role of communities and local regeneration, and invited local groups to submit proposals for initiatives. However, McAreavey (2009) observed that, in practice, the initiative was controlled by policymakers and their selected agents, "*resulting in a process which does not necessarily correlate to the needs, skills or indeed the culture of the wider community it purports to represent*" (p.322). McAreavey (2009) suggested that this does not necessarily make the project a failure, the outcomes of the project may still be positive for the wider community. However, she stated that "*if an elite group operates within an invited space and purport to represent broader interests, it is entirely misleading to set up the structures and systems of governance and claim that they are acting wholly in the real interests of the community*" (p.323).

4.3 Community Empowerment

Liu (2003) suggested that a crucial part of community engagement relates to empowerment. Community empowerment involves mobilising and organising them to take action, influence and make decisions about their own development. Liu (2003) noted that no external influence (such as policy produced by government) should assume that it can bestow on the community the power to act in its own self-interest. Rather, those working alongside the community can assist in their development by providing tools and resources so the community members can act to take control of their own destiny.

Fawcett *et al* (1995) suggested that empowerment takes place at three levels: the individual, group and community. They go on to suggest that empowerment at one level can influence empowerment at others. Rich *et al* (1995) noted that community level empowerment takes place when both individuals and groups have sufficient power to achieve outcomes. Individuals and groups gain power by having information about problems that face them and *"an open process of accumulating and evaluating evidence and information"* (Rich *et al*, 1995, p. 669). Consequently, empowerment requires members of the community to work together to reach decisions.

Edwards *et al* (2003) commented that empowerment is a term that usually describes a process through which marginalised people gain consciousness of their situation and organise themselves in a collective fashion to gain greater access to public services or benefit from economic growth. Once a community fully understands the status of its resources and begins to feel confident enough to act through existing policies and institutions, meaningful and lasting achievements can be made. However, as Dudley (1993, p.265) pointed out:

"Development is not just about increased wealth. It means change; changes in behaviour, aspirations, and in the way in which one understands the world around one. Without an understanding of how people change, knowledge of the mechanisms and technical assistance will be of little use".

Consequently, it becomes necessary to instil confidence and create capabilities that enhance the empowerment of communities and does not turn them into mere receivers of "funding" coming from the outside. Clark *et al.* (2007) noted that empowerment requires a shift from "power over" to "power with", which recognises the interdependence of communities, society and the natural environment.

The meaning of empowerment differs between actors and contexts, challenging the development of shared understandings of the term when it comes to partnership in development (Luttrell *et al,* 2009). This terminological ambiguity and confusion also stemmed from the idea that power, is a highly contested concept, understood in different ways by different people (Rowlands, 1996). In fact, "*the meaning of empowerment can be seen to relate to the user's interpretation of power*" (Rowlands, 1996, p.87).

Development literature reveal that empowerment happens a number of domains of dimensions. For example, Hennink *et al* (2012) categorise their findings into five "domains": health, economic, political, natural resource and spiritual. These dimensions are interlinked meaning that empowerment in one dimension can facilitate or be dependent upon empowerment in another dimension. The interconnectedness of these dimensions is emphasised by Somerville (2011) who stated that improvements in one dimension can cause

positive improvements or changes in other dimensions. He went on to suggest that when people are empowered in all areas, they are said to have reached "sustainable empowerment".

Others propose a distinction of the domains of empowerment between social, political, economic (Eyben *et al*, 2008; Luttrell *et al,* 2009) and psychological. For the sake of this thesis, the domain of social empowerment is most closely linked to SDF. As Eyben et al. (2008, p.8) suggested:

 "*social empowerment means taking steps to change society so that one's own place within it is respected and recognised on the terms on which the person themselves want to live, not on terms dictated by others".*

 More specifically, social empowerment as defined by the UNDP (2009), referred to the building of human and social capabilities to expand social capital (i.e. the maintenance and development of assets and capabilities of communities or an increase participation). Social empowerment can be fostered through increased participation in social organisations, knowledge and skills and access to information (Friedmann, 1992).

Participation, however, is often hindered by access to resources, keeping individuals from taking control over their environment, thereby resulting in social disempowerment and even conflict (Kirst-Ashman, 2008). On the contrary, signs of social empowerment include community equilibrium (Kraft, 2000) an increased sense of belonging or connectedness (Laverack, 2001) and marginalise members establishing a place within the community (Eyben *et al*, 2008). Although social empowerment should signify meaningful changes within a community is often referred to without mentioning it without clear definition. Consequently, the term often seems to conflate all aspects that do not form part of economic or political empowerment because social empowerment focuses mainly on social relationships.

As will be discussed later in this chapter (refer to p. 73) there has been an increasing amount of literature on re-conceptualising community development that focuses on community assets (namely social capital) and developing social innovations. This coincides with the community empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, which significantly strengthened public authorities' ability to deliver community planning, participation, community rights to buy land and transfer assets

for community purposes. The interpretation of this Act has been utilised by many NPs around the country. (http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/6/contents/enacted)

In order to capitalise on this re-conceptualisation, empowerment has become an acceptable term in development vocabulary. However, like many other concepts in this thesis, it is been hard to define and given rise to alternative explanations. For example, Sofield (2003, p.50) recognised empowerment when it "*is located within the discourse of community development and connected to concepts of self-help, participation, networking and equity*". Therefore, participation is a vital part of empowerment as involvement in decision-making that affects people's lives should provide them with confidence, knowledge and new skills. Dredge (2006) identifies that when communities obtain new skills this in turn enables rural people to manage better, have a say, or, negotiate with existing development delivery systems in a more coherent manner.

Sofield (2003) highlighted the need for community empowerment for the success of sustainable tourism. According to him, the future of tourism destinations should be decided by local residents themselves, and, to do so, a degree of real power needs to reside with the host community. He also argued that "*empowerment for communities will require environmental or institutional change to allow a genuine relocation of power to ensure appropriate changes in the asymmetrical relationship of the community to wider society*" (2003, p.346). Moreover, as Pretty (1995) noted empowerment can transform the dependent mentality that people have into a feeling that they can succeed when they take control of their everyday environment. The process of gaining control and sense of efficacy that takes place when people realise they can solve their problems strengthens their social capital. Subsequently, community development involves local empowerment through organised groups of people acting collectively to control decisions, projects even policies that affect them as a community and occurs when people form their own organisations to provide a long-term capacity to solve problems. Community-based, grass-root groups are therefore, the main agents of community organisation, community development and the creation of social capital (Goodman, 2004).

However, Taylor and Wilson (2006) identified a significant gap between the rhetoric and implementation of community empowerment. Namely, whilst the potential benefits of community empowerment have been increasingly extolled across the public sector:

"the statutory sector has largely failed to respond to the community agenda and there is little evidence of community influence over budgets, service delivery, prioritisation of issues in general bending of mainstream services to reflect the partnership process". (Adamson and Bromiley, 2006, p.59).

Consequently, projects pursued by communities reliant on grant funding remain largely controlled by the funding that is available. In order to achieve community empowerment, power, as well as resources, must be given to and developed within communities.

4.4 Place Attachment

The term "Place" is common parlance and may appear quite self-explanatory not necessitating any thought as to the meaning behind it. However, confusion exists between the term "space" and "place" as Creswell (2010) differentiated the manner in which space is different from place utilising coordinates to explain where a "place" exists. Creswell determines, therefore, that a kitchen, a town or village are "places" due to the fact that people have created an attachment to these locations and have made them meaningful "spaces". Therefore, the concept of place may assist to describe any "spaces" as long as that space embodies some meaning to someone.

The relationship between individuals and their environment has been outlined by Scannell and Gifford (2010) as "place attachment". The concept of place attachment, similar to the concept of community is that, it is multidimensional and has been applied and defined within many different contexts and disciplines. Place attachment is constructed around the concepts of personal attachment, community attachment and environment attachment (Scannell and Gifford (2010), table 4.1 (on the next page) highlights these attachments and outlined the dimensions relevant to each form. The relevance of place attachment is useful in identifying the overlap between communities and their bonds with other members of society.

Pole	Dimension	Definition
Personal	Place identity	Those dimensions itself, such as a mixture of feelings about specific physical settings and symbolic connections to place that define who we are.
	Place dependents	Functional connection based specifically on the individual physical connection to a setting.
Community	Social bonding	Feelings of belongingness or membership to a group of people, such as friends and family, as well as the emotional connections based on shared history, interests or concerns.
Environment	Nature bonding	Implicit or explicit connection to some part of the nonhuman natural environment, based on history, emotional response or cognitive representation (e.g. knowledge generation).

Table 4.1: The four dimensions of place attachment. *Source*: adapted from Scannell and Gifford (2010, p.7)

Scannell and Gifford (2010) made a distinction between communities of place and communities of interest. They believe that a clearer understanding of what a "community" is would assist to expound the social sphere associated with place attachment. SDF scheme members lie somewhere between a community of interest and a community of place. This is because sustainability initiatives are aimed at a particular place but mediated by a community whose rationale for involvement may overlap between that of interest and place. What links the community of interest and community of place together in SDF schemes are the shared goals, procedures and connected interaction procedures that ascend from a common interest of place (Armanios, 2012). Therefore, appealing to place attachment has relevance in attracting members of the community who possess an interest in a particular place that the SDF schemes are sustaining. In order for community-based projects to be fruitful, Hawkins and Wang (2012) identified the need for cooperation, collaboration in decision-making and the presence of social networks in order to enhance capacity for communities attempting to create sustainability.

Agyeman (2002) noted that a community has a stronger possibility of being able to achieve sustainability if more individuals in a community engage in the initiative, as the concept of "locus

of control" indicates (i.e. the more people engaged in the process the greater the chance of being able to achieve an outcome). This may be connected to increased social capital in the coordination of various actors to safeguard the progression of the initiative (Wenger, 2000). The prospects offered by working in the community setting can help to establish communal effectiveness which is imperative to performing particular activities in achieving sustainable ambitions (Aguilar and Sen, 2009). Given that if an individual has an effective connexion with a specific place, they are more likely to want to shelter it and maintain it as their sense of support may be stronger than people who lack place attachment. Consequently, the structure a community provides an individual with help to establish a setting by which barriers that an individual would face would be reduced and the probability of achieving the outcome increased.

Therefore, the usefulness of place attachment is that it can appeal to individuals' emotions of a place in order to gain participation in community initiatives and by sharing knowledge and skills in a community driven scheme place attachment can be integrated as part of a shared identity to maintain and enhance participation.

Scannell and Gifford (2010) noted that values or meaning attached to some physical spaces can influence the behaviour of individuals to act in an environmentally friendly fashion. The relevance of which suggests that if an individual appreciates the geographic location then they will behave in a sensitive manner. The behaviour of individuals in "spaces" often happen as a consequence of experiences in a space, thereby, rendering that space a "place". As commented by Lukerman (1994, p.168) "*The study of place is the subject matter of geography because unconsciousness of place is an immediately apparent part of reality, not a sophisticated thesis; knowledge of place is a simple fact of experience*". Lukerman's comment suggested that experience underpins knowledge accentuates the concept of place attachment. SDF involves communities seeking to create sustainability at a geographic place, and this practice takes the "place" and individual's knowledge and assists them in forming their identity and acting with other members of the community who have shared meanings and understandings of that "place".

Therefore, the concept of place attachment is a social construct which indicates that people have the capability to modify their view of it (Harvey, 1996). Using SDF schemes to enable

altering a "place" as a stratagem may have potential because it enables the individuals within a community to confirm and endorse their attachment to the "place" with an innovative socially constructed meaning.

The concept of place attachment can assist in the regeneration of rural areas by appealing to members of a community to establish and/or reconceptualise what their community could be as a place in which to live. Poole (1991) identified that using place attachment must incite or appeal people in order to bring about some form of change to the place that they live in. Leopold (1949) illustrated that people need to have a sense of belonging to their natural environment as opposed to feeling that it is a resource to consume. However, Lewicka (2011) noted that most academic discourse surrounding place attachment is concerned with the physical environment with little consideration being given to the social aspect of attachment.

Paul (1987) suggested that stakeholders who are more attached to a place are more likely to be more involved in community development. However, it depends how place attachment is viewed. People attach meanings to places which often result in intensely powerful sources of identity. Those who feel more closely attached to their own local area, (e. g. their village), are actually less likely to participate in schemes or groups than those who identify with a wider community, particularly a community of identity. Consequently, extremely localised attachment may actually be counter-productive in community development terms, particularly in terms of bridging social capital and cooperation with other parts of the community.

Place attachment literature suggests that length of residence should be a measure of bonding social capital, and attachment to place, but may be negatively related to openness to change (Giddens, 1990). For example, the literature concerned with tourism impacts indicate that the longer the length of residence in a community, the more negatively residents felt towards tourism (Liu and Var, 1986; Um and Crompton, 1987; Allen et al, 1988).

4.5 Social Capital

Woods (2005) summarised the academic discussion about social capital and he summarises it as "*it's not what you know, but who you know*". Although this does not fully clarify what social capital is it does illustrate that this concept is all about creating relationships in order to achieve progress or development. Woods suggested that knowledge is not paramount but networking and establishing relationships is more valuable. Hargreaves (2011) noted that the coming together of individuals with their neighbours led to an accumulation of social capital and that this growth of capital would lead to an improvement of living conditions for a whole community. This suggests that a community will benefit by working together through cooperation, collaboration and working for a common cause. In doing so a community will as Peters and Jackson (2008) suggested develop social networks, community capacity and increase their social capital.

Pretty & Ward (2001) noted the importance of local groups for delivering positive environmental outcomes from community led initiatives. They also noted that bottom up solutions to addressing local problems helped to develop social capital which was not only relevant to sorting out local issues but also provided an outlet through which communities could raise concerns to local authorities and possibly potential funders. Hawkins & Wang (2012) suggested that this type of capital will create a two-way benefit, one for local authorities developing on the ground policies and the other for the communities who are taking an active role in developing their resources. Dale and Newman (2008, p.8) explained the relevance of connecting people with different social capital by stating that: "*network formation is critical to sustainable community development but the importance lies in the nature of sustainable development issues; for example, local communities might well be able to address land use matters, but have no capacity to inform decisions related to land fragmentation. Multiple levels of governance and multiple diverse societal actors are required*".

SDF relies on multiple actors working together to drive forward sustainability initiatives and, therefore, as Pretty and Ward (2001) noted there is a need to cultivate social capital as it is necessary to ensure that common issues are identified and addressed both at a local and regional level. Beckerman (1994, p.192) referred to assets as "*resource endowments and capabilities that people have access to in order to sustain their livelihoods and to enhance their*

welfare". As stated these have traditionally included social, human, physical, financial and natural capital (Liepins, 2000a). However, this list has been added to by the literature on empowerment to include psychological and political assets (Adams, 2006). This highlights people's ability to exercise power as individual and social groups. Adams (2006) goes on to suggest that the ability of people to exercise agency over public policy is essential as it helps to reduce power inequities between public organisational policies and those groups that the policy is attempting to influence. This is relevant to the SDF as the BBNP attempt to provide guidelines as to how local people can use resources in order to attain the funding. The policy maker's guidelines may not necessarily fit with how local communities may wish to use resources to achieve the potential of those resources. Therefore, as noted by Healy *et al* (2007), social capital is worth investigating to see who is harnessing the resources available in the BBNP in order to meet the criteria set out to gain the SDF in the first place. Then, how the local community organises itself to meet the development outcomes stated when applying for the SDF. One would anticipate that will require an increase in the social capital of the community otherwise only individuals would benefit. The regional dimension of SDF requires the analysis, understanding and interpretation of NPA policy documents by those preparing SDF bids. Cooke and Leydesdorff (2006) argued that a regional regeneration system such as the SDF requires an intellectual level of understanding that they cite as another form of capital. They suggested that when a community is developing an innovative scheme connected to the economy (as SDF schemes intrinsically are) there needs to be a "*commercialisation of new knowledge*" (p.6). Thereby, the skills that are illustrated in the points above with regards to project planning and understanding (e.g. how to play the funding game) need to be spread throughout the region to increase the number of successful applications for SDF from those communities that do not possess such skills. Marshall (1916) recognized that '*capital consists in a great part of knowledge and organisation... knowledge is our most powerful engine of production... organisation aids knowledge*' (p. 115). To this end, the development of social capital based in the knowledge economy of rural regeneration needs to be enhanced in order to aid applicants in the SDF process.

Kirchmajer and Patterson (2003) argued that it is almost impossible to have relationships without communication, as communication is a core activity that links people together and creates meaningful relationships. Ramayah *et al* (2011) noted that communication can have a disproportionate impact on collaborative relationships in community development when

compared to other influences such as trust and commitment. This communication would not only need to come from the State but also from the participants' intentions towards one another.

The conceptualisation of "social sustainability" theory and policy has now started to develop (Cuthill, 2010) but has done so in a hazy, less agenda driven way than notions of environmental or economic sustainability, reflecting a slightly chaotic discourse and a plurality of meaning (Vallance *et al,* 2011). One way of conceptualising the social aspects of sustainability that has gained significant traction within policy-making, academia and the practice has been the notion of "*community resilience*" as Cinderby *et al* (2014, p.51) explain:

"Communities are subject to constant adjustments from internal (demographic, skills) and external (environmental, economic, technological, governmental) drivers of change. A community's resilience will determine its ability to successfully mobilise and respond to these drivers, and is therefore integrally related to community and social sustainability".

Although community resilience is something of an abstract concept (Steiner and Markantoni 2014). It has become more significant, particularly as Barr and Devine-Wright (2012, p.56) comment that "*resilience has become an important and inseparable part of the sustainable communities agenda in developed nations*".   The manner in which communities organise themselves and their use of social capital is often emphasised as a critical component of both resilience and sustainability (Pretty and Ward, 2001; Peters and Jackson, 2008; Magis, 2010).

Fedderke *et al* (1999) suggested that social capital is the glue that binds communities together. The concept of social capital has been defined as the "*networks, together with shared norms, values and understanding, which facilitate cooperation within or among groups*" (Cote and Healy 2001, p.41). It is considered to have four central elements: relations of trust; reciprocity and exchanges; common rules, norms and sanctions; connectedness, networks and groups. These components create a social structure which gives individuals the "*confidence to invest in collective activities, knowing others will also do so"* (Pretty and Ward, 2001, p.211). Social capital is often distinguished from physical and human capital by the fact that it is not found within tools of production or within individuals themselves, that exists in the relationships between the various actors. Social capital is, therefore, created through changes to these relationships

which facilitate more productive action (Coleman, 1988). Sustainability policy therefore often seeks to find and foster social capital to build community resilience, increasing the capacity of the community to respond and adapt to change, including environmental stress and shock (Magis, 2010; Cinderby *et al,* 2014).

As noted above, social capital is often highlighted as critical for social sustainability. Specifically, Magis (2010) identified three different types of social capital which are required for community resilience: 'bonding', 'bridging', and 'linking' social capitals. Bonding capital is created in close relations between individuals within groups that generate cohesion. Bridging capital is created in loose relationships between groups, where individuals who would not usually interact are connected, increasing diversity, and expanding the resources available. Finally, linking capital is created in a group's vertical relationships with actors with authority or power. These relationships increase the group's ability to take advantage of opportunities and get their voices heard. Consequently, social capital and community resilience are therefore, key related concepts in investigating and analysing the efficacy of the SDF as a tool for achieving sustainable rural communities.

4.5.1 Social Innovations in Rural Development

The transition from sectoral to territorial rural development strategies as noted by the OECD's new rural paradigm (OECD, 2006) is arguably a framework upon which community, tourism and sustainable development could be embedded. Neumeier (2011) concluded that social innovations and rural development is generally well recognised and researched. However, this is often discussed without referring to any conceptual structure which might clarify the precise meanings of social innovations. Innovations have been defined by Reffitt *et al* (2007, p.23) as *"the translation of understanding or ideas into some form of value, either financial or for the public good, and in doing so, improves products, procedures, structures or processes"*. Consequently, the stakeholders and actors of SDF projects must re-evaluate their resources, structures and procedures to create the sustainable (mostly defined in economic terms) projects the SDF seeks to realise.

Social innovations take place due to collaborative communities presiding in a "network of aligned interests" (Neumeier, 2011, p.50). However, a certain critical mass of actors must be enrolled in this actor network to enable social innovations to be situated in the associations of the different actors. Therefore, the potential for innovation is closely related to first, the presence of social networks and social capital. Secondly, social innovations require an initial impetus which may be triggered by any of the actors involved in the process. Thirdly, social innovations are not teleological, they must be allowed to develop in advance through an increase of collaborative action. Finally, social innovations build on novelty which is subjective and requires a change of attitude or behaviour. Based on these considerations, the potential for SDF to assimilate the three contested concepts of community, sustainability and rural development is vast. This is because social innovation does not have to be viewed as a tangible outcome, rather a change of attitudes or conduct resultant in new forms of collaboration and achievements that facilitate development.

To illustrate the concept of social innovation in a rural development context the work of MacKinnon *et al* (2002) provided an example from the province of Kärnten, Austria. In 1989 a rural development strategy was conceived by the local communities who wanted to integrate community affairs, nature and tourism to develop a *Leitbild* (a model or example) for the communities of Weiddensee and Stockenboi. The development utilised a bottom-up approach involving local communities and integrated the motto of "*Spielplatz der Natur*" (playground of nature). The main aim was to reconcile tourism with nature conservation. MacKinnon *et al* (2002) provided another example from Bavaria, Germany. The aim of this *Leitbild* was to entwine ecology, community development, diversifying agricultural products and introducing tourism as well as the linking of biotopes. This took place in 1999 and involved eight communities in the Achental Valley. The collaborative nature of this project involved an integrated approach, incorporating a society eco-model.

The examples above illustrate that social innovations can be the dynamic strength behind the development processes. The schemes involved not only a reconciliation of tourism with nature but also a change of attitudes and behaviours. In Achental Valley the local authorities had to incorporate the wider society to pursue the overall aim of the scheme and provided direct marketing whose responsibility was shared amongst the communities. The involvement of these communities in the marketing efforts can be considered a social innovation. Both

examples provide illustration that the actors from community, tourism and local authorities can join together and establish a network of united interests, as ultimately the SDF seeks to do.

In rural development, social innovation is not a new concept and has been built into many development plans such as Agenda 21 (refer to p. 24) or LEADER (refer to p. 224), at least at a theoretical level. Evaluations of these schemes identified the importance of community knowledge, local identity and networks that play a crucial part in the advent and establishment of social innovations. These programmes also produced precise and measurable development outcomes against the programme's aims of developing tourism, protecting the environment and strengthening communities. Consequently, the field of social innovations in rural development strategies such as the SDF should be reconsidered in order to maximise the potential these schemes offer.

Social innovations in industrialised countries that have developed territorial development strategies provides the opportunity for local communities to take control of their own development. These communities know the problems they face within the context of their region, and, arguably, which activities are necessary in order to overcome them. Arguably, these innovations require participation from all stakeholders involved in the development process that the outcomes can lead to the sustaining of communities and economies and could lead to cultural renewal.

Ironically, however, social innovation may be a central requirement to successful rural development but its role in this area is often understated. Social innovation is not directly addressed in UK development programmes and its creation is still not well supported by government institutions and funding. It may be that questions concerning social innovation, primarily regarding the driving forces behind it in rural development and the ways in which innovation can be supported, are unanswered.

The SDF schemes rely on the mobilisation of the public, gaining participation that not only sustains traditions that can further develop social, economic and cultural renewal or as Magel (2000) noted, *"it is basically about the development of sustainable structures and establishing a*

former balance that, on the one hand, enables innovation, creativity, new ideas and visions in action; and, on the other hand, maintains the necessary stability" (p.73). Consequently an understanding of how social innovations can integrate the three contested concepts of this thesis may assist in implementing rural development strategies.

Traditionally, innovation research and policies have dealt with technical and economic innovation. The focus being material and product innovation and increasing production processes all of which fall into the field of economics (Godin 2006). Adams and Hess (2008) noted that innovations with an economic rationale are well established but that the knowledge of social innovations are not as well elaborated upon. Consequently, public policies in innovation are primarily concerned and perceived with economic innovation utilising technology, as well as the commercialisation of science.

Zapf (1989) emphasised that social innovations can bring a change in attitude and practical implementation which is essential in bringing about these changes. Godin (2006) goes on to suggest that social innovations should include achievements, improved solutions that create social change. These can be structured via organisations or procedures and should be aimed at communities that are agents of change including changes of attitude towards which the level of participation takes place creating "societal acting" (Godin, 2006 p.641). Therefore, thinking of social innovation as a part of public policy strategy within an economic setting provides stages and preconditions that can be clearly defined and operated upon to encourage innovation (Adams and Hess, 2008). The psychologist Mumford (2002) noted that social innovations can be about the way in which society organises itself and its relationships. This could include the formation of new social institutions and the development of new ideas of social structures, processes and procedures.

4.6 Funding Community Development

The SDF sits within a somewhat chaotic landscape of funding options for community led initiatives across Wales. Broadly speaking, funding providers can be divided into three categories: Public-Sector including local authority, Welsh Assembly, UK government and the

Wales European Funding Office; National Lottery; and other grant making trusts. Across these categories, there are a huge number of grants, ranging from multi-million pound UK wide grant funding programmes, to very localised private trusts offering communities a few hundred pounds a time. In addition to the extent and diversity of grants, the availability of funding is also extremely dynamic, with funding streams frequently switched on or off according to demand and funder priorities. As a result, it is almost impossible to "map the landscape" for grant funding for community activity in Wales in a meaningful or useful way. Therefore, in an attempt to illustrate the funding context within which the SDF fits, Table 4.2 illustrates the total amount of grants provided over the last four financial years in Wales.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Grant Provided (£bn)	13.2	13.6	13.7	13.6

Table 4.2: Total Welsh Government Grant Funding by Financial Year, *Source:* Welsh Government Finance System

As noted earlier in this chapter on page 65-66, community empowerment has been cited as a central benefit of community led approach is to development. However, when the existence of a community organisation is supported, fully or partially, by funding, there is an inevitable imbalance of power between the community group and the organisation that is providing the funding (Taylor and Wilson, 2006). With the exception of some private trust funds, the vast majority of grants are made available through funding schemes which have been set up to deliver specific outcomes. Whilst broad notions of community development and engagement are almost always part of the aims of the funding, there is usually a set of more tightly defined criteria which projects must meet, and often a specific set of outcomes of the project must be aiming to deliver in order to be funded. This is of course particularly true for public funded grants, such as the SDF, which are linked to specific policy objectives.

As has been discussed above, it is undoubtedly legitimate, if not necessary, for funding to be distributed according to a set of outcomes the funders are striving to achieve. However, the inevitable consequence, as noted by Adamson and Bromiley (2008) is that, in order to receive funding, community groups must adhere to top-down priorities. When the priorities of the community organisation in question naturally align with the priorities of the funders the grants

issued in this way can be effective. However, there is a risk that, in order to secure the funds to operate, community initiatives alter their ambitions and direction to fit with the top-down perception of what is needed.

One element of the SDF programme is that sustainable development schemes should be conjoined with existing resources and supplemented by new projects initiated by individual communities. The objective of "additionality", as it is known, is that any funding assistance provided by a public agency should be matched by other income streams (Zito *et al,* 2003). Additionality is possible at two levels, the "global" level or "individual" level. The former means that SDF funding is added to the overall volume of regional development expenditure in the rural locality from a public agency. The latter would lead to SDF funding being supplemented by private means. The implication being that communities that cannot match fund lose out and communities with strong, well reserved networks win.

The approach to funding and the implementation of funds has traditionally followed two perspectives. Woods (2006) noted that some projects take a "top-down" perspective. In other words, the execution of policies are viewed from the point of the policymakers trying to put policy into effect. This invariably begins by examining the objectives of the policy and assessing the extent by which the policy objectives have been achieved. If this process led to the identification of an "implementation gap" (Woods, 2005) between policy objectives and outcomes then a study of the processes by which policies were implemented would facilitate the identification of the points where policy went wrong and why. Analysis of top-down approaches tend to explain policy failure in terms of the inability of policymakers to control those responsible for implementation or the failure of policymakers to stress clear objectives. Van Horn (1975, p.447) suggest that "*policy implementation encompasses those actions by public and private individuals (or groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions".*

The contrasting implementation perspective is known as the "bottom-up" approach which considers the floors of the top-down approach and focuses on the actions of local participants in implementation and appreciates that activity originates at this level rather than being instigated by top-down policymakers developing policy and attempting to put into effect.

Instead of beginning with an identifiable policy decision, the bottom-up approach starts with an analysis of the actors which interact at the local level facing a particular problem or issue. The focus is on the strategies pursued by various organisations in the pursuit of their own objectives rather than those of the policy imposed from above. Implicit in this approach is the notion that policies are best formulated by actors at the local level rather than controlled by central decision-makers removed from the needs of particular localities and the consequences of policies "on the ground". This approach recognises that the interactions between the policy formulation and implementation processes produced a *"policy that evolved as it was being implemented"* (Stringer and Williamson, 1987, p.36). One of the first studies of this kind was that by Majone and Wildavsky (1977) who conceptualised the implementation process as one of "evolution". They argued that as policy is enacted it is automatically changed as resources are altered, they concluded that *"implementation will always be a revolutionary; it will inevitably reformulate as well as carry out policy"* (p.115). Holland (2004) noted that sustainability policies evolved during implementation, because of the process of bargaining and compromise between more or less autonomous actors and organisations. Barker (2005, p.15) suggested that "*the process of implementation is essentially a political process characterised by negotiation, bargaining and compromise between those groups seeking to influence the actions of others and those upon whom action depends".*

Implementation studies aroused interest in the 1970s and 80s, more recent discourse is concerned with the constant change in the way in which policies are made and implemented. Mansuri and Rao (2003) noted that there has been a movement from traditional hierarchical structures towards a more centric focused form of control. This has led to funding schemes evolving from being "governed" towards "governance". This replaces outdated organisational boundaries and involves various actors who are external of the public sector representing civil society. The rationale behind this governance is connected to the efficiency of politics and service delivery as well as the need to generate participation and engagement from relevant stakeholders (McIntosh, 2008). The SDF system involves close collaboration between the local authority and local communities and is categorised by the notion of "multi-level governance" (Majone and Wildavsky, 1977). The dismantlement of traditional central government regulation by devolving powers to local authorities has not led to deregulation but to a different kind of re-regulation. These new policy instruments are often reliant on the marketplace, the wider community, access to information, the art of persuasion and the provision of incentives (Jordan *et al*, 2005). The new policy instruments utilised comprise of benchmarking, codes of conduct, sharing of best practice, voluntary agreements and eco-labels (Zito *et al,* 2003). These

mechanisms are commonly found in environmental policy but are also being shared across other disciplines, but are not evident in SDF practices.

Another growth area of funding implementation is the process of evaluation. The evaluation of public funding schemes involves the assessment of the value of the project in accordance to clearly defined measures, and, on the gathering of data which can be explicitly collected and examined (Baker, 2001). Greer (2009) noted that conflicting opinions are expressed as to when a project should be evaluated. Greer suggested that evaluation can be retro or prospective. However, Pender *et al* (2012) identified three stages associated to the lifespan of a programme where evaluation can take place. At the start of a project (i.e. feasibility study). During the project, referred to as the mid-term evaluation where outputs are monitored and at the end of the project (some form of reporting) which focuses on the success or failure, results or impacts. However, the evaluation of SDF as referred to on page 33 is a rather vague process that would benefit from the utilisation of stronger evaluation methods.

4.7 Addition of Dynamic Drivers to Static Synthetic Model

At the end of chapter two the static synthetic model was introduced on page 35. For this thesis, that model is considered as the "engine", consisting of core components necessary for the creation of rural sustainability in the BBNP. In order for this "engine" to work it requires "fuel" to enable the core components to operate smoothly and assist in the smooth running of the "engine". Without fuel, parts of the engine cannot function, this analogy applies to the topics under review in this research. Consequently, the two outcomes of the static model, namely, sustainable rural communities and sustainable tourism necessitate fuel. In this case, they are the dynamic drivers discussed in this chapter and can be found in Figure 4.1 below.
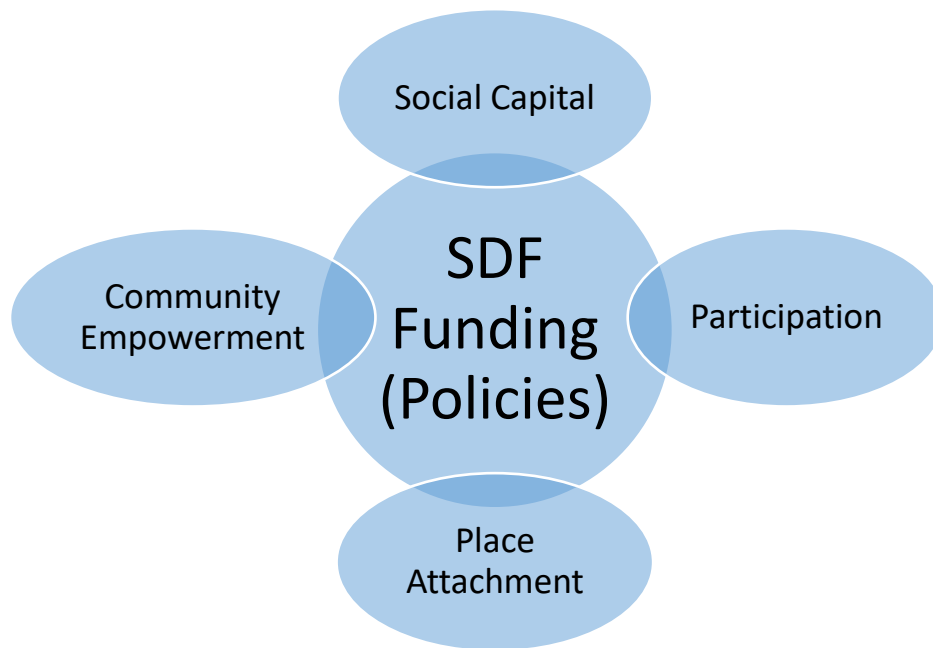
Figure 4.1: Dynamic Drivers of Rural Community Development for the BBNP, *Source:* Author

The inclusion of the dynamic drivers into the synthetic model (Figure 4.2 on the next page) are necessary inputs, in order to produce the required output of sustainability. Further chapters will return to the analogy and qualifies the integrity of the engine and fuel. After that, the chapters will propose changes derived from the research to make the engine and fuel more efficient and effective. Consequently, Figure 4.2 below, illustrates how the dynamic drivers (or fuel) are inserted into the components of the case study area (or engine). It can be noted that in order for this model to operate all the dynamic drivers bridge the divide between each other indicating that they are connected. Having integrated the dynamics of sustainable rural community development into the synthetic model, attention, in the next chapter, must turn to the activation of these drivers for rural sustainability. In the case of this thesis, the use of community as a mechanism for initiatives (namely, SDF) in rural development within the context of tourism and sustainability must be considered in more detail.
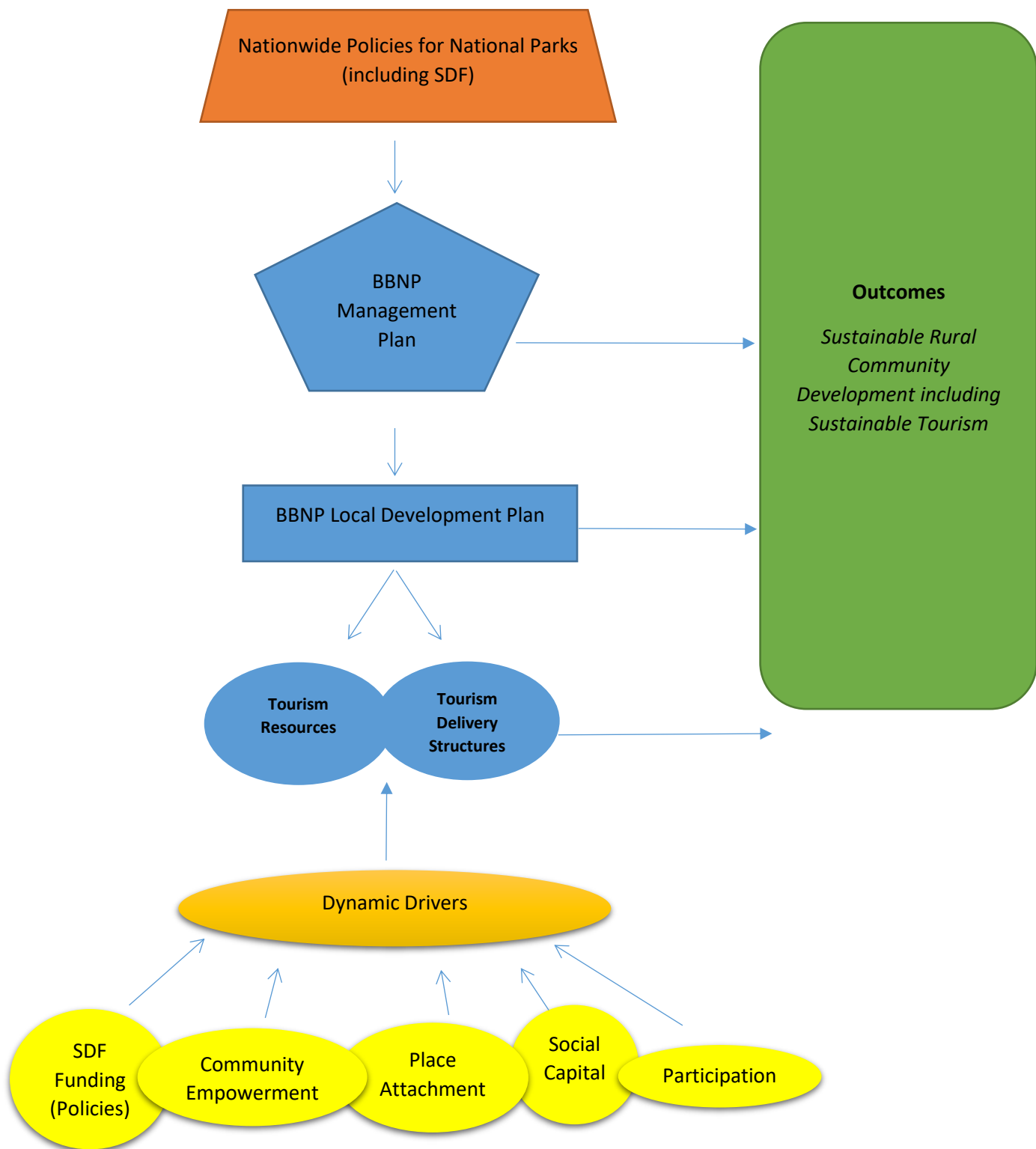
Figure 4.2: Synthetic Model of the Structures and Dynamic Drivers of Rural Sustainability in the BBNP, *Source*: Author

Chapter Five

The Context of Tourism and Sustainability within Rural Community Development

The quest for rural sustainability in the BBNPA is a complicated, sometimes confusing pursuit. It requires the integration of many facets, including, policies, structures and the presence of the dynamic drivers. Having established that sustainability is a hazy, ambiguous term, whether applied to community or tourism, and, having discussed the theoretical underpinnings of the dynamic drivers of rural development, our attention must turn to how the connexions are made between these components. Returning once again to the analogy used on page 83, having defined the "engine" and "fuel", what now warrants further examination is the "ignition". "Ignitors" create sparks to enable "fuel" and "engine" to combine to produce their intended outcome. This chapter, using the context of tourism, will discuss how the dynamic drivers can be ignited to bring about the elusive notion of rural sustainability within the BBNP. In order to do this, this chapter will highlight the relationship that exists between tourism and NPAs, and, will then discuss how the dynamic drivers can be activated to create sustainable behaviour outcomes within a rural setting.

5.1 Tourism and the National Park Authority

The relevance of tourism for the BBNP cannot be understated as it is one of the largest economic sectors for the region (Morgan, 2015). Rural tourism makes a significant contribution to the rural economy and, therefore, it has a great potential to contribute to regional prosperity. This may be because as noted by Deller (2009), money spent by tourists' flows into industries up and downstream of tourism and, thereby, stimulates regional economic growth through the multiplier effect. However, the importance of tourism operators utilising resources from local markets helps ensure that revenue earned will remain in the locality. If resources used are not local then the benefit for the locale will only be marginal as economic leakage occurs (Beeton, 2006).

Tourism is considered to be a promising route for rural development especially in regions where conditions for other economic development are not met. Often in these situations there are favourable preconditions for the development of tourism. The development of the tourism

strategy by the BBNPA indicated that the park has undergone economic restructuring with a declining role of agriculture and mining, and so the NPA management plan turns to tourism as a central driver for economic development and income generation opportunities for the rural population, based on the region's natural and cultural assets (Tyler, 2016).

In order to create a sustainable and economically viable tourism industry, it is necessary to develop an attractive, competitive product. This may mean a destination presents a diversity of amenities and facilities (Choi and Sirakaya, 2006) which require continuous adaption by the stakeholders. However, the integration of tourism within the local community is as important as the product. The acceptance of tourism by the local community and their attitudes towards tourists will need to be favourable to ensure that tourism is sustainable Fredman *et al* (2007).

However, the integration of tourism within the BBNP, and particularly, its use as a diversification strategy is questionable. The academic discourse is prevalent, but the divide between reality and theory warrants examination, as this thesis will set out to achieve. The importance of involving all actors in the development of tourism practices originates from the components of tourism destinations as systems of mutually dependent participants (Cooper, Scott and Baggio 2009). However, Dewhurst and Thomas (2003) suggested that the problem with the implementation of sustainable tourism is situated in its practical application and in the intricacy of the stakeholders involved. Issues around the inability to gain participation from rural communities, blurred lines of communication, lack of leadership or coordination, fragility of common interests and lack of participation have been cited by Dodds (2007). Consequently, executing sustainable tourism practises requires direction, enticement, structure, long term vision, pliability and fiscal backing (Waligo *et al,* 2013). Arguably, this may be why there is a lack of momentum in the dynamic drivers within the BBNP.

Nevertheless, identifying who the stakeholders are in the development of sustainable tourism can contribute towards a stronger implementation process (Tosun, 2005). Various studies (Aas *et al*, 2005; Mason 2003; Vernon *et al,* 2005) identify the typology of stakeholders generally amalgamating into six classifications: visitors, commerce, local communities, governing bodies, interest groups and scholastic institutes. These actors have the ability to influence tourism development including the supply and demand, governance or legislation, managing visitor

impacts, labour and research. However, having identified the stakeholders makes it no easier to manage the involvement of these actors. Friedman and Miles (2006) noted that collaboration is complicated due to the diversity of the stakeholders and the presences of differing and disparate points of view.

Many tourists also expect some local authenticity in the tourism product (Flannigan *et al*, 2014), however, the majority of rural areas do not possess sufficient cultural, natural or other attractions to create outstanding unique selling propositions in order to distinguish themselves from other destinations (Deller, 2009). Tourism income is generally distributed to the public and private sectors, offering little incentive for local communities to participate and gain benefits from the tourism industry. A study conducted by Jamal and Stronza (2009) identified that, although tourism can create additional income and enhance the livelihood strategies owners of tourism enterprises, it excludes rural residents from benefiting if they have no economic stake. The tourism industry also tends to offer fairly low paid, inferior job opportunities that are often only seasonal (Deller, 2009). These factors indicate that much of the rural population will only see minor economic impacts from the development of tourism. Therefore, it is quite surprising that within rural development tourism seems to be a key agent of change offering perceived universal remedies for structurally weak regions (Weaver, 2006). However, the importance of tourism as a regeneration tool has been noted by the OECD that suggests tourism is a key target in the "new rural paradigm", which focuses on places rather than on sectors (OECD, 2006; Ward and Brown, 2009). Consequently, this paradigm promotes integration of rural development by creating a more coordinated approach from all actors and stakeholders be they public or private to improve the multiplier effect up and down the economic chain, but the economic effects (for the wider region) of rural tourism can be minor, as tourists may be attracted to hubs or honeypot sites at the exclusion of peripheral destinations.

However, Madsen and Zhang (2010) suggest that the reality is not that simple. Although these economic impacts can be triggered by efforts to create rural tourism, other impacts such as the establishment of local identity or social change such as indirectly empowering local communities to enhance their capacity and, in turn improve the livelihoods of the rural communities (Nyaupane and Poudel, 2011) indicate there are different ways rural tourism can contribute to rural development. Tourism can enhance local identity and provide a stimulus the

changes in social and political structures which consequently improve the livelihoods of rural communities (Nyaupane and Poudel, 2011).

Notably, beyond the economic aspects, tourism development influences social, cultural and ecological matters, which should also be taken into account, as these might induce positive as well as negative impacts which are important for the locality and overall regional development. (Beeton, 2006: McAreavey, 2009; Meyer, 2015). Liepins (2000b) indicate that social relations are networks and are important in the development of rural regions for the integration of economic interactions. The promotion of issues such as empowerment or community sustainability should be part of the objective for integrated rural tourism (Beeton, 2006; Nyaupane and Poudel, 2011). Employing a sustainable wider than economic approach to tourism may help alleviate uneven spread of benefits often found by the growth of tourism (Raco and Flint, 2001).

Arguably there is a need for managing tourism business and cultural networks and opening these to new community stakeholders in a coherent manner. Todorova and Durisin (2007) noted that management skills are required in developing rural networks to help existing, revive ailing, or develop emerging business networks. In order to extract value from visitors a clear understanding of the characteristics of such tourism networks and actors is required in order to manage interactions of stakeholders to bring about wider societal benefits and help the local tourism industry act in an efficient and innovative way. If, as Lemmetyinen and Go (2009) suggested, tourism destinations can separate "nets" of attractions from the overall "network" they will be able to create value that customers appreciate. This involves a methodical review of existing products and services and then forward thinking to future orientated value production. Such management can be seen, at an embryonic stage in the BBNPA as there has been a move towards using cultural activities (such as arts and crafts) to add value to their tourism products.

The concept of diversification as a strategy for farmers to increase their income from alternative streams and reduce their reliance on agricultural production, otherwise known as pluriactivity (McNally, 2001) is accepted in practice in the BBNPA. There is a sound logical economic rationale for this strategy which attempts to utilise land and resources in different ways and reduces the

risk associated with relying solely on farming. Although the BBNPA enforces its regulatory powers by limiting the development of changing traditional farm buildings to new forms of accommodation, the ability for farmers to diversify by selling products locally, opening café's (selling their own produce), creating petting farms or involving tourists in traditional farming activities, seems widespread in the park. This means farmers need help integrating into tourism business networks whilst other parts of the rural community need empowering in order to develop businesses or social enterprises that can in turn join these networks.

Tourism in the BBNP faces many challenges similar to those of rural communities in other NPs. The recognition of a new globalised economy that integrates high speed communication networks with an increase in infrastructure, such as transportation, is becoming a cornerstone to developing tourism networks. The decline of traditional agriculture poses threats and opportunities, as established structures of governance, policies, and the role of the individual changes. In 2006 the OECD developed "The New Rural Paradigm" document which outlines how rural areas need to review their policy in relation to adjustments to governance systems. They suggested;

- A shift from an approach based on subsidising declining sectors to one based on strategic investments to develop the area's most productive activities;
- A focus on local specificities as a means of generating new competitive advantages, such as amenities (environmental or cultural) or local products (traditional);
- More attention to quasi-public goods or "framework conditions" which support enterprise indirectly;
- A shift from a sectoral to a territorial policy approach, including attempts to integrate the various sectoral policies at regional and local levels and to improve co-ordination of sectoral policies at the central government level;
- Increased use of partnerships between public, private and voluntary sectors in the development and implementation of local and regional policies.

http://www.oecd.org.gov accessed on 17/05/16

Getzner (2003) noted that economic prosperity within NPs is reliant upon a thoughtful planning and decision making process, involving local communities, actors and stakeholders working in collaboration with local authorities that take into consideration NP policies. These sentiments

were echoed by Fennell (1999) who drew attention to the requirements of participation which involved local communities and stakeholders in decision making processes. Tourism can enhance other local industries and sectors and a multi-sectoral approach to its governance by a NPA could boost the local multiplier effect and make a centre piece of a rural development strategy. The creation of partnerships and collaborative thinking that facilitates interactions between tourism and SDF schemes could assist in this multi-sectoral approach.

5.2 Tourism and Rural Development

Areas such as the BBNP are experiencing a change in their economics often chose to adopt tourism as a development strategy (Latkova and Vogt, 2012). The benefits of this to rural areas include the rejuvenation of local communities, improvements to public services and infrastructure as well as enhancing quality of life for residents (Andereck and Vogt, 2000). Consequently, as the industry grows the scale of its impacts, both positive and negative, may be felt by local communities. Arguably, the managing partnerships of stakeholders mitigate negative and improve positive impacts may help the community support tourism and realise sustainable outcomes (Gursoy and Rutherford 2004; Sharpley 2014). The progression of successful rural tourism, therefore, requires the development of social capital to enable communities to positively react to tourism at their discretion rather than by obligation (McGehee *et al,* 2010; Zhao, Ritchie and Echtner, 2011). Business and public bodies may be unsuccessful in achieving sustainability if community participants are not willing to support the advance of tourism (Bowles and Gintis, 2002). Consequently, developing social capital is considered an essential and indispensable component in the development of strategies of sustainable rural tourism (Park *et al,* 2012), such that local communities are able, if they desire, to gain benefits from tourism's development.

Many studies on residents' attitudes concerning tourism draw from social exchange theory (e.g. Gursoy and Rutherford, 2004; Nunkoo and Smith, 2013). This theory indicates that an individual expresses their support through their willingness to enter into an exchange. Therefore, inhabitants are more likely to observe tourism positively and support any expansion if the benefits obtained are greater and the costs (Ap 1992; Gursoy, Jurowski and Uysal, 2002; Andereck and Nyaupane, 2011). Research by Nunkoo *et al* (2011) indicate that employment creation, improvement in infrastructure and the generation of investment which all contribute

to regenerating the local economy, improving community facilities and generating tax for local government are among some of the most recognisable benefits. Therefore, using tourism as a tool for rural development requires consideration, and acceptance, by local communities in order to attain the rewards from tourism, such that they can be judged to be greater than the risks associated with its development.

The level of engagement that individuals have with tourism and tourists correlated to positive attitudes to the sector (Collier *et al,* 2010). Variables affecting this included distance from a hub of tourism from where individuals live (Sheldon and Var, 1984); being involved in making decision; level of understanding about tourism; and level of interaction with tourists (Brougham and Butler, 1981; Lankford and Howard 1994). What residents offer, moreover, in the social exchange theory is their backing for appropriate development, being welcoming, and accepting of inconveniences produced by tourism such as queuing for services or traffic congestion. The ability for communities to accept and become involved in tourism development was noted by Murphy (1985) who suggested that if communities are to succeed, they need to be enabled to participate in the development process, including its ongoing management (Haukeland *et al.* 2011). Cooke and Leydesdorff (2006) indicated that some communities possess the capability to absorb tourism. If tourism grows beyond the communities' threshold to absorb it then the resulting negative impacts would outweigh the benefits. Thus, residents' attitudes are not homogeneous with reference to socio-demographic characteristics, dependency on tourism or other factors, but also vary in relation to the level of tourism development in the community.

Tao and Wall (2009) noted that for some communities tourism may be perceived as a risky activity. However, if it is incorporated with existing community strategies, such as SDF, then the risk declines and it can enrich rather than deplete rural livelihoods. If tourism is used to enhance rural areas then it is considered to be a form of community diversification. Community diversification is defined as "*the process by which rural families construct a diverse portfolio of activities and social support capabilities in their struggle for survival and in order to improve their standards of living*" (Ellis, 1998, p.5). Tao and Lui (2009) suggested that the advantages of this strategy may include:

1)   A means to attain more income for consumption or investment;

2)   A means to spread risk;

3) A response to long term downturns in income or the economy which are beyond local control;

4) A means to take pressure of fragile landscapes or declining industries (such as farming).

This chapter has so far, identified the relevant theoretical concepts behind the use of tourism in rural areas. There has been discussion about impacts, social exchange and tourism but there is a lack of understanding of how this is really achieved within a setting such as the BBNP. The structures and policies, exist. The communities are experiencing changes and are, arguably, open to new ideas for their development and sustenance. Tourism occurs within the NP. However, as will be argued, the dynamic drivers have not been ignited in this process to assist in the rural transformation. Consequently, there needs to be some bridging that links these practices together to make them into a tangible, working reality. In order to address these matters, an investigation into how a community interprets knowledge to create attitudes, and, consequently behaviour may go some way to create these links.

5.3 Community Knowledge, Attitude and Behaviour towards Sustainability

Many behavioural models are founded on the economic theory of rational choice. Put simply, this theory asserts that an individual will assess a given set of options available to them, weigh up the costs and benefits of each possible course of action, and rationally choose the one which is judged as having the outcome most closely aligned with the individuals desired result (i.e. maximum utility) (Clark, 2010). For this model to function correctly, people are assumed to hold perfect information about the choices open to them and the costs and benefits of their decisions (Welsch and Kuhling, 2010).

Based on this assumption, the earliest frameworks to explain the motivation to adopt or reject sustainability behaviours were founded on an "information-deficit model" (Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002). This essentially suggested that communities are prevented from making the "correct" utility maximising decision by lack of knowledge. As such, sustainability policy making had historically assumed the failure to adapt pro-environmental behaviours attributed to the

fact that "*laypeople do not grasp the scientific and rational reasoning behind policy debate*" (Eden, 1996, p. 197). Using the linear progression "knowledge-attitude-behaviour" it is argued that information provision and skills training about sustainability behaviours (including the costs and benefits) will increase communities concern and consequently, "*communities will accept their own responsibilities and acknowledge the need to change aspects of their lifestyles*" (Burgess *et al,* 1998, p.1446). Arguably, once supplied with relevant expert knowledge, communities will be facilitated to rationally select sustainable behaviours (Steg and Vlek, 2009).

Guagnano *et al* (1995) argued the policy interventions that bring about change which focus on influencing individual's internal cognitive processes (perception of the development of tourism) or the external conditions (for example through policy implementation) are bound to fail as they neglect to account for the interaction of the these two sets of factors. Consequently, Guagnano *et al* (1995), building on the original work by Stern and Oskcamp (1987), designed a simple Attitude Behaviour Context (ABC) model of behaviour to illustrate how the various variables interact.

The ABC model, shown in Figure 5.1 (on the next page), describes behaviours as an interactive product or personal sphere attitudinal variables and contextual factors (Stern, 2000), the influence of which can vary from extremely positive to extremely negative, for example, an individual may have negative attitudes towards the development of tourism and they would only involve themselves with it under coercion, on the other hand, they may have such positive attitudes towards it that they feel compelled to engage. Similarly, the influence of contextual factors may be so negative so as to act as a barrier to performing in this process (for example if it is time-consuming), or the influence may be so positive that they actively facilitate the process (for example, if they are tangibly rewarded). It is arguably here that the rationale for the approaches taken by the BBNPA to facilitate tourism development are weak, as they focus on "*shading the context in which decisions are made, rather than explicitly aiming to persuade or dissuade individuals from engaging in a particular behaviour*" (Corner and Randall, 2011, p.1010).

The ABC model postulates that the effects of attitudes and context on behaviour are dependent upon their values relative to each other, as opposed to their individual values. In this way, the

influence of attitudinal factors on behaviours is strongest when contextual factors are neutral, and attitudes will have negligible effect on behaviour when the influence of context is either strongly positive (compelling the behaviour) or negative (prohibiting the behaviour) (Stern, 2000).

Positive

CONTEXT

BEHAVIOUR

Negative   Positive

NO BEHAVIOUR

Negative

ATTITUDES
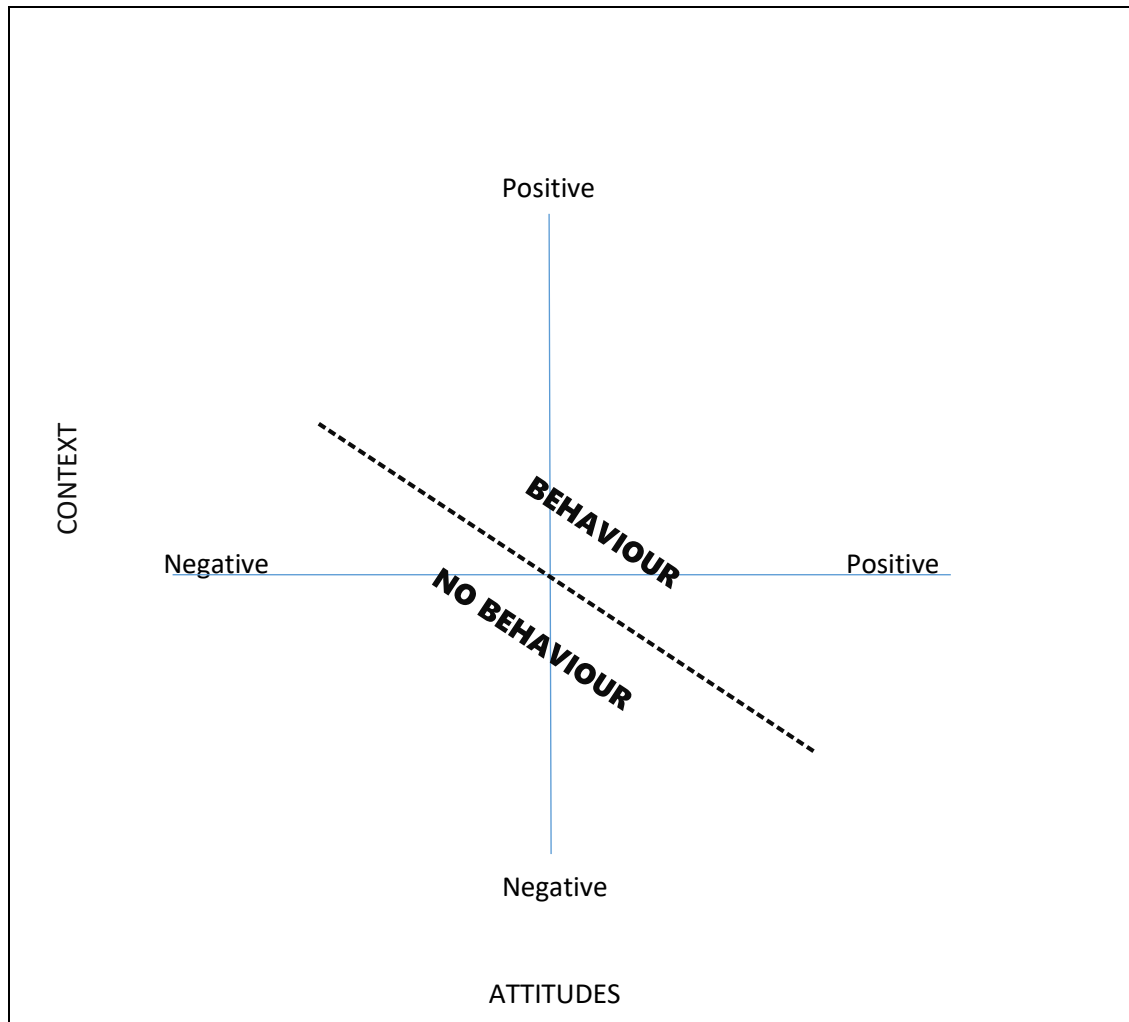
Figure 5.1: The ABC Model, *Source:* Adapted from Guagnano et al (1995, p.703)

The model's authors acknowledge that the ABC is not a comprehensive model of shaping behaviour as it does not account for habits or personal capabilities. Instead, the model is intended to demonstrate how the categories of variables interact, and highlight the need for policy which seeks to encourage behaviour change to take a holistic approach which recognises that behaviour is determined by multiple variables across various categories (Stern, 2000).

The growing appreciation of the pivotal role of context in inhibiting or enabling behaviours has been reflected in a transition in academic and political discourse, away from sustainable livelihoods and towards the notion of "sustainable lifestyles" (Eppel *et al*, 2013; Barr *et al*, 2011). This shift towards sustainable lifestyles rather than focusing on behaviour directs its attention on understanding "*how different groups of people see and experience sustainable behaviours within the context of their lifestyles".* (Eppel *et al*, 2013, p.32), and it is this area of policy to which the SDF as a whole, aims to contribute to sustainability.

However, despite its popularity, there has been some debate about whether the notion of a sustainable lifestyle is, in practice, a tangible or useful concept for policymakers as there is no accepted definition of a sustainable lifestyle (Barr *et al*, 2011). However, it is evident that the concept comprises of a range of contextual behaviours as outlined by DEFRA in 2011. The key behaviours focus on environmental aspects including the use of energy and water, managing a sustainable and healthy diet, travelling sustainably, but most importantly for this thesis, setting up and using resources in communities. Southerton (2012) noted that the ambition to influence lifestyles across the nation is a significant challenge, greater perhaps than the challenge of influencing individual behaviours. Consequently, to address this challenge, DEFRA sought to segment communities into various lifestyle categories. This is illustrated in Figure 5.2 based on DEFRA's 2008 "segmentation model" divides communities into seven categories according to a raft of variables, including: values; attitudes; behaviours and sociodemographic characteristics. Using this framework, different segments of a community can be assessed in terms of their willingness and ability to act and, subsequently, policy interventions can be more carefully tailored and targeted, delivered in packages of multiple measures at multiple levels (DEFRA, 2011).
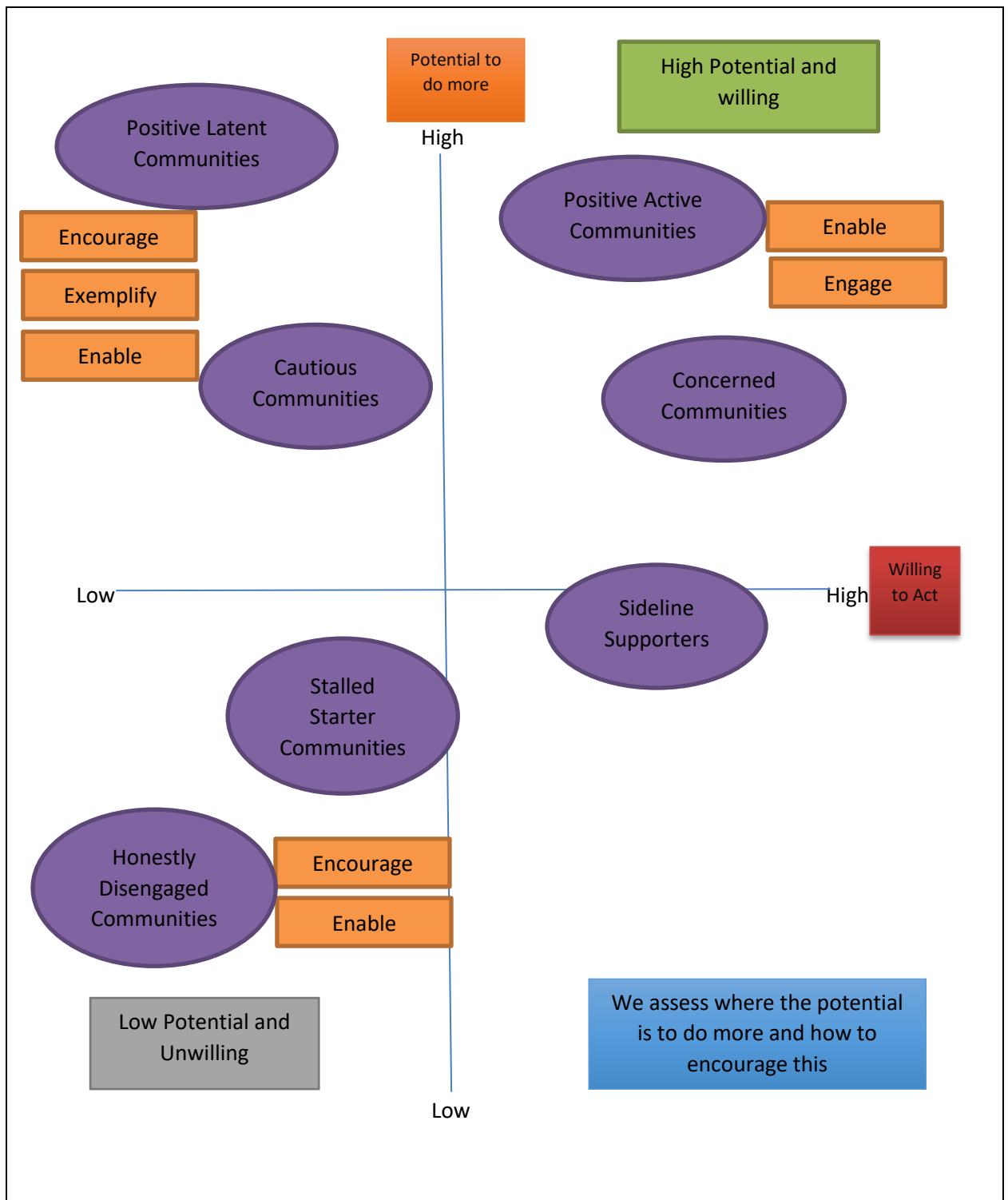
Figure 5.2 Community Segmentation Model, *Source:* Adapted from Defra Segmentation Model (2011, p.18)

However, segmentation models such as these assume a community lifestyle can be neatly categorised and coded. In reality, lifestyles vary, not only between individuals and communities, but within a single individual at different times in their life (Brown *et al,* 2011). Consequently, it

is argued that sustainable lifestyles are best understood, not as fixed frameworks, but as dynamic, fluctuating processes. Accordingly, this means that communities must continually redefine their understanding of sustainability to make it applicable to the various behaviours which comprise their lives, but also repeatedly negotiate their attitudes and agendas as different behaviours come into conflict with each other (Evans and Abrahamse, 2009).

Individuals are often observed to find global scale concerns, such as sustainability, "*distant, abstract and even disempowering*" (Macnaghten, 2003, p.79), but Reeves *et al* (2011) suggested that the community might be the most efficient level at which to communicate these global scale messages. Partially because at the community level individuals are able to "*learn, feel, and be empowered to act*" (Maser 1996 p.166). Middlemiss (2011a) noted that the physical environment is most meaningful to people, whereby it enables and encourages interactions of social life in human relationships. Framing problems at such a level at which individuals have a personal, lived experience of the natural world, increases the potential that they will connect with their concern for that environment and encourage sustainable choices (Macnaghten, 2003).

Therefore, the framing of development plans at a community level appears justified. For example, Middlemiss (2011b) in the study of five different community projects across the UK, observed that, behaviour change amongst participants, was influenced by three key factors. First, how actively the individuals participated in the project, with those who are more active reporting greater change than those who were only involved peripherally. Second, how cohesive the organisation running the project were, with better results produced from more cohesive organisations. Finally, whether the project was "lifestyle driven", that is explicitly aiming to alter participants' lifestyles through knowledge provision, or "activity driven", whereby projects were focusing on engaging people in activities which were in themselves "sustainable". Here, the lifestyle driven projects were found to deliver a greater behaviour change amongst participants. However, as Middlemiss (2011b, p.277) noted;

"*involvement in community based action on sustainability cannot be forced, and sustainable outcomes in this context are, therefore, dependent on people volunteering to be involved in these organisations in the first place*".

Further to this, there is a distinct lack of longitudinal research which has sought to measure the long-term impacts of community level interventions. As such, there remains a lack of certainty about the level and longevity of change that can be achieved through various types of community action (Walker, 2007; Hildreth, 2011; Barr and Devine-Wright, 2012;). This raises the question of whether community led initiatives are, in practice, an effective means by which to promote sustainability initiatives throughout the community in question, or whether these initiatives in fact are, as often characterised to be, simply "*a middle class niche pursuits for the ecologically minded*" (Barr and Devine Wright, 2012, p. 531).

Evans and Abrahamse (2009, p.489) suggested that lifestyles can be "*understood, at the most basic level, as the assemblage of social practices that represent a particular way of life and give substance to an individual's ongoing narrative self-identity and self-actualisation".* Accordingly, "social practices" provide a non-individualist perspective on social conduct (Spaargaren, 2011). Social practices can be defined broadly as "*routine driven, everyday activities situated in time and space and shared by groups of people as part of their everyday life"* (Verbeek and Mommaas, 2008, p.634). Arguably, community activity is a social practice and how this practice theory develops and integrates into an act of reality is difficult to state. Moreover, how social practices develop are complicated to operationalise in policy (Jackson, 2005). Jackson (2005) emphasised the importance of looking at the collective level, to understand how behaviours are shaped and shared within different "systems of provision" (Shove and Walker, 2010).

5.4 Summary

In this chapter, an overview has been provided of the context of tourism and its relevance for the park and rural sustainability. The attitudes that people have to tourism, the impacts and integration of tourism have been discussed. The context of sustainability has been discussed for community rural development. As these are contextually specific it is arguably necessary to evaluate them in situ to be able to access progress that is being made in their implementation. Designing effective strategies to encourage and facilitate more sustainable communities have been argued to be a particularly complex and uncertain. As such, research which seeks to provide more evidence in this field is important if understanding and, consequently, policy-making, is to be improved. The SDF is currently project focused. It only works on those

individuals and groups with existing social capital, and the ability to use that social capital, leaving behind those with either low levels of social capital, or do not have the wherewithal to mobilise social capital. Therefore, from the literature (chapters three, four and five) it would appear that SDF is a blunt, finance driven tool, and to be successful it needs to prepare individuals and communities to be able to take part in the planning of their development and to deliver these plans in order to achieve its sustainable aims. Consequently, this research is seeking to observe the way in which the context of community through the mechanics of SDF, part of which incorporates tourism, is striving to achieve rural sustainability. The next chapter will outline the main research methods employed to investigate these matters.

Chapter Six

Research Philosophy and Methodology

This chapter outlines the stratagems and methods used for data collection and analysis for this research. First the guiding methodology of a constructivist realist is outlined and secondly the use of a case study as a research strategy will be deliberated. The method of data collection and the manner in which theory and data are used in this thesis to create a knowledge situated approach will be explained. Thirdly, the chapter will then explain the procedures for the collection and analysis of the primary data. Fourthly, a brief critique of the fieldwork will be presented highlighting the difficulties encountered and how they were addressed.

6.1 Constructivist Realism Ontology

Theory and method are intimately and inseparably intertwined. Theoretical orientation *"guides the investigator, not only in choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways"* (Guba and Lincoln, 1994: 105). For researchers whose interests lie within a conventional academic discipline, deeply-rooted theoretical paradigms largely circumscribe methodology: the methods selected for a discipline based study reflect an aim to further that particular branch of knowledge in accordance with the accepted epistemological and ontological boundaries of the chosen discipline (Gilbert, 2008). However, tourism and sustainable development studies have no such convention of methodological approach.

Therefore, as Crotty (1998) suggested that the philosophical assumptions made by a researcher will influence the research, its design and the outcomes greatly. Illustrating the epistemological and ontological approaches is particularly important in these fields as a credibility and clarity of the research are influenced by the researchers' awareness of their philosophical underpinnings and by the application to every aspect of the research process (King and Horrocks, 2010). Therefore, an explanation of the beliefs and values underlying the design of this research will be provided.

Ontology concerns the study of being, of what is real or true. Epistemology refers to the study of knowledge, i.e. how we know what we know. Depending on how one sees the world (ontology) one goes about understanding it (epistemology) in certain ways. Typically, a distinction is drawn between subjectivist, objectivist and constructionist ontologies. Subjectivist ontology assumes that meaning is imposed on the object by the subject and is influenced by, for example, dreams, religion, individual consciousness, but not by any interaction with the object. Instead, understanding of the object is assumed as being influenced by subjectivities and purely based on subjective meaning(s). Scholars who ascribe to subjectivist ontology understand reality as created by the individual. An extreme form of subjectivism is solipsism, according to which everything we see is a product of our imagination (Crotty, 1998).

In contrast, objectivism as ontology assumes that reality exists, as opposed to being created by individuals. Specifically, scholars who ascribe to this ontology argue that there exists one, and only one, truth external to the individual, which can be discovered by means of scientific research. Research based on positivist or post-positivist epistemologies is traditionally informed by this ontology (Crotty, 1998; Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Scholars who refer these epistemologies seek explanation to predict and control phenomena and understand the researcher and the researched as independent entities (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, 1998).

Ontology can be concerned with the nature of social environments and social beings. This is something that social science has to grapple with as it deals with the intentions of actors who are situated in a social context. As briefly mentioned in Chapter One, the ontological position assumed for this research is constructivist realism, which has been highlighted in table 6.1.

Epistemology	Theoretical Perspective	Methodology	Ontology
Constructionism	Interpretivism • Symbolic interactionism • Phenomenology • Hermeneutics • Feminism	Ethnography Grounded Theory Phenomenological research Heuristic inquiry Action research Discourse analysis	Social Phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors (produced through social interactions) and are in

			a constant state of revision.
Critical Realism	Pragmatism Transcendental Realism Naturalism	Ethnography Grounded Theory Survey Research Qualitative and Quantitative research	Reality exists, but can never be fully apprehended. It is drive by natural laws that can only be incompletely understood.
Constructivist Realism	Interpretivism Realism	Qualitative and Quantitative research Grounded Theory Phenomenological research	Subject and object are dependent and that knowledge can be constructed through participation. Reality can be explained, but not totally.

Table 6.1: Constructivist Realism as a Methodology, *Source:* Adapted from Crotty 1998 and Cupchik 2001.

Constructivist realism, derives from two ontological standpoints, constructivism and realism. Therefore, a brief explanation of those standpoints are required in order to situate constructivist realism appropriately. Bryman (2012) suggested that constructivism asserts that social phenomena and the interpretations of them are achieved by social actors. This ontology denotes that social phenomena and categories are not only produced through social interaction but that they are in a constant state of revision. Therefore, this position challenges the idea that communities and cultures are pre-given, it sees social actors as internal to communities, who continually shape them, as and when the social actors themselves change and evolve and the relationships between them change and evolve. Constructivism is based on specific assumptions about reality, knowledge and learning. The process of communicating and interacting necessitates socially agreed-upon concepts of the world and social patterns regarding the use of language (Kukla, 2000). The construction of social meanings consequently involves intersubjectivity amongst individuals. Reality, knowledge, learning and social meanings are shaped and evolved through negotiation within society (Gredler, 1997). Thus, any personal

interpretations shaped through these experiences are affected by the intersubjectivity of the community to which people belong.

Therefore, the common feature of realism that is, the concept which is to realism as intersubjectivity is to constructivism - is power. Constructivists see social meanings as not reflective of an objective, material reality but an intersubjective, or social, reality (Onuf 1989). In other words, what actors do in society, the interests they hold, and the structures within which they operate are defined by social norms and ideas rather than by objective or material conditions.

Constructivist realism houses positivism and constructionism and the methods that they contend. This ontology acknowledges the existence of the social world which is illustrated by the natural attitude of daily life and exists prior to and independent of either positivist or constructivist analysis; hence *realism.* Phenomena are interpreted as practises that cut across the physical, social and personal worlds. Qualitative and quantitative research methods examine these occurrences, providing thick descriptive accounts or accurate analysis of relationships respectively. Therefore, it is acknowledged that both approaches to research practice face the issue of constructing "data"; hence *constructivist*.

Constructivist realism ontology permits complementary roles to be played through the employment of quantitative and qualitative methods when analysing social occurrences. Quantitative and qualitative methods are usually practised by academics from diverse disciplines assuming "*that the claim of compatibility, let alone one of synthesis, cannot be sustained*" (Smith and Heshusius, 1986, p.4). Lincoln and Guba (2000) have correspondingly suggested that the ontological basis of positivist and interpretivist paradigms (and the methods of research that dominate them) are profoundly incomparable. They suggested this because positivism's ontology indicates that reality is considered both "real" and "understandable", whilst critical realism preserves that "real reality" is "probabilistically understandable". Whereas, Constructivism represents "*local and specific constructed realities*" (Lincoln and Guba, 2000, p165) within which social phenomena are creations of "*meaning-making activities of groups and individuals*" (p.167). Constructivist realism transcends and expands between these differing social ontologies. Whilst positivism indicates that the onlooker is separated from the

observed and the discoveries are "true", constructivism is transactionally aligned, with its revelations subjectively "created". Consequently, constructivist realism is a locus which recognises that social phenomena prevail in society independent of investigators. These "real" phenomena can be revealed, understood and described by branches of society. Researchers can approach this "real" world as they deem suitable. Therefore, with one hand holding the "real" social phenomena observed, the other hand will investigate theoretical accounts of such occurrences increasing the clarity of focus on the phenomenon. Abstract concepts may not account for arrangements in the lived-world but an in-depth examination of the phenomena could help clarify patterns allowing them to be formally described. This then permits both the qualitative and quantitative approaches used in this study to achieve their purpose by providing richness and precision whilst complementing each other (Cupchik, 2001).

Constructivist realism will illuminate this social research by revealing the modus operandi that determine observed social phenomena. These phenomenon are multi-layered actions, and as such require a pragmatic mixed methodology. Qualitative methods will not only provide access to the "meaning" of individual occurrences but will be understood within their contextual setting providing the basis for "thick" description. Therefore, the interviewer and respondents share a constant reference point making it straightforward to establish the respondent's rhetoric in a purposeful philosophically theoretical situation of relevance to the interviewer. This enriched intersubjectivity allows for the reconciliation of realism and relativism in a "grounded" fashion (Rennie, 2000). Quantitative methods can provide insights that may help to tease out underlying issues resulting in statistical data that can raise consideration to socially consequential occurrences that can then be reconsidered in descriptive depth. This coaction between descriptive abundance and experimental rigour can present narratives of social phenomena to sequentially increased levels of lucidity. Therefore, qualitative and quantitative methods yield complimentary perspectives of occurrences and attempts at reconciling them can clarify processes that underlie them. Consequently, constructivist realism *is an ontological position that accommodates the best of positivism and interpretivism"* (Wallner 1994, p.23).

Morton (2006) suggested that social reality could be understood by using a system of entities with causal powers based upon three echelons related to constructivist realism that provides an ontological approach as follows:

- Realms of real, these include the structures that generate actual outcomes;
- Realms of actual, these are actual occurrences generated by structures;
- Realms of empirical, these include observable and expressed experiences.

Utilising these three classifications will permit the constructivist realism ontology to be positioned within the setting of this research. The realm of the real will be the SDF scheme itself, and, the individuals involved in SDF. Arguably these are empirical objects which exist irrespective of our understanding of them (Sayer 2000). The realm of actual will be illustrated by the outcomes of SDF illustrated by individuals and communities who have been involved in the process. The realm of actual has, therefore, been influenced and caused by real mechanisms. The realm of empirical allows the researcher to gather information from individuals, however it may only represent a slice of authenticity, as it illustrates a fraction of a whole and will only provide limited access to a bigger picture, or, will demonstrate one strata of understanding when there are arguably many layers to appreciate (Middlemiss, 2008).

6.1.1 The Constructivist Approach

Constructionism borrows from subjectivist and objectivist traditions. While it shares with subjectivism that reality is understood as created by the individual, Crotty (1998) described it as a separate ontology, distinct from subjectivism. He suggested that constructionist ontology assumes the existence of multiple realities and that the realities of a group of people might overlap, i.e. they might share a common 'truth' (Crotty, 1998). He goes on to explain that such shared meaning is not called into existence (as subjectivist ontology implies), but the result of combining elements that already exist. In other words, meanings and realities are constructed using what we have available to us in the world. Similar to objectivist ontology, therefore, constructionism assumes that there exists meaning outside the individual; however, there exist multiple meanings, hence there is not one external 'truth' as objectivist ontology implies.

Crotty (1998) argued that meaning maybe constructed by societies, and people are born into a world full of already constructed meaning, such as culture. This is not to say that people do not construct meaning(s) individually as well; rather that the process of meaning construction will be influenced by meanings that were previously socially constructed (Crotty, 1998), i.e. that

there exists a reality outside the individual as well. The notion that realities are constructed socially and do not exist as objective entities highlights the importance of the local context within which individuals construct their realities (Cope, 2009) and the meaning that already exists within these local contexts. Constructionist ontology generally informs interpretivist epistemology, which aims at understanding human as well as social realities (Crotty, 1998). Presupposed is that meaning is constructed, and discovered by interpreting the meaning that people ascribe to objects, interactions and actions (Hesse-Bieber and Leavy, 2011). Crotty further explained that when we describe something we are reporting on how something is seen and reacted to, and thereby meaningfully constructed, within a given community or communities; and when we narrate something it is the voice of our culture. Thus, Social Constructionist approaches are not normative, nor are they prescriptive. They can be descriptive and predictive, but it should be borne in mind that data is interpreted within the researcher's own culture. Data is usually qualitative, exploring meanings, teasing out interpretations and worldviews and relations between these, but is not incompatible with some positivist research techniques that seek to identify objects or events in terms of quantitative facts.

The setting in which SDF occurs is instrumental to this examination as the methods used to appraise this community driven process characterises a specific social practice in which group activity can be examined. Community sustainability is closely connected with the notion of social learning as indicated by Lave and Wenger (1991). Inasmuch as they require a descriptive approach that encapsulates the social milieu in which learning and community development takes place. Therefore, the situated method to data gathering and theorem building reflects the theoretical manner used in this research. The theory surrounding the development of schemes such as SDF, used as a community sustainability tool, is fairly limited. Using the constructivist perspective, the collection of data and analysis is carried out in a dialectical manner. The essence of such a strategy is to attempt to bridge the gap between reality and theoretical discourse by understanding the constructed nature of knowledge.

Dickens (1996, p.74) stated: *"Social constructivism as developed by realists is indeed establishing relationships, causal powers, and mechanisms which can be relied on in explaining changes in the human and natural world."* A constructivist-interpretive approach was considered most suited to address the research objectives as it allows the researcher to explore SDF in terms of

how communities view it and understand it and make sense of it by interpreting the meaning they ascribe to community sustainability, their relationship with the BBNP and the BBNPA as well as the value that they consider tourism and the SDF play in creating sustainable communities. It follows that the focus of this research is not the explanation of one peripheral truth, (as pursued by objectivist researchers) but rather to examine multiple realities of communities and ascribe interpretation as to how they make sense of their world (Gioia *et al*, 2012) to investigate the similarities and differences in their views. The researcher, as prescribed by Kvale and Brinkman (2009) journeys through the interpretive-constructionist approach engaging in conversations with the actors involved to explore their lived worlds; in doing so meanings may unfold in this process through the researcher's interpretation of them and that this exploration might unveil previously unchallenged values and customs. Therefore, this approach lends itself well to exploring and interpreting SDF schemes and community sustainability discourses and enables the researcher to be aware of meanings and knowledge that may challenge current conceptualisations and engagement with publicly funded schemes.

6.1.2 Pragmatic Research: quantitative and qualitative research methodologies

King *et al* (1994) claim that both qualitative and quantitative findings share a unified logic and that the same rules of inference apply to both. Arguably both sets of methods are thought to be compatible because they share tenants of ambiguity over theory and the fallibility of knowledge. Furthermore, these paradigms both share a commitment to understanding and improving the human condition whilst both possessing a commitment for rigour conscientiousness and critique in the research process (Reichardt and Rallis, 1994).

DePoy and Gitlin (1993) described three techniques for mixing methods, the *nested,* the *sequential* and the *parallel* strategies. The sequential approach makes use of qualitative and quantitative data during different time intervals. This research began with a questionnaire survey which produced both qualitative and quantitative outputs. This was proceeded by the focus groups and concluded with the interviews. This approach allowed the study to begin with a more quantitative aspect providing facts and then developed the qualitative approach exploring feelings, perceptions and views about the phenomena studied.

The use of qualitative methods for research requires the assembly of data that can give meaning to what can be observed (Gillham, 2000). Gilliam suggested that the strength of utilising this approach is the way in which it elucidates specific subjects and offers potential clarifications for them. Therefore, a qualitative approach to data collection was central for this research as it necessitates a *"deeper understanding of social phenomena than can be obtained from purely quantitative data"* (Silverman, 2000, p.8). Although a questionnaire survey was utilised this provided only the foundation giving baseline knowledge. But as Kitchen and Tate (2000) noted quantitative data does not allow the researcher to measure and analyse personal experiences or opinions and attitudes in order to provide any meaning to them. Therefore, a qualitative dimension was essential in undertaking this investigation. Willis (2007) noted that utilising a qualitative approach to social research will allow the researcher to acknowledge and understand the importance of context which makes this a suitable method for this project. The need to understand the experiences and veracity of that experienced by individuals or communities and the exploration of the processes that leads to observable results is, as Gillham (2000) pointed out, one of the benefits of using a qualitative approach.

Bryman (2012) suggested that using numerous approaches of enquiry and research methods can increase the strength of discovery through cooperation or diverging responses that ask researchers to reconsider and re-postulate theories. The process of using multiple approaches to data collection is sometimes referred to as triangulation. Figure 6.1 outlines the triangulation used in this particular research. Denzin (1989) differentiated between different types of triangulation including the triangulation of data, investigators, theories and methodologies. This research utilised the between method triangulation to confirm and seek further richness in the findings generated through one particular method by another. Triangulation process links the research method type to the three system of entities related to realism as outlined by Morton (2006) realms of the actual, empirical and the real to the variables the research is seeking to illuminate.

Kitchen and Tate (2000) suggested that quantitative and qualitative methods best be viewed as a continuum rather than as polar opposites. The qualitative part were the interviews which permit respondents to *"discuss the subject in terms of their own frames of reference"* (May, 2011, p.112). The quantitative part here, employed questionnaires to provide answers in a homogenous fashion which make them suitable for evaluation and comparison (May, 2011).

Lying between these two methods (on the qualitative and quantitative continuum) are the focus groups which elicit a blend of factual information and perceptions and attitudes. Powell *et al* (1996) suggested that the basic format of a focus group is "*a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of research*"(Powell 1996, p.202). Kitzinger (2004) purported that humans are not self-contained isolated beings and that we live within complex, overlapping societal, familial and collegiate networks. This could mean that in order to gain a greater understanding of issues relating to the human experience it may be shrewder to observe humans discussing various discourses in an interactive way as behaviour is not cut off from public discourses and our actions do not happen in a vacuum. As Morgan (1988) implied, when researchers want to explore people's understandings, or to find out what influences them, it makes sense to employ methods which encourage the examination of these social processes in action.
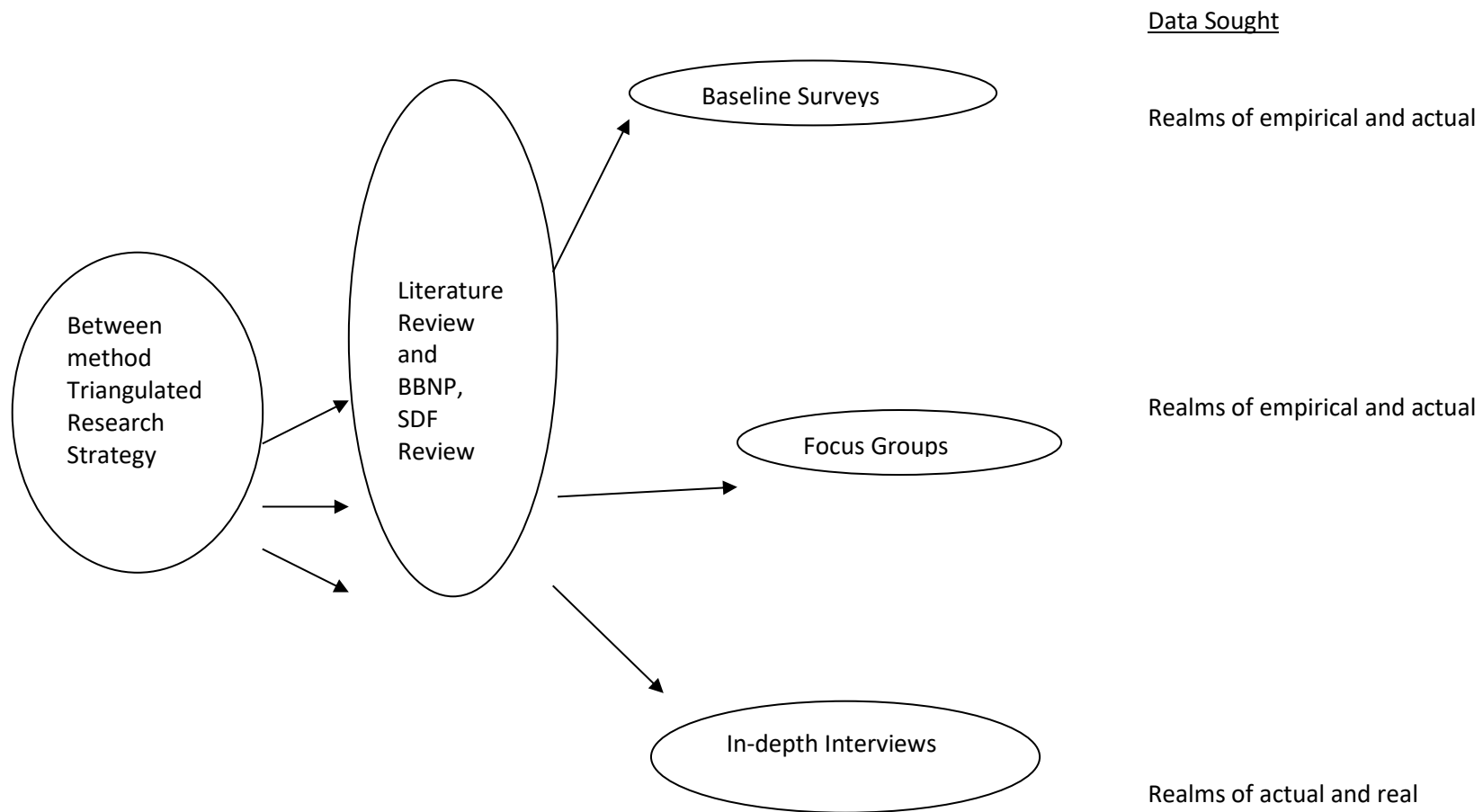
Figure 6.1: Triangulated Research Strategy, *Source*: The Author

6.2 The Interpretive Multiple Case Study Approach to Research

This study was conducted employing a multiple case study approach. Reksoatmodjo *et al* (2012) indicated that this approach refers to a group of methods that focus on qualitative analysis. Whereby, data is obtained from a small number of respondents or organisations through various methods such as interviews or focus groups. Interpretive case studies are chosen *"due to an interest in the case rather than the creation of a general theory"* (Lijphart 1971, p.692). Although the interpretive case study approach may not create any specific theory, they can be linked to existing theory to test and scrutinise it. This approach relies on previously known generalisations that are present within the current discourse of interest and may help to uncover new issues on the case under review. This type of study has been referred by Eckstein as a *"discipline-configurative"* study (2000, p.134). This means that the case is analysed by incorporating conventional methods where the data gathered is inferred by deduction from the extant theory it draws upon. Eckstein suggested that the interpretation of the case would be successful if it is logically compelled by the theory and that *"one should be able to demonstrate that, given the regularity and the characteristics of the case, the outcome must have occurred or had a high probability of doing so"* (p.136).

Within the case study area, data collection was undertaken by means of the questionnaire survey (n=79), focus groups (n=3h), and in depth structured interviews (n=16) with participants of the SDF schemes and representatives of the BBNPA. The case study approach is argued to be an ideal methodology when a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed (Feagin et al, 1991). Yin (1994: 23) defines case study research as "*an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident*". Cases are often chosen not because they are extreme or unusual in some way but because they will provide a suitable context for certain research questions to be answered (Bryman, 2012). Because issues may arise which demonstrate a necessity to explore further specific themes and/or characteristics (to research numerous characteristics) in another way, Stake (2000: 438), for example, referred to the advantage of this approach as "*the study of the particular*", which encompasses the nature, historical backgrounds, physical settings as well as socio-cultural contexts of a specific case.

Adopting a multiple case study approach for this research provided the opportunity for the intensive analysis of individual protected areas so that generalisations about successful collaboration factors may be made that may be useful for other protected areas (Romeiro and Costa, 2010). The case studies are based on BBNP. The case study approach allowed setting the survey results in context and involved an investigation of the study population's socio-demographic background and perceptions of themselves and their surroundings.

Multiple case studies can be exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory (Yin, 1994). Exploratory studies are a valuable means of finding out what is happening, to seek new insights, to ask questions, and to assess phenomena in a new light (Robson, 2002). Saunders *et al* (2003), state that there are two principle ways of conducting exploratory research: Talking to experts on the subject and conducting focus group interviews. Exploratory research is conducted when very little or no data exist on the phenomenon (Jennings, 2001). Therefore the relevance of these approaches is well suited to the case under scrutiny.

Yin (2016) suggested that the use of case studies help to answer the "how" and "why" questions in an descriptive fashion by assisting with "*links that need to be traced over time, rather than mere frequencies or incidence*" (Yin, 2016, p.9). These links could relate to various causes that are being investigated. These causes would probably be numerous and given the depth of this research the use of "sensitising concepts" as purported by Blumer (1954) will be used as he suggests these give "*a more general sense of reference and guidance for approaching empirical instances*" (Blumer, 1954, p. 7). In reality what Blumer is suggesting is that various concepts cannot purport to illustrate a holistic overview or picture of why a particular phenomenon takes place. What they do provide a researcher is the ability to investigate various avenues of approach in order to discover other concepts that may explain the motives for the phenomena. Given the array of literature related to communities as drivers of change for creating sustainable initiatives it makes sense that individuals in communities involved in SDF schemes are the most suitable unit of analysis. This will permit the exploration of their interpretation, their involvement in SDF as the building up of what community involvement means.

6.3 Data Design and Collection

By research design Easterby-Smith *et al* (2012) mean more than the data collection methods but also the type of evidence gathered, from where it comes, and how such evidence is interpreted to meet the objectives of the research. In this research, the main data collection methods were threefold: questionnaire surveys, focus groups and in-depth interviews. These were combined according to the research objectives at each stage of the process for analysis.

The most appropriate ways of collecting data was sought that enabled a picture of the SDF schemes to be developed around the concept of community and relevance of tourism within the BBNP. The literature identified several studies that collected information on these topics in different ways. For example, observational techniques were a possibility which would potentially allow the description of behaviour as it occurred in the natural setting (Teddie and Yu, 2007). Observation would reduce any artificial data being introduced in the data collection process, as there is minimal interaction between researcher and object. Parfitt (2004) suggested that observation could also reduce differences in responses that might arise through variations in verbal skills between individuals in terms of their ability to articulate their thoughts and ideas. However, whilst observation may be a suitable method for studying small groups in a limited area, it would be a difficult method to use when attempting to gather perceptual information about being a resident in a community. Such place perceptions might have been developed over a period of time, and throughout variable spatial and temporal dimensions. Therefore, conducting an observational study on this scale would certainly be impractical.

Another method considered for this research fell within an ethnographic framework (Wang and Pfister, 2008). Some ethnographers strive to meet the standards of the natural sciences. They believe that rigour allows them to capture reality, which is fixed, that could be revealed, described and explained. Thus, the practice of ethnography using this approach is formal, rigorous and systematic and reflects the positivist scientific model. The ethnographer is the expert and uses structured methods of data collection. Research, if conducted in this way, is objective and provides a 'real' picture of the world. The researcher is powerful as he or she is seen as *'a larger-than-life figure who went into and then returned from the field with stories about strange people'* (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, p.13). This approach imposes on the sample a pre-existing theoretical standpoint. The research philosophy adopted in this research, being constructivist realism, rejects this proposition.

At the other extreme to the positivist approach is humanistic ethnography (Fielding, 1993). This type of ethnography typically believes that full immersion within the world of the people being studied is essential to allow the researcher to adopt the perspective of the researched. The researcher's power lies in his or her ability to represent the subject's story through narrated life history (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Centred on the belief that people have the capacity to give meaning to their world, humanistic ethnography operates on the basis that it produces a privileged access to social reality. The ability of individuals to construct their reality through their capacity to understand and interpret social life means that humanistic ethnography places emphasis on research in naturally occurring settings over artificially created settings. Thus, the data collected is taken at face value by the researcher who embraces the culture of the researched to become an 'insider'. The researcher is as much a subject as researcher (Vidich and Lyman, 2011). This approach claims to have 'special' and privileged access to insider accounts of people's world-views. Therefore, this does not fit into the constructivist research philosophy used for this study as it is too individualistic and does not enable the researcher to look at the wider issues facing community sustainability and development.

An in-depth face-to-face contact seemed to be important in order to draw out the perceptions and points of views of residents and NPA representatives. One possible point of contact could be a group discussion, such as a focus group. However, these methods bias responses towards those who are more articulate. Therefore, some form of survey research would provide a suitable method by which base line information could be gathered from a wider sample. The main problem in using survey research methods was felt to be the potential varying abilities between individuals to express themselves verbally, or in writing. As Atkinson and Coffey (2002) pointed out, questionnaires or interviews rely heavily on images of environment filtered through language which differs in structure and vocabulary from culture to culture, class to class and person-to-person. This meant that any form of survey would have to be structured carefully so as to take into account attitudes as well as descriptions. Having said this, Hammersley (2000, p.61) believed that "*verbal responses can contribute dynamic contextual information which may be used to define important elements of preference".* The use of description acted to enrich attitudinal information. Consequently, the first round of primary research utilised a survey and the second phase of data collection employed focus groups and interviews that put detail on the broad picture painted by the survey results.

6.3.1 Questionnaire Survey

The questionnaire was designed, and a pilot study was undertaken. There was satisfactory feedback obtained from this pilot which led to two changes in the design of the questionnaire, a copy of which can be found in Appendix 2 (refer to p.299). The use of stratified purposive sampling was applied to the implementation of the survey, but they also included an element of probability sampling. By using the 2011 ONS consensus figures for the POWYS region the researcher was able to ensure that the sample obtained reflected the wider population (see Figure 6.2 and 6.3). This enabled the research to discover characteristics across the strata (Patton, 2002). Whilst attempting to gather data relating to attitudes and opinions a number of problems may be encountered. These may include patterned responses, insincerity, "attitude forcing" (Parfitt 2004, p.79) and bias. The latter may be from both the interviewer and respondent. Parfitt goes on to suggest that other areas that often face cause for concern include sampling errors, response errors and non-response errors. Due to the complexity of surveys the design of the survey including the format, sequence and wording must be considered. The use of open or closed questions also raise apprehension as to the quality of the data gathered. Yes or no answers, although easier to analyse, provide narrower scope for discussion. Conversely, as Oppenheim suggested "*free response questions are often easy to ask, difficult to answer, and still more difficult to analyse*" (Oppenheim 1992, p.113).

One of the problems associated with face-to-face surveys is that is common for them to be done on a one-to-one basis. Valentine (2004) noted that positivists suggest they are susceptible to bias and a lack of objectivity. However, Valentine also noted that humanist approaches imply there is no such thing as objectivity in social science and that all research is informed by the experiences and interpretations of the researcher (and to some extent the respondents). Surveys can also be prone to the dynamics between the researchers and respondent (Saunders *et al,* 2009). On a one-to-one setting the flow of the conversation and interaction between the two people may determine the level of the responses; which can either be an advantage or disadvantage depending upon the situation. This in turn may lead to a lack of consistency with the results due to the fluid nature of semi-structured survey.

The survey generated a total of 79 responses. The respondents were interviewed in three different locations in the POWYS area (all falling in the jurisdiction of the BBNP) during three

different community events in 2015. The Brecon show, the Hay-on-Wye Summer Food Festival and the Talgarth Festival of the Black Mountains. These three destinations were chosen as they all fall within the study area within the NP. The sample can be compared to the statistics provided by the ONS census of population 2011 in terms of their age and gender.

Table 6.2 identifies the age range of the sample population and compares it with the populations of the POWYS district listed in the 2011 census of population. Table 6.3 illustrates the gender of the sample population and once again compares it to the Powys district from the 2011 Census of population.
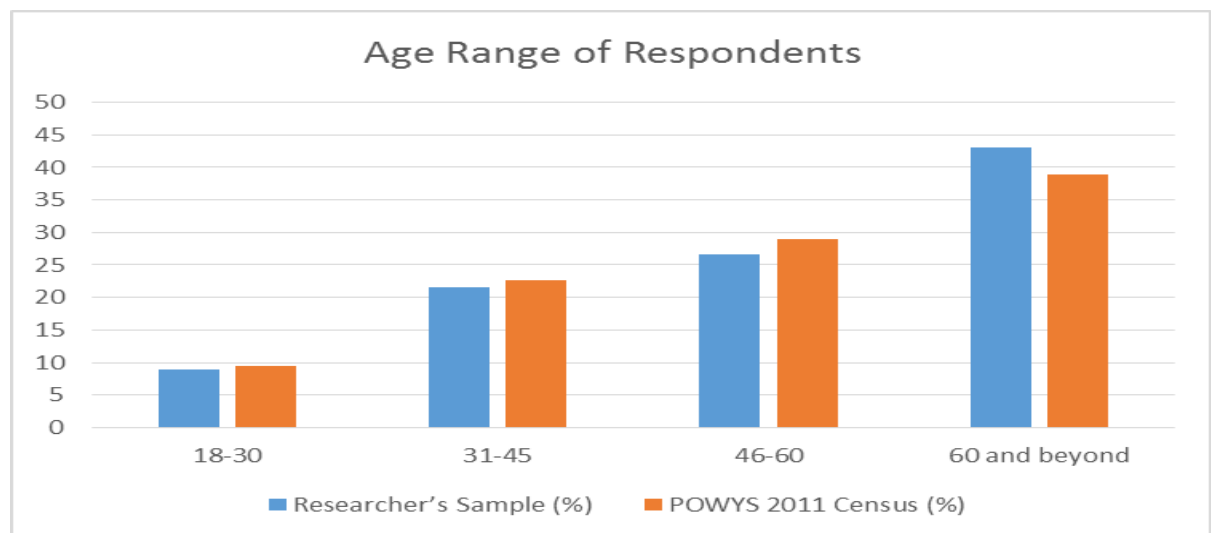
Figure 6.2: Age of Respondents of Survey, *Source*: Author

It can be seen that the main variation between the 2011 census figures and the researchers own sample in terms of the age range relates to the 60 and beyond group. This means that this group is slightly overrepresented. This may be due to the fact that older age groups tend to respond more positively in taking part in a survey or perhaps have more leisure time available to them (Onwuegbuzie and Collins, 2007). It can also be seen that the gender of the resident sample was similar to that of the 2011 census figures, with female respondents forming a marginally larger group than the census figures.
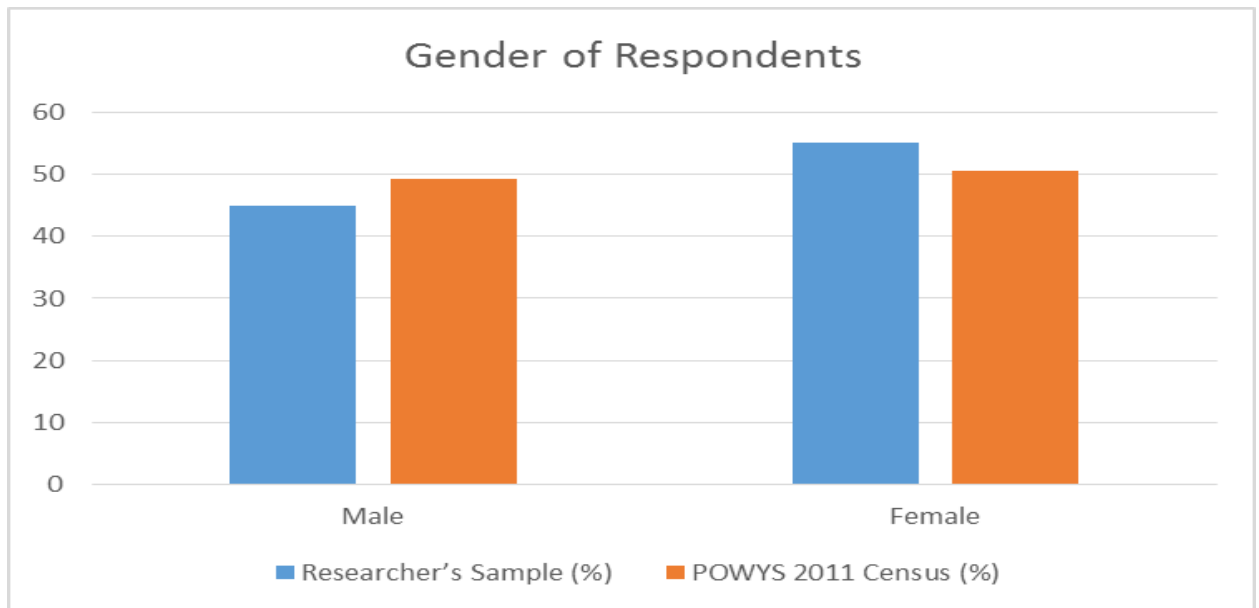
Figure 6.3: Gender of Respondents of Survey, *Source*: Author

The purpose of the questionnaire was to elicit responses from members of the Brecon Beacons communities regarding:

- Their understanding of the word community (Q1 – Q2) and their attachment to it and its institutions and associations (Q3 – Q6). These questions were derived from the literature particularly that of Woolvin and Hardill (2013), Magis (2010) and Akgun *et al* (2015) who questioned how rural communities interpreted their understanding of themselves and their own development. The research of these academics indicated that the various elucidations of the term community and how people feel attached or participate within the community has far-reaching policy implications for publicly funded development schemes.

- Their opinion of the National Park as an agent of community (Q7, i-vi) and tourism development (Q7, vi-xiii). These questions were informed by Day (2006), Kokx and Van Kempen (2010) and Ishkanian and Szreter (2012) who considered that the role of public agencies within the rural community development rhetoric warranted examination. The Likert scales used here allow the respondent to express the strength of their opinion while still allowing for statistical analysis such as average, standard deviations and changes to be calculated to demonstrate the strength and uniformity, or not, of the answers.

- Residents attitudes to tourism within their communities (Q8 and Q10) and their role in decision-making about tourism development (Q9, Q 11 and Q 12). These questions were informed by the literature of Marcus and Brennan (2008), Haukeland *et al* (2011) and Pender (2012) who contended that the role of residents and their attitudes towards tourism influenced their participation and involvement with community development. The open nature of question 10 and 12 allowed respondents to give more depth to their answers.

- Questions 13 – 17 enquired after the independent variables such as gender, place of residence and length of residence against which questions 1 – 12 were tested to identify any associations between the dependent and independent variables that may explain differences in answers between differing members of the community.

6.3.2 Themes used in the Focus Groups and interviews

The themes and topics of the questions employed in the focus groups and interviews were originally derived from a comprehensive review of existing research literature (Putnam, 1993; McKenzie-Mohr, 2004; Ledwith, 2005; Jackson, 2008; Clark, 2010; Key and Kerr, 2011). A short introduction explained the focus of the questions in order to make the respondents feel at ease. Respondents were informed of the objectives of the research, and why the respondent was chosen to participate, and for what purposes the results would be used. It was stressed that the answers would remain confidential and anonymous (to gather data in a way which makes it impossible to connect specific responses with any particular respondent).

The focus groups and interviews were designed to study involvement or participation in the community. In other words, these research methods were to analyse and evaluate the characteristics of, and attitudes towards, the 'community', participation, empowerment, SDF, tourism and the role of the NP by the members of the local community. The analysis considers whether there is anything distinctive about those who take a relatively active role in community life (Howe *et al*, 2004).

Questions were related to residents' opinions of "place attachment" and perception of community. A key element of the research is the principle of "community". It was suggested in the literature review that there is a connection between the value orientations people hold toward their community and their attitudes about what is desirable in local development (see for example Mason and Cheyne, 2000). These research methods sought to analyse and evaluate

the perceptions of the local community of the influence of local communities on development, and the reasons for those perceptions. To establish how traditional institutions are seen to be having had a role in the local development process and whether community empowerment and capacity building have taken place, residents were asked about their perceptions on factors leading to participation. Next, the link was made with the NPA in that residents were asked to express their opinion concerning how the NPA operate and who is involved in the decision-making processes. Further to that, the role of the SDF scheme was pivotal around all of these issues to determine the way in which these publicly funded schemes were integrated and used by the community.

Both the focus groups and interviews consisted of questions concerning residents' frequency of interaction with tourists and their involvement with the tourism industry and about the residents' attitudes towards tourism development in their community. This included the roles played in tourism development by individuals, community-based associations and SDF schemes and looked at specific concerns about tourism and possible advantages and disadvantages for the environment, the economy and the socio-cultural life of the community. The main purpose of researching attitudes is to examine the association between particular attitudes and a number of other variables. These attitudes may be opinions on specific issues and the other variables being, for example, the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent, such as age, gender and location.

The focus group and interviews elicited information on the residents' relationship with BBNPA and whether it has encouraged and facilitated community involvement in local development efforts, with particular attention given to the SDF. The NPAs work in balancing the needs of residents with the maintenance of the landscape, as well as future changes, policies and planning decisions will directly affect the life of residents. No other organisation has as much influence. Even the local government authorities require the approval of the National Park Authorities for planning decisions and development initiatives within its territory. Consequently, the need to interview members of the BBNPA and cover the same range of issues outlined in the section to understand and interpret their understanding of the same themes and topics provided a balanced and descriptive view of the SDF schemes, tourism and community within the BBNP.

6.3.3 Focus Groups

One of the primary reasons for conducting a focus groups was to gain an insight into people's experiences and understanding of issues. Saunders described the information gleaned from focus groups as that "*based on meanings expressed in words*" (Saunders *et al,* 2003, p.78). As a qualitative technique focus groups established procedures for exploring complex and diverse patterns of behaviour generating hypotheses, and informing question development for the in-depth interviews (Oppenheim, 1992; Veal 1997). The illuminating feature of focus groups is the key aim of creating interaction between the group participants to generate data (Morgan 1988; Albrecht *et al,* 1993). The role of the interviewer (or "moderator") is not just to seek answers to questions posed, but to stimulate debate which reveals the range of views and experiences that are held by participants which may not have been considered by the researcher in the initial stages of the research process. The aim of focus groups was not to lead participants but to facilitate the articulation of their ideas and thoughts through focused discussion. It can be argued that this approach is better suited than interviews as it replicates social processes (through group interaction) where knowledge is constructed and through which ideas such as sustainability and business practices are diffused (Kitzinger, 2004). However, there certain themes that had to be teased out of the focus group sessions, consequently table 6.2 highlights the structure of focus group sessions.

No.	Question	Notes
	Introductions	Each member of the group was asked introduce themselves, to state where they lived and what it was about the local area that was important to them. The purpose was to create sharing and hospitable environment for focus group members.
Q1	What you understand by the term "sustainability"?	This question was asked to see how the concept of sustainability would be interpreted by the focus group members.
Q2	What does sustainable development mean to you?	Following on from the previous question participants were asked this question to see if they could discern the difference between sustainability and sustainable development.
Q3	What do you understand by the term "sustainable community"?	This question was used to move the discussion into the area of sustainability and community which allowed for other probing questions to generate discussion including: • What is a community? • Who do you think is in your community? • How do you define your community?

Q4	What does community development mean to you?	This question purposely focused on building from the previous question whereby having established what a community is discussions around development could take place.
Q5	What are the barriers that prevent people from getting involved in community development activities?	Following on from the previous questions, this question attempted to elicit what would stop people from engaging in community development activities.
Q6	How do you feel that you have been empowered in terms of taking control of your own development	This question reduced to identify the participants understanding of empowerment and see to what extent they believed they were and empowered community
Q7	What does the term "tourism" mean to you?	This question was intended to determine the level of understanding that local people have about the tourism industry and led to the following probing questions: • Who are the tourists visiting the area? • Where do you see tourists? • Who (in the focus group) is involved in tourism? • What local businesses are involved in tourism?
Q8	What are the impacts of tourism on you?	Group members were asked to discuss the impacts they had seen from tourism, during discussions they were prompted with the following questions: • How to tourists impacts your daily routines? • How do you benefit from tourism? • What are the drawbacks of tourism?
Q9	What is the Sustainable Development Fund?	This question was asked to see how if participants knew what the SDF was doing.
Q10	What SDF projects are you aware of in the BBNP?	This question was asked to see how if participants were aware of any SDF projects.
Q11	What role does the NPA play in developing the community, sustainability and tourism	This question was asked to see a focus group members can explain the relationship between the NPA and their activities with regard to the three concepts under review.
Q12	Summary and close	Each group member was asked to highlight the most poignant issue for them that was raised during the focus group meeting and bought about closure of the proceedings

Table 6.2: Questions asked to Focus Group Participants, *Source:* Author

Questions asked about sustainability (Q1 to Q4) stemmed from the literature of Kemp and Martens (2007), Pender et al (2014) who contended that the interpretation of sustainability by residents was key to their active participation and involvement in the development of sustainable initiatives. Questions with regards to community participation (Q5 and Q6) were drawn from the work of Shorthall and Shucksmith (2001), Day (2006), McAreavey (2009) who

suggested that the barriers to community involvement were linked to the involvement of communities in their own development. Questions asking about tourism (Q7 and Q8) were based upon the work of Drumm (1998), Blackstock (2005), Carson and Carson (2014) who contended that the understanding of tourism and the impacts derived from it were correlated to the involvement of community members in tourism development. Questions about the SDF and the role of the National Park Authority (Q8 to Q 11) were drawn from the research of Zito *et al* (2003), Fredman *et al* (2007), Alcock (2012) who suggested that the role of public authorities involved with sustainability initiatives were reliant upon the understanding and involvement of the community within which the initiative was being implemented.

A profile of focus group participants is found in appendix 2 (refer to p.304). The term focus group should mean that the group are "focused" on a particular issue that is common to them. Powell *et al* (1996, p.194) suggested that the basic format is "*a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of research*". This type of research will coincide with the view held by Kitzinger who suggested that focus groups are *"group discussions organised to explore a specific set of issues such as people's views and experiences of…,"* (Kitzinger 2004, p.269) whatever topic is under investigation. Kitzinger purported that humans are not self-contained isolated beings and that we live within complex, overlapping societal, familial and collegiate networks. This could mean that in order to gain a greater understanding of issues relating to the human experience it may be shrewder to observe humans discussing various discourses in an interactive way. Our behaviour is not cut off from public discourses and our actions do not happen in a vacuum. As Morgan (1988) implied, when researchers want to explore people's understandings, or to find out what influences them, it makes sense to employ methods which encourage the examination of these social processes in action. Given the arguments of above, this method was chosen as it was hoped by the researcher that the social process involved in focus group discussions will help generate a diverse and developed body of results. It is hoped that the more natural group setting rather than the artificial one-to-one setting of interviews will allow the researcher access to the true feelings and opinions of the respondents. This should mean that as Conradson (2004) has noted focus groups should be able to provide an insight into the wide array of views that individuals have regarding a particular issue and the nature of their interaction and dialogue over that issue.

6.3.4 Interviews

Primary data was then collected by conducting in depth interviews with key stakeholders. This was useful because it is important to gather diverse and free opinions from stakeholders in order to uncover unidentified factors hindering effective collaboration in the sustainable arena. As Sekaran (2000) noted, the interview uses questions that direct the respondent toward a specified topic area, but the responses to the questions are unbounded and the interviewer is not looking for any preconceived right answer. Some questions which relate to the factors that had been previously reviewed in the literature were predetermined before the interviews were conducted, but the remaining questions were developed according to the exigencies of the situation the questions included the following predetermined elements:

- Overall assessment of the SDF project; these questions were based on the research of Majone (1977), White (2000), Garrod (2003), Fredman *et al* (2007), and Watson (2012).

- Relationships with other stakeholder groups and community members; these issues were noted by Liepins (2000), Schofield (2002) Vermmak (2009) and Shove and Walker (2010).

- Attitudes toward SDF projects, the ease of application and support from the BBNPA; based on the literature from Florin and Wandersman (1990) Lefeber (1995), Alcock (2012) and Adamson and Bromiley (2013).

- Perceived or experienced difficulties in collaborating within and between stakeholder groups based on the research from Mansuri and Rao (2003), Amin (2005) and Lewicka (2011).

- The use and development of tourism within the policy agenda on the National Park; stemmed from the work of Joppe (1996), Ko (2005), Liu (2006), Andereck and Nyaupane (2011) and Williams and Balaz (2015).

Some additional questions were also asked during the interviews as and where the respondents raised new relevant issues. Interviews were conducted flexibly allowing the interviewer to alter the sequence of questions when necessary. This is an important strategy, because it enables

the researcher to come up with unexpected but crucial factors with regard to barriers to effective collaboration, which achieves both breadth of coverage across key issues and depth of study (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

Interviews took place from August 2016 until January 2017. The average interview time was I hour and 5 minutes. Most of the interviews were audio recorded for more accurate and specific data analysis. Audio recording has many advantages. It allows the researcher to devote their full attention to listening to the interviewee. It provides an accurate record of the interview, capturing the language used by the respondents, including their hesitations. It also is a neutral and less intrusive way of recording the interview than note taking (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). However, seven of the interviewees refused to be recorded as they wished to remain anonymous, so their interviews were recorded by taking notes.

6.4 Data Analysis

The data analysis process of qualitative research begins when data is being collected rather than when the data collection process is completed. This process of data collection contributes to what Ezzy (2002) suggested is one of the strengths of qualitative methods as an inductive method for theory building and interpretations from the perspective of the individuals being studied. The use of categorising data into themes was crucial as it enables data to be converted into serviceable evidence which would help underpin concepts discovered and theory to be developed (Curtis and Curtis, 2011).

Ryan and Bernard (2003) suggested looking for repetitions, categories, concepts related to theory, similarities and differences in order to help identify themes from data. The use of finding sub themes as noted by Bryman (2012) took place by reading the transcripts of the interviews several times. This allowed the researcher to become familiar with the data from the interviews and to recognise subjects that were being repeated and connections to be made (May 2011). The importance of establishing relationships from the various interviews would as Stake (1995) recognised help to provide various categories so that the complexity of each individual case study from an interview becomes less important and that highlighting the links relevant to the

research objectives becomes more important. Categorisation occurred without the use of any computer software. Curtis and Curtis (2011) suggested that inputting data involves investing a great amount of time and that the results often proves alluring to quantify. Using a constructivist approach meant that data was assessed in conjunction with building new concepts and frameworks. Therefore, the assembly of ideas to help develop new understandings of how publicly funded schemes are used to sustain communities, including utilising tourism, in these processes could be achieved.

Two main data analysis methods were adopted. First, the survey data were coded and entered into SPSS and the results interpreted. The use of SPSS was considered valuable to work out relationships that may have existed between some of the answers provided by respondents of the survey. Secondly, focus groups and interviews were transcribed, coded and analysed using the data display technique. The method chosen was that of Miles and Huberman (1994). This involved developing a set of data displays, in which themes from the focus groups and interviews are displayed against concepts identified in the literature review and which emerge from the primary interviews themselves. The display is a visual format, which presents information systematically, so the user can draw valid conclusions. The analysis is driven by displays that are focused enough to permit a viewing of the full data set such that '*pieces of data are arranged systematically to answer the research question at hand*' (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.92). Data entered into the display cells includes quotes, researcher observation, facts, paraphrases, and links to theory. When analysing interviews, the main analysis type used, was the 'Cross-Case' analysis, which allows for comparisons of concepts within and between group types (e.g. residents, NPA representatives). The constant comparison method as described by Glaser and Strauss (cited in Lincoln and Guba, 1985) was employed as it enabled the researcher "*to group answers…….to common questions (and) analyse different perspectives on central issues*" (Patton, 2002, p.376). Phenomena were recorded and classified and compared across categories. Therefore, relationship discovery began with the analysis of initial interviews and underwent continuous refinement throughout the data collection process, continuously allowing feedback into the process of category coding to enable the discovery of new relationships.

Immediately upon return from each fieldwork period, any data obtained was transcribed and, along with all notes, were systematically coded. As initial open coding and writing of 'memos'

(notes to myself while coding) had been ongoing throughout the fieldwork periods, the process undertaken upon return was one of focused coding, in which the data were analysed according to the most significant codes that had already been identified. By a process of comparing and connecting codes, themes began to emerge.

Analysis was derived from the displays as the researcher looks for recurring themes, patterns in replies, reported action, contrasts and comparisons. Analysis included the construction of mind maps to help identify relationships between constructs and concepts, an example of which is given below in Figure 6.4. Here, the category was 'SDF scheme - Llangorse' (indicating issues related specifically to the fact that it was a particular SDF project in a hamlet), the sub-categories are 'Relationships', 'Boundary' and 'Close-knit community', everything else is a code. By mapping these on a diagram, the researcher found it easier to visualise the connections between the observations and analyse the situation more holistically.
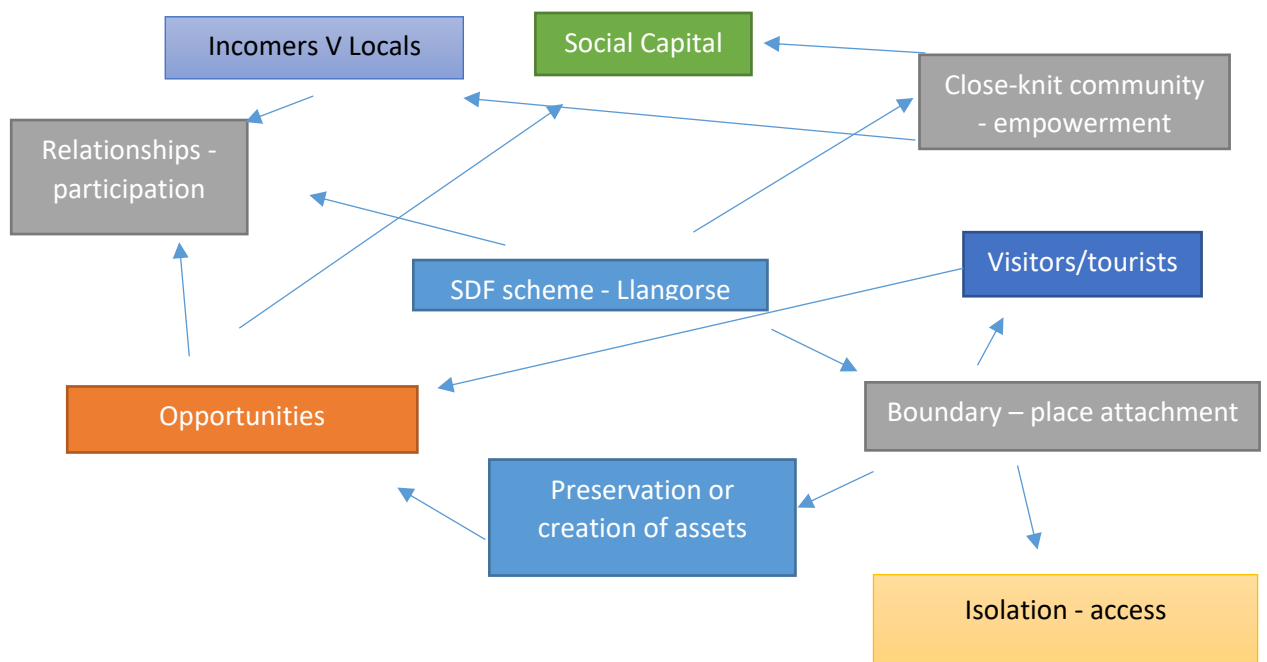
Figure 6.4: Example of spider diagram used in analysis

Due to the chronology of fieldwork, the data from the questionnaires had been analysed before the focus groups and interviews occurred. The findings provided new insights and directions into the topic areas and necessitated subtle shifts in the focus of attention due to the emerging themes from the primary research findings. Although the researcher had been

consulting literature throughout the field period, it was at this point, after returning from the first phase of data collection, that the researcher started to engage deeply with the literature around each concept in order to better understand how observations fit with existing knowledge and help to refine further thinking. Consequently, each of the results chapters also integrates significant discussion and analysis around each theme. The rationale being that the explanation of the meaning of the results permits the opportunity to analyse the findings in order to develop an understanding of why they are important and how they are connected (or not) to one another.

After all field notes and interview transcripts had been synthesised, coded and categorised, key concepts and theories began to emerge. Verification was by way of cross-referencing to the literature or by triangulation with parts of the collected data. Analytical output was drawn from the displays then related to evidence from field notes such as quotes "memos" and paraphrases. However, whilst an attempt to analyse each SDF case study separately, so as to give as rich and full a picture of each separate case as possible, the researcher was conscious that the themes that had already emerged in the first interviews undertaken were irrepressibly influencing perspectives in later interviews. The consequence of this was that few new categories emerged during the latter interviews, and, therefore, the data collected here are probably most accurately understood as having been gathered through a form of 'theoretical sampling'. As Morgan (2008, p.35) explained, "i*n this process, the tentative conclusions from ongoing analyses serve as the basis for selecting a new set of data sources according to what would be most useful for either building on or challenging those emerging conclusions"*. For example, as was briefly mentioned on page 4 the increase in the volume of 'incomers' (compared to locals born and raised in the area) is very obvious in Llangorse. Although this divide also exists in Pennorth, it is much less readily apparent and, had Pennorth been visited first, this issue may not have been picked up on as quickly as it was.

6.5 Reliability, Validity and Generalisability

For quantitative research, establishing validity and reliability is important in terms of ensuring that the measures developed are appropriate for the research. Validity addresses the issue of whether what the researcher was trying to measure was actually measured. A necessary precondition for validity is that the measuring instrument be reliable (McDaniel and Gates, 2006, p.224). Reliability means the degree to which measures are free from random error and, therefore, provide consistent data. Hence, the less error there is, the more reliable the observation is, "*so a measurement that is free of error is a correct measure*" (McDaniel and Gates, 2006, p.222). A study is biased if one or more sources of potential bias have not been effectively controlled. A good design requires that the researcher take credible actions to reduce or eliminate likely sources of bias (Kidder and Judd, 1991). Consequently, the survey was trialled in order to identify areas for improvement. Kidder and Judd (1991) suggested that an Therefore, after the trial the survey was re-engineered to take on board the comments of those who participated in the trial.

Procedural reliability is considered by assessing if the researcher has assumed suitable research procedures and methods (Downward *et al*, 2002). This chapter has detailed the linking of the research question and objectives with the data collection techniques and the process of analysis in order to ensure the procedural reliability of this research. The contextual validity as suggested by Downward *et al* (2002) indicates the credibility of the research evidence and the conclusions that can be drawn from it. This study has used multiple research methods (questionnaires, focus groups and in depth interviews) as well as a review of documentation from the BBNPA and individuals involved in the SDF process. The transferability of this research is to seek concepts that can be applied to other NPs using SDF as a means of creating community sustainability as well as considering the impact that tourism has on this process.

Creswell (2009) advocated eight different validity strategies for qualitative data. This research has utilised three of them. Firstly, the use of triangulation as a strategy has been utilised, by means of collection of secondary data and primary data. Different methods used to collect information and the review of documentation has helped in this strategy. Secondly, the strategy of providing thick and rich case studies to illustrate findings has been exploited. Thirdly, the

strategy of prolonged engagement in the field has been achieved as the researcher has been involved in the field study area since 2004.

This thesis does not attempt to make universal generalisations about publicly funded schemes. This thesis aims to contribute understanding to the evaluation of the concepts that lie behind creating sustainable rural communities through the use of SDF with particular reference of using tourism as a tool for development. Generalising about other NPs is something that will require further research perhaps using a comparable theoretic lens to that used in this research to help refute or corroborate the discoveries existing in this research. Creswell (2009) suggested that qualitative research depends more upon particularity than generalisability. The generalisability offered in this thesis is that as the communities under review in this research are all related to SDF projects they embody an explicit contextual area and generalisations could be made on the basis explained by Dey (1993, p. 263) "*There may be some saving grace in the ability of qualitative analysts to identify the context in which their inferences are made. This can provide a key to as elucidating the conditions under which a generalisation can be expected to hold*".

6.6 Ethical Considerations

The main ethical concern that has arisen from this research is the anonymity of the interviewees. In some cases the names and positions or communities of the interviewees have been protected. In order to protect the confidentiality of the respondents from the interviews in the subsequent chapters, when quotations are given illustrating the thoughts of respondents they will be illustrated through the use of capital letters, for example *Interview STM.* This will provide the privacy the respondents asked of this researcher.

6.7 Critique of Fieldwork Process and Practice

This section illustrates the main challenges encountered in the study's fieldwork methods, summarises action that was taken to minimise these, and outlines possible improvements in the mode of fieldwork, with the benefit of hindsight, that may be employed in future studies.

6.7.1 Addressing Difficulties in Fieldwork Methodology

The following points were identified to be working difficulties in the fieldwork:

- A risk that the survey questionnaires only asked about the NP and the use of tourism, thereby not accurately reflecting all the research objectives as the research evolved.

- The focus groups did not contain anyone currently involved in the SDF scheme although two participants had been involved in SDF schemes in the past.

6.7.2 Action taken to Minimise these Fieldwork Difficulties

- The survey was used as an instrument to provide baseline knowledge for the research and to enable the development of more detailed and focused questions to be asked in the latter stage of the research. The survey provided data on how local people viewed the relevance of tourism in the NP. It also provided data on the relevance of community attachment and involvement from residents in the BBNP. In retrospect, it would have been beneficial to have conducted the focus groups prior to the survey as this would have allowed the researcher to ask more specific questions in the survey, although the iterative process of research used allowed for flexibility in the questions asked during the latter phases of data collection. Alternatively, piloting the questionnaire on people based in the study area would have been beneficial.

- The participants of the focus group were either a business owner/professional, a local resident or a local resident involved in a local society. A purposive sampling strategy was adopted (Teddlie and Yu, 2007; Kitzinger, 2004) which selected potential participants on the basis of the range of perspectives they might hold rather than their representativeness of the wider rural area. Table 6.3 identifies the profile of the focus group respondents.

Business Owner/professional	10
Member of Women's Institute	7
Member of Brecon Rotary Club	3
Local Resident	10
Total Focus Group Participants	30

Table 6.3 Summary of profile of respondents of the three focus groups August 2015 (Brecon, Pencelli and Bwlch)

- The participants in the focus groups and for some of the interviews were aware that the researcher was a student (and lecturer) at London South Bank University. However, the researcher had been involved in community activities for over 15 years within the BBNPA. Although this helped to establish a good rapport with the respondents, whereby several respondents indicated that they did not feel intimidated by the research process and suggested that they were more likely to discuss their opinions more openly. The drawback of "being known" by some of the respondents may have led to them saying things that they considered were helpful for the direction and focus of this research. The researcher attempted to not overemphasise the three contested concepts being reviewed in this thesis and try to situate them in the discussions accordingly.

6.8 Summary

In the previous chapters, the literature review identified the key issues of the dynamics of rural communities. The concept of sustainable tourism also came to the fore in the literature inasmuch as that tourism should be integrated into the planning framework of SDF schemes in order to enhance the development of rural sustainable communities. This chapter has purported the use of constructivist realism and the adoption of multiple methods of data collection in order to examine the implementation of SDF schemes from the perspective of the three contested concepts and at different levels in the development process. In this way, the various effects of rural development and the agents involved can be examined. The methodology enables the exploration of the ways in which the structures and actors involved in tourism, communities and SDF programmes assist in the transformation of rurality, so determining the strategies that particular communities take in order to create sustainability. It is therefore, logical that the constructivist realist approach sits well in this research for the chosen study area. That is, it is possible to explore the arrangements between the local structures, communities and individuals in the study area and the manner in which these relationships occur, which are central to rural development. The application of SDF schemes are driven by local people, local situations, local interpretations as well as the wider structures of the BBNPA.

This chapter has presented a narrative of the methodology which illustrates that the research design and direction was not rigidly fixed from the start, but was allowed to mutate and meander as new paths revealed themselves along the way. This was not a conscious decision made at the start of the project or based on an underlying epistemological and ontological orientation, this was a process that has generated a novel perspective on how the unique sociocultural landscape of remote rural communities can influence the challenge of creating more sustainable communities within the existing structures and policies.

This unique perspective is presented in the ensuing chapters, which combines the results, discussion and analysis based around the dynamic drivers of the synthetic model and will conclude with the starkest and most problematic issue to emerge throughout the research: the assumption that it is possible to capture and employ the inherently fluid concept of 'community' in a locally delivered sustainable based project.

PART II

Findings and Analysis

Chapter Seven

The Dynamics of Rural Sustainability in the Brecon Beacons National Park

The findings and analysis presents the rich and detailed information gained from the survey, focus groups and the interviews. The level of detail is methodologically important for as Cupchik (2001, p.37) stated constructivist realism research needs to "*reveal the processes that underlie observed social phenomena. Social phenomena are multi-layered events as is the inquiring mind of the social scientist*".

"Getting below the surface" requires "*rich descriptive accounts or precise analyses of functional relations*" (Cupchik, 2001, p.32) to identify and expose social phenomena. Consequently, the researcher can then justify causal explanations of actions and events to strip away the surface detail and expose the underlying processes providing access to the "meaning" of individual events (Rennie, 2000). The research ontology identifies these as the beliefs, feelings, intentions, habits, rules, and the social structures that put boundaries on actor strategies and actions. It is important, therefore, that before one can begin to identify and analyse these strategies and actions that actors "realities" are investigated, recorded and interpreted. Therefore, the dynamic drivers added to the synthetic model in Chapter 3 (and highlighted in Figure 7.1 on the next page) will be scrutinised in order to see if they are "igniting" and providing the "fuel" to feed the "engine" of rural sustainability in the BBNP. Accordingly, the analysis will be entwined with the research findings to permit the development of discussion and ideas based around the dynamic drivers.

This chapter will conclude with the suggestion that the concept of "community" as a means through which sustainability policy is being followed is misdirected and ultimately unachievable. It has been suggested that the concept of community lacks tangibility and is best understood as an inconsistent symbolic social construct, rather than a standardised social unit, with the manifestation of community depending upon the specific meanings and perceptions of its members (Cohen, 1988). And yet, community has increasingly appeared within government ideology and strategy, in the case of this thesis, the outcome is for the creation of "rural sustainability" as part of the rationale of the SDF. In the case of rural sustainable strategies the "community" is often seen as the means through which this process might be achieved (Connors and McDonald, 2010). Consequently, the relevance and understanding of what a community is

and how it can be empowered and strengthened in order to assist with rural development requires assessment.
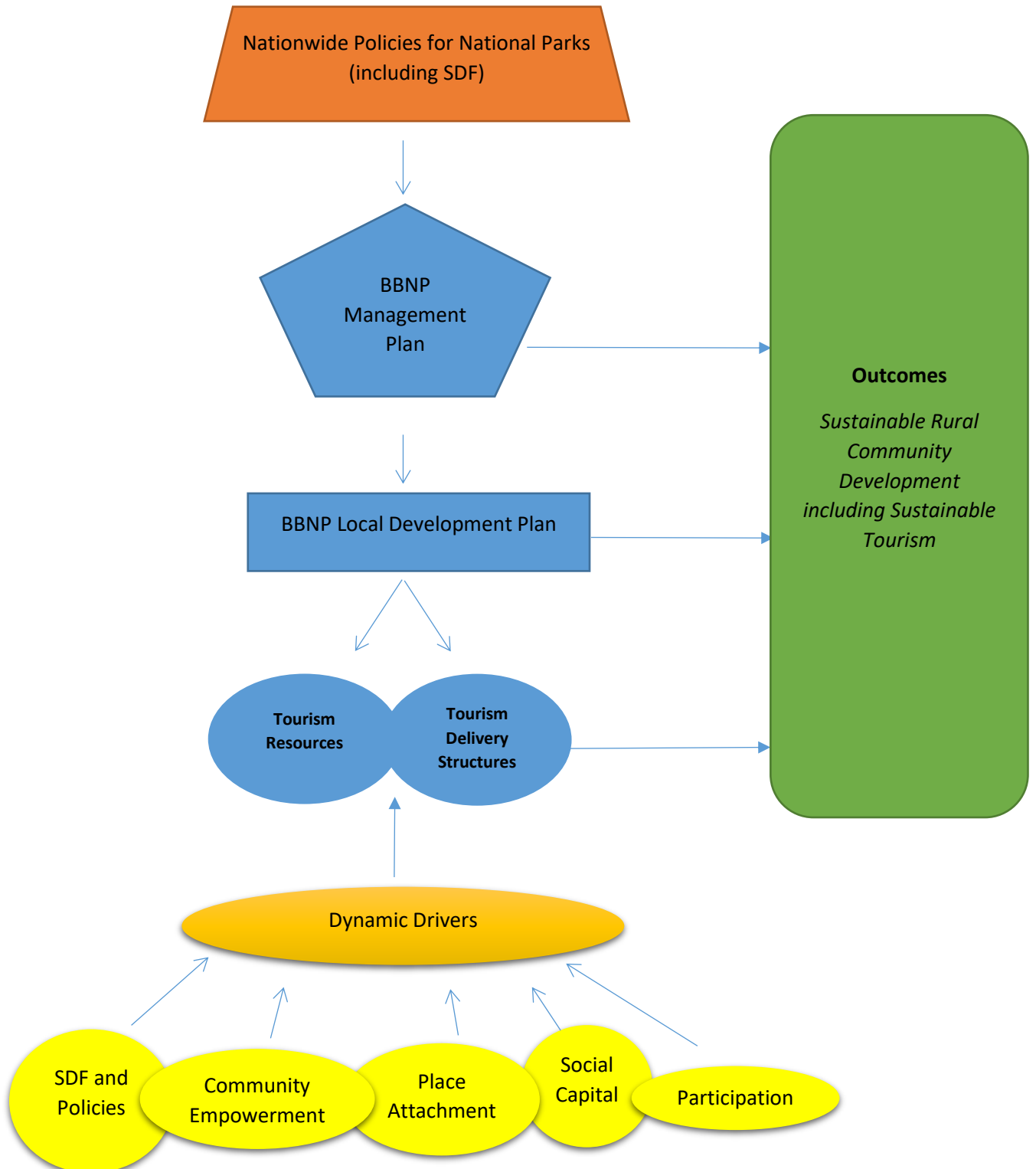
Figure 7.1: Synthetic Model of the Structures and Dynamic Drivers of Rural Sustainability in the BBNP, *Source*: Author

7.1 Overview of the main themes

The next 2 chapters will present and discuss the main findings from the primary research. However, to provide a brief overview of the main themes that will be explored it may be useful to present the main findings from the focus group research at this point. This highlights the key topics that will be explored in more detail over the next two chapters. A summary transcript of the focus group research findings can be found in Appendix 4. However, the main outcomes of the 3 focus groups were:

- *Sustainability*. Focus group members put forward various definitions as to what they believe sustainability referred to. Most of these definitions focused around the economy indicating a link between economy and sustainability.

- *Community.* Focus group respondents suggested various definitions as to how they viewed their community and who was in their community. Some members believe that the community was connected to their geographic location whilst others suggested that community was connected to their social activities. The focus group findings articulated and mirrored the academic literature with regards to the complex nature of the concept of community as the focus group discussions provided ample examples of how people viewed their community and what involvement they had in the development of the community.

- *Empowerment*. Focus group respondents illustrated varying degrees of understanding of the term empowerment. Some respondents believed that it was a process of renegotiation of power within the community, others thought it was to do with working in a collaborative fashion towards a common goal. Empowerment was considered to be a tool through which the local community could preserve their culture or heritage whilst at the same time sustain the economic and social development.

- *Participation.* Focus group respondents outlined various examples of their involvement within the community with regards to SDF projects and activities within community associations such as the Women's Institute. Several of the respondents voiced their concern over the level of involvement that was expected from them. These respondents believed that it was the responsibility of the local council or NPA to establish and deliver various community projects absolving them from any form of participation.

- *Barriers to participation*. Table 7.1 on page 151 will identify the main barriers to participation that the focus group respondents identified regarding community participation. These ideas were generated through a focused discussion within the

focus groups as to how community members not only viewed these barriers but suggested ideas as to how these barriers could be overcome.

- *Place attachment*. Focus group respondents illustrated high levels of place attachment through their explanations and responses regarding community issues. Several respondents referred to the idea of networking about raising their concerns to the local council and suggested that the mobilisation of the community so that a communal voice could be heard was considered to be far more powerful than individual members of the community approaching the local authorities.

- *Tourism*. Focus group members were able to provide numerous examples of how tourism impacted their community. Only a minority of participants illustrated an understanding that there was a relationship between the tourism industry, the NPA and the local community.

- *Sustainable tourism*. Focus group respondents illustrated an understanding that sustainable tourism was related to the environment (natural, built or cultural) there was a general inability to be able to articulate how sustainable tourism was demonstrated within the NP. Issues around seasonality and how the region could reduce the number of people coming during the summer dominated the focus group discussions with regards to this issue. The concept of sustainable tourism development was seen by a minority of focus group members as a way of strengthening societies by helping them to take action to progress their own social, economic and environmental agendas.

Further and more detailed findings from the focus groups will be analysed and entwined with the findings from the questionnaire and interviews. A summary transcript of the interview with the Sustainable Tourism Manager can be found in appendix 5 and a summary transcript of the interview that occurred with the Sustainable Development Funding Officer can be found in appendix 6. This research combined with the findings from the questionnaire (of which the data entered into SPSS can be found in appendix 7) as well as the findings from the other interviews (a copy of the focus group and interview schedules can be found in appendix 3) will form the foundation upon which the proceeding results and analysis are based.

7.2 Sustainable Development Funding Structures and Policies within the Brecon Beacons National Park

In seeking to investigate the implementation of SDF within the BBNP, it may be useful to consider how the aims and objectives of the funding scheme are interpreted by the NPA representatives. As noted on page 25, the outcome of SDF is to bring about community sustainability throughout many facets of the NP. On the surface, the SDF appears to be the embodiment of such a rationale within policy-making. It was designed to support community led projects and create sustainability within communities in the park.

However, this process involves communication and co-ordination, not only within existing communities, but from the NPA. It was assumed that communication was prevalent amongst SDFOs around the country in order to administer a cohesive and structured strategy for development within NPs and share best practices, as was suggested by the report undertaken by DEFRA in 2009 noted on page 35.

However, due to the pressure of the working environment, collaboration amongst NPs around the country with regards to SDF is relatively non-existent, unless through personal networks. Arguably, this brings into question the overall structure of this development strategy as a national policy. If SDFOs are not in communication with one another then the development of a cohesive, holistic and balanced strategy is questionable. It appears that the current strategy discovered, permits individual NPAs to develop funding as they deem fit. However, tailoring the funding to meet the specific needs of the community is quite logical, as was noted by Stringer and Williamson (1987) on page 82. However, Dong *et al.* (2013) suggested that authorities such as the BBNPA could integrate and embrace the concepts of the new rural paradigm outlined by the OECD (refer to page 90) into the funding scheme, given its potential to integrate rural development through the coordinating of various strategic plans whilst incorporating a wider scope of stakeholders. The amalgamation of SDF schemes within such a plan could complement the reorientation of SDF policy and may provide the BBNPA the opportunity to embrace this new paradigm to enhance their rural development strategies.

To create a comprehensive strategy at a national level is laudable, but at the regional level it was noted that there was limited communication between the NPA representatives. Given the

remit of topics this team was responsible for with regard to community development and sustainability, it was assumed that there would be close coordination and cooperation amongst team members, after all, they occupied the same open planned office within the NPA building. However, it was noted that:

> *We are a fairly small organisation and I know them (referring to other members of the team) reasonably well. I'm not involved in the SDF directly, the applications come in and that process is undertaken by the SDFOs and I am not part of the grant advisory panel. Once it's prepared for the panel it circulates it around everybody and if there is something of interest to any of us we will comment on it. So then our comments can then be put to the panel. There aren't that many direct applications using solely tourism they are mainly to do with heritage, education and conservation which are all indirectly related to tourism. But I do accept there are great deal of relationships between the various projects and the development of tourism.* (PSDF 16)

The researcher found the lack of integration amongst a relatively small team a point of interest, and therefore, posed the question: *They call it a "sustainable development fund" and I find it interesting that you not working closely with the SDFOs given that you're the sustainable tourism manager?*

> *That's an interesting observation - because sustainability is written into our functions like a stick of rock, because we have these two purposes and a duty, conservation enhancement, visitor experience, socio economic development. So those are the three legs of the stools of sustainability so although they didn't know it when they set it up they actually set up a sustainable development structure and we do try to mean the word sustainable. It's not surprising that one bit of the organisation called sustainable something is not working closely with another part of a sustainable something. The SDF are generally reactive funds waiting for applications coming to be judged on their*

merit and therefore, we have not created a programme of trying to get tourism things through SDF. So we haven't done that proactive stuff by taking the view that tourism SDF applications should come to me. I suppose you're probably right we could work more closely together we just actually haven't ever thought of a reason. (PSDF 16)

7.2.1 The Changing Context of Sustainability within the SDF schemes

As noted in the literature by Irwin *et al* (2010) sustainable rural development involves bringing about change, maintaining current assets whilst furthering opportunities for rural communities. SDF has been offered to residents of the NP for the last sixteen years, during which the demographics of the BBNP have changed dramatically (as noted on page 4). Therefore, it was interesting to note that the number of SDF applications had remained constant during this time.

Despite the decline in income streams and employment opportunities for those in the BBNP, it is notable that rural communities have not taken a more active role in SDF to assist in alleviating these economic strains. Especially, given that this is a tool designed to assist in creating sustainable projects whilst offering opportunities to communities.

This complements the literature noted by Szlanyinka (2009) on page 41 who commented that sustainability covers a wide variety of concerns. Alessa *et al*, (2008) on page 42 also noted that the efforts of public bodies to promote sustainable development is of great importance. Arguably, this indicates that a stronger marketing presence may be required in order to inform residents of funding available to them. The financial pressures of the BBNPA has clearly placed strains on the SDFOs which means they are not able to give their full attention to the role attributed to their job title. Although the number of applications for funding had not increased in volume, had the changing demographics of the region bought with them a change in the nature and variety of proposed funding applications in the last sixteen years?

It was noted that there had been a change in the type of projects undertaken by local communities which perhaps confirms the "knowledge-attitude-behaviour" progression

outlined in chapter 5, where Burgess *et al* (1998) indicated that communities can take responsibility and bring about change relevant to their lifestyles. Nearly 20 years ago solar panelling was a relatively new concept which has now become mainstream. More recently, the growth of the leisure industry has led to a change in the nature of SDF projects, which are ultimately driven by individuals within communities. Arguably policy interventions, as noted by Guagnano *et al* (1995) can influence the perception that communities hold as to the shape of their development, it is, in the end, up to the individuals within communities to bring about such change. Consequently, the work by Stern and Oskcamp (1987) in the development of their attitude behaviour context model might be applicable when assessing the changing nature of SDF schemes since its inception.

7.2.2 The Mechanics of Funding Community Development

The criteria for applying for SDF can be found in chapter 3 on page 24. Respondents who had been involved in SDF suggested (see the next page) that sustainability was the key and an ability to be able to prove how a proposed project could link various sectors of society together was also a main contributor for the success of an application. The application had to support at least one of the objectives of the criteria of the fund and respondents were informed by the SDFO when putting the application together it would be beneficial if at least two of the objectives were met. The proposals also needed to consider the overall policy that the BBNPA were taking in terms of sustainability initiatives.

A copy of a completed application can be found in appendix 4. The applicant who completed the paperwork regarded the NPA as the most important hurdle to overcome before being awarded any funding. Individuals in the community play a crucial role in preparing the detailed paperwork for the application of the SDF. Despite the high levels of assistance provided by SDFOs from the NP it was at the local level where individuals played a distinctive part in implementing the funds. Indeed, applicant groups at the local level were in one sense of fundamental importance since funding could only be allocated if bids for aid were forthcoming.

SDF necessitates communities to take responsibility for elements of their own development. In order for this to be possible, these communities must gain the skills, knowledge and network of

relations that enable them to successfully develop themselves (Herbert-Cheshire and Higgins, 2004). As the SDFOs decide who deserves this assistance, those who are seeking support must learn to adopt the same processes and measures of success as set out by the funding bodies (Amin, 2005). For example, McAreavey (2009) observed that those involved in the UK government funded community regeneration programmes had to abide by the complicated rules of the game whilst operating within predetermined boundaries. Similarly, in Australia, Herbert-Cheshire and Higgins (2004) found that, "*those communities that follow the prescribed paths of development are represented as "active", responsible and worthy of government funding*" (p.290). Consequently, community driven schemes cannot be relied upon to be representative of the community in which they operate. Rather, they are better understood as a small, self-selecting sub- community.

There were variations in the ability of the many potential eligible groups to generate applications and this, of course, has ramifications for the policy objectives of the SDF and BBNPA. What was noticeable from the demographics of the respondents interviewed who successfully completed SDF applications was that none of them were traditional local Welsh people. They were the "incomers", who bought with them, a skill set that enabled them to complete the SDF grant application process to a high standard as can be noted from the completed application in appendix 8. Consequently, traditional local Welsh applicants are particularly disadvantaged by the SDF's application system and this may have a particular effect in the shape, scope and potential of creating sustainable communities. The volume of SDF applications is dependent on the level of commitment from the BBNPA, (particularly at a time of financial stringency). However, other factors are important in determining local responses to the funding process. These may include local political interests, the initiative of particular individuals and the availability of information and expertise. Respondents were asked what they thought was key to the success of their applications:

Having a scheme that fulfilled the SDF criteria. (Interviewee PSDF 2)

Illustrating to the SDFO how this scheme would involve and benefit the community. (Interviewee PSDF 3)

Demonstrating that the scheme was sustainable. (Interviewee PSDF 4)

Indicating that the scheme would become financially viable after the initial funding. (Interviewee PSDF 5)

Understanding that our proposed scheme would have to fit into the wider framework of the NPA in the making sure that we fit the bill. Interviewee PSDF 6)

The respondents answers illustrate a professional knowledge based understanding that their proposed bids would need to fulfil the SDF criteria and beyond that, be strategically integrated into the wider BBNP framework. Chapter 4 (page 81) highlighted the contrasting approaches to funding. The "top down" approach and "bottom-up" perspective. The "top down" approach is concerned with examining whether or not objectives decided by policymakers at the "top" are achieved. This perspective generally emphasises the ability of the policymakers to structure and control what happens during implementation. In contrast, the "bottom-up" approach maintains that policy objectives cannot be initially formulated to overcome all problems encountered in practice, but they are likely to undergo changes of interpretation as being implemented. This approach stresses the interactions between the many actors and organisations involved which accentuates that policy objectives can be changed during implementation to suit both local conditions and the different goals of the organisations involved. The bottom-up approach carries with it a value judgement that extols the virtues of "grassroots" participation in policy formulation and implementation. Arguably, these contrasting approaches depend upon the extent of the nature of particular policies. Moreover, both perspectives may be useful in that they generate different but complementary insights into how policies are put into effect. The SDF adopts an essentially top-down approach. The operational objectives of the SDF scheme are defined by policymakers. Consequently, it may be argued that there is an "implementation gap" between stated community objectives and intended policy outcomes. Furthermore, the means by which the fund is put into effect has been scrutinised with an emphasis on how the policymaker can attempt to control the operation of the fund in order to achieve their objectives. Respondents were asked how they came up with the ideas behind the grant applications:

We knew we had to have a scheme that would involve the local community and build on what we have and at the same time we had

to make sure that what we were doing would be approved by the SDFO. So we had to try and achieve a balance between what we had and fitting it into the criteria in order to get the funding. (Interviewee PSDF 2)

We wanted to build off the back of an existing project which we knew the NPA loved. So a few of us sat down together and worked out how we could pull this off. It was quite simple really, we knew how we wanted to get young people involved with our current festival, it was just a case of taking this idea and embedding it into the existing festival. (Interviewee PSDF 3)

These comments suggest that the "bottom-up" view can generate insights into how community sustainability initiatives and funds are put into practice. By elucidating the choices facing potential participants at the outcome and of the policy process it can be assumed that local authority controls on spending, political and organisational commitment at the local level, as well as individual initiative and the availability of information and expertise will all influence the degree of local involvement with community funds. This bottom-up perspective has also demonstrated the operation of the SDF has much in common with the ideas of academics who stress the flexibility of implementation and the lack of hierarchical control among participating groups (e.g. Bayliss, 2004; Dobson, 2010).

The respondents were asked what they thought assisted them achieve the funding when working with the SDFO and NPA. The comments below indicate that there are certain skills that assisted them in creating a successful bid:

As a background, when dealing with officialdom, I often tell people when approaching officials with ideas or requests, just imagine you are on the other side of the desk. (Interviewee PSDF 1)

As far as building up a grant application, it's a process. Somehow a broad idea has to be generated and distilled. Perhaps an individual with vision will start the ball rolling, but often as a result of a general

> *conversation among people being aware of a 'need' to do something*
> *about a specific problem or a need that needs to be resolved.*
> (Interviewee PSDF 2)

The evidence of strategic thinking in the preparation of the bid outlined in appendix 4 was confirmed through the comments provided by the respondent as to how important her previous industrial experience was in the preparation of this bid:

> *There's no doubt that my previous experience in working with people*
> *and understanding people and engaging with them helped me in the*
> *preparation of this proposal. There were lots of good ideas but what*
> *was required with the ability to be able to join them all up in a logical*
> *and strategic fashion that would meet the sustainable aims of the*
> *funding as well as create an economy out of the proposal. This plan*
> *really seemed to tap into various resources around the lake, and when*
> *I prepared the bid I made sure of providing evidence from external*
> *sources that this was viable. For example, I approached Cardiff*
> *Metropolitan University to see if they would be interested in using our*
> *facilities and in doing so got a letter of support for the project. I use*
> *the same strategy and approached Christ's College in Brecon who also*
> *supplied us with a letter of support. I believe this strategic approach*
> *assisted us in the successful outcome.* (Interviewee PSDF 5)

7.2.3 Evaluation of SDF Schemes

The evaluation processes of SDF policy was highlighted on page 26. The "*Evaluation of the National Park Sustainable Development Fund*" (2004) document, indicates that the monitoring and evaluation are to involve a "*very light touch regime".* The document goes on to suggest that individual projects approved by the SDF panel are to have regular contact with the NPA and that each NPA is required to submit an annual report to the Minister of State for Rural Affairs.

> *When it comes to evaluating these projects we are limited in what we*
> *can do once the project has been approved. The park only has planning*
> *enforcement capabilities everything else involves us using diplomacy*
> *and persuasion. And whatever budget we have and however we*
> *choose to use it is at our discretion, which is why the art of persuasion*
> *so important to us.* (PSDF 15)

The lack of monitoring or follow-up once SDF had been granted point to a potential flaw in the evaluation processes of the programme. Pender *et al* (2012) on page 83 noted that evaluation is crucial and has become a core component of management thinking. After all, to spend money and then not assess the effectiveness of public spending seems a questionable use of income when budgets are stretched and public spending is under such scrutiny.

7.3 Empowerment in the Rural Community

When individuals lack the basic skills they need to enable them to embark upon a development programme they want to participate in, capacity building becomes a necessity. It does not only equip individuals with the skills that enable them to participate but also rather empowers them to act independently. Building capacity to empower the local people has not been cited as an objective of the SDF. However, the BBNPA has encouraged rural communities to create rural sustainability, of which the acquisition of livelihood skills is an integral part. Empowerment encourages rural people to construct "*group identity, improving economies of scales, strengthening collective bargaining power, acquiring new skills and upgrading the knowledge bases progressively to build economic and social power"* (Hennink *et al*, 2012, p.213). Consequently, capacity building and empowerment enables rural people to make sustainable communities through income generating activities, such as (some of the) SDF schemes.

Therefore, questions arise as to what role the NPA play to making interventions they initiate sustainable? Who should do what and how can it be done? To answer these questions effectively an investigation is needed into the process of participation, this will assist in the understanding of the value of the concept of "community" in order to ascertain what can be achieved at the community level. This section of the chapter analyses the dynamics surrounding participation to create insights into possibilities for social empowerment. Exploring how SDF members are able (or not) to engage with SDF schemes in order to reveal useful insights into power relations for reflecting upon the nature of SDF and ultimately to understand possibilities for participation and consequently rural community sustainability.

Cole (2005) suggested that participation alone does not equal empowerment. This may be because although one can participate in an SDF scheme the possibilities for control and agency are limited and often possibilities for participation are largely unequal (those that lead the programmes retain control). One respondent argued that:

> *Empowerment is a process of renegotiating power in order to gain control* (Respondent FG 7)

If it is argued by FG 7 that power is a fundamental basic centred on power relations within a community then arguably power relations shape the way participation is applied in rural development. The dynamics of power and power relations remain a key aspect in many development processes and relationships amongst communities and individuals (Roseland, 2005). The representative from the NPA suggested that:

> *Looking back over the last 20 years or so there have been several reasons for the development of schemes such as the SDF, that empower communities. These include; funding priorities, budgetary pressures and government policy whilst at the same time we want to establish confident communities that protect their services and their assets and of course we want the communities to succeed.* (PSDF 16)

It is not uncommon for development agencies to empower rural communities and make them proactive through participatory activities (White, 2000). Arguably, there is some scepticism whether empowerment truly occurs, due to the power shift that may result. Community participation brings sustainability development interventions and leads to the establishment of

ownership of the intervention, but some critics also argue that such an assumption is naïve because there is no detailed empirical evidence indicating that participation brings empowerment to rural communities (Kellerman, 1997; Thomas *et al*, 2003; Cleaver, 2001). Possibly, this is because the power relations between development institutions and community members on the question of how power has to be transferred are not properly addressed in a way that would increase the level and effectiveness of participation in rural development activities.

Respondents of both focus groups and interviews were asked as to their understanding of what empowerment was and how it reveals itself within their communities. In alignment with the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, one NPA representative suggested that:

> *We empower the community by providing them with the policy context*
> *from which to grow. We also transfer assets, for SDF schemes this is*
> *mainly funding and the use of land.* (PSDF 15)

As suggested by the comment above empowerment is more than just involvement or participation. It implies some form of ownership in action that is specifically aimed at social change. However, the understanding that empowerment was more than just some form of involvement was not recognised by focus group and interviewee responses, for example, empowerment was noted to:

> *Help to strengthen community planning through the SDF scheme, this*
> *has involved many of us coming together working towards a common*
> *goal.* (Interviewee PSDF 8)

> *Participate in public decision-making shaping the future of our*
> *community.* (Respondent FG 19)

> *Help us conserve and enhance our natural and cultural heritage.*
> (Respondent FG 25)

> *Promote sustainable economic and social development of our*
> *communities.* (Interviewee PSDF 2)

Promote sustainable use of our natural resources. (Interviewee PSDF

6)

These comments illustrate that there was a general perception as to who, in what way and how empowerment should be practised. Although these comments are laudable and exemplify the respondents understanding that empowerment has enabled them to achieve something it was only the comments of FG 7 (on page 143) that addressed the issue of "power" when referring to empowerment. Even the NPA representatives could not define how their organisation should look at how participants could be empowered as they engage communities in a participative process. Hill (1997) noted that the engagement of community members will not only empower them but would help to sustain the development initiative. However, active community participation, arguably, will never address the changes in structures and policies that shaped development policy and practice. Furthermore, it will not even affect the power relations that hinder effective community involvement. Knowledge is power and it is an asset in development (Foucault cited in Lukes, 2005). Chambers (1983) observed that it has been universally accepted that outsiders' knowledge is superior to local, indigenous rural knowledge, and this bias notion has remained in development policy and practice. However, the acquisition of such knowledge is only possible through skill development, which rural people lack, and sometimes may not have access to. Arguably, people in communities could be sensitised in an informal way to become proactive and make a contribution to their communities.

A number of obstacles to the empowerment process emerged from the interviews. These are also connected to issues surrounding participation, a major prerequisite to experience social empowerment. Understanding these obstacles is necessary to understand the (dis)empowerment illustrated in SDF programmes as well as the obstacles impeding the empowerment process.

Based on the interviews, a major obstacle impairing the empowerment process was the lack in skills and self-confidence of individuals. These skills form part of the empowerment process. The strengthening of skills and capacities includes certain technical skills (such as bid preparation and budget preparation) and customer service skills (such as marketing and public speaking) as well as a sound knowledge of the geographic area in which the SDF schemes are situated. Francis (2002) suggested that acquiring these necessary skills, is what empowerment

refs to. The research findings illustrate that there was a general perception as to who, in what way and how empowerment should be practised.

7.4 Participation in Rural Development

As noted on page 133, the communication between SDFOs around the country, and even within the BBNPA sustainability team warrants attention. This lack of coordination and communication has filtered down to the grassroots level. Whereby, the SDF schemes appear to be one-off initiatives, instigated by individual communities. This has created a scattering of projects across the Beacons but with no unifying strategy. The lack of communication between individuals, communities and the BBNPA has created stagnation in participation. It was noted on page 135 there had not been an increase in the number of SDF applications in recent years. Arguably, the strategy and implementation of SDF has in part created this situation. In order to rectify this, greater communication and acknowledgement of successful schemes is required.

In order to increase participation, rural development schemes need to involve as many members from the community as possible as noted in section 4.2 on page 57. However, SDF schemes only involve those members of the community who wish to undertake such an initiative and drive it forward. Consequently, the validity of SDF as a creator of community sustainability is questionable. After all, how do these projects involve the whole community when there are only a few people involved in the preparation of a bid?

One of the difficulties of recognising participation as interplay between "means an end", is that of measurement. While it is clear from the excerpt above is that the BBNPA is committed to the principle of participation as a process, funding schemes do not always provide a way of recognising intangibles. Focus is normally reserved for the most obvious project outputs on so-called "deliverables" as noted in chapter 2 (refer to p. 27). Consequently, the more formal measurable outputs tend to receive the most attention. Hence, although the SDF guidance and documentation may provide guidance about how projects should be delivered they fail to detail about *how* to get people involved. Schofield (2002) examined the linkages needed between the regeneration guidance issued by regional government making community involvement reality. In his specific example, he suggested that adaptation is required from local government to align their working practices to the needs of the community. Schofield (2002, p.674) advised that

local authorities should "*be clear about why you are involving the community…. To map out the existing networks and to enlist community support*".

The extent of participation that is desirable is the subject of ongoing debate. For example, Hayward *et al* (2004) developed the notion of non-participation (or peripheral participation). Whereby they challenged the assumption that "*broad-based participation is always a social good*" (2004, p.96). Hayward *et al* (2004) noted that communities have a saturation point for community-based activities and so full participation may not necessarily be the optimum position for community regeneration. Possibly, it may be more appropriate to consider participation that is relevant and inclusive. Consequently, rather than considering the level of participation it may be wise to examine the notion of representation within participation. Barnes *et al* (2003) suggested that the examination of whose interests are being represented a more valid consideration than the volume of participation from community.

Participants were aware of various initiatives implemented by the BBNP with regards to tourism but were not aware of any initiatives with regards to community development (apart from the creation of new leisure centres or sports fields). This is highlighted by the quotes below:

> *I can see the development of new recreational facilities aimed at local people but I am not sure how these developments are trying to improve community sustainability………. After all the community is what you make of it which in my case involves me embedding myself with my neighbours?* (Respondent FG 28)

> *My community pretty much looks after itself, all right the government and local council establish various rules and procedures and some of these are implemented by the National Park but generally we are left to our own devices with regards to how we manage our livelihoods.* (Respondent FG 5)

> *I always see notices and read in the local paper about initiatives and consultation processes taking place in the area with regard to tourism and using local resources and local people. My wife has got involved*

with one such collaboration and I can see how it brings people
together working towards a common goal, but this was not something
that I wanted to get involved in. (Respondent FG 19)

The excerpts above may suggest that nonparticipation can indicate the existence of marginalised groups and individuals. However, it also results from acts of empowerment with individuals or groups choosing not to get involved or to take part in peripheral activities. This in itself is a legitimate and valid aspect of community involvement.

One member of the focus group provided another example of an SDF scheme that had gained wide participation from many members of the community.

I have a friend who lives in Camaes (North Pembrokeshire) her local
community received over 20 grand of the SDF funding. They are trying
to get rid of plant species known as the Himalayan Balsam. The origin
of this project was that the community wanted to get rid of the
Japanese knotweed which had appeared in the area. Local residents
got together to get rid of this species, and in doing so, they identified
a new plant species to the area called the Himalayan Balsam. The
project involved them sawing and pulling and brush cutting to get rid
of this invasive plant. (Respondent FG 2)

In the example given by respondent FG 2 a comprehensive programme was devised by the local community to get participation from the geographic community. Permission was gained from local landowners to help remove the species, notices were erected to increase public awareness. Talks, presentations and meetings were held to address the issue and even a local builder with appropriate equipment was hired to start the process. Furthermore, the local community created regular volunteer working parties which took place every month. With the money gained from the SDF, training was given to local people in the art of brush cutting, chainsaw work and first-aid. These trained individuals were then expected to contribute to the project and this scheme also produced some unexpected benefits by improving the confidence and employability of these volunteers three of which have gained full-time employment since

this project, *http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk/?PID=668*. What is interesting to note from the two examples given above is that both projects provided specific outcomes that were clear for the participants to see. If measurable outcomes can be derived and explained then participation will be stronger which was noted by Lankford *et al* (1999) on page 63-64.

7.4.1 Barriers to Participation

The results of the focus groups provided some insights into how the NPA could help overcome some of the barriers to involvement. Table 7.1 below identifies how the focus groups believed these barriers could be overcome.

Barriers to involvement	Focus groups ideas for overcoming the barriers
Not wanting to be involved	This is down to personal motivation so perhaps the NPA could create some stimulus that would create a desire for people to become involved
Not knowing you could be involved	There needs to be a more expansive marketing program that lets local people know what is going on and how they could become involved
Lack of time/resources/expertise to get involved	Providing knowledge and resources (not necessarily financial but technical and expert knowledge would be beneficial).
Lack of understanding what is required when being involved	Clear guidelines could be provided on the roles and responsibilities of the people getting involved
Not approving of the proposed development	Providing a persuasive argument for the proposed development
Lack of mobility	Providing transportation
Lack of interest/effort	This is down to personal motivation so perhaps the NPA could create some stimulus that would create a desire for people to become involved

Not understanding what personal gain can be obtained from getting involved	Providing a clear and identifiable benefit that people can understand they will get from becoming involved

Table 7.1: Ideas from focus group participants to overcome barriers to community participation, *Source:* Author

The main barrier to involvement cited by participants was with regards to time and effort required. These are always at a premium, many participants feel that the main priority is to ensure continued economic survival for their business (or personal income). The ability to be able to look ahead with a long-term strategic view seem to be near impossible for some of the participants.

My business commitments in running a pub mean I don't have any time to get involved with anything else will stop my business needs me 24 hours a day seven days a week (Respondent FG 7)

We are so busy in our business just surviving on an ad hoc fashion. I literally don't know if I'm able to survive. I need to think about who's working in the bar of the hotel is at the reception desk if someone calls in sick and need to be around to cover and that doesn't even give me a chance to do the administrative work. The trying to get involved with some kind of development programme that doesn't have an immediate impact on our business is just too timely" (Respondent FG 18)

Although there are no financial implications for getting involved in development programmes it could be noted that there is a cost for people's time. Therefore, the need to demonstrate an efficient use of time would be a valid measuring yard that could be used by people. Arguably, these constraints illustrate the low-level of community participation demonstrated by many businesses in the BBNP. In order for communities to get involved in development programmes a great deal of time and effort is required for which the opportunity costs of such involvement is very high given the current economic pressures and considerations in today's modern world.

Traditionally, getting involved in some form of development was considered to be "*complicated*" and "*time-consuming*" often with participants feeling that their views are not being taken into account or limited resources available for the programme which compounds the feeling of frustration of the participants of such a development programme. The NPA might need to try and take this into consideration when developing their programmes that they intend to roll out to local communities.

It was interesting to note a number of group members seemed to distance themselves from tourism development programmes and felt no need to get involved in any fashion.

> *It's the NPA that established these programmes, they are offering money, and they provide the guidelines so why would I would need to get involved?* (Respondent FG 22)
>
> *The state propose the programme what say do I have? I mean the government should take responsibility in rolling out and managing these types of programmes, they are the ones with the expertise and skill, not me*. (Respondent FG 13)

This notion of "distancing" themselves from development programmes highlights one of the problems the NPA have with regard to getting communities involved in future projects. If local people believe that the responsibility lies with the government then it would be very hard for local people to accept any form of ownership in such programmes. Although many businesses can have a direct impact on communities and livelihoods they tend to believe that it is the responsibility of the local council, county planners and NPA to develop design and manage such programmes. Nonparticipation through choice is different to imposed nonparticipation. As Hayward *et al* (2004) suggested, the act of nonparticipation may indicate exclusion. This occurs where barriers exist that prevent certain individuals or groups from participating to the extent that they would otherwise choose. Hence, Lave and Wenger (1991) identified marginal groups among those who participate less than fully arguing that this occurs because full participation is prevented by a form of nonparticipation. In other words, barriers to full participation prevail. The comments from respondents FG 22 and FG 13 may indicate that a community is used to the dominance of the local authority in shared activities. Consequently, the norms of the local

partnership reflect the formal approaches of the local authority. This leads to opinions and questions such as "are we allowed to do this?" As the culture of nonparticipation power holding is so ingrained among those on the margins.

The relevance of participation was discussed in the literature review and the findings support a number of ideas presented. Most notably, that local people were generally reluctant to participate in initiatives for sustainability through confusion about the meaning and relevance of the concept and the constraints of limited available resources, time, knowledge and expertise which were cited as the restraining factors for involvement. In other respects, however, the results revealed new insights into the influences upon community participation. In particular, there appears to be evidence of an underlying diversity in the response of participants to sustainable practices arising from a market demand and an interest in environmental issues amongst residents. The emergence of altruistic motives within decisions to adopt sustainable practices was also apparent from responses given. Additionally, the barriers to adoption appeared complex and operated on a number of levels. Some barriers were specific to individuals, while others were common across the district and region. These findings suggest that policy interventions might need to be broad-based and focus upon all stakeholders, rather than focusing on the top-down nature of the BBNPA Management plan.

7.4.2 The Professionalization of Participation

Jamal and Stronza (2009) noted that collaboration amongst stakeholders should create a more fluid and vigorous process that will change over time and enable members of the community to try to find solutions to problems or issues as they arise. Arguably, SDF schemes would benefit from understanding where the stimulus for participation originates within communities, so that the schemes can appeal to the motivations of community members to engage active participation. Below are 2 statements reflecting the type of SDF projects that the interviewees were involved with:

> *The scheme I was involved with once the wall2wall youth Jazz Festival.*
> *We were awarded SDF to support a new youth element for this wall-*
> *to-wall jazz festival held in Abergavenny as part of the Black*

Mountain's jazz programme. We worked with local businesses and communities and even managed to breakeven! The idea was to involve young people of all ages and abilities to a programme of workshops. (Interviewee PSDF 1)

I helped to establish new clubhouse Llangorse sailing club. The idea was to get money from sport Wales, private individuals in the club and the SDF grant (amounting to £3000) in order for us to build a new clubhouse. In order to get the money yet show evidence of reaching the wider community. So what we do for eight weekends of the year is open up the sailing club to anyone who wants to participate. People can come in and experience sailing whizz around on the safety boat and have a nice cup of tea. The take-up has been quite good but mainly seems to be tourists take advantage of these open days I have not seen many members of the local community come in, but maybe that's because we don't promote it very well. (Interviewee PSDF 3)

These SDF schemes involved participation from community members whilst realising ambitions of rural sustainability, respectively, socially, and economically. The level of participation was evident in the development of a festival or a clubhouse. These outcomes compliment the participation literature noted on page 61 by Marcus and Brennan (2008). However, one interview, went beyond that and highlighted the use of strategic thinking that illustrated participation across all boundaries of a community. The person behind this proposal was an "urban refugee" (originally from London) and was a professional fundraiser for over 30 years, working for a number of independent schools and charities during her career which she believed provided her with the skills to be able to create the concept and prepare the bid. She firstly outlined the SDF bid by indicating that:

We think that our 'Round the Lake' / 'O Gympas y Llyn' concept will, over a sustained period, have a marked effect on the entire locality. Equipping Llangasty Hall as a Field Study Centre and linking our bi-

lingual interpretation boards with those at the Crannog and Ty Mawr
Lime (to ensure a 'joined up' approach) will enhance visits to either
side of the lake. All the businesses in between will benefit, as will the
villages, pubs and shops on the outer rims of the lake – Llanfihangel
Talyllyn and Bwlch.

By making Llangasty Hall financially viable through this project, we will
be able to ensure that our hall is available for use by the local
community in the longer term. Our business plan includes the
development of community activities to include more for younger
families and their children to meet the needs of the changing
population. (Interviewee PSDF 5)

The holistic vision of this scheme and the integration of so many facets of the community illustrate a well-considered SDF bid which not only obtained the funding in 2008, but has been a continued success for the community of Llangasty. Criticism has been waged against sustainability initiatives that have become dominated by professionals, often with little accountability or transparency to the local community (Hall and Mawson, 1999). Therefore, there is a danger of professionalising rural regeneration where, on the one hand expertise is essential to tap resources but on the other hand, the majority remain on the edge of the process (Storey, 1999). This view was noted by respondent FG3 who stated that:

I am retired and moved to the area nearly 20 years ago and I have seen
the decline in the fabric of our community. Farmers are finding it hard
to make money, local craftspeople (such as my wife who is a painter)
are having to travel further in order to sell their work, local pubs are
shutting and the makeup of our village is changing considerably as
more people are moving into the area and I can see the Welsh locals
being ostracised. I thought the scheme would be a good way to try and
integrate the "outsiders" and rural locals working towards one
common goal. (Respondent FG 3)

If, as is the case in rural development, an objective is to achieve the participation of the community, then there must be a clear concept of what a community is before it can be represented. The dynamic and heterogeneous nature of any community means that achieving a cross representation of the community is likely to remain complex.

Hayward *et al* (2004) warned of participatory methods that promoted the voices and values of the most articulate and accessible within the community thus reinforcing existing structures. Hence existing barriers and exclusions are retained. Relevant participation should, therefore, be considered in terms of what a community seeks to achieve in a broader context of rural development. The skills, knowledge and expertise that are necessary will vary according to the particular task in hand and this will shift over time as the rural development process involves. Consequently, the degree of participation from an individual within the community will vary as noted by interviewee PSDF 5:

> *Having got the scheme up and running I no longer take an active role in the management or maintenance of the facilities or services. This has been passed down to the next generation to look after. Of course, I still go to numerous events at the hall but purely for enjoyment purposes only.* (Interviewee PSDF 5)

The comment above indicates that although an individual with extensive professional experience drove the rural development initiative forward, they then passed the initiative on to other members of the community (possibly those who in the past and been excluded). The ability to change the membership of those participating in community development projects that mixes those with previous experience in those without may help to overcome the risk of reinforcing existing barriers and norms while also acknowledging the importance of the balance between the "means and end" of participation.

7.4.3 Levels of Participation in the Brecon Beacons National Park

One of the questions posed to survey respondents was identifying if people work together to get things done more at a local (village) level than at the community level and the respondents generally disagreed with this statement. The findings illustrated in table 7.2 demonstrated that 40.5% of the respondents disagreed and 17.7% strongly disagreed with the idea that people work better at a village rather than community level. Notably, this data indicated that NPA strategies should operate at the wider community level if the local people are to respond to their policies. Only two of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement.

Statement: People work together to get things done more at a local level than at the community level	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	2	2.5	2.5	2.5
Agree	14	17.7	17.7	20.3
Neither Agree or Disagree	17	21.5	21.5	41.8
Disagree	32	40.5	40.5	82.3
Strongly Disagree	14	17.7	17.7	100.0
Total	79	100.0	100.0	

Table 7.2 Statement – People work together to get things done more at the village than at the community level

It can be noted from Figure 7.3 that the respondents who felt most strongly about this were from the 18 to 30 age category and this suggests that young people do believe in a sense of a wider community rather than operating at a village level. This could be due to the fact that globalisation, mobility, education and the access of information through technology means that the younger generation think more broadly than the elder respondents who feel a stronger sense of attachment to their specific geographic location.
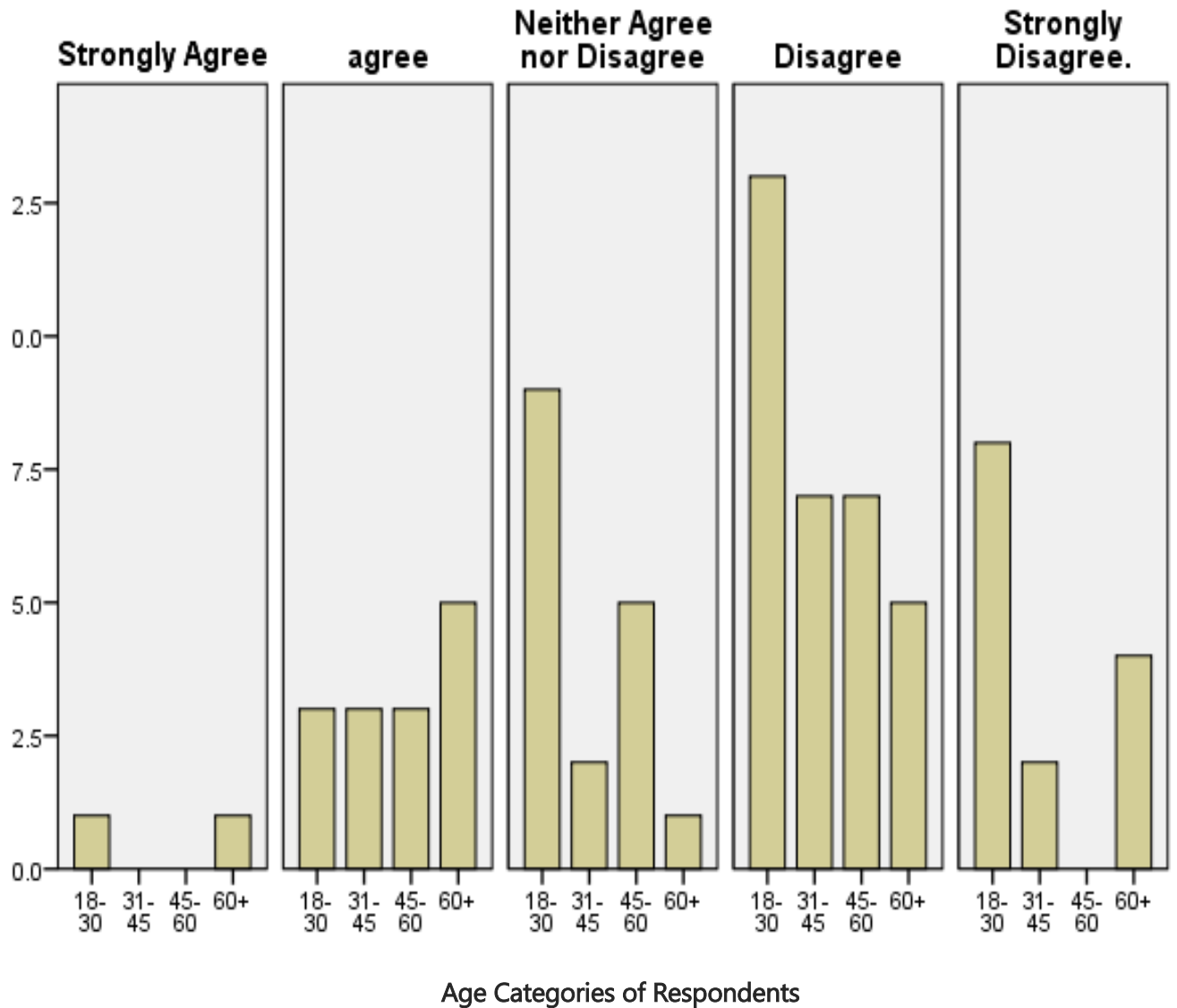
Figure 7.3: Statement - People work together to get things done more at the village than at the community level cross tabulated with age of respondents

The use of a chi-square test (Table 7.3 on the next page) illustrates the extent to which age reflects if people work together to get things done more at the village than at the community level. The null hypothesis states that there is no association between ages and at what level people work together to things done. However, taking the chi-square test results into account, the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternative, which is to state that there is a level of association between ages and at what level people work together.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.099ᵃ	12	.362
Likelihood Ratio	16.715	12	.161
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.784	1	.182
N of Valid Cases	79		

a. 13 cells (65.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .35.

Table 7.3 Chi-Squared Test of age and how respondents felt about getting things done more at the village than at the community level

The respondents of the survey were asked to identify which civic groups they were members of as having determined that participants felt strongly attached to their community it would have been assumed that there was much civic activity. However, only 39% of the respondents were actively involved in their community and the results are presented in Table 7.4:

The Association of Brecon Freemasons in the province of South Wales:	6 respondents
The Association of Welsh Independent Brewers	1 respondent
Brecon & District Mind	1 respondent
Brecknock Federation Of Young Farmers	2 respondents
Brecon Beacons Park Society	2 respondents
Brecon & District Contact Association	1 respondent
Brecon Rugby Football Club	3 respondents
Brecon Workmen's Club & Institute	3 respondents
Conservative Association	4 respondents
Farmers Union of Wales	3 respondents
National Trust Brecon Beacons	1 respondent
Rotary Club of Abergavenny, Brecon and Monmouth	3 respondents
Women's Institute –Brecon, Llanfrynach & Cantref, Llangasty, Talybont on Usk, Trallong & Penpont :	7 respondents
Total	31 respondents

Table 7.4 – Results from Survey illustrating which civic groups the respondents were members of.

The literature review noted that most of the current problems faced by rural areas cannot be solved by individual action but rather as part of a "Big Society". In a community, the existence of networks, such as SDF groups, it is argued, reflects an intense horizontal interaction.

Not only are there subdivisions within a geographic community, but other complex divisions were observed to exist, for example, where residents were born, income, occupation and land ownership. As respondent FG 6 stated:

> *My community is just the farmers in Bwlch, I don't mix with the people*
> *on the estate, or the incomers*. (Respondent FG 6)

The importance of residents who grew up in the BBNP and those who had moved into the region provided constant commentary throughout the research and will be discussed later on pages 164 and 194. However, the presence of communities within a community is not an unusual phenomenon as Halseth (1993) noted there is often a demonstration of clear social and spatial divisions within communities externally defined as single entities. If the concept of a traditional place-based community is no longer fit in today's society questions arise as to the attribution of a place-based interpretation of communities within the BBNP. Nevertheless, there is a distinct absence of any acknowledgements within the BBNPA of the way in which these sub-communities interact with a community group's ability to mobilise the geographical community in which they operate. Furthermore, this research highlights that group membership was not a proxy for active participation in the "community's" activities or future direction and membership carried no responsibility or commitment to the community as highlighted by the respondents who were involved with applications for SDF indicated:

> "*Gaining involvement from members of the club was hard to achieve,*
> *everyone liked the concept but only a few people were instrumental in*
> *obtaining the funding. "We got a great idea, we have a rough idea*
> *how that plan will translate into reality but what we are lacking is the*
> *support of a couple of the businesses that are key to our proposed bid".*
> (Respondent FG 4)

> *"It's all very well having a great idea about how we can bring in people to the area and get them to use local businesses and facilities but it's another matter getting members of the local community together in order to work out a well-structured and well considered bid for the SDF. What I found is that there are two or three key members to the committee who are willing to put in the time and the effort in order to prepare to meet the sustainable development officer to discuss the plan and to try and work out the nitty-gritty of what surprising about this is that the local businesses who perhaps might gain the most in a financial sense are not willing to get involved as I thought it would be".*
> (Respondent FG 3)

The quotes above illustrate that there is an inconsistency between being a member of the community and active participation in furthering a communities goals. This was a common theme taken from the primary research. For example, respondent FG 4 suggested that:

> *It was easy to get people to attend the annual general meeting where we discussed the SDF bid but after that initial meeting there was just a handful of us who attended the follow-up meetings and then there were just two of us involved in the application.* (Respondent FG 4)

Arguably, members of this community may have been motivated to attend the annual general meeting simply to "show support" for the SDF process, regardless of their commitment to, or interest in the scheme. Legitimate factors including bad weather, clashes with other events and lack of publicity may have been contributing factors to the reasons as to why people didn't attend the follow-up meetings. However, the lack of wider engagement in the actual SDF application process meant only two members of this community driving the proposal forward. The structure of the SDF needs to develop the enabling factors that lead to successful participation. Arguably, communication and building trust are necessary components when gaining commitment from community members. If the NPA wish to work with local communities, these areas require further attention. A greater insight into the benefits to be derived from the participation and commitment of local people should be developed. If local

communities can clearly see the potential benefits from participating in sustainable programmes that not only enhance their communities but their livelihoods then the level of commitment might rise. There was a similar story to tell in the development of the community hall in Pennorth, where one respondent indicated that:

> *Everyone in the community thought the development of the village hall would be excellent for local residents. The intention was to create a village hall that was a hub for the community where we could offer lots of activities using different businesses in Pennorth. At our original meeting the attendance was really positive but by the time we reached our third meeting where we started to complete the paperwork for the sustainable development fund there were just four of us. (*Respondent FG 8)

This does raise concerns about the extent to which community members are contributing to changes that are attempting to be made. It is interesting to note that in these cases the local businesses are not perhaps as willing to get involved in the scheme as previously thought. One respondent questioned further about this issue suggested that:

> *It could be that the businesses don't see the potential in the scheme. As the scheme would involve them changing their business plan slightly in order to accommodate what we are suggesting should happen in the area and although I pointed out to them examples of other areas that have been successful in the bid and seen an increase in the number of visitors to the area I still can't seem to get them to fully commit to the proposal".* (Respondent FG 16)

Although it may seem logical that businesses should be the first to get involved in such projects as they would see almost immediate financial returns, it could be argued that galvanising the local community might be a lot harder to do, as there may be no specific financial return for individuals and the community who get involved in these projects. The two respondents who

were currently putting forward the applications for the SDF were both members of the local community that had no economic benefit to be derived from their proposed bids. It was, therefore, interesting to note the motivations of these people in order to provide an insight as to why they got involved. One respondent suggested:

> *I could see the area was in need of regeneration and I have read about other examples where the funding had been successful and I thought to myself that this will be the perfect way to make our community stronger and richer. I would be satisfied if what I get out of this is seeing long-term survival of our little community. I'd like to see more people come to the area and spend more money in our village and visit the ruins and maybe we can create new businesses such as cafe or even a visitor's centre. There is no financial incentive for me, this is purely for my own satisfaction*". (Respondent FG 3)

Respondent FG 4 was instrumental in the successful application of SDF for the development of a series of walking trails Talybont. He referred to the process of networking and commented that networking was more about creating a spider's web.

> "*I found that getting the local community behind the grant application process was more about creating my own little spider's web rather than a network. This is because networking is all about individuals communicating and creating more connections. I wanted to link up with people who would help me get through the SDF process. I, therefore, thought of it as my own spider's web where I am the spider and all the people I needed to help me achieve the grant process were caught in my web.* (Respondent FG 4)

The research findings demonstrate that the way in which individuals got involved with SDF schemes was fairly ad hoc. As with typical community projects, many people were unable to commit due to lack of time. Thus the availability and willingness of individuals to participate was

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limited. However, the "incomers" to the geographic area (or urban refugees) who arguably possessed regeneration skills and relevant experience make themselves attractive partners for the BBNPA and the SDF scheme. Possibly, this is because they situate themselves within the SDF structures which allow the development of projects with very little management and evaluation on the part of the NPA. For example, one respondent suggested that the NPA took almost no involvement in the SDF project this respondent believed that the NPA would use their scheme simply as a form of "*self-promotion*" (Interviewee PSDF 6). The respondents of both the focus groups and interviews who were involved in participating and developing the SDF bids represented individuals with an agenda with knowledge of the geographic area coupled with relevant skills in development/regeneration funding - which is arguably how they came to be involved in the process in the first instance. Individuals drawn from the broader community were involved in the latter stages of preparing the application.

Participants of the focus groups were asked to highlight any involvement that they had with the development of their communities in their area.

> *I have been involved with the Women's Institute in the development of local fetes, organised walks and arranging speeches from various members of the community on behalf of the Women's Institute.* (Respondent FG 12)
>
> *Every year we offer strawberry picking which is very popular with the tourists* (Respondent FG 6)
>
> *I am involved in the organisation of the Brecon Jazz Festival which takes place in August* (Respondent FG 2)
>
> *I am part of the Brecon business club which involves local businesses joining together to improve our efficiency, communication and provide support to one another* (Respondent FG 28)

Out of the 30 participants from all three focus group sessions, the participants above were the only ones involved in any form of community development. Given that all participants were living within the BBNP, it was notable that not many of them were involved in any form of

development. This brings into question the reliability of the academic material which suggested that it was very important for the community to be involved, as this research highlights minimal involvement of the wider community with development from the participants. Therefore, what is actually happening on the ground may be somewhat different to what the NPA would like to happen.

7.5 Place Attachment in the Brecon Beacons National Park

The concept of "the rural" is a complex one and its definition has been subject to wide debate within social science (Halfacree, 1993). Rurality has generally been described as a social construct or, as Woods (2011, p.9) suggested it is "*an imagined entity that is brought into being by particular discourses of reality that are produced, reproduced and contested by academics, the media, policymakers, rural lobby groups and ordinary individuals*". The rural landscape is, to an extent, expected to conform to an ideal or construct (in the British context) known as a "rural idyll". Part of that involves rolling agricultural pastures, valleys and rivers interspersed by picturesque villages with a "community feel" (Bunce, 2003). Central to the construct of the "rural idyll" is the notion that the countryside is home to communities of people who know and support each other. However, rural communities can be particularly exclusionary in isolating by exaggerating lines of difference between majority and minority groups or ethnic minorities (Cloke, 2006). Divisions between "outsiders" and "locals" may well exist, but these are shifting concepts and contribute to the networks of social relations that make up each individual's understanding of the concept of community which are usually open and adaptable to incorporate such "strangers" over time. Consequently, the presence of place-based community remains an important notion to rural identity and this is frequently reproduced and reiterated by rural residents through spatial and representative means (Liepins, 2000b). The findings of this research do not contest the findings of the studies noted above.

Residents of the survey were asked about their attachment to their community. The literature (e.g. Giddens, 1991) indicated that there was a relationship between place and attachment. Therefore, the questions ascertained if respondents were more attached to their village than their community to test this academia. The findings illustrated that the participants felt more attached to their community than their village which was contrary to the community literature. In establishing this fact the respondents mirror the tourism academic literature of Perdue *et al* (1990) who believed that the relationship between local people and the connection to their

environment plays a great role in how tourism can potentially be developed in the area. It can be noted from table 7.5 that 26.6% of the respondents agreed with the statement that they are more attached to their village than to their community and that 30.4% of the respondents disagreed with the statement which illustrates some confusion about how the respondents view their community and their village.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	3	3.8	3.8	3.8
Agree	21	26.6	26.6	30.4
Neither Agree or Disagree	19	24.1	24.1	54.4
Disagree	24	30.4	30.4	84.8
Strongly Disagree	12	15.2	15.2	100.0
Total	79	100.0	100.0	

Table 7.5 Statement – I am more attached to my village than the community

It could be argued that some of the respondents felt that there is a stronger sense of attachment to their geographical vicinity in terms of the village rather than thinking about the community as a whole. Conversely, some of the respondents seem to think beyond their own particular village and think more about the idea of community as a wider encompassing notion. Arguably, Figure 7.4 (on page 168) illustrates that the respondents' attitudes towards their attachment to the community is not bound by any geographic location but rather the idea of community is related to the groups and activities the that people are involved with. For example, the range of facilities available in Brecon are much wider than the range of facilities available in Pennorth. Therefore, it is of little surprise that residents of Pennorth undertake social and leisure activities in Brecon. This means that people have to travel to other communities in order to engage in social and community activities and therefore their attachment to the community is not bound to a specific location but rather to group of people who have shared interests working towards a common goal. These findings indicate that those residents who lived in a small village were more attached to their village than those who lived in bigger settlements. Notably, the respondents from Brecon the largest settlement from the survey highlighted that their physical location did not create the same level of attachment when compared to those living in smaller settlements. Consequently, issues around mobility would warrant more investigation due to

the statistics mentioned in chapter 2 on page 14 illustrating lack of transportation which may hinder residents' ability to be able to travel to other destinations in their vicinity to partake in such activities.
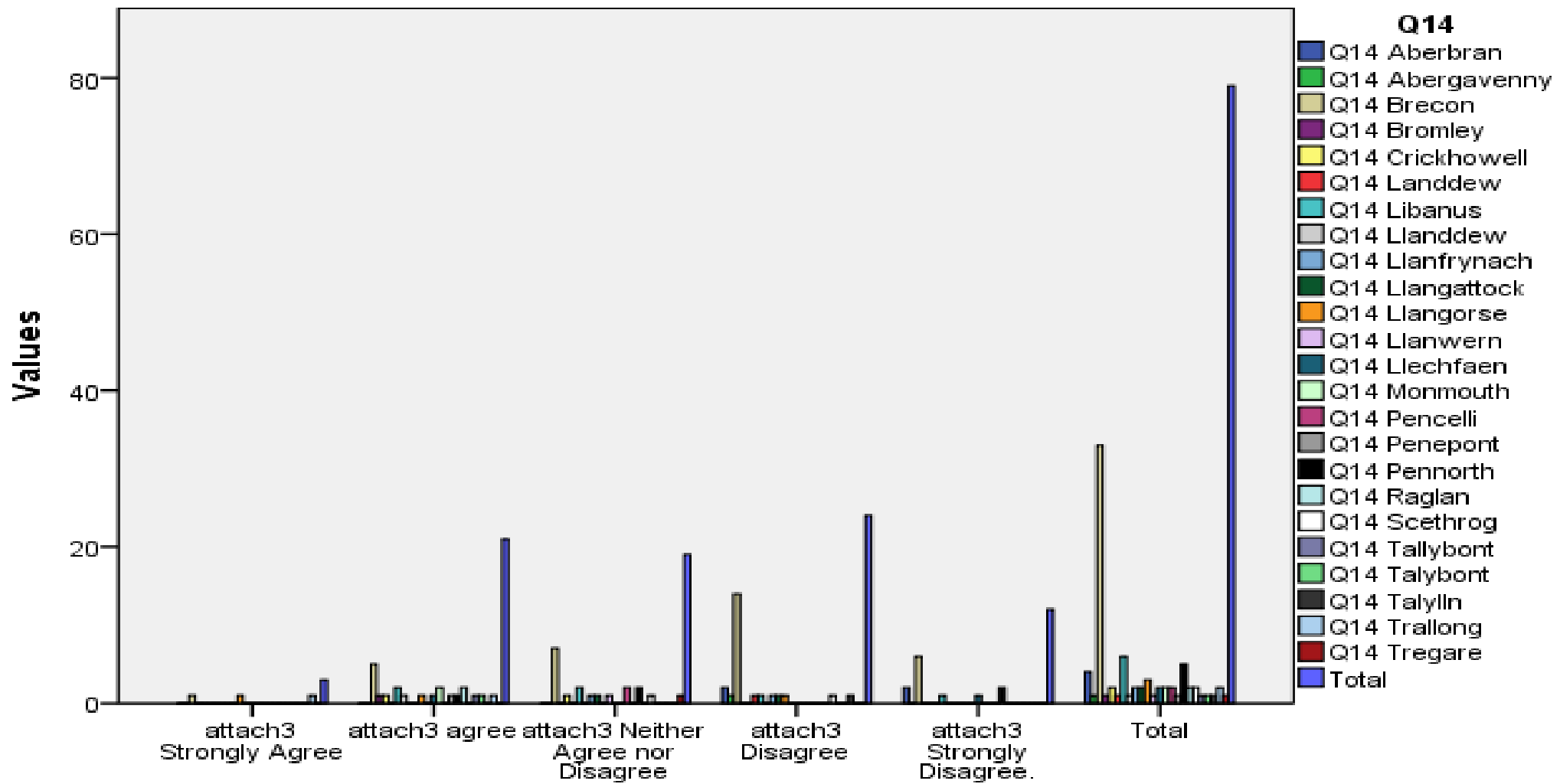
Figure 7.4 Cross tabulation of attachment and location of respondents

The relevance of how long someone had lived in a location may have significance on how attached they felt to that community. Therefore, the use of a chi-square test (Table 7.6 below) illustrates the extent to which the length of residence was related to how attached they felt to their village. The null hypothesis states that there is no association between length of residence and how attached they felt to their village. However, taking the chi-square test results into account, the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternative, which is to state that there is a level of association between the length of residence and attachment to that location.

Chi-Square Tests attach3 Q15

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	109.500[a]	136	.954
Likelihood Ratio	106.406	136	.971
Linear-by-Linear Association	.056	1	.814
N of Valid Cases	79		

a. 175 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .04.

Table 7.6 Chi-Squared Test of Length of Residence and Attachment to their Village

Social cohesion was found to be a strong predictor of place attachment in many of the interviews. The interviews revealed that social ties become more important for attachment over time, perhaps when people have got to know and become friends with their neighbours, which may in part explain why length of residence may be such an important predictor of place attachment. The longer one lives in a neighbourhood the more social ties generally one makes. However, one interview highlighted a respondent who had lived in their area for a relatively short period of time but felt very attached to their place of residence because they took part in many social events. Whereas another respondent who had lived in the area for longer but who did not participate in such events did not demonstrate such a level of place attachment.

It was notable that the age of respondents and their attachment to their village also highlighted discrepancies. Figure 7.5 indicates that older respondents were more attached to their village than younger people.
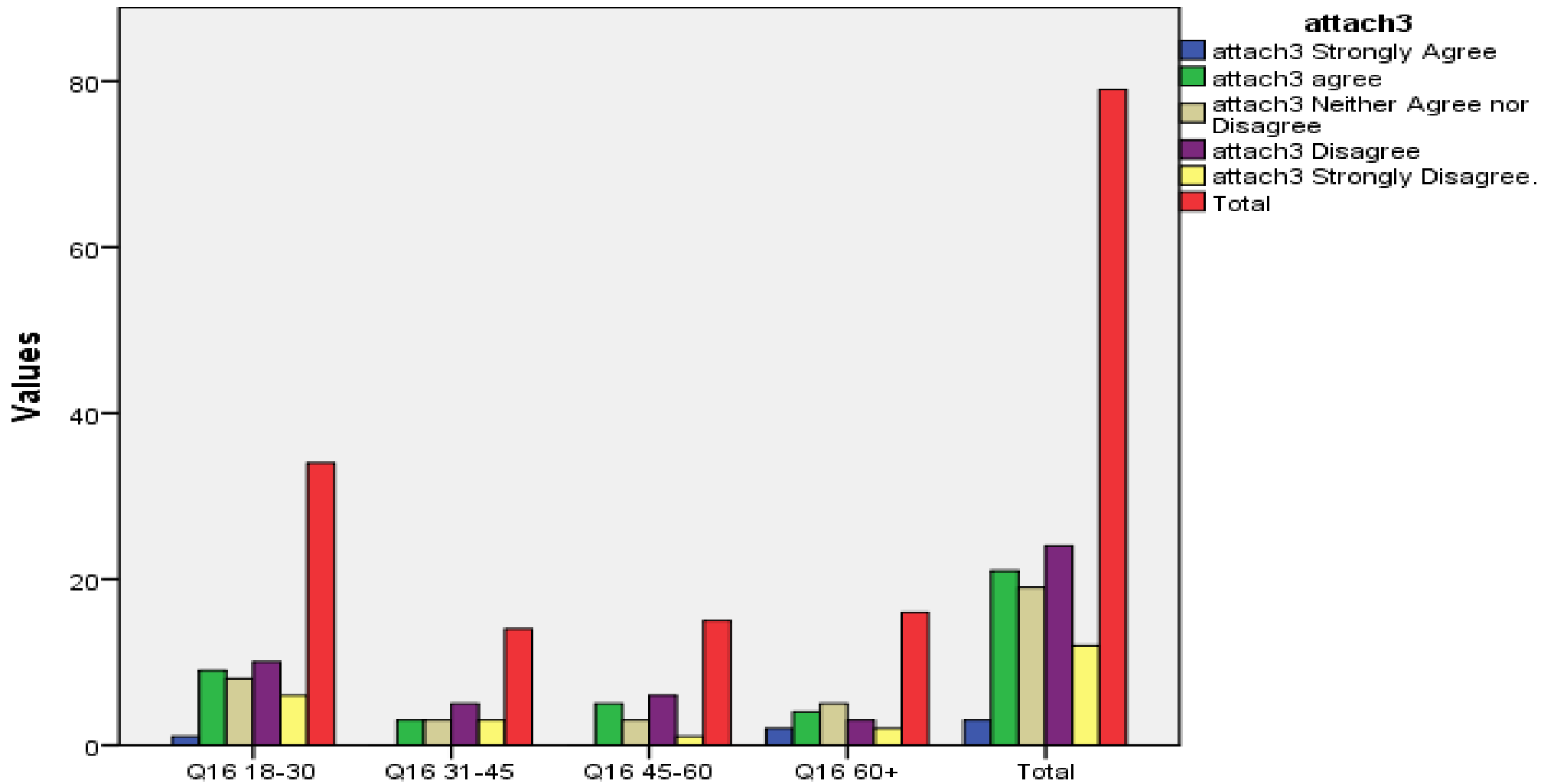
Figure 7.5 Cross tabulation of attachment and location of respondents

It was expected that length of residence would have been the main predictor of place attachment. For example, Bailey *et al* (201, p.2012) argues that it is the "key influence". Arguably, the findings indicate that as one grows older, it follows that one would accumulate more memories and significant experiences of the place where one lives. Consequently, increasing the level of place attachment. Age was found to predict attachment in some studies, (e.g. Lewicka, 2011), it was found to be correlated with length of residence in others (e.g. Aiello *et al*, 2010) and found to not be a significant predictor in others (e.g. Rollero and De Piccoli, 2010).

In terms of the development plans the findings of the survey illustrate that the BBNPA is following a development route in alignment to the literature. Whereby their strategic vision encompasses broader areas rather than focusing on specific destinations within the park as can be seen from Figure 7.6 (on the next page). However, 30.4% of the respondents either agreed or neither agreed or disagreed that there is a stronger sense of community at the village level (rather than at the community level) which means for the policymakers of NPs that although strategic plans can encompass broader areas, there would be benefits from focusing on specific destinations, which is part of the strategy the BBNPA have followed with their SDF process, which enables individual communities to put forward plans for sustainable developments at a very local level. The implications of this may well be that community action could be fragmented within a community if people feel a stronger sense of attachment to their particular village than to a wider geographical area.
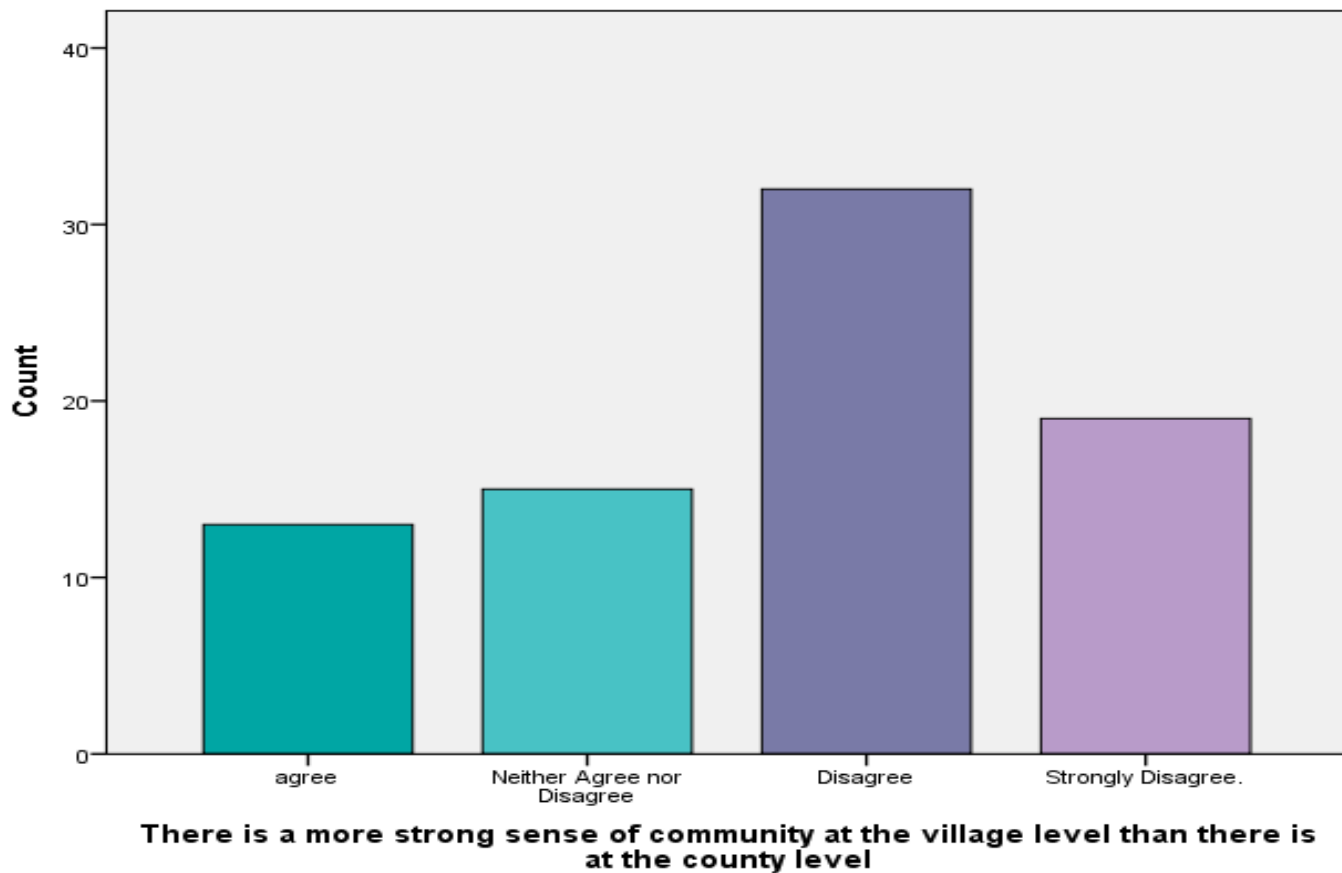
Figure 7.6 Findings of Survey on sense of community at the village level

Place attachment is not only related to the physical proximity of a person to a location or community, which is why a community has such a nebulous nature as one focus group respondent indicated that:

> *My community is much wider than my neighbours and my village. My community is all my girlfriends from the Women's' Institute. The quality of life I have is really down to the social aspects that this Institute has provided me. I get to travel around not only the local area but the whole country and I find I have an immediate bond with other women from the WI. When I think about community development and thinking in a broader sense. All right there are certain initiatives that we take that are to benefit the immediate vicinity but some of the activities I'm involved in are trying to influence the government in some of their policies which mean to me the community*

development things that you're talking about are a more national scale.
(Respondent FG 16)

The idea put forward by respondent FG 16 indicates that many of us can be part of more than one community even if we are not conscious of it. Arguably, individuals associate themselves with a number of different communities depending on what activity they are doing. For example, an individual when praying may believe they are part of a religious community. That same individual when working would perceive themselves as part of a business community. That person may be involved in a sporting activity and therefore they may be part of a sports community. This illustrates that an individual is not restricted to being a member of a specific community but there is a more liberal approach to how the perception of community can be defined. What binds the various groups together are common beliefs and shared interests all working towards a goal. Therefore, the relationships that people have with the natural or built environment as well as other people help define a community for each individual. However, a community is not defined by geography or physical environment as interestingly, only one participant mentioned the use of a virtual community.

I have signed various petitions in the past online and discovered that there
are communities to be found on the Internet that have shared values to mine.
I think this is a more common phenomena for younger people having seen
the growth of social network sites in the last few years but clearly this is a
way for communities to move forward. (Respondent FG 27)

Virtual communities tend to be groups of individuals that primarily interact via online media rather than in person (although the growth of Skype and other video conferencing services may see a shift in virtual communities as traditionally they involved communication via chat rooms and social network applications). Online communities are;

"social aggregations that emerge from the net when people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships" .
(Rheingold, Howard: The Virtual Community http://www.rheingold.com/vc/book/intro.html (accessed 01/06/16).

Arguably, there is a lack of clarity between how the participants of the focus group research view the concept of community. There was often confusion between what a community is and what community development is and often a belief that that these are the same things. Perhaps it is the values and principles that distinguish community development from other concepts of community. Community development programmes involve people sharing ideas and finding common ground in order to create a shared vision of the future for their community. The concept of place attachment can assist in creating sustainable communities by appealing to members of the community to establish and/or reconceptualise what their community could be as a place in which to live. Poole (1991) identified that using place attachment must incite or appeal people in order to bring about some form of change to the place that they live in. The relevance of this for SDF schemes might be that place attachment could be used as a way to galvanise and harvest participation within a community.

Leopold (1949) illustrated that people need to have a sense of belonging to their natural environment (opposed to feeling that it is a resource to consume). If SDF schemes can connect communities to their natural environment in order to increase their sense of place attachment, this might encourage and inspire sustainability initiatives. Lewicka (2011) noted that most academic discourse surrounding place attachment is concerned with the physical environment with little consideration being given to the social aspect of attachment.

Gender was found to have a minor significant relationship with place attachment, but not with any of the other dimensions discussed in this section of the findings. Where gender was found to have an impact was that women were found to be more highly attached than men. Possibly, this is because the findings illuminate that women were generally more proactive in undertaking social activities such as the Women's Institute, which in turn creates stronger social cohesion and consequently, stronger place attachment. When reviewing the gender breakdown of table 7.7 58% of participants were women. When analysing the results of the survey, women were also found to demonstrate stronger sense of attachment to their community than their village as highlighted by Figure 7.7 below. Both sets of data suggest go some way to confirm that although women had stronger levels of attachment the patterns of attachments across both genders were similar.

The Association of Brecon Freemasons in the province of South Wales: 6 respondents	6 respondents
The Association of Welsh Independent Brewers	1 female
Brecon & District Mind	1 female
Brecknock Federation Of Young Farmers	2 male
Brecon Beacons Park Society	2 female
Brecon & District Contact Association	1 female
Brecon Rugby Football Club	2 male, 1 female
Brecon Workmen's Club & Institute	3 male
Conservative Association	2 male, 2 female
Farmers Union of Wales	2 male, 1 female
National Trust Brecon Beacons	1 female
Rotary Club of Abergavenny, Brecon and Monmouth	2 male, 1 female
Women's Institute –Brecon, Llanfrynach & Cantref, Llangasty, Talybont on Usk, Trallong & Penpont :	7 female
Total	31 respondents

Table 7.7: Results from Survey illustrating which civic groups the respondents were members of by gender

Statement: I am more attached to my village than to my community
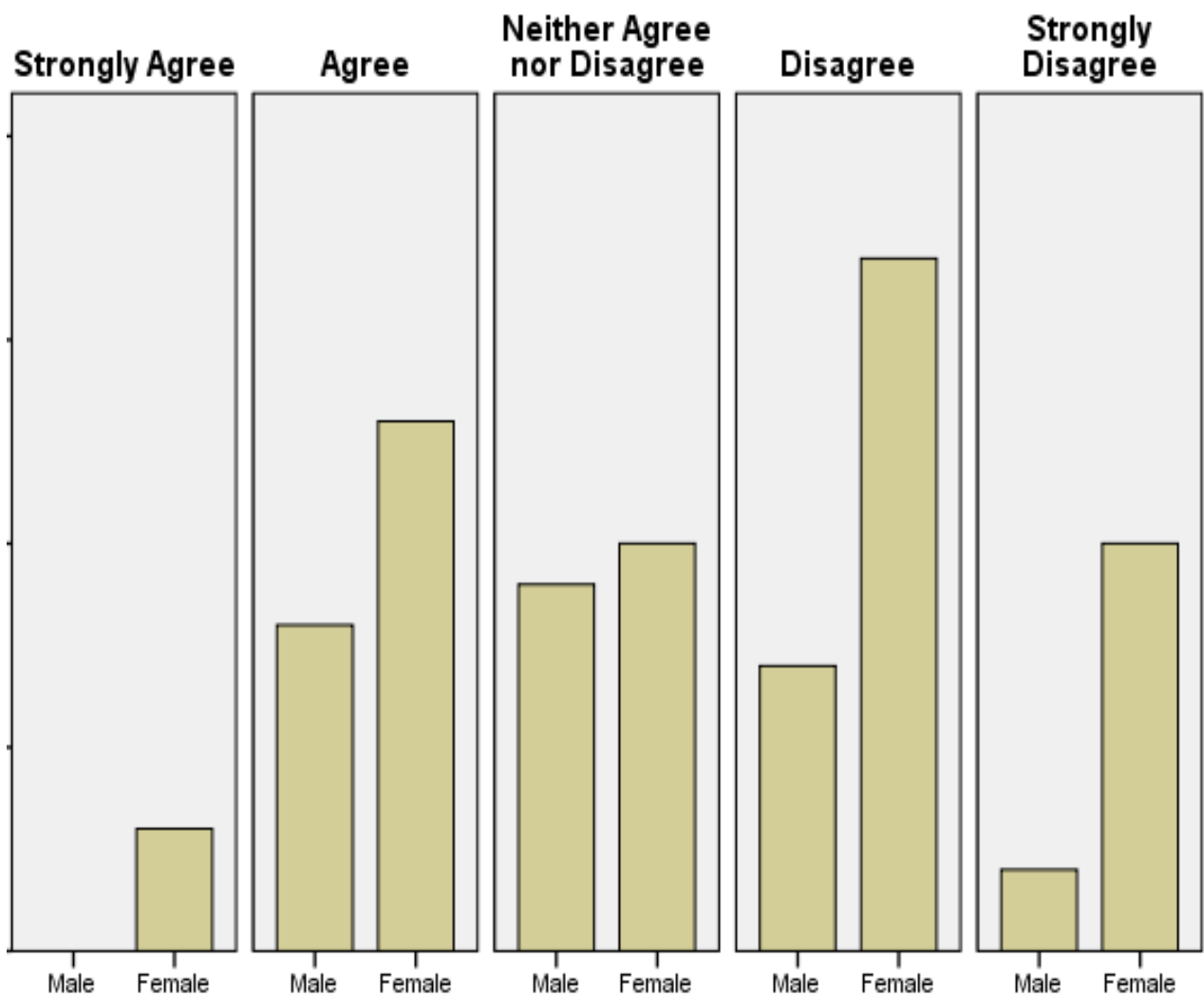
Figure 7.7: Attachment to Village and Community by Gender

Place attachment in the context of SDF schemes adheres closely to the actual definition of place attachment due to the fixed geographical location to which each scheme is attached to. Each project is unique in that the approach used to encourage participation was directed towards appealing to people's affective bonds with the physical environment (place attachment). The findings of the research suggests that SDF schemes evoke latent place attachment whereby individuals create shared meanings of the physical environment. For example one respondent suggested that:

> *Through discussions with others in remembering memories that they had of the village hall they could reminisce about experiences that they had. This meant that they realised that unless the village hall was renovated they would not have a chance to create more memories or experiences or for that to be an option for future generations.* (Interviewee PSDF 3)

The above excerpt is similar to the method used by Chawla (2010) to inform environmental action; she relied on individuals' memories to recall their experiences with nature, which guided their intentions, ultimately leading to action. For this SDF project to be successful, local knowledge about the village hall and a willingness to conserve this physical environment was necessary, both of which derived from experiences in that location, which ultimately, resulted in place attachment. Arguably, the experiences of individuals are of great importance when acquiring support and engagement in rural development initiatives.

> *I think the legacy of the project is that it is still here even though the funding has run out. We might have to do some fundraising in the future I don't think that will be a problem because we will become so attached to the project and protective of it that we all now muck in and do what needs to be done.* (Interviewee PSDF 5)

The use of Scannell and Gifford's (2010) model of place attachment is useful to show how the person, place and process can alternate depending on whether ones views it to describe the route to participation or maintenance of participation. Understanding the various processes of place attachment is useful as these can be exploited during the various stages of participation. In the case of respondent PSDF 5, the person aspect shifts from individual to group, the place aspect is now a social place of interaction and the processes include attitudes, behaviour and context (Stern and

Oskcamp, 1987). Arguably, the four dimensions of place attachment (refer to p. 69) developed by Raymond *et al* (2010) denotes how easily a change in place attachment occurs, from a physical space to that of the social arena through social interaction. It also shows how participation can add to place attachment and can be deepened by utilising the ABC model (refer to p.95). This reflection may serve to prove the function of a community in providing participation by appealing to place attachment during the implementation of rural development programmes.

7.6 Social Capital in the Brecon Beacons National Park

Vermaak (2009, p.404) commented that "*no uniform measurement for social capital exists*" which justifies the exploration of this concept within the community and SDF setting. Although there is no uniform standard of measure a large part of social capital is the presence of networks Rydin and Holman (2004).

The questions asked during interviews did not use the term "social capital" explicitly. Consequently, to understand the level of interaction of community members to ascertain the strengths of bridging and linking social capital, interviewees were asked a few questions:

How often or if at all they interact with our communities and for what purpose;

What are the barriers to into community relationships?

Who drives projects forward?

Did they feel that more interaction is necessary between the BBNPA and their SDF members?

These questions required respondents to elaborate on their feelings regarding certain aspects of the community, thus, highlighting the perceptions on the role of social capital in the community. This gives a more holistic picture of what is going on in the community as experienced by its members.

The main issues became apparent from responses pertaining to the lack of bridging and linking social capital was similar to that of the responses of the focus groups, namely, lack of time. However, the interviews illuminated the lack of a dedicated individual and to a lesser degree the perception of being misunderstood by people outside the SDF project. For a majority of respondents involved in SDF the need to build and utilise bridging and linking social capital is evident. However, it does not seem to be a priority because of other pressing issues must be dealt with by a community, for example, work or family commitments.

Some responses relate to the fact that there is no one person in SDF projects with the drive or enthusiasm to harness bridging and linking ties. From the quote above it is clear that there has been some attempt to enable interaction between communities. Whereby, a positive outlook exists of the benefits of these interactions. However, the reality is these attempts have only been half-hearted with little prospect of actually building strong durable relationships which can be drawn upon over a period of time. This is highlighted by the comment made by respondent PSDF 6 he suggested that:

> *We will not go out to another community and tell them what we are doing*
> *and tell them what to do. We will tell them if they ask, but we have enough*
> *to do in our own community.* (Interviewee PSDF 6)

This statement reinforces the fact there is indeed a lack of agency within the BBNPA with regards to creating social capital. This becomes evident when people discuss what they could do to create rigid and links that none of the suggestion that amounted to any action being taken. De Groot and Tadepally (2008) suggested that different communities in different contexts require different indicators to assess the presence of social capital. In the interviews carried out for this research the SDF schemes consist of a community of people involved in developing and implementing the sustainability initiative. These communities possess bonding social capital which, arguably, can be assessed by the same indicators, namely, strong intra-community ties that foster trust, cooperation and the creation of a sustainable enterprise. These are necessary components for the functioning of these communities as the individuals within them are embedded in the membership through the sharing of common values and practices that have led to their involvement in the SDF scheme.

It is, however, bridging and linking social capital that varies amongst the SDF schemes. Dale and Sparks (2007) suggested that the leadership (of SDF schemes, observed from the interviews), the imperative mobilisation of both bridging and linking social capital. They suggested that smaller communities benefit from this leadership as a means to bridging the gap between other bonded communities, thus accessing a wider variety of human and financial capital. The lack of discussion between SDF communities and lack of agency from the NPA illustrate the structural problem but also provide examples of how links with outside communities can be created:

I've never talked to anyone else involved in SDF scheme, I've seen a

newsletter about some schemes but that is all. (Interviewee PSDF 3)

The newsletter interviewee PSDF 3 referred to is the BBNPA SDF update which is a yearly printed document showcasing some of the current schemes. Only a minority of those interviewed were aware of such documentation existing. However, the BBNPA believe that they are trying to promote shared experiences of those involved in SDF schemes. Although the BBNPA state they are trying to promote networking, it arguably requires more consideration on both the part of the NPA and those involved with the scheme. The foundations of the SDF involve participation from local communities in the implementation process and this means that they are working towards the BBNPA goals. Hence, these goals take precedence over the "community" ambitions. Arguably, the BBNPA is using these community funds to fulfil a variety of its own policy objectives. Apart from its role in administering the SDF the BBNPA also plays a major role in assisting in the application process on behalf of members from the local community who are seeking funding. This funding raises the question concerning the additionality of community assistance. Moreover, this funding contributes towards national budgets in a very general, spatially unspecific way and therefore, there is particular concern whether the funding is really being used for regional rural development purposes.

The ambitions of the NP filter through all aspects of the implementation of the funding. Not only does the NPA participate in the decision-making process but as they raised the capital of local communities in their park they receive the benefits. Arguably, NPA involvement in regional and rural development is both inevitable and desirable. What is less acceptable is that the goals of the NP can negate and overwhelm "community" objectives, inasmuch as communities seeking funding must fulfil the sustainability criteria as stated by the NPA and there is no flexibility. This rigidity in funding will impact and restrict the innovative nature of future schemes.

George Hillery (1955:p199) identified the "hard core" definitions of community to be situated in an "area", for there to be "common bonds" and "social interaction". When reflecting on the SDF schemes reviewed in this thesis it is clear they embody these central characteristics of a "community". The SDF schemes enable social interaction and help to strengthen the common bonds of individuals. However, the assumption that these SDF schemes accurately represents the wider geographic community in which they are situated in would be unrealistic. The SDF initiatives only involved a small proportion of the wider population in these "sustainable community" driven schemes. Consequently, it could be

argued that the SDF process helps to form and develop new "communities within communities". Therefore, instead of a pre-existing geographic community coming together to create a sustainable development programme the SDF scheme actually creates a bubble within the wider geographic community in which this new "community" has formed.

Consequently, the SDF schemes represent "communities of interest" Rather than representatives of all the residents in which these schemes are located. Whilst this may appear to be a matter of semantics, the research illustrated the way in which individuals identified themselves and others which might possibly have an impact on social relations and patterns of local participation. Through the SDF, the "community" is converted into an individual, bonded unit as such the funding granted is to this new community which empowers and strengthens them. This new community directly benefiting from the project and is not necessarily aligned with the wider geographic community that it is purported to be benefiting. Consequently, resources intended to strengthen and empower the wider community are being channelled primarily into a specific group within the wider community. This may well lead to an increase in social capital which may filter into the wider community at some point in the future but is not of direct impact to the initial term.

SDF participants were observed to display high levels of both bonding and linking capital. Through their participation in the SDF, they had been directly linked to actors with authority and power. However, there was limited evidence of bridging capital between the SDF groups and the other local actors. These observations provide evidence to support the concerns expressed by Bridger and Luloff (2001) regarding the common assumption that building social capital will automatically support more sustainable communities. They argue that the 'stocks' of social capital created within a certain network of individuals cannot be aggregated to the community level. Instead, communities are made up of a number of networks with individuals working across multiple groups, and "*pockets of social capital, each isolated from one another, tend to exist*" (Bridger and Luloff, 2001 p.469).

These pockets of social capital, instead of strengthening geographic communities, have the potential to be divisive. As Putnam (2000) argued, "*Networks and the associated norms of reciprocity are generally good for those inside the network, but the external effects of social capital are by no means always positive*" (2000, p.21). That is, social capital which benefits or enhances one group within the community may be detrimental or problematic for another.

The SDF schemes rely strongly on the mobilisation of the public, gaining participation that not only sustains traditions that can further develop social, economic and cultural renewal Consequently, the potential for SDF schemes to create innovative processes that change lifestyles, change the direction of the community, solving problems and improving on formal practices is vast. For SDF to be sustainable, to incorporate tourism and the community it must integrate the dynamics that come from social innovations. The combination of the three contested concepts must be entwined into the strategic thinking of all actors within the BBNP as Moulaert and Nussbaumer (2005, p.1973) indicated "*innovation must be entwined in the social relations between individuals and groups in neighbourhoods and the wider territories embedding them".* An increase in collective action could build social innovations within the BBNP as an individual SDF scheme, but cannot bring about social innovation by itself. The lack of embracing social innovation by the actors in the BBNP is, arguably, an important constraint on the development of not only the wider region but of the three contested concepts of this thesis.

In analysing the instrumentality of social capital in the BBNPA it is evident that the result of insular communities lacking bridging networks to connect to other SDF communities has resulted, not intentionally, but from the lack of agency of any individual (or authority) to make these ties. On the other hand, SDF schemes are fortunate to have individuals with a strong sense of purpose consequently forcing the community, so to speak, into developing into community ties. This was evidence from the response given by Interviewee PSDF 5 (refer to p.155) with the development of their *Round the Lake scheme.*

The relevance of bonding social capital for the creation of knowledge within a group and the importance of bridging social capital for sharing of knowledge beyond that group was noted by Isihara and Pascual (2008). The lack of knowledge transfer between SDF participants has been illustrated and the knowledge transfer beyond the SDF communities is arguably almost non-existent.

7.7 Sustainable Communities through Sustainable Development Funding

The next part of this chapter examines how the concept of sustainable communities is currently being understood and employed within the BBNP and the potential consequences of this framing on the outcomes it intends to serve. It will begin by discussing the conceptualisation and implementation of community in the BBNP and consider some of the criticisms of the use of community as a unit of governance. The literature (e.g. Baker, 2001) indicated that sustainable communities should consider the dynamics of all actors, at all levels within a geographical setting, that develop or enable a community to bring about sustainable development and change be it economically, socially, ethnically or ecologically. Consequently, interviewees were asked as to their interpretation on what a sustainable community means to them:

> *Sustainable communities can be interpreted in so many different ways, it can depend on where you live, who you associate with, what job you have and what pastimes you have……. It's really hard to define what a sustainable community is but I guess at its most basic level it is a group of people who live in a defined geographic area or at least as far as the NP is concerned that's perhaps the easiest way for us to classify it.* (PSDF 16)

However, contrary to the comment above, one interviewee suggested that:

> *That's interesting because sustainable communities are not just about where you live it's about how you are involved in the society that you live in. For example in Abergavenny I'm involved in community action, community participation and community involvement which as far as I'm concerned are three different ways of being part of the community.* (PSDF 6).

The literature (e.g. Taylor, 2003; Peters and Jackson, 2008) noted that the community level was the appropriate to bring about sustainable development initiatives. The SDF was established with the aim of developing ways of achieving a more sustainable lifestyle in the countryside utilising the beauty and diversity in which the local characteristics of culture, wildlife, landscape, land use and community are conserved and enhanced. This aim hangs on the assumption that communities should be actively engaged in working towards sustainable development goals which are the fundamental premise behind the growing trend towards community-based initiatives within government sustainable development policy. When asked about community development, one respondent from the BBNPA indicated the values of community development programmes as them being:

> *Self-governing, inclusive and non-hierarchical. This will then allow them to determine their own direction in terms of development and enable them to take ownership of the direction in order to allow them to use any assets at their disposal. The creation of such programmes (such as the SDF), in part, is to create a form of social justice and equality, that such programmes be universal and involve integration from different members of society.* (PSDF 15)

"Community" can be seen as playing two, interconnected roles within the sustainability policy rhetoric. Often, community is framed as a site of scale at which to deliver a particular sustainability goal, for example, and increase in the use of solar panels (a former SDF scheme in 2003 to increase the uptake of this renewable). This type of community-based intervention can include technical measures, such as a decrease in household energy consumption or the installation of renewable energy sources and behaviour changes such as an increase in recycling. Here, the community is the means by which a particular sustainability ambition is realised, however the fostering of "community", in itself can also be considered a goal, or an end of a sustainability policy. Sustainable development is usually perceived to be a tripartite concept bringing together the environment, economy and society either as a system of three interlocking concepts or as supporting pillars. Therefore, encouraging and strengthening "community" and the social networks and social cohesion it implies, may be seen as contributing towards socially sustainable rural development (Lehtonen, 2004). For example, one part of the rural community that has faced many challenges due to the changing economic framework of the NP is the farming community who have begun to use tourism as a strategy to generate alternative sources of income, in order to strengthen their diminishing community numbers.

Consequently, the need to identify what other rural communities can achieve through tourism was noted by one respondent:

> *We done some work with local communities trying to find out what kind of initiatives float their boat which was quite valuable but what was really important was what we did on the ground trying to involve local people with tourism in their patch to provide us with information as to how we can move our tourism strategy forward. So tourism needs to be part of a rural regeneration strategy some of the issues which are beginning to worry me are how does tourism fit into a rural economy because tourism is a bit fickle, you don't want to base your whole economy on tourism as that's a very high*

risk strategy as a number of destinations across the globe are found. Foot-and-mouth, BSE, terrorism it doesn't take much because there are so many alternative destinations. If there is any perceptual issues with your destination people won't go there and it doesn't hurt them one bit. We need to find different ways of gaining income which aren't necessarily based on the visitor economy and we need to broaden our visitor economy so it doesn't just focus on accommodation.

We do not have the answer sitting in our hands, if we did I wouldn't have a job. But National Parks are very favoured in the sense that they have these budgets such as £4 million a year coming out of the public purse into these special areas so we ought to be one of the people leading the field in terms of trying to answer these questions as who else is there? Local authorities won't be bothered they got heavy inward investment strategies and worrying about their town centres. Even local authorities you think of as being predominantly rural are actually targeting all their regeneration resources at their towns and that's not good enough quite frankly, that's not a rural regeneration strategy. This will turn commuters into their urban centres whether they be within the rural matrix or without it so certainly a lot more people are commuting down to Cardiff for example then who used to. (PSDF 16)

Rural tourism has long been considered a means of diversification for the rural economy. It is no surprise from the comments above given that tourism forms a major part of the economic base of this rural society that promoting this tool should create vitality and sustainability. The synergies interrelationships between tourism, agriculture and other economic sectors are increasingly important with many different actors getting involved. Rural tourism has become a "development tool" for many communities that wish to diversify their economies due to its ability to generate local employment, stimulate external investment into the communities and supplement traditional industries (Yiannakis and Davies, 2012). These issues will be given more consideration in chapter 8.

The focus groups were asked to explain what they understood by the term sustainability. A number of responses were given including:

This is about thinking about tomorrow making sure that were all able to survive and prosper in the future" (Respondent FG 28)

Is this making sure we all have jobs tomorrow?" (Respondent FG 8)

Making sure we all have jobs in the future" (Respondent FG 15)

This is ensuring that the land of today is fit for use in the future" (Respondent FG 6)

The comments above indicate that the respondents had a fairly clear understanding of what sustainability referred to for them. It was interesting to note that the majority of responses focused on economic prosperity and it was only respondent FG 6 (a farmer) who viewed sustainability in terms of land rather than economic prosperity. However, a farmer requires land to create income, so perhaps, it could be argued that all responses focused on economics. What was remarkable was that not a single respondent viewed sustainability in alignment with tourism or community development. If community development was such an important factor for local people, then perhaps, thinking about developing tourism and communities in order to create long-term strategic growth might have been commented on by respondents. This illustrates that there is much work to be done (particularly by the NPA) in order to make sure that people can clearly see a link between developing tourism and community programmes in order to create jobs/income for future generations. When the respondents were prompted about this they noted:

I know that sustainability is really important thing for the National Park. I never really considered the idea that our community or tourism can be linked to sustainability and at the moment I am struggling to make ends meet so thinking about the future in terms of a community based sustainability project or creating links to tourism projects is a little far-fetched (Respondent FG 2)

I thought this is all about being green. Recycling, waste reduction, it was that programme on TV called Hugh's War on waste that really made me think about this he kept mentioning sustainability all the time. It had not really crossed my mind that sustainability was to do with community survival or tourism these are separate things that require separate approaches. (Respondent FG 12)

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These comments indicate that even for residents on the National Park a sustainable community is hard to define as noted by Ledwith (2005) on page 44. The common theme from the comments does relate to the work of Dobson (2010) who indicated that communities are built on resilience and social or local networks which create relationships within a community, thereby establishing some form of sustainability. The focus groups were also asked about their understanding of sustainable communities and the participants suggested that:

> *Community is all about being together and community development is about sticking together*. (Respondent FG 30)

> *It's about being more than an individual............ and community development is thinking about long-term issues that affect us, such as lack of housing*. (Respondent FG 11)

> *It's about creating long term links with the people who live around us, maybe even the people who govern us. Whereas community development is about making sure that these two groups of people interact correctly*. (Respondent FG 5)

Respondents of the survey were asked what the term "community" meant to them. The relevance of identifying how the respondents viewed themselves as a community was important for this research, as the thrust of the NPAs policy with regard to SDF is to try to utilise community assets in order to provide services and products that create community sustainability and also to enhance community development the respondents of the survey were also asked what attributes they gave to the term community.

The main themes put forward by the respondents were the ideas of a "*sense of belonging*" and "*togetherness*" and "*being part of a group that has a shared identity*". Also respondents commented on the idea of "fellowship" where people share values and have a common identity which brings a cohesive meaning to a group of people that live in an area. The literature complimented the research findings as Crow *et al* (2001) highlighted the fact that the idea of community is a rather vast concept and quite ambiguous as it is bringing together many different demands on the environment and the economy. The data illustrated in Figure 7.8 highlights that the respondents believed that the creation of an identity at 25.3% and where you live at 21.5% summarise what a community meant to them.

This was followed by the notion that a sense of belonging and working together both at 17.7% also determined what a community is. The ideas of being together or working together were the least most popular notions of what community meant to the respondents. The data illustrates that the physical location and the sense of identity were the most important factors in determining what a community was for the respondents.

The idea of friendship or solidarity has been well noted when studying issues around defining what a community is. As noted by Phillips (1993) definitions of community all deal with people and generally comprise of network of social relations marked by neutrality and emotional bonds. However, there were some respondents who indicated that they "didn't know" what community was highlighting the ambiguity of the term.
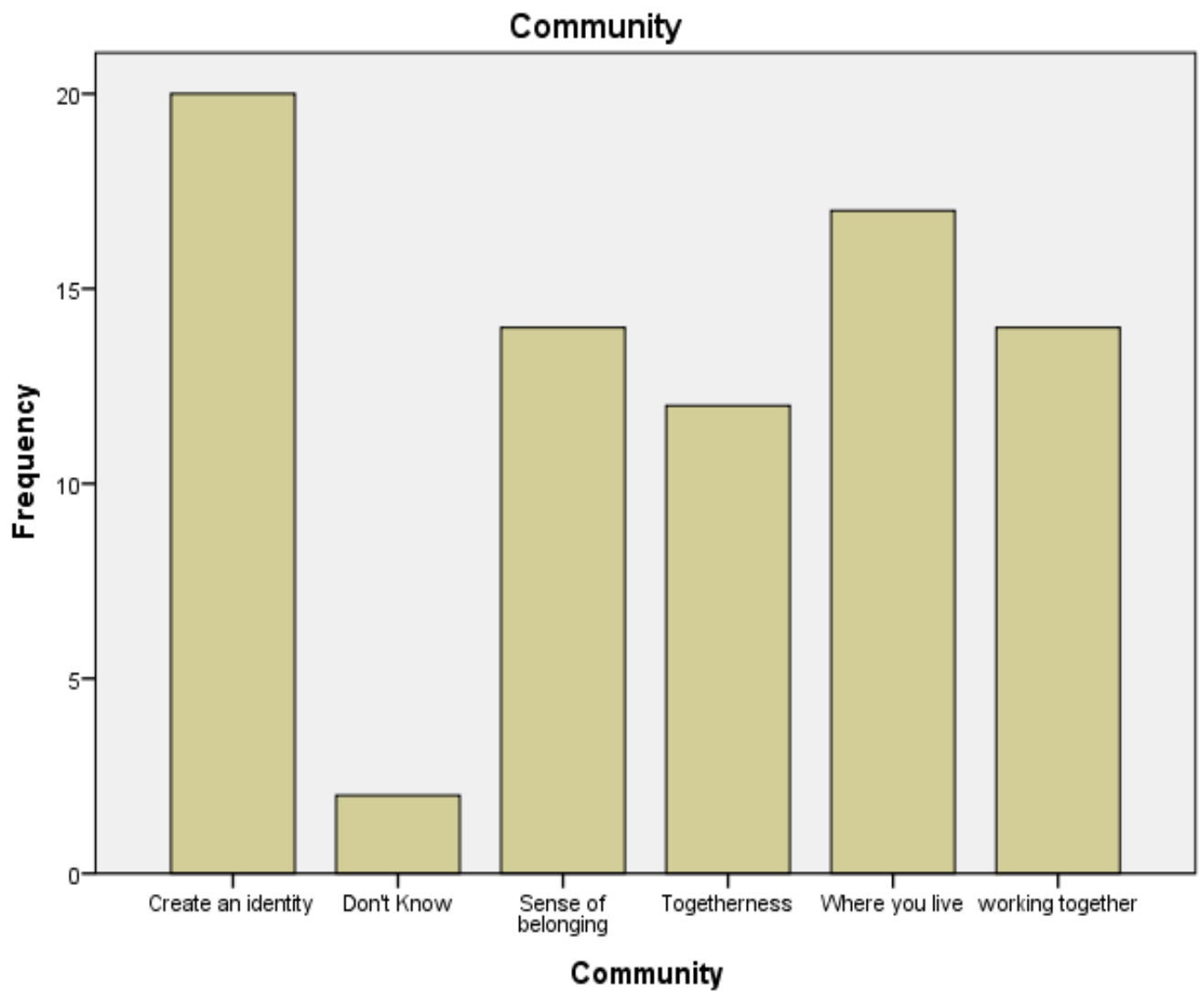
Figure 7.8: Findings of Survey on what does a community mean to them?

Definition of Community	Age				Total
	18-30	31-45	46-60	60 and beyond	
Create an identity	5	5	5	5	15
Don't Know	0	0	1	1	2
Sense of belonging	8	3	2	1	14
Togetherness	4	2	4	2	12
Where you live	11	3	0	3	17
working together	6	1	3	4	14
Total	34	14	15	16	79

Table 7.8: Cross tabulation of what a community means broken down by age

It can be noted from table 7.8 that the majority of the younger respondents aged 18 to 30 believed that where you lived explained how the term community could be defined and that all ages believed that creating an identity was an important part of defining a community. These responses relate to feelings of being together with other people in the community and the perceptions of the respondents are in accord with the definitions of community that were put forward in the literature review. Whereas for older people it was more about people and less about place.

The notion of community development as noted by Dobson (2010) has been discussed on page 45. Therefore, the comments of the focus group noted that community development was considered to be where:

> *It's a process where members of the community come together to take some form of collective action and try and sort out problems that have some sort of outcome such as economic or environmental*(Respondent FG 14)

It's a grassroots process where people try to organise themselves and try and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Communities then try to develop plans or options that try to benefit the community. (Respondent FG 21)

The responses of FG 14 and 21 indicated that a community is there to address some form of action or development and this warranted further examination.

Moderator: *"you all seem to have a really good understanding of what community development is all about how did you find out about it*?"

When you live in an area like Wales terms like sustainability and community development been bandied around for many years now by local councils, reading about it in the local newspapers and magazines and of course the NPA has been pushing issues around community development for at least the last 20 years. (Respondent FG 1)

The hotel industry in the area has been trying to get community involvement for quite some time now and I don't just mean employing local people and referring to the idea of getting the community behind the benefits of what our business can bring to the area and of course how they can take advantage of an increase in the number of visitors to the area" (Respondent FG 18)

The survey asked the respondents what "community development" meant to them. The responses indicated a variety of ideas with regard to the use of collective resources and ideas around achieving a goal. Participants highlighted that community development should involve people who share a vision that go through a process of change (building relationships with one another and then supporting existing government policies) in order to bring about change. The issues brought forward from the responses mirrored the literature that discussed issues around ownership (and economic ownership) of development as cited Edwards & Llurdes (1996). These academics indicated that there should be a relationship between members of a community that have to balance the various needs of their environment in terms of livelihoods and sustainability as well as meeting the various economic demands required by the members of the community. Figure 7.9 illustrates that the respondents stress the importance of creating better economic or social capabilities with 30.4% of the respondents

highlighting this fact. Related to this 31.6% of respondents believe that community development was about creating change. The statistics also highlighted that is was once again the younger respondents who purport these findings, and that the middle-aged and elderly respondents believed that creating change was also a central theme for community development, but equal to economic and social capabilities, as noted in table 7.9 on the next page.
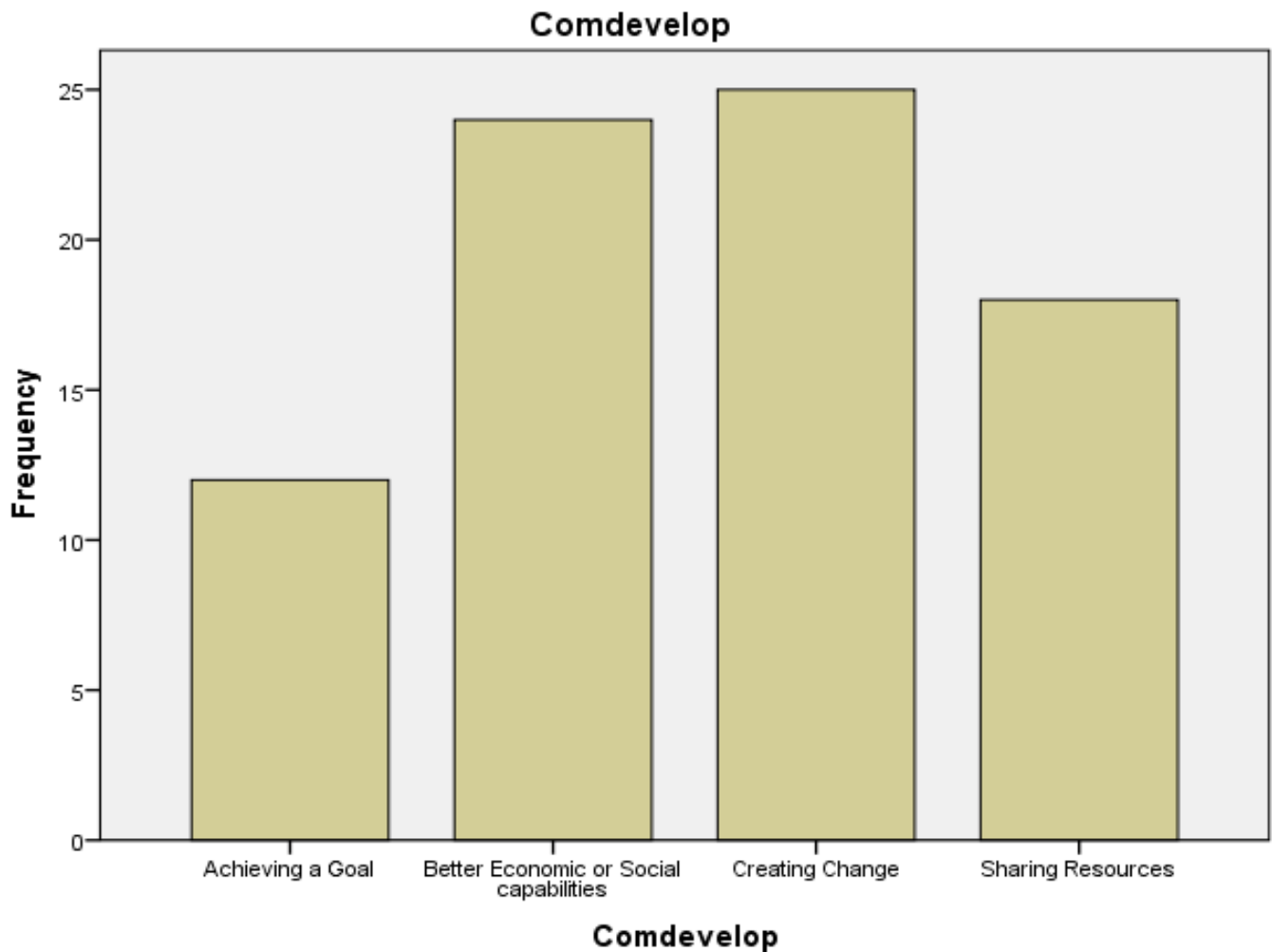
Figure 7.9: Findings of Survey on what does community development mean to them?

Count

Community Development	Age				Total
	18-30	31-45	46-60	60 and beyond	
Achieving a Goal	4	2	4	2	12
Better Economic or Social capabilities	9	4	4	7	24
Creating Change	13	5	4	3	25
Sharing Resources	8	3	3	4	18
Total	34	14	15	16	79

Table 7.9 Cross tabulation of what a community development means broken down by age

7.8 The Discourse and Reality of "The Community" in the Brecon Beacons National Park

As discussed in chapter 4, the concept of community is often acknowledged as a central feature of sustainable development. The community is thought to be the most efficient medium through which policies can encourage sustainability initiatives. It is also considered to exemplify the connexions of reliance and provision required to accomplish social and economic sustainability (Putnam, 2000; Dale and Newman, 2008). These two roles, as defined in this thesis are often considered the process and the outcome of sustainability policy and are considered to be co-constitutive. Participation in community driven schemes is assumed to be effective in enhancing and empowering communities and consequently making them more resilient and therefore sustainable (Assadourian, 2008).

The findings from the representatives of the BBNPA indicates that the SDF scheme is about making "improvements" and becoming more resilient. However, the findings raise a number of questions about the validity of this rationale. But at the most fundamental level, attempts to translate this theory of community driven action into reality were far more complicated by the inherent plurality and subjective nature of a community. This resulted in an inconsistency between the community that was participating in the SDF scheme and the community in which the scheme was situated.

The research conducted by Stone and Nyaupane (2013) indicated that a community usually comprises of various, sometimes conflicting, factions and interest groups, which supports the findings presented in this thesis whereby geographic communities encompass multiple and diverse "social categories" (Turner and Reynolds, 2011). These categories assist in the segmentation of the population into various complimentary and conflicting examples of "communities within communities" (Halseth, 1993). This research has highlighted the distinctions between members of the community that were "locals" and "urban refugees". Perhaps the NPA are using SDF policy to create communities as Raco and Flint (2001) noted as the "*producers of space and the makers of place*" (p.590). Consequently, each SDF scheme occurs in a space which is situated in a place and each SDF group is a community within a community. This resonates with the findings of this research where SDF groups often claim to speak "in the name of community". The participants who had been successful in SDF grants were well educated middle class individuals. This supports existing evidence to suggest that it is characteristic for sustainable, environmentally and ethically orientated activity to be dominated by the "well educated societal elite" (Svensson, 2012).

Although the process of public participation examined in McAreavey's 2009 case study cited on page 65 are very different from those in the SDF, these findings illustrate how participants of the SDF alter and shape their ambitions, arguably, influencing their position in the community in order to achieve the grants. Therefore, it can be argued participation in SDF had been linked into "the political apparatus" of the NPA and SDFOs, through whom, the communities' projects will mould with to more closely align the criteria and ambitions of the NPA. Participants of the SDF schemes indicated that they were obliged to make the criteria of the SDF projects a central point in their strategic thinking, which arguably exaggerates the groups' dislocation and detachment from the wider geographic community they are attempting to represent. The rationale for schemes such as the SDF rests on the ability for "communities" to take responsibility for elements of their own development.

7.9 Summary

Previous research has indicated that, when free to respond organically to the evolving needs of the population, community driven initiatives can be an effective means by which to engage and mobilise communities around sustainability concerns in order to serve local needs (Peters and Jackson, 2008; Peters *et al*, 2010; Middlemiss and Parrish, 2010). However, this thesis will argue that the lack of measurement or evaluation coupled with a lack of cohesion in the development of SDF programmes is an underlying flaw in this scheme. The expectation of funders for community projects usually requires a well-planned strategic approach with the need to regularly report outputs. This is not the case for SDF schemes. It could be advisable to develop appropriate measures for success for community-led initiatives, which provide evidence of the positive impact of the scheme. This would provide the funders with information and such data could be used by other communities planning similar initiatives. Arguably, the SDF officers could take, as suggested by White and Stirling (2013) a more "intermediary role" whereby they act as mediator and coordinator in the communities in the BBNPA. The authors suggest that such a role will allow communities to become linked together and learn from one another in order to give guidance, support and advice. This evidence serves to underline the importance of seeing community driven sustainability activities, not as a series of isolated projects, but as components of wider, multi-actor networks and complex systems.

The concept of community is connected to sustainability into two distinct manners. Firstly, community can be utilised as a tool through which sustainability goals such as the involvement in SDF, are achieved. Secondly, the strengthening of bonds or relationships of a community may be an outcome of sustainability programmes in itself. The BBNPA link these two characteristics in a mutually reinforcing relationship: employing "the community" as a tool through which to achieve sustainability goals which is thought to build social capital and in turn empower those communities, thereby, producing a "community" as an outcome. Central to this reasoning is the belief that "the community" is a tangible entity which is capable of delivering sustainability goals in order to achieve a sustainable community. The SDF scheme requires that communities are defined in terms of geography, a requirement which is based on the traditional notions of a community as an organic, place-based connections between individuals living in close proximity. Whilst some of the SDF schemes observed demonstrate some indicators of place attachment the bonds identified in this research more closely aligned with those of personal "place identity" as opposed to place-based community bonds. This research has noted that the traditional place-based notions of a community which visualise the rural community as a homogenous, cohesive entity is archaic. Instead, the researcher found sub-communities within communities where membership overlaps but both of which serve a geographically

defined community. Therefore, the sub- community which has achieved SDF and raised its social capital and has been strengthened and empowered as part of the SDF process does not always increase the capital to be found in the wider community. Therefore, the "community" being strengthened and empowered is a self-selected sub-community of the wider community. Through the receipt of SDF these communities in the BBNP are creating small pockets of bonding and linking social capital. Therefore, not only are these initiatives not increasing wider community cohesion, but without building the necessary bridging capital, these pockets of social capital can actually undermine the social cohesion of the geographic community. Consequently, whilst SDF can legitimately claim to be utilising "the community" as a tool through which they are achieving sustainability, they are not strengthening that same geographically defined community as an outcome.

Chapter Eight

The Place of Tourism as an Instrument for Development in the Brecon Beacons National Park

The previous chapter reviewed the dynamic drivers (of the synthetic model) to ascertain how they fuel the mechanics of rural sustainability. Attention must now be given to the development of tourism within the synthetic model (as outlined on page 131). In order to appreciate the significance of the role of the NPA in the development of tourism as well as the attitudes of the residents, impacts and integration of tourism within the BBNP. The SDF schemes may have social and cultural implications important for rural development, like the enhancements of local identity. Providing a stringent and coordinated use and utilisation of funding for development coupled with the promotion of collaboration between local actors may have more long-term value. The creation of actor networks, changes in attitudes to grassroots community participation processes as well as the development of the stronger sense of confidence and higher place attachment could help nurture the integration of tourism in a much stronger fashion.

8.1 The Role of the National Park in providing Tourism

Representatives of the NPA were asked what they felt about tourism development in the area. The responses were generally related to the role that the NPA plays with regards to development, tourism and the preservation of natural assets. However, these respondents focus much more on the landscape and their role in preserving this asset and how it could be used as an economic tool much more than other respondents. For example one respondent thought that the natural environment was the primary asset that could be used for tourism, stating:

> *The environment is what people come for, the quality of the air the quality of the wildlife and beautiful landscape and why tourists come. My role is to make sure that there is an attractive environment that preserves and enhances the quality of life both residents and tourists and that we can adapt our more traditional industries that are declining and transform them into new economic activities.* (PSDF 16)

The role of the BBNPA often allows them to dictate the way in which land and NP development can take place. They are in a position to dictate the use of landscape and as tourists use landscape in their leisure pursuits it only follows that local people should be able to glean income from the everyday activities of tourists. Therefore, as noted by Grunewald, (2009) to place an economic value on the use

of land involves understanding the behavioural patterns of visitors. If local communities understand the various economic value to sustaining and enhancing the natural landscape in order to increase visitor numbers this may increase the number of sustainability initiatives. However, the BBNP has followed a traditional route of tourism development as noted by another respondent who suggested that:

> There are so many different types of small accommodations and attractions, open spaces, market towns and interesting places to visit in the area. The growth in the tourism sector has been phenomenal but primarily it has been individuals transforming their homes into the bed and breakfasts or their open spaces into activity centres that have been the driving force for change.
> (PSDF 5)

This illustrates the lack of community involvement in the initial growth of tourism in the area. Tourism development has predominantly been led by the NPA working with local businesses. It has only been in the last 20 years through the use of SDF that local communities have mobilised themselves in order to create consumable products that transform their livelihoods from rural economies to more tourism based economies. This route of development is a typical pattern for tourism development in rural areas where local entrepreneurs have created businesses and then the knock-on effect of their business has generated revenue for peripheral areas and then these areas have created change based on the efforts of an entrepreneur (Jennings, 2011). The shift towards using community based programmes involves a more holistic thinking about tourism development in an area.

NPA representatives identified a range of issues around the sustainability of tourism. One respondent suggested that:

> There are no global hotel operators in the area which means there is very little inward investment opportunities perhaps the absence of decent infrastructure or isolation of the towns does not make it very appealing for global investors. (PSDF 16)

However, what may be considered as a disadvantage is also an opportunity as the area is able to utilise the notions of peace and quiet and be "far from the madding crowd" in their (BBNPA) promotional material. As highlighted by the NPA representatives the issue of communication and lack of structure

is a problem in utilising business people in the development of proposed projects. The use of tourism was seen by business people as a way of enhancing their geographical area in the hope of enticing more visitors to this destination. Andereck and Nyaupane (2011) noted income from tourism has the potential to increase the quality of life for local people as well as improve awareness and contentment within residents of NPs. Given such a sentiment it is only logical that tourism is utilised effectively by the BBNPA. One respondent suggested that:

> *The landscape is beautiful. The town is not commercialised so still feels like a traditional country town and we should be taking advantage of this. Obviously there are drawbacks to this as well but the SDF is one way that we can try to take advantage of what we have in order to overcome the limitations*. (PSDF 15)

The NPA representatives focused on the natural environment as the main attraction for visitors. Arguably, the landscape should be viewed as an asset in its own right rather than being marketed as an additional benefit to visiting this location. This argument aligns itself with the view that Beckerman, (1994) contend whereby the attribution of an economic value on landscape helps bring the identifiable benefits of tourism to all actors involved in the development of it.

> *By using the land and the history that goes with it we are able to create a more interesting product rather than just saying to potential visitors come for a walk.* (PSDF 15)

The concept of adding value to the existing core product (the landscape) appears to be the main motivator for rural development. As noted by a NPA representative:

> *We don't have to create something new or novel but what we do need to do is make sure that we can offer what visitors want. Most of our visitors need short walks, nice experiences in towns or villages, castles and churches. They need all these multiplicity of things and that's okay we have those things already.* (PSDF 16)

It is interesting to note from the comment above how tourism contributes to the improvement of collaboration between different actors within the rural development arena. Given that tourism is generally an integral part of recommendations for economic development in rural areas, it can often

"strengthen the cooperation of local actors in the cooperation of actors inside and outside the region. This cooperation facilitates the creation and maintenance of networks and public/private partnerships and may result in local synergy………….. In addition, a cultural territorial identity may also serve as a main catalyst in raising local consciousness towards cooperation" (Terluin 2003. p. 342).

Butler (1980) noted that the paradox of tourism is that it consumes the very products that attract tourists to a destination. Therefore, the respondents were questioned as to how tourism can be sustainable when the literature (e.g. Andereck and Nyaupane, 2011) indicates that it destroys the natural environment.

> *Well does it? Tourism has negative impacts as well as positive impacts certainly. It's one of our roles as an organisation to manage the negative impacts and to find ways in which people can enjoy the area whilst having fewest negative impacts. There's impacts can be physical or environmental you know on the landscape as it were all they can be negative for the community but is very much our role to negotiate good solutions to those problems whereby people can have the benefits of the economic value.* (PSDF 16)

This quote illustrates that the enigma surrounding the concepts of tourism and sustainability. The finding above suggests that there is no "end goal" of sustainable tourism but rather an on-going process. This statement indicates that the tourism created in the BBNP is sustainable within the remit of the NP, they are using and preserving landscape, creating recreational past times and considering the impacts on local areas and how to mitigate these impacts. Given this statement, participants were asked how they interpret the concept of sustainable development as the literature (e.g. Parris and Kates, 2003) indicates that it means many different things to many different people. PSDF 16 purported that sustainable development was:

> *Sustainable regeneration, development of the rural community and economics is part of this type of development. You need all the elements of sustainability to be built into that process, it's about quality not quantity and I mean quality of life rather than quantity of money. Communities make sure that tourism works for them rather than them working for tourism.* (PSDF 16)

Although more visitors may visit a destination creating facilities for visitors and locals alike the question of establishing a wider sustainable economic base warranted more investigation, PSDF 16 noted that that:

The problem local communities have is working out how to extract value from the closed walls of one particular attraction (he mentions the Big pit a UNESCO heritage site in the National Park) and the trouble with all these things is that people rock up to the attraction, experience it and then go away again. Unless you're going to create more attractions such as espresso machines how does a village gain from that? For example we have the waterfalls area where people come and visit the waterfalls and have a lovely time and they might even spend money in the surrounding area such as Brecon. So Brecon get some value out of it but what the actual destination Pont Melin-Fach gets out of it?…….. Well they are not, and we trying to work with them and say okay what business opportunities are there in your local community that we can create to get some value out of those people. But it's not easy to achieve that as the visitor demands tend to be around refreshments and that is something which is difficult in a community that is actually deprived as they don't have much of market for espresso places. If you go to another destination such as Crickhowell it's easy there's plenty of people with disposable income and there are plenty of espresso's everywhere but other destinations do not have that same core market, we are trying to evolve solutions to that. (PSDF 16)

One such response to the comment above is the evolution of the arts and crafts market as a driver for the tourism industry. PSDF 16 noted that:

Many towns have started to use culture as a way of attracting tourism, for example the Hay book Festival and Brecon Jazz but the problem Brecon Jazz has are there aren't any Jazz clubs up and around town, there used to be but not anymore and it does not come out of the authenticity of the place. This is why I think Brecon Jazz is struggling and Hay is successful. So the core product in this case jazz needs to come out of the culture of the town. Which is why Brecon is now moving to an arts and design town, as it fits and is moving in that direction, there are more of those sort of retail outlets and we

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are hoping that trend will continue. What I have seen is the towns in tourism areas generally do well when they sell things to visitors who come. Part of the change in UK demographics means there are more elderly people who are visiting and have more pounds in their pockets and prepared to spend things on nice things. So there are linkages there. (PSDF 16)

Once value has been created as noted from the comment above then the community involved needs to mobilise itself and take responsibility in the direction of this type of development. The knowledge and skills required to promote and market a destination to a wider audience require nurturing. Therefore, the question of whose responsibility the promotion of the destination should be warranted examination. One interviewee suggested that:

Well when we had the money what we did was sit down with them and say here is someone who can help you develop your own tourism action plan. So we had a consultant back then and it was a very simple bit of work it wasn't complicated. The consultant would say what is the tourism strategy for the Brecon Beacons and how does that relate to this community - here's a list of tasks to do. You want to add to that, take away from that and we had money to help them implement that and some of it was elements of marketing so, website or leaflet not journalist visits just the most basic things. Some of these communities are continuing to do that off their own back using their own resources now that that has come to an end some of them are applying for more SDF to keep things going, some have survived, some not sadly but that's life. It is that sort of approach that we enable and empower people to take action on their behalf and to my mind that is sustainability, it's not about public bodies doing it all for people. That said we do now have a marketing coordination group, we invite all local authorities Powys is the only one that really engages with it, and the tourism Association, and say how can we work as a partnership to deliver better marketing or funds from visit Wales. Which means we have joint campaigns on behalf of the destination. (PSDF 16)

The comment above suggests that participation and coordination are required in the development of such a strategy. Participation through training and workshops may provide a quick means to involve private actors in public issues. This approach can be response to the current needs of society, and

arrange resources to sit in quicker than formulated long-term strategy. Although such projects deliver advantages in providing quick results and meeting current needs, there were some issues which emerge from the research findings. It was found that the project based public-private interaction has not been a consistent relationship within the BBNPA, as noted by interviewee PSDF 5:

> *The round the lake SDF scheme involved public and private organisations working together and to established it and coordinate this was a nightmare. What both parties shared in common was a desire to know what they would get out of it in the short term. There was very little concern with the long-term.* (Interviewee PSDF 5)

The comment above contributes to the lack of partnership and understanding between public and private sectors which is an important element in sustainable development. In addition, there is a lack of flexibility in the nature of the SDF; for example, funds for community projects can only be used for those very specific purposes. This limits the ability of communities to address wider issues when engaging in publicly funded schemes that involve tourism development.

8.2 Attitudes towards tourism within the Brecon Beacons National Park

The survey utilised the following questions to establish whether the residents believed that the NPA had done enough in terms of providing accommodation, maintaining the landscape, preserving built heritage, marketing, contributing to local employment, organising local events, and creating/improving tourist attractions.
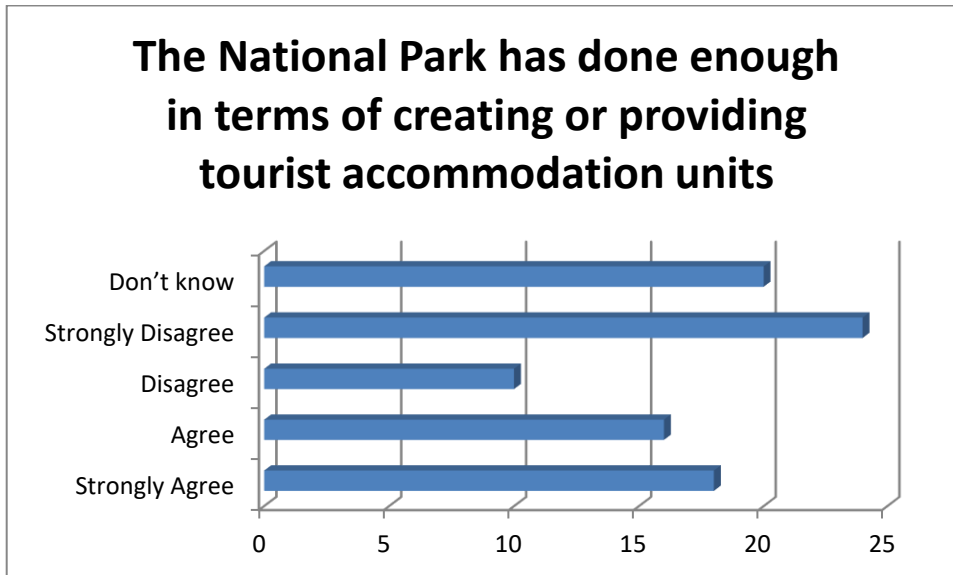
Figure 8.1: The National Park has done enough in terms of creating or providing tourism accommodation units

Interestingly the participants had mixed views about whether the NP has done enough in terms of creating tourism accommodation units. The geographic area of the respondents provides a mixture of camping, Bed & Breakfasts and self-catering accommodation but there are not many hotels in the region and there are restrictions on the use of land in terms of providing accommodation for tourists (see page 18). In March 2015, the NPA modified their planning guidance notes with regards to accommodation within the park. The NPA committee deferred the "*conversion of farm and other buildings to dwellings*" until a later date but wanted to enable appropriate development in the open countryside. This was to be done through the development of allowing glamping an appropriate development in the countryside to enhance and protect the character of the BBNP. http://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/the-authority/press-and-news/press-releases/march-2015/new-guidance-for-development-in-the-national-park/.

The mixed views from the respondents may reflect the notion that in rural areas tourism is often viewed as means by which to counteract economic decline and prevent outmigration of the local population (Walford, 2001). The development of providing basic elements of tourism such as accommodation should be at the forefront of any rural development plans. Bateman and Ray (1994) researched pluriactivity (which is the ability of a farm household to participate in income earning activities that contribute to the maintenance of that household other than farming) in Welsh NPs and deemed the need to allow farms to develop accommodation as a prerequisite in tourism infrastructure and rural development. Consequently, any land use restrictions placed on residents by the BBNPA may not be well received by the local people.

The National Park has done enough in terms of maintaining the landscape

Category	Value
Don't know	0
Strongly Disagree	4
Disagree	11
Agree	25
Strongly Agree	38
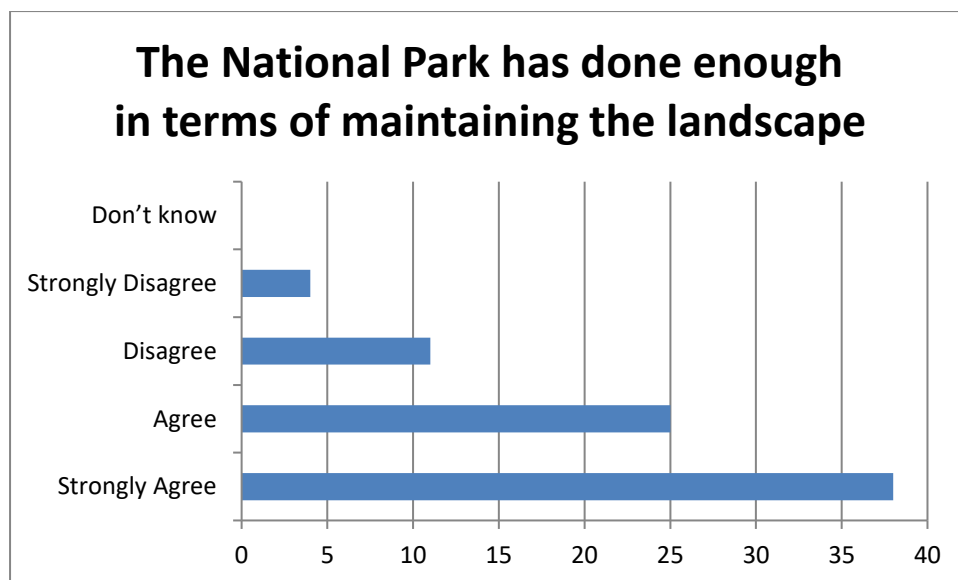
Figure 8.2: The National Park has done enough in terms of maintaining the landscape

Here the respondents indicate that the NP is attempting to maintain the landscape. 48% of the respondents strongly agree that the NPA was maintaining the landscape and the primary function of such an organisation is to play this role. The landscape character assessment carried out by the NPA in August 2016 reflected the European landscape Convention and took into consideration the natural, cultural and perceptual factors that comprise the landscape. http://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/1.0_Executive-Summary_final_-120930.pdf. The need to protect and conserve the main tourism asset was reflected in the findings.

The National Park has done enough in terms of preserving built heritage
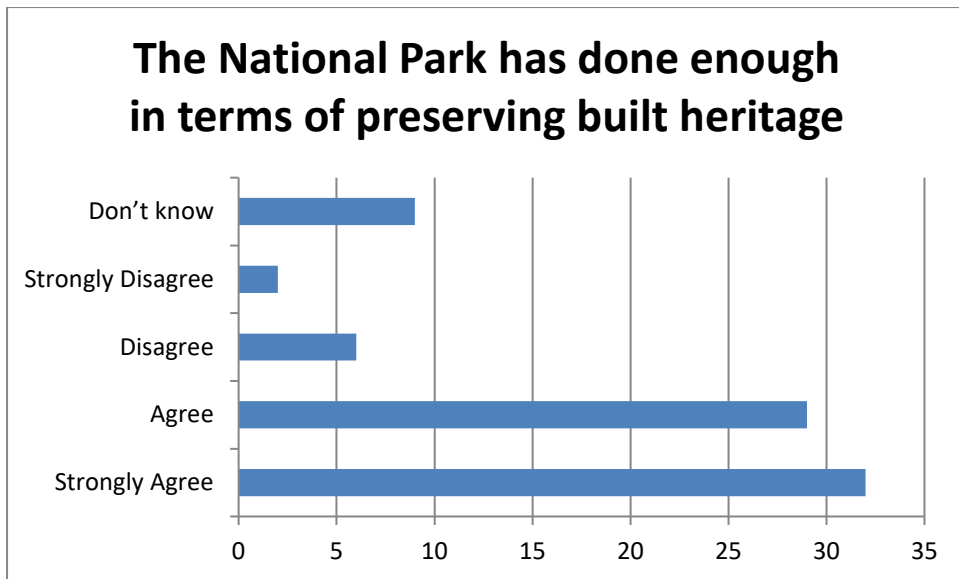
Figure 8.3: The National Park has done enough in terms of preserving built heritage

Respondents also believe that the NPA is preserving built heritage with 36.7% agreeing and 40.5% strongly agreeing with the statement. The findings from the statement can be justified by the different archaeological sites scattered throughout the BBPNP which include prehistoric stone circles, burial chambers, Iron Age hillforts, Roman camps and mediaeval castles as well as the remains of their industrial past. The NPA has made great efforts to preserve these heritage hotspots as they have provided attractions for both tourists and residents.

The National Park has done enough in terms of promoting the area as a tourist destination
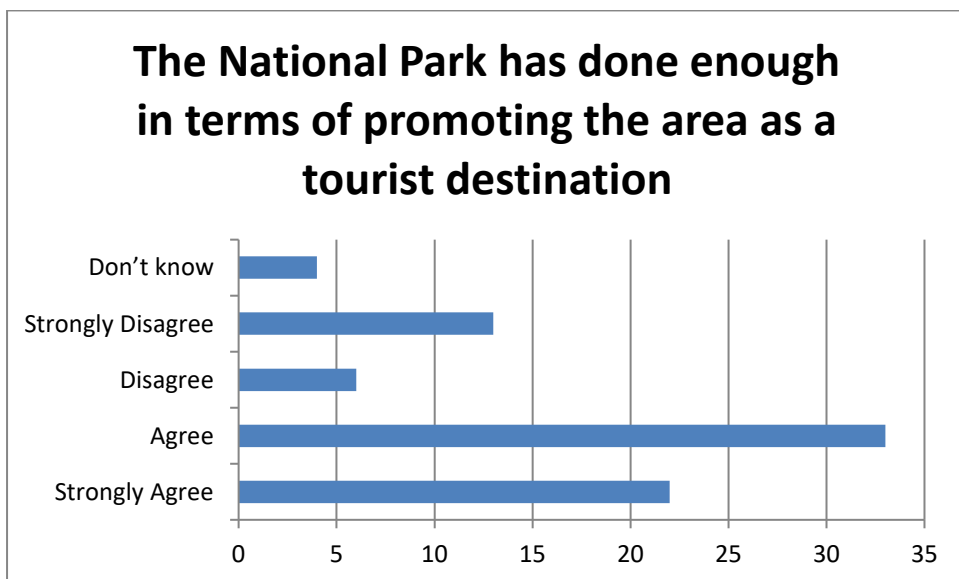
Figure 8.4: The National Park has done enough in terms of promoting the area as a tourist destination

The respondents indicate that the NPA has promoted the destination well. Marketing has historically been considered as the means of satisfying consumer needs for short term profit, as Wilson and Gilligan (1998, p. 3) suggest, '*marketing is the management process for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably'*. Accordingly, as environmental awareness has become more prevalent, marketing has been viewed as the main influencing factor that encourages a growing demand and consumption of scarce resources which are resolutely associated '*in the attendant problems of resource depletion, pollution, species destruction and climate change'* (Crane, 2000, p.1). The importance of marketing to promote a destination such as a NP may prevent conflicting interests.

However, the NPA use marketing as a part of their practical management processes integrating marketing into the park's management plan which should provide the tools and systems that enable businesses and voluntary enterprises to attain their ambitions more efficiently. Sharpley and Pearce (2007) purported that the use of marketing is indispensable for the realisation of non-profit groups as marketing is primarily concerned with motivating and persuading the attitudes and commercial decisions of other people. They go on to suggest that many community groups have yet to see the potential of marketing and have, therefore, still not fully embraced its potential, rendering it an insignificant role as a promotional tool. The results of the survey indicate that residents can recognise the marketing efforts of the NPA. This may reflect that as Peattie (1999) noted that marketing is not only involved with attracting potential consumers but doing this in such a way that is socially and environmentally suitable.
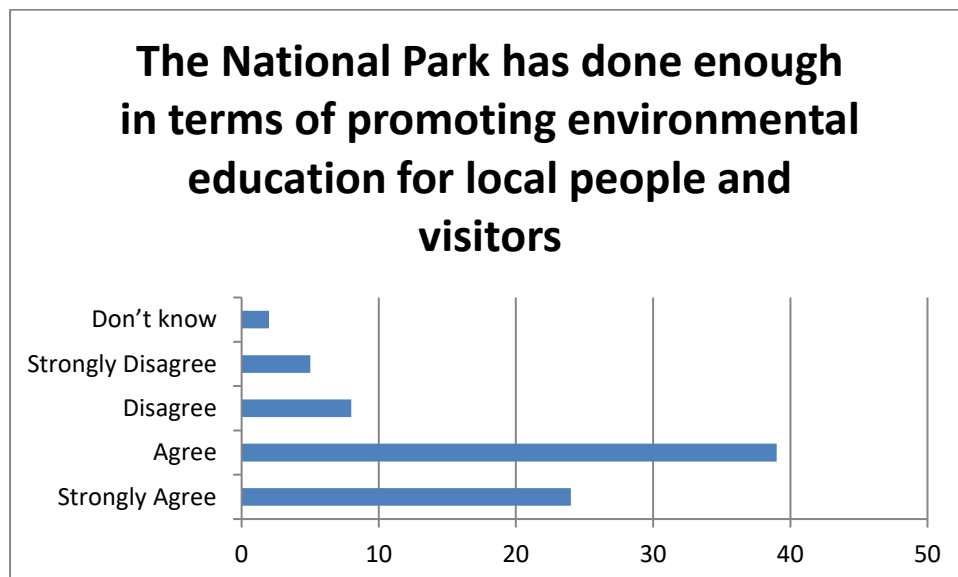
Figure 8.5 The National Park has done enough in terms of promoting environmental education for local people and visitors

This statement also illuminates the respondents believe the NPA is promoting environmental education for local people and visitors and this can be illustrated by the various activities undertaken by the NPA which include; the dark sky reserve, the biodiversity programmes, the climate change programmes, the wildlife and planning initiatives. Innovative schemes such as the "Calch" (lime) project are attempting to promote education and conservation was increasing the number of visitors to the park. This project is a partnership between the BBNPA, archaeological trust, the National Museum of Wales and the Black Mountain centre where they are attempting to preserve heritage and nature. The project has repaired various structures in the Black Mountain area and has created some trails in order to encourage visitors as well as investigating the history of the lime industry to discover its links with local communities. http://www.calch.org.uk/.

Bushell (2003) suggested that tourism can increase the understanding that people have for the environment and the need to conserve it. Income derived from tourism can also supplement the funding of conservation projects (Goodwin, 2002). Hence, the results indicate that residents believe that the BBNPA has done enough in the promotion of environmental matters. It would be the BBNPA that can directly benefit from an increase in tourism revenue, as their primary source of funding is government grants. These have been reduced in recent years despite rising visitor numbers and a need to increase their efforts in conservation and protection (Bushell and McColl, 2007). Therefore, raising environmental awareness something which Bushell (2003) indicated cannot be learnt in a classroom, is something that the residents believe the NPA is achieving. This maybe because tourists may feel motivated to contribute to the conservation of natural areas when they can physically see a tangible return. The NPA can consequently provide an arena via which visitors can experience the outdoor life and nurture an understanding of the value such areas play in wider society. Butler (2000) has argued that public support for NPs is to a degree, dependent on consenting public access to these areas and the thought of a NP without tourism is unsustainable.

The National Park has done enough in terms of contributing to local employment

Don't know	
Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	
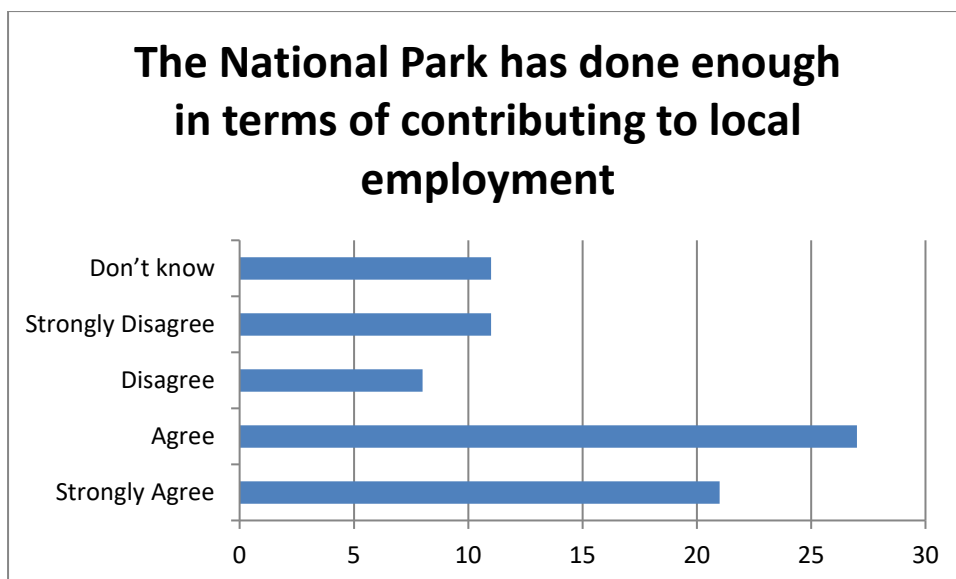
Figure 8.6 The National Park has done enough in terms of contributing to local employment

The majority of respondents also believe that the park has contributed to local employment. The UK Association of National Park Authorities (2012) indicated that tourism will stimulate the economy, income and employment opportunities and rural tourism is a primary source of income for some local communities that few other income stream possibilities (Briedenhann and Wickens, 2004). However, the reliance on this source of income and jobs is a high-risk strategy that is prone to seasonality, poor wage possibilities for workers (Wall and Mathieson, 2005) and external issues to the tourism system such as the Foot and Mouth outbreak in 2001 that impacted the BBNP for several years. Morgan (2015) indicated that the BBNP suffered losses estimated at £1 billion due to the limitations placed on outdoor activities and closure of many regions within the park. The ancillary services such as restaurants and shops obviously felt the knock on effect facing closure and uncertainty in their survival (Hayward 2001). The growth of second home ownership mentioned on page 4 is yet another example of how the use of tourism can undermine the BBNP. The leakage of income earned from tourism out of the park is a growing phenomenon (Eagles and Moisey, 2008). When "outsiders" who do not live in the BBNP yet own property in the park and then rent them out as holiday accommodation contributes to economic leakage from the area.

The National Park has done enough in terms of organizing local events

Response	Value
Don't know	19
Strongly Disagree	5
Disagree	29
Agree	16
Strongly Agree	9
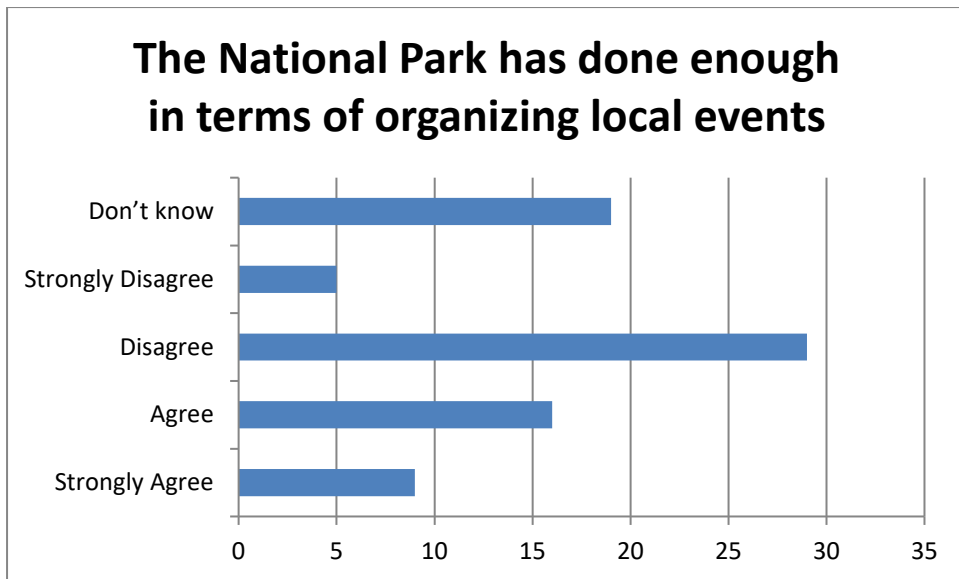
Figure 8.7: The National Park has done enough in terms of organizing local events

The majority of respondents indicate that the NPA is not doing enough in terms of organising local events. This is surprising as the NPA assists in numerous festivals and fairs across the region aimed at residents and tourists alike including the Hay Book Festival, the Royal Welsh spring festival, Brecon Arts and Craft fair and various rural festivals such as the Llandovery sheep festival. Although some of these are private initiatives they all involve collaboration with the NPA. The BBNPA website indicates there are a variety of events including; stargazing, navigation courses, open gardens, cycling tours, and pottery workshops (http://www.breconbeacons.org/events?page=1&). Arguably, the NPA needs to promote these activities in a more stringent manner.

The National Park has done enough in terms of creating and/or improving tourist attractions
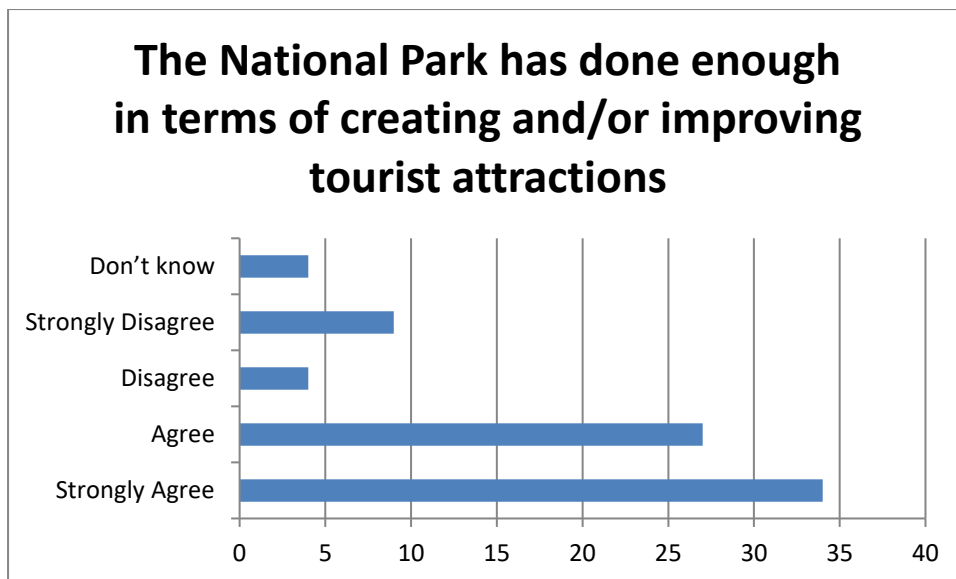
Figure 8.8: The National Park has done enough in terms of creating and/or improving tourist attractions

The respondents also believe that the NPA has created sufficient tourist activities. The creation of tourism products in a NP setting is a sensitive process as noted by Romeiro and Costa (2010). This involves not only developing the resources available for consumption but also the management of visitors. Whilst these maybe independent components they are entwined due to the impact on the environment from the interaction of tourists. Visitor management usually begins with the premise that the visitors damage the very resources they are visiting and, therefore, is mainly concerned with the minimisation of the negative impacts of tourism (Mason, 2005). The development of tourism resources has gone through much development in the BBNP in the last 10 years (refer to section 2.2.1). However, the visitor management techniques are the approach the NPA is taking in regard to improving experiences in the park. Visitor management techniques have been categorised into two differing approaches. "Hard" approaches focus on controlling visitor numbers and the adaption of the destination to cope with visitors. "Soft" approaches primarily direct their attention to modifying visitor behaviour via the dissemination of information and education (Kuo, 2002; Mason, 2005). The NPA is attempting to meet and exceed visitor needs whilst minimising their negative impacts which as Bullock and Lawson (2007) noted is hard to achieve equitably.

8.3 The Impact of Tourism on Residents of the Brecon Beacons National Park

Participants of the survey were asked to give examples of any positive or negative changes from tourism development that has affected their community and a range of answers were expressed highlighting various issues such as:

Increased number of jobs and revenue for local people
Development of public space
Improved infrastructure
An increase in preservation of land and historic sites
Increased demand for local food and craft
Helps preserve rural services like buses, village shops and post offices
Tourists mainly come to see the scenery and wildlife, so there is pressure to conserve habitats and wildlife
Services provided for the use of tourists, such as leisure facilities, also benefit local people
Tourism revenue can be reinvested to protect the environment
Regeneration of both the 'built' and 'natural' environment
Information provided by national parks increases the education and environmental awareness of tourists
Increased education and training of local people to enable them to take jobs in the tourism industry
Reinforcement of cultural identity if visitors are interested in the host culture can create new industries
Increases tax revenues which the local government may invest in the area

Table 8.1: Respondents comments on positive impacts of tourism

The perceived positive advantages of tourism were generally focused around the economic opportunities presented by this type of development. Economic growth be it through employment opportunities or an increase in business and investment seem to be the main desired outcomes. Respondents also believe that tourism development will have a positive impact in the development of local recreational facilities as well as an improvement in the infrastructure of the park. Respondents also highlight the benefits that the cultural identity of the region would be strengthened by tourism development. Moreover, as Grunewald (2002) argued an increase in cultural identity will help to enhance community confidence by creating changes in the attitudes of individuals who help with the regeneration of their area.

Loss of sense of community
Increase in number of people coming to the area
Extensive development
Increase in traffic volume, congestion and pollution, limited parking for residents in towns due to tourism
Loss of public spaces for tourism activities
Damage to the landscape such as litter, erosion, fires, disturbance to livestock, vandalism
Local goods become expensive because tourists will pay more
Shops stock products for tourists and not everyday goods needed by locals
Demand for holiday homes makes housing too expensive for local people
Demand for development of more shops and hotels
Jobs are mainly seasonal, low paid with long hours
Water sports cause erosion of lake shores and there is a conflict of interests between different lake users
Too many tourists can overwhelm local culture
Tourist behaviour can offend locals and there can be conflict between tourists and locals
Pressure on scarce resources like water

Table 8.2: Respondents comments on negative impacts of tourism

The research asked survey participants if they had been involved in the development of tourism in their area and the results identified 82% of the participants had not been involved. Of the 18% of the sample that have been involved they went on to answer the proceeding question which asked them what roles they have played in the development of tourism and their answers included:

9 respondents have been involved in community consultations/discussions and forum groups organised by the POWYS and the NPA about tourism development.
1 respondent had set up their own accommodation unit for tourist consumption
1 respondent ran a garden nursery
1 respondent was involved in providing tourists with rowing boats to use on Llangorse lake

1 respondent ran a horse riding school that provides trekking facilities to tourists	
1 respondent managed a local pub	

Table 8.3: Respondents involved in development of tourism in the BBNP

The survey respondents were asked if their income relied upon tourism. Compared to the 2011 census, the sample illustrates an underrepresentation for those who do not derive their income from tourism and an overrepresentation for those that do. It is hard to ascertain from the 2011 census what percentage of the population partly derive their income through tourism. Jobs in transportation, wholesale and retail, public administration and transportation may well be linked to the tourism industry. These sectors actually comprise 26.23 percent of the overall population by occupation which might explain the results obtained from the survey.

Income depending on tourism	Researcher's Sample (%)	POWYS 2011 Census (%)
Yes	14.10	11.25
No	74.35	88.75
In part	11.55	N/A

Table 8.4: Respondents reliance upon income from tourism
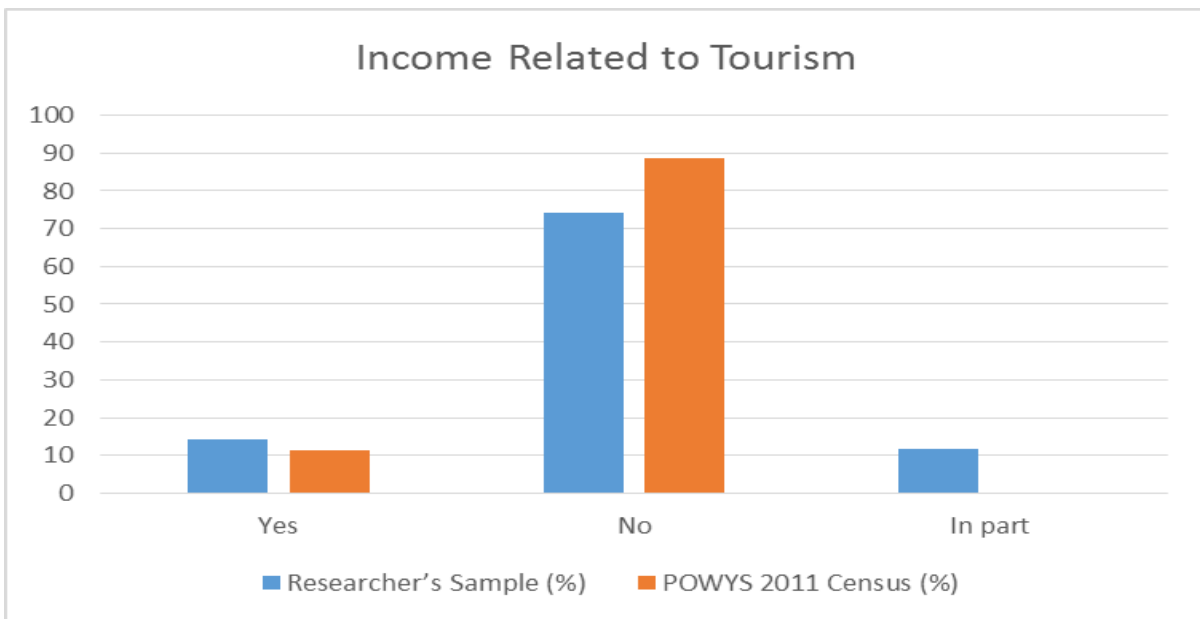
Figure 8.9: Respondents reliance upon income from tourism

Figure 8.10 and 8.11 illustrate the satisfaction and level of involvement survey respondents have towards tourism development. Given the relatively high level of support for tourism development, it is not surprising that in an area where tourism is used as a regeneration tool that these findings occurred due to the perceived potential for employment opportunities and economic growth. According to social exchange theory, residents seek tourism development for their community in order to satisfy their need or improving the community's well-being (see for example Ap, 1992). Although, as Tosun (2005) noted tourism can reduce unemployment by creating employment and the residents believe that tourism can stimulate investment and provide employment within their communities. Increased investment and employment opportunity was identified by the focus groups as one of the biggest advantages of tourism. By reinforcing the positive influence tourism has on the availability of jobs and the experience that comes with tourism employment it is often implied that residents can come to see the benefits of tourism. Consequently, if people accrue benefits from tourism such as job creation, economic gain, cultural exchange, and cultural identity, they less probably attribute the negative consequences of tourism whilst possessing a more positive outlook towards an increase in tourism development (Pizam, 1978; Allen et al, 1987; Lankford and Howard 1994; Jurowski et al, 1997; McGehee and Andereck, 2004).
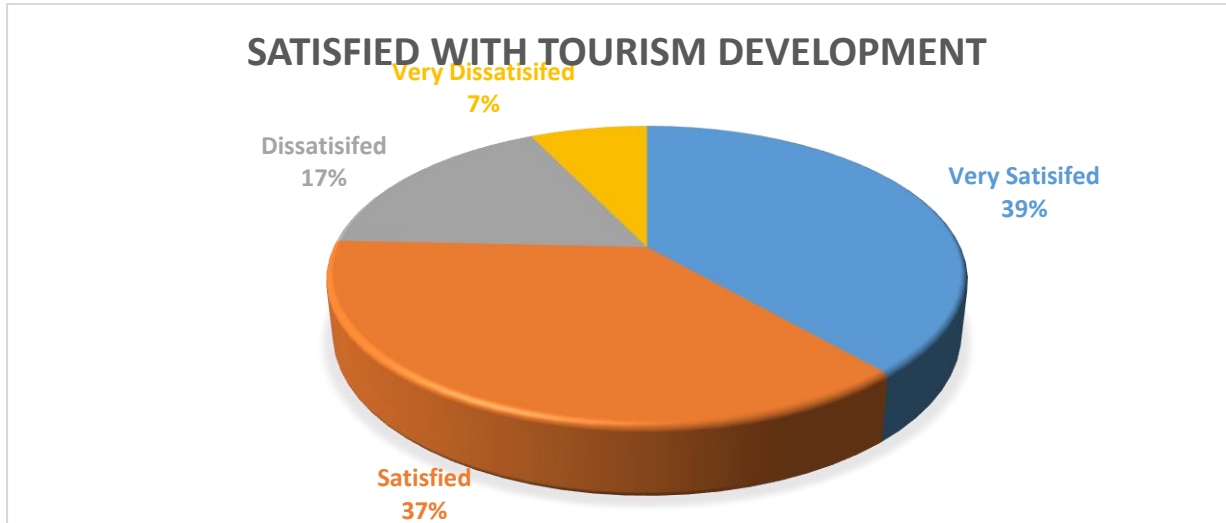
Figure 8.10: Satisfied with tourism development

INVOLVEMENT IN DECISIONS ABOUT TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

No Opinion 9%
Noat all Important 11%
Not Important 17%
Somewhat Important 36%
Very Important 27%
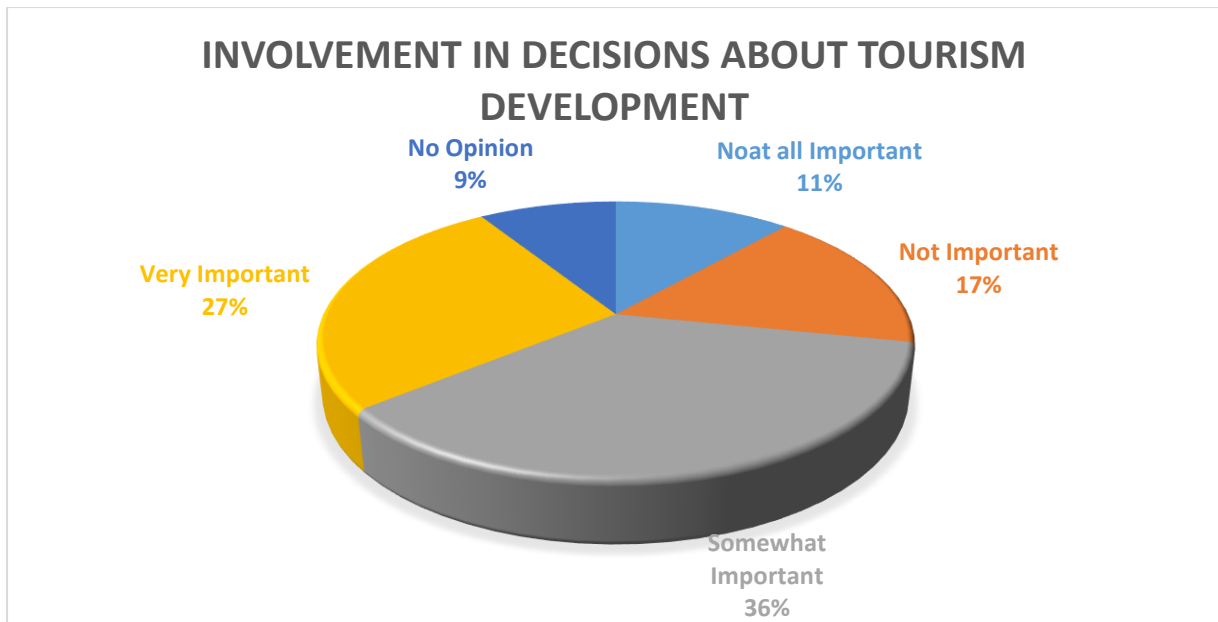
Figure 8.11 Involvement in decisions about tourism development

The focus group discussions also focused on evaluating the impacts that tourists might have on their communities. Unprompted, group members showed very limited cognizance of the effects that tourism has on the state of the community in their area. However, the relative contribution of tourism and the different ways in which it manifests was picked up by many members of the focus groups. It appeared that respondents who owned businesses although would consider the environmental implications of their businesses had not given much consideration to the social impacts their businesses may have (particularly with regards to community sustainability). Many responded defensively by emphasising the positive benefits of tourism to the area or suggesting that any negative impacts were negligible because of the small size of businesses and in comparison to other industries. Significantly, most suggestions attributed the detrimental community impacts of the industry to the activities of tourists rather than the local community (e. g. congestion, crowds). When discussing the potential effects of tourist activities on the area it was almost accepted that any negative social costs were just par for the course. For example, the issue of seasonality with regards to employing local people seemed to be an acceptable part of what the tourism industry entails. The idea that the environment would suffer during the peak season and then have the chance to recover when there was no tourism was purported as follows:

> *We all know it can be busy during the summer for a couple months irrespective of what the weather is doing. We know that the Dutch will migrate and fill out all the campsites. We know that the arts, music and*

literature community will descend upon us in August for all their festivals. These tourists know that there will be things for them to do even if it's raining. They all assume that there will be enough accommodation and transportation and food to look after them which means that all our services come under a great deal of pressure for a few weeks of the year. (Respondent FG 16)

Well the environment can cope with the impacts of people and tourism as it basically has three quarters of the year to recover. (Respondent FG 24)

Only a minority of participants showed a more informed and sophisticated mindfulness of the impacts of the tourist industry on the community. Such participants recognised that collectively the impacts of even small tourism businesses were substantial, and that the industry shared a responsibility for social and environmental problems in the district, illustrated by the following quotes:

We know that the impacts of tourism destroying the environment and place strains on our resources and clearly with lots of people come to the area there can only be one outcome and it won't be a positive one. There might be some positive things that happen but surely the negative impacts far outweigh the positive ones. The increase in traffic has got to be bad the strain all of our services such as transportation isn't great. I know during the summer if I don't get into Brecon early I won't get a parking space so for the residents of the area we see an increase in traffic and people it can only be a bad thing for our day-to-day life" (Respondent FG 12)

They [the impacts of tourism] ought to be entirely detrimental. If you want to look at it in its purest terms, bringing people into an area cannot possibly have a positive effect on it. There might be positive spin-offs, but the first impact has got to be detrimental. As they drive their car down the road it has got to be detrimental. (Respondent FG 1)

The focus groups were asked if they were aware of the SDF opportunities open to their communities with regards to tourism development and only five of the participants were able to cite any examples

of successful programmes or current bids. Two of them had been involved in SDF programmes and three of them were aware of other programmes. These were related to environmental management and the protection/conservation of natural landscapes.

> *I know about a project that about educating children about wildlife and how they can help protect it. The project involves bringing aquatic life into the classroom so children can feel and experience such things as rock pools and what you can find on beaches it's part of their marine wildlife awareness programme and they got some of the sustainable development funding.*
> (Respondent FG 2)

Although funding for community initiatives is widespread amongst NPs, arguably, funding for community education and technical assistance is not so forthcoming. Financial assistance that protects community resources (biodiversity and/or cultural diversity), and helps communities continue to have access and management of those resources may be important. However, some of the basic skills (such as financial planning business plans) are also important and often community representatives do not have the needed skills. Therefore, it is important to support the development of rural local people to assist them through the funding process to increase the volume of SDF applications.

8. 4 Integration of Tourism and Sustainable Development Funding

Having ascertained what the relevance of tourism was for the BBNPA the research then probed the relevance of SDF in relation to tourism and community sustainability. Most community driven initiatives emerge informally in response to a local impetus for action, and start out as a small group of passionate and dedicated volunteers. When the association of income earned from such initiatives such as the use of tourism in rural areas the community may become more ambitious and may find that to achieve their goals they require more significant resources than those available locally. Consequently, many community led initiatives seek some form of funding, and sourcing and obtaining funds is frequently identified as a primary barrier to the success of community programmes (e.g. Chruch and Elster, 2002; Hand, 2011). However, there is a lack of academic and political discourse about the ways in which the association with top-down, government initiated funding schemes and bottom up community driven projects relate to one another, not only the proposed project being supplied, but the way the schemes function within the community. PSDF 8 suggested that:

The SDF programme has four strands. Firstly the landscape and how we use it, secondly recreation and access, thirdly education and finally the conservation of the natural environment. The use of tourism in enhancing these components seems to be an additional benefit derived from the original purpose of the funding". (PSDF 8)

While the benefits of SDF were detected in the variety of areas observed in the BBNPA, including the creation of jobs and work placements and an increase in the standard of community services, there seemed to be a lack of understanding as to how tourism can play a more substantial role in the development of SDF programmes.

The demand for a variety of tourism has grown in the NP and not all local communities are able to continually adapt and meet the requirements of tourists in terms of quality of services. In order to meet this requirement, it means building the capacity of the local people. For SDF schemes to become sustainable and integrated with the tourism industry they would need to "cultivate" their relationships with the main providers of tourism services. Often, there is very little chance of community networks influencing or approaching the mainline sources by themselves. Hence, the role of the NPA might arguably be to negotiate with private enterprises, regional and national governments.

The importance of leadership was noted in chapter 5 as was the professionalization of participation (refer to section 7.3.2) and is crucial to the success of SDF. Interestingly, the use of tourism as a regeneration tool seems to be a common theme with SDF projects. Utilising assets, creating new economic streams, strengthening community amenities all of which could integrate tourism into their strategic thinking. There is a challenge of finding capable tourism personnel in rural settings. Although there are a few inspirational people (as noted in the comment above) who determinedly move their projects forward they are often being ignored by local authorities. There seems to be a "divide" between the BBNPA and the rural communities. Some academics such as Barker (2005) referred to "capacity building" perhaps this refers more to the capacity building within the existing frameworks. Consequently, the innovative leaders within SDF schemes who are seeking opportunities at the community level and have a realistic understanding about the sustainability approaches they can take should not be treated as "objects" of development but rather as genuine and respected partners in policy, planning and development. Arguably, this would require fundamental changes to the process

of how SDF schemes are set up. Consequently, the relevance of tourism as a regeneration tool was asked to PSDF 16:

> *Tourism is not an end in its own right, indeed the quantitative economic impact of tourism is not an objective in its own right, we are not measured by that and I would resist being measured by that but of course it is looked at but it's not about that sort of quantity as it were bums on seats type stuff or trying to stuff them in. What we're trying to do is use tourism as a tool to further sustainable development.* (PSDF 16)

Communities' expectations of tourism are not the same all over the NP which means it may be somewhat risky to generalise. Some have the capacity to take charge and some do not. Some communities are able to be patient and some have very short "expectation stands". Some communities are looking to make money, whereas some are interested in developing a scheme that will generate a business and create additionality. Transparency in sharing experiences is important, not just for failed projects (to learn from their mistakes) but for successful projects.

One interview was carried out with a representative from the skills in action partnership which was awarded SDF to provide 12 year-long salaried conservation traineeships. The funding was aimed at local people (who would most likely benefit from the opportunity) interested in pursuing a career in estate management or practical conservation. The trainees work alongside existing wardens and gain skills in the heritage management sector for example working with information staff and environmental educators. The respondent indicated that

> *When preparing the paperwork for the SDF I knew I had to illustrate that this scheme was not only sustainable but that it relied upon tourism. The importance of tourism cannot be understated. The purpose of this funding was to educate local people and provide them with practical work experience but of course visitors are required to visit the sites in order for the business to be sustainable. There had to be a correlation between attracting visitors to the various parts of the park whilst at the same time sustaining the businesses from which these traineeships withdrawing from.* (Interviewee PSDF 6)

The use of a holistic masterplan might be beneficial for the NPA. A conservative and realistic business plan (or masterplan) illustrates a proven, reliable ability on the ground to make the plan happen and, even more importantly, to manage, tweak and recreate the plan as circumstances change. This will provide a framework which would allow the actual implementers not only understand the plan, but change it into other feasible plans as circumstances unfold. As it stands, the vast majority of viable SDF schemes were created without any kind of cohesive business plan and it is mostly the knowledge and leadership of a few persistent movers and shakers that have made it happen.

The funding from the European Regional Development Fund between 1991 and 1995 (part of the Leader programme) initiated a funding programme aimed at promoting innovation for rural undeveloped areas in the European Union. This scheme illustrated the use of tourism and its potential as a planning strategy, based on the entrepreneurial instinct of people living in those areas who require new economic opportunities to cope with price and production reductions within the agricultural markets. Arguably, rural tourism has proven its power to balance those fragile economies. The notable parts of this scheme was that every entrepreneur who obtained a grant was obliged, by contract, to attend compulsory training in rural tourism management issues: feasibility studies, pricing, operation, marketing and promotion. Although this arguably led to rural tourism in some areas becoming a "mass product" due to the unrestricted policies of local governments, this scheme demonstrated the ability to use tourism as a means of complementing existing economies. The SDF schemes could follow a similar process in order to provide the skills required. However, massification of tourism in the BBNPA has not occurred and does not reflect the strategy they seek to reflect as noted on page 53.

The advantage of following a masterplan whereby the funding and organisation of a coalition of schemes involved in SDF projects includes local, regional, public and private agencies allows the pooling of limited resources to produce results from which each agency benefits. In other words, the added value to a relatively small contribution become substantial. Each member of the scheme is represented on a project steering committee thereby ensuring their voices heard. Project documents and press releases could include the logo of the various funders so that each group is able to visibly demonstrate their involvement, gaining public relations mileage and more critically creating awareness of the various projects. However, the research findings illustrate that the BBNPA struggle to support the long-term self-management of a single community SDF scheme and the requirements

of several communities working together coordinated under the guidance of an umbrella organisation may increase the risk of disaggregation and lack of commitment from individual communities.

However, the research findings have noted that the work of the SDF is very fragmented and sporadic in that it relies on communities to drive strategies for development forward. It has been mentioned that tourism flows through many of the projects. Consequently, if these projects are relying on tourists then what activities are SDF groups engaging in to stimulate tourism to their vicinity. The researcher wanted to identify what strategy was used by the BBNP to assist in the attraction of tourists to SDF site destinations. PSDF 16 suggested that:

> *We are trying to service existing markets which are quite strong and quite broad, if honest there are lots of different types of people who come here. We are more about influencing the behaviour of people who are coming here rather than creating new markets specifically. We don't have a strong marketing function in the BBNP, it's complicated because we are on the edge of so many administrative areas, not only the England and Wales border which we do try to straddle up to a point and work with Herefordshire. We are in three Welsh regions and 10 local authorities and wherever we go on our patch we are working with a different local authority, because of this strange designation where we overlie the local authority function and that is indeed why the economics thing is only a duty not a purpose of the National park because actually the purpose is with the local authority structure the socio economic development and they never wanted us to clash with our local authorities colleagues. The BBNP surprisingly isn't a priority for any of the local authorities and indeed before we started work the Brecon Beacons wasn't even recognised as a destination in Wales you had to click on POWYS website to get information. In fact you had to go on the about POWYS website for their bit of the Brecon Beacons and the Monmouthshire website for their bit of the park and so on. Mad.* (PSDF 16)

This lack of a cohesive marketing plan has been a barrier to development of wider tourism in the region. Lack of marketing budgets in the development of SDF schemes is arguably a flaw in their development. The linkage to market is often overlooked by funding institutions and arguably, is an

important element to long term success. Not only do these projects need to have a good business plan and linkage to market, they need to be market ready. When there is a limited/non-existent marketing budget, word-of-mouth will generally make or break a start-up venture. Although SDF participants have extensive knowledge about their scheme and geographic area they may not know much about the motivations, preferences and expectations of a visitor who may be spending their pounds to visit the area.

However, the NPA has developed a strategic tourism plan, part of which involves marketing, as noted:

> *We have built it (a tourism strategy) from scratch because there was an element of power vacuum if I'm honest that nobody was doing the job and someone had to so here we were the only body responsible for what is indeed an iconic destination in in Wales's tool bag so someone had to do it. So muggins here had to do it and make it work but what we haven't done is trying to say to all the local authorities we will do all the marketing as it is actually their job, for those reasons and because they recognise that they throw money our way in little bits we don't have a particularly strong marketing function and therefore if we can service the existing markets we feel when doing very well.* (PSDF 16)

However, where did the SDF schemes fit into this strategic tourism plan, the respondent noted:

> *We have not included any SDF schemes into our tourism strategy or marketing because some of these schemes are very short-term and marketing is a long term and expensive process. I guess I haven't really been deeply involved in SDF, so I'm not sure how I could build them into the overall strategy.* (PSDF 16)

This comment indicates that the NPA could arguably take a more holistic approach when developing their strategy to integrate SDF schemes. Although the findings from the interviews with the NPA representatives highlighted that they were committed to the idea of sustainable development, there does not seem to be any integration of SDF into the strategy. The Welsh government in 2001 made a conscious decision to plough a great deal of money into SDF. Although the amount of money being spent by the Welsh government has declined over the past four years by 23% since 2012, arguably due to economic pressures their commitment has not wavered. The fund has been allocated £175,000

for the current financial year (2016/7) and the scheme has expanded its scope to generate greater awareness and understanding of sustainability amongst residents and visitors and facilitate positive behaviour change. At its most basic level the NPA is trying to address visitor behaviour in terms of curbing pollution, stopping visitors from leaving litter and addressing attitudes towards polluting the rural environment. Although these initiatives are commendable the need to further visitors' knowledge of SDF schemes should have a more prominent position in their strategy. As one respondent suggested:

> T*he sustainable development fund is trying to do so much, perhaps too much. As well as tourism initiatives and green initiatives and innovation the fund is also trying to support local disadvantaged and disabled groups and involve young people and encourage the use of the Welsh language. I sometimes wonder what the layperson thinks sustainability is all about*. (PSDF 8)

> *The objectives of this sustainable development fund are so wide in their scope that it is hard to determine which proposed project is worthy of the funding and which isn't. I'm glad I don't have to make these choices as there are so much competition for the funding even I'm not sure where the focus of sustainability is anymore*. (Interviewee PSDF 7)

Arguably, this is why tourism has risen to the agenda for many rural communities (in locations where it appears viable) because, the hope is, well managed tourism can be compatible and even supportive of the traditional rural economy. The development of tourism operations as an active "side-line" for SDF schemes, with limits set and respected so that it supplements the community (and economy) and does not overtake their traditional life might be one way of addressing such an issue.

Given the lack of integration of SDF in the overall tourism strategy the researcher wanted to probe as to why tourism and SDF were not linked more cohesively. The comments provided below illustrated that there was a desire to increase visitor numbers to the park and that the SDF schemes were not at the forefront of their considerations.

> *SDF projects quite often has to include tourism as you're trying to extract money out of different people. Even though the reality is that although people tell us it's an affluent area it doesn't always feel that way and*

therefore you know in Talybont which is quite a honeypot in terms of tourists they are now trying to create a bike trail. So if you have the people (visitors) well then the area will see benefits. The shops and the pubs and everybody, so then actually, you can combine the facilities for them. So that hopefully they'll be parking in the car park and not on the roads so you are helping both ways really. You are helping their community itself in terms of income generation but also from the social aspects of it and there are more facilities for the tourists and they are getting what they want when they come here and seeing a really nice village and enjoying the experience really rather than having someone shouting at them for parking in front of their garden. (PSDF 16)

Questions around the profitability and survival of SDF schemes exist, as currently only 37% of projects funded in 2014 exist today (Tyler, 2016). Smith 2000 characterised the broader tourism industry as basically extractive in nature, with an emphasis on volume or capacity. "Success" as defined by a tourism office may be acknowledging the steadying increase of volume of tourists to an area. This is in sharp contrast to the idea of sustainable tourism, where the goal is low volumes and limited capacity. Another respondent suggested that:

It's very hard for us to get major inward investment. We have been trying to get major hotel chains to establish themselves in the area to no success. One of the problems we have is that although we are a destination we really in the middle of nowhere and our infrastructure is poor. We get a surge of visitors when the book Festival or Jazz Festival take place but generally we really are peripheral area. We suffer the impacts of national trends quicker than most regions and we tend to recover slower. So our strategy is not focused on the local level that's too narrow we are more interested in the greater good. (PSDF 8)

Although a poor infrastructure may be seen by residents and NPAs as a disadvantage, for tourists this may be the reverse. The fact that roads are poor and transportation to certain areas may be non-existent can be an attractive prospect for many tourists who seek the quiet life of the rural areas. This fact was highlighted by another respondent who suggested:

> *We don't really have any major tourism attractions and we have no large scale accommodation which means with limited in what we can potentially offer or do.* (PSDF 8)

Again this may be more of an advantage than a disadvantage and maybe the reason that visitors come to the area. Given the lack of infrastructure and large-scale tourism offerings it seems only logical that the BBNPA should follow a community-based strategy for developing tourism as this type of tourism tends to be small-scale and generally attracts niche markets which would suit the capacity of the area with regards to facilitating and accommodating tourists. One respondent indicated that:

> *This issue has created diversity amongst local residents people who were born in the area yearn for better infrastructure and larger scale leisure facilities. Whereas residents who have migrated to the area want the reverse, they want peace and quiet. These residents are generally quite wealthy, they tend to have their own transportation and are really looking to settle into rural life, but not traditional rural life what I call modern rural life. By this I mean they want the ability to feel like they're living in the middle of nowhere at the same time they want access to a Waitrose, coffee shop and all the trappings of modern life.* (PSDF 16)

> *If we don't attempt to provide some form of direction for investment in the area then I think there would be even less economic development and if the economy is in decline and there is no investment then outmigration will continue and the population will dwindle and will be in a downward economic and social spiral. We cannot sustain ourselves with the type of inward migration we currently have, as we now have an ageing middle class population in rural areas as younger people moved to central hubs. The relevance of the SDF is paramount in addressing these issues, previously unknown towns such as Llangorse have been able to market themselves and create products that give them recognition. This in turn has made Llangorse a more vibrant town attracting new younger residents.* (PSDF 16)

The economic importance of tourism as noted by the comment above is one of the restraining factors in the development of tourism connected to SDF schemes. To create tourism at a village level and an

income stream that would maintain livelihoods would be very hard to achieve due to the lack of visitor numbers and the smaller nature of business enterprises. Tourism has become a side-line income in these areas through the provision of Bed & Breakfasts or Café's.

If SDF schemes could contribute to the activation of public participation these schemes might trigger self-contained activities and initiation and ensure some long-term commitment for local communities to take control and ownership of their own area. Although infrastructure such as bike trails, village halls, history museums and walled gardens do not have the potential to function as a sustainable tourism attractions (from a purely economic point of view) the infrastructure that it creates is of great importance for the local population and to the destination self-image. It may not have any noteworthy touristic and economic impacts nor may it influence the external image of a destination. However, taking an anthropological point of view these facilities contribute to the attractiveness of the rural region. They provide an enhancement of the local identity and create or establish a certain kind of integrated rural tourism (Carson and Carson, 2011). In the short term these isolated SDF schemes that are creating pockets of infrastructure around the BBNP may not contribute in an economic manner, but rather to equally important overall rural development by promoting socio- political change. If SDF schemes were purely assessed on their economic impact they would not be considered successful but these schemes provide the foundation upon which communities can attempt to create sustainable communities, lifestyles and livelihoods.

8.5 Rural Development and Tourism

This research has highlighted that the use of rural tourism as a development strategy by the NPA has been logically considered. There is a park management plan and a tourism strategy. However, there is no integration at the strategic level with the SDF scheme. Given that tourism can change the structure and economics of a community, more consideration could be given to the incorporation of SDF schemes. Diversification into tourism will not save all rural areas by providing jobs or alternative income streams. To realistically utilise tourism as a rural development strategy the building blocks and networks (as discussed on page 89) of tourism needs to evolve. In order to create a viable tourism industry that visits the peripheral areas of the NP the development of networks and the creation of value that tourists obtain from visiting such destinations must be duly considered.

The findings of this study are consistent with the literature, which suggests that rural communities who have experienced economic hardship frequently consider tourism as a tool to improve their economic outlook but sometimes underrating the social and environmental costs of tourism (e.g. Akis et al, 1996; Liu and Var, 1987). These authors suggest that rural communities who have experienced economic hardship frequently consider tourism as a tool to improve their economic outlook but sometimes underrating the social and environmental costs of tourism (e.g. Akis et al, 1996; Liu and Var, 1987). An increase in recreational facilities and a more vital and active local economy were also noted by the respondents of the survey as advantages. Notably, the social and cultural interaction that tourism can bring with people from other regions and communities were not considered perceived benefits from the respondents in this study which is somewhat contrary to the literature (e.g. Bushell and McCool 2007).

Also, the findings suggest that attitudes to tourism development are related to involvement in tourism. Responses were found to be varied, arguably compelled largely by personal interest. Whereas respondents who felt they were personally benefitting from tourism held generally benign views of tourism and its impacts. Respondents who believed they were not benefitting and possibly had to compete with tourists for community resources and infrastructure expressed generally antagonistic viewpoints. These findings add credibility to previous research that specify that if people accrue benefits from tourism such as job creation, economic gain, cultural exchange, and cultural identity, they less probably attribute the negative consequences of tourism whilst possessing a more positive outlook towards an increase in tourism development (Pizam, 1978; Allen et al, 1987; Lankford and Howard 1994; Jurowski et al, 1997; McGehee and Andereck, 2004).

The integration of the SDF schemes into the marketing and promotional materials would aid not only the communities to develop, but the stimulation of tourists to visit the sites of SDF programmes. For example, considering the contextual characteristics of each SDF programme and then building those into the planning, management and marketing of the BBNPA strategies would assist in both the development of tourism aligned with the SDF programmes. Each location is different as are the stakeholders, communities and the value that could be added to a tourist experience from participating or visiting a site involved in SDF.

When discussing tourism and communities the focus groups make it clear that the issue of community is regarded as a stand-alone element. Participants can see that tourism brings in positive and negative impacts and these need dealing with but the issue of community is not at the forefront of their thoughts with regard to tourism development. The participants seem to believe that tourism is a tool in order to achieve a goal but what the goal is seems confused depending upon which stakeholder you refer to. Haukeland *et al* (2011) noted that tourism development will have multiple actors with diverse concerns which together make up a complex framework based on patterns of interaction and behaviour. Given that residents are all "users" of traditional rural interests (such as agriculture, and outdoor recreation activities) it is surprising that more respondents were not involved in the development of plans within the park. Arguably, the apathy demonstrated by the residents could be connected to the lack of information being disseminated by the NPA.

Given that tourism has become the largest economy in the BBNP it could be argued that the BBNP is moving towards a recreation dependent economy (Dresner, 2008). The reliance on income from tourism can have marked effects on rural development, this is because economic growth comes from increasing the "exporting" of goods and services to non-resident visitors. If this trend increases and the primary economy of agriculture depletes then the risk of shocks to the economy may increase.

The findings indicate that local people have a limited awareness and involvement in tourism development programmes and were not able to see how their own activities could be entwined with the programmes developed by the NPA (and BBT). Indeed, some of the participants believe that it was purely the government that should take the role of establishing, developing and managing proposed tourism developments, quite literally washing their hands of any role or responsibility that they could take. There is perhaps a need to establish a clearer and more defined route for enabling communities to get involved in tourism development programmes. The results of the focus groups illustrated that at the moment there is much "goodwill" relied upon in order to get tourism development programmes operational. In the case of the BBNP, the demographics highlighted in chapter 2 suggests that there are many elderly people who have more leisure time to be involved in such programmes. The results of the focus group noted that the self-employed (and employed) participants (who were generally younger) did not seem quite so keen to offer up their time to become involved. However, it should be noted that these younger people were involved with various associations and activities that were concerned with their direct physical local environment.

8.6 Sustainable Tourism through Sustainable Development Funding

As noted on page 49, tourism has already been mentioned in reference to community sustainability illustrating the overlap between these contested concepts. This highlights the ambiguity and hence confusion that exists when attempting to "classify" and place boundaries or labels on concepts that are fluid and somewhat illusive. When referring to SDF projects that involved the use of tourism the SDFOs indicated that sustainable scheme would be one where:

> *Any proposed scheme that is developing and finding a new way of approaching sustainability in the countryside will meet the SDF criteria. Sustainability isn't just the outcome if we can encourage participation and involve communities, individuals and businesses to work together and if we can promote social inclusion and breakdown any barriers to achieving sustainability then we are achieving a sustainable project.* (PSDF 8)

These answers demonstrate the ambiguity of sustainability and how hard it is to quantify exactly what sustainability meant or how it could be measured. The issue of sustainability is critical to the SDF schemes. If they cannot demonstrate and ensure sustainability, then the investments in tourism, regardless of the source might be wasted. At its core, any SDF schemes must be sustainable. If the scheme is not capable of generating a positive cash flow it becomes something of a white elephant, regardless of the various sources of funding. This will impact negatively on the communities that are attempting to sustain themselves. The great draw of the tourism industry lies in its apparent simplicity, arguably this belies the reality of operations. Given such haziness over sustainable tourism projects it follows to look at an example of one.

> *I was involved with the bid for SDF and we were awarded funding this helped us to start up from being a fairly shaky start up business to a confident visitor destination. The money helped not only develop the business has allowed us to create signage, visitor guide and a leaflet in English and Welsh.* (Interviewee PSDF 2)

> *Unfortunately in the last couple of years we seem to have slipped off the radar of the NPA and have been left to our own devices. I appreciate the NPA have a lot to do, it would have been useful if we could have got more involved*

in what they're doing as this would help us increase visitor numbers. It's just about creating awareness. We've created a pretty strong brand, so the locals know us. But I need to take a much more proactive role in marketing us to tourists and potential visitors and I feel the NPA missing a trick by not including us. If you go to a B&B you will see loads of promotional materials about all the various sites of interest (of which we are one), but none of these destinations are on one website, which would make it easier for visitors to get a picture of what they can do in the area. (Interviewee PSDF 2)

This comment typifies the lack of cohesive thinking demonstrated in this area. A simple enough strategy which combines all the attractions of the area into a bundle of products creating economies of scales for marketing and promotion. Arguably, the BBNPA and BBT seem to serve their own interests and fail to grasp the notion that providing a wider perspective of all products and services available within the park would benefit all actors involved in the creation of sustainable tourism initiatives.

The need for political and practical mechanisms to ensure that private and public decision-makers in tourism development can work in association with community based initiatives who require access to funds in order to create sustainable small-scale tourism. Possibly, perhaps the creation of an umbrella inter-organisational system that would funnel resources directly to a set of projects that demonstrated their ability to add value to both communities and tourism demands might go some way to address this issue. Such a body could both represent particular stakeholders, and be capable of managing resources, ensuring proper project set up, monitoring input as well as account for the use of finances.

To address this a more holistic strategy is required in essence to be sustainable. For example, the creation of a SDF network may create involvement for many community projects in a meaningful and profitable ownership sense over a long term. The need to develop a product which is in demand by reasonably constant and predictable segment of the tourism market, and maintain the quality of that product through supervision and quality control may assist in this matter. In addition, the product should be packaged, promoted, marketed and sold with a high degree of professionalism to be competitive. The actors involved in this chain of development should set reasonable expectations in

terms of their sharing risks and profits and above all a clear understanding of each other's respective roles.

The focus groups were asked to identify their awareness of the concept of sustainable tourism development. All group members were acutely aware of their reliance upon the environment (natural, built and cultural) as the main attraction for visitors to the district. Indeed, some focus group participants had chosen to set up business in the BBNP because of the quality of the environment and therefore had a strong interest, both professional and personal, in conserving the area's main tourism asset. However, only a minority of the participants were aware of the term `sustainable tourism' and fewer still were confident about offering an explanation of its meaning. For most, the concept was complex and confusing. Many perceived the term to have originated from within the tourism industry, with the result that it was considered irrelevant to local residents:

> *We seem to know what we're talking about, as far as tourism is concerned. What the concerning thing is that we do not seem to understand what `sustainable tourism' is, and this is very worrying. Is there some trendy lefty trying to invent an expression we, Joe Public, are meant to understand, or is this academic jargon? It is nonsense. It ought to be so that the likes of us, Joe Public, can actually understand what people are talking about.*
> (Respondent FG 17)

Where explanations were offered, they often revealed misunderstandings. Despite an emphasis in the questioning upon sustainability, participants frequently confused the concept with the general economic health of the industry or couched their interpretation in terms of market opportunities and threats to the viability of the industry, as demonstrated by the following quotes from the focus groups:

> *If we did more environmental stuff…... a lot of people will come out of season. I really do push to try and get out of season trade* (Respondent FG 22)

> *These are all beautiful things we have. It is our environment, and in a sense it is the environment we should be promoting*" (Respondent FG 4)

> W*e cannot afford to reduce the number of people coming into the area. The number of people who are coming into the area is less than it was twenty*

years ago, and they need people. It is no good talking about environmental

issues if you haven't got the people coming down, because the area would

just... (Bwlch) just wouldn't exist, because it relies so much on tourism.

(Respondent FG 7)

The increasing importance of "authenticity" in the tourism experience whereby tourists are willing to pay more for what they perceive as an authentic experience is an area that warrants further attention for the BBNPA. SDF schemes, at their heart, offer authenticity as they rest on cultural and natural components of the tourism experience. Consequently, the need to pay attention to the volume of tourists requires addressing whereby attention paid to the "type" of tourists rather than the volume may gain some way to increasing the longevity of SDF schemes.

While it is possible to present tourists with an "authentic" experience with the hope of educating the tourist, it is probably more likely that a far greater social and cultural change will happen in the community itself. For example, a number of respondents identified that they were saddened because many of the young people had moved to larger cities looking for work and almost in the same breath suggested that they hoped their children will be able to take advantage of higher education or work opportunities outside of the park. Consequently, how sustainability is viewed and conceptualised by community members will be in transition. Economic sustainability might be easy for SDF schemes to define in that it would allow communities to continue with particular activities, with the current distribution of benefits and costs indefinitely. Cultural sustainability is a more challenging concept. Tourists might be attracted to a community because of the agrarian, remote and non-commercial quality of life on offer. Community members might look to tourism as a way to diversify their economy, and their remoteness and bring more amenities to the community. Those two paths are rather divergent, especially if tourists are seeking an "authentic" experience. Only two group members offered more informed explanations that implied a trade-off between ecological and economic imperatives:

MODERATOR: "How about anybody else? Sustainable tourism development, what does it mean to you?"

I tend to think that trying to conduct your business in a way that is going to

have little as effect on the environment as you possibly can... but you do not

> *know what is the best thing to do and how you can go about even making a*
> *start at it* (Respondent FG 11)

> *We want more and more people to come to us [sounds of agreement], and*
> *yet we don't want to spoil these lovely little villages, the country lanes, and*
> *everything else, you know……guess what we are getting at here is that there*
> *is a basic dichotomy, you know, a basic problem there* (Respondent FG 1)

Arguably, the NPA in their quest to provide meaningful involvement from communities in tourism benefits have created unreasonably high expectations of those benefits. They have helped create a scheme which requires certain technical skills and infrastructure, but arguably, provided inadequate management skills and little oversight, and virtually ignored the realities of marketing. Consequently, many of the SDF schemes were not sustainable and may well have disillusioned communities and ultimately provided poor service to visitors (which is a key to sustainability).

Lopez (2011) suggested that traditionally the term "development" has carried with it a supposition of evolution, enlargement and was connected to economic concerns. Lopez also identified that this manifests itself through an increase in connectivity, speed (production) capacity and scope. Although the respondents' answers fall into these categories some respondents questions the concept of development and what it actually meant.

> *I agree with the comments about sustainable development in terms of*
> *increasing opportunities but at the same time preserving what we have but*
> *maybe we should think about sustainable development in terms of thinking*
> *that more isn't always better maybe sustainable development should be*
> *about reducing our dependencies. Maybe sustainable development is about*
> *lowering our levels of consumerism, decreasing our need to rely on external*
> *sources by this I mean the number of products and services produced abroad*
> *and imported into the country, maybe development is not about growth but*
> *rather change.* (Respondent FG 14)

The idea by respondent FG 14 put forward indicates that sustainable tourism development is perhaps a way of strengthening societies by helping them to take actions in the progression of their own social, economic and environmental policies. The process of change will strengthen the ability of people to

become active citizens of their community associations, organisations or networks and assist the bodies and government agencies to work together in order to outline and define change in their communities. Arguably, this is a crucial role in active democratic life which attempts to promote the voice of disadvantaged and vulnerable communities whilst establishing policies that will create a sustainable community whilst promoting an economic plan. At its core sustainable development is trying to bring about change whilst balancing environmental, social and economic factors so that the needs of today are met without compromising the future. The SDF is asking communities to find ways to achieve a more sustainable way of living in the countryside that has natural beauty and diversity, at the same time the scheme wants communities to remain socially healthy and economically viable. It is, therefore, not surprising that tourism has been utilised by some communities as a tool to address development issues. Tourism utilises the natural environment and can help to revitalise an economy. However as the respondents of the focus groups identified there are drawbacks to using tourism such as the impact on the natural environment (in terms of capacity and footfall) that are at odds to the objectives of the SDF. The challenge faced by local communities wanting to use tourism as a revitalising agent is that they have to prove when applying for the SDF they are able to meet the requirements of the scheme.

There was a recognition that achieving a sustainable balance would not be achieved unilaterally, but required system-wide co-operation across a range of sectors and stakeholders to improve the general sustainability of local communities. Any action plan for sustainable tourism will, therefore, need to complement and integrate within wider strategies for sustainable development in the district. The findings of the focus groups reiterated the results of earlier studies (see Berry and Ladkin, 1997; Stabler and Goodall, 1997) that the debate about the nature and relevance of sustainability to tourism had not permeated to the majority of local residents. Interpretations of sustainability as market opportunities and potential limits on tourism development are, of course, elements of the concept that align most closely with the interests of businesses as commercial enterprises and sources of livelihood. They are at some distance from the resource conservation implications of the concept. The importance of establishing common interpretations of the concept is nevertheless a necessary pre-requisite for effective action (Hinds and Sparks, 2008). Problems in achieving this common ground were also evident in responses to other questions, such as the impacts of tourism (as noted on pages 215-216).

8.7 Summary

The opportunities and constraints that tourism development presents raise questions about the management and policy approaches of these issues. Notably how planning and/or funding from SDF can really contribute to a durable successful rural development programme. The development of the destination is accomplished by various actors in the rural arena, and the success of individual actors, as well as the success of the entire destination, which is often dependent on efficient coordination (Dale and Sparkes, 2007). Noting that tourism development has different causes, only some of them may be influenced through planning. Therefore, Cresswell and MacLaren (2000, p.292) described destination development as a process of "*finding the way to direct a complex system which, almost by definition, is quite unmanageable".* This, and the importance of providing a suitable foundation for building on capital, make clear that an integrated and participatory planning approach is required.

The success of rural tourism is the ability to involve all actors and stakeholders at a regional level, and that where there are organisational structures they permit continuous progression (Gillmor 2008). Not only as Dewhurst and Thomas (2003) noted that the effort of individual entrepreneurs is required but all organisational structures has to connect with the differing actors who possess diverging interests. Some of these actors belong to the state, some the private sector, some civil society, which means some form of governance arrangements would be required (Edwards *et al*, 2003). An organisational structure should provide a framework within which strategic decisions (related to objectives), organisational decisions (outlining the use of resources) and operational decisions outlining the delivery of the outputs, are made (Schofield, 2002). Altogether, this collaboration of different types of actors requires careful organisation to encourage well thought out solutions and a reciprocal learning process, which is important when bringing about change of the socio-political nature.

As discussed in chapter 3 the definition of rurality and more specifically rural tourism lacks clarification. Areas such as the BBNP have been traditionally associated with characteristics such as reliance on agriculture, declining populations, disparate villages creating peripherality (Marsden, 1999). Rural areas are not limited to a particular economy and can be as diverse as they wish in seeking income streams to utilise, but they tend not to have high levels of economic prosperity. Rurality is considered a more socially fabricated concept that characterises it and separates it from urban areas (Cloke, 2003). Hall (2011) suggested that rural areas are destinations whereby consumption is

considered to be the destination itself and that local people can then create products for the visitors to consume enhancing their experience of the core product and helping to increase the revenue earned from their visit. Therefore, the complexity of issues surrounding rural tourism creates a multi-dimensional concept encompassing a wide range of concerns which only helps to strengthen the inability to precisely define what rural tourism is (Waligo *et al,* 2013). The World Tourism Organization (1997, p.15) suggested that "*by its nature, rural tourism encourages joint ventures, cooperation, partnership, solidarity-keywords which, when turned into action at the heart of the sustainable development of a rural area".* The World Tourism Organisation also noted that rural tourism is best enabled when participants are not insular but more progressive in the way in which they view potential opportunities. This may well involve the BBNPA facilitating different individuals, communities and interest groups as tourism projects straddle a variety of different actors or concerned parties. At the same time these projects align public and private bodies whilst linking villages and countryside. The notion of integration has been a subject of discourse in tourism academia for some time (Murphy, 1985; Butler, 1998; Dicks, 2000). The SDF scheme enables communities to realise, and be encouraged, to develop other activities (based on their traditional agrarian roots) which might encourage the differing income streams or opportunities for visitors and residents alike. This means that areas such as the BBNP could be developed into divisions of diverse income generating streams whereby tourism epitomises itself as a tool rather than the outcome of development (Pernecky, 2010). Richards and Hall (2001) noted that when policymakers devise schemes for tourism development they have a tendency to not incorporate the varying components which provide the context for rural development processes. The use of the SDF is such a process that should be incorporated into the development of tourism.

The results and analysis of the role of SDF schemes and rural tourism in relation to rural development should focus on the conceptualisation of using rural tourism in a wider sense. SDF outcomes are not attractive enough to entice many external visitors to the destination, but they are a springboard from which to begin. The SDF projects when helping to create confidence in place attachment will attract local recreation (i.e. local visitors) which is a stepping stone for rural tourism.

Although the SDF schemes are not very well suited for tourism *per se*, this research identified aspects of change to be found in communities. The activation of local actors and community groups. The creation of a sense of identity and an increase of social capital. While improving social relations and strengthening networks is not sufficient for generating stronger economic performance, it is

nevertheless a necessary "ingredient" for successful (economic) development as it has the potential to enhance further benefits for the overall development (Agarwal *et al.* 2009). Consequently, the initiation of public commitment via the funding process, the importance of key actors, the potential of building capital within the community provide pre-requisites that may well enable tourism to flourish in the BBNP.

This chapter has introduced some of the key findings around the three contested concepts, namely, sustainability, community and tourism. These were central mechanisms of the static synthetic model, which identified that although these concepts play a central role there is much confusion from all actors as to how these concepts are situated amongst one another. The connections between them and the way in which they work with one other are confusing and lack clarification. The need to integrate rural development in a more cohesive fashion indicates the shortcomings that exist with current institutional structures. There are a multitude of different actors engaged in some aspect or another of rural development, many with objectives of dubious compatibility. However, greater emphasis must be placed on ensuring adequate arrangements for coordination exist between them. Consequently, the actors involved will be required to reconceptualise and reform current practices, which may serve to alleviate some of the current, yet given the breadth of rural development, inevitable problems associated with creating rural sustainability.

Chapter Nine

Conclusions

9.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to draw together the theoretical and policy implications of this research, identifying how each research question has been addressed and clarifying the wider significance of the findings. Reflections on the chosen methodology, considering the benefits and limitations of this approach will also be described.

The contribution to knowledge of the three contested concepts together alongside existing literature to consider the whole of what has been learnt about the position of community driven initiatives such as the SDF in rural development and the influence of tourism in these processes. This research did not set out to be a community study *per se.* originally, this thesis was going to be much more focused on the use of tourism and the SDF rather than the concept of community. However, the primary research that took place in the field changed the focus of the study towards the realisation that the community setting was of paramount importance and that the use of tourism was secondary, in that, tourism was being used to help serve the purpose of creating community sustainability. Community initiatives served as a means of access to individuals pursuing sustainable ambitions through the use of SDF schemes, and, SDF schemes require visitors to maintain the communities in which they are embedded. The rationale for this research originated, not from a desire to chart the idiosyncrasies of any particular community, but from an awareness of the recognition that communities should play an important role in the development of sustainability goals in rural areas (e.g. Lorenzen, 2012; Marquart-Pyatt, 2012).

9.2 Summary of Main Findings

The findings and analysis lead to the conclusion that the concept of community is perceived both to be the "means" by which community led initiatives achieve sustainability ambitions as well as being an outcome of the initiatives themselves. However, the investigations indicated only a small proportion of local residents were actively engaged with the SDF schemes. Therefore, while the geographic community could legitimately be identified as the "means" by which the project objectives are being achieved, this did not align with the smaller "community" that is being strengthened as an

outcome of that project. Drawing these findings together with the existing literature on participation, empowerment and social capital (Bridger and Luloff, 2001; Putnam, 2000) it was argued that the SDF is creating individual pockets of social capital within geographic communities.

This thesis has also provided evidence which demonstrates that SDF schemes were dominated by "urban refugees" who were purporting their notion of the rural idyll via the use of SDF mechanisms. Consequently, there is a risk that community led initiatives can take on an identity which might deepen segmentation of the community and serve to deter, rather than encourage, wider community participation, by linking the previously identified tendency for community led sustainability initiatives to disproportionately attract the "civic core" (Mohan, 2011) this thesis argued that community led initiatives can unevenly engage members of rural communities.

The findings indicate that the use of tourism as part of a rural development strategy is not sufficiently substituted or integrated into the SDF schemes. If one considers that it is communities that should be sustained to support tourism rather than the creation of "sustainable tourism" then local change requires that stakeholders participate in local development and pursue social capital in different social areas. According to this study, SDF schemes are not creating social capital for the wider geographic community. The impact of SDF initiatives often do little to increase the economic vitality of an overall community in which the project has developed. Members of the wider community might feel alienated from the SDF development process resulting in the perception that the opportunities in the area are somewhat limited. Therefore, arguably there is no incentive for inspiring local people to work collaboratively in the benefit of their community or encouraging them to take and engage in positive action connected to tourism development.

9.2.1 Development of the Model of the Structures and Dynamic Drivers of Rural Sustainability in the Brecon Beacons National Park

This thesis has referred to a synthetic model based upon the structures and dynamics observed in both the literature and research findings. Once again, we must return to this model to update it to reflect the research findings. Figure 9.1 revisits the model as last observed on page 137. However, an amendment has been made in light of the primary research findings. As noted on page 241, Pernecky (2010) suggested that tourism could be viewed as a tool, or mechanism through which sustainability outcomes can be achieved and the conduit to use this tool for this thesis is the "community".

Consequently, rather than refer to tourism resources and systems this model now refers to community resources and structures which will be examined further in this section of the chapter.
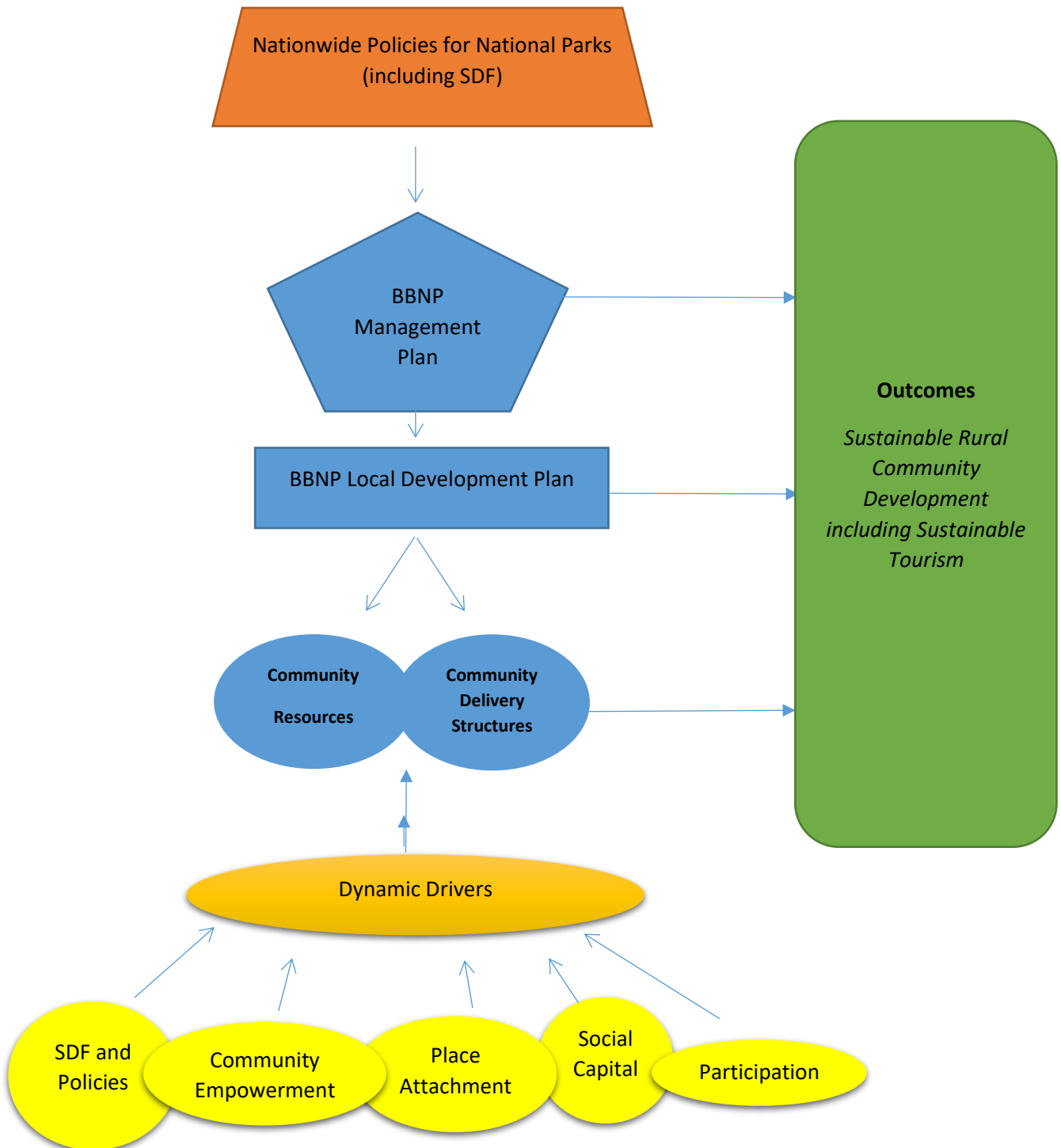

Figure 9.1: Amended Synthetic Model of the Structures and Dynamic Drivers of Rural Sustainability in the BBNP, *Source*: Author

The model (illustrated in Figure 9.1 on page 252) was originally introduced on page 36 and was based on the evidence gathered during the secondary research process by analysing Government documents, BBNPA policies and plans, and an evaluation of the current delivery structures and resources available for achieving sustainable rural development. However, this model was not dynamic. It explained only the structures and outcomes of Park management, it did not explain what had influenced these and why they appeared in the form or within the context that they did. Hence, the model was amended after having completed the review of academic literature related to community development. This amendment added the dynamic drivers of social capital, empowerment, participation, place attachment and the SDF policies (on page 86) to explain the key variables that affect a communities input into the policy-making process.

However, following the primary research it was clear that the policy structures and outputs were not sustainable. Therefore, there needed to be some reason that the drivers identified in the literature were not working. The primary research suggested that this was because the drivers were not being "switched on" and, therefore, not influencing policy. The research suggested that the "switches" as "igniters "were related to:

- How to reconceptualise what the idea of community with the SDF can be employed.
- How there is a need to develop intermediary organisations to facilitate SDF development.
- How to redefine measures of success to allow for innovation and to reduce the fear of failure to enable experimentation.
- Strengthen networks to enable the sharing of ideas, knowledge and resources.
- Strengthening the relationship between the NPA and communities by explaining issues of place attachment, participation and empowerment.

Consequently, after the fieldwork had been undertaken, and given that the research philosophy of constructivist realism permitted the construction of ideas, the synthetic model was revisited as the researcher had identified that a change was required to the model in order to incorporate the findings of the primary research. Namely, that the tourism delivery structures and resources should be changed to the community delivery structures and resources as these were the necessary ignitors that were necessary to bring about the intended policy outcomes. These community structures and systems were further evolved in Figure 9.3 on page 259 which addressed the practical issues of what was discovered through the primary research.

The research has highlighted that more thought into how the NPA can translate ideas into practice warrants attention. The current state of play has enabled the "urban refugees" to reap the rewards of a somewhat inequitable scheme. Consequently, Figure 9.2 and 9.3 reflect the research findings that requires a change of emphasis taking a bottom-up approach that develops, organically, locally-based social capital skills in order to help develop a more equitable SDF scheme that includes a wider range of local and long term resident actors.

Figure 9.2 (on the next page) illustrates the current SDF structure observed during the research process. It indicates that the policy structure and policy outputs are not leading to their intended policy outcomes. Currently, the BBNPA employs "communities" as the means by which to achieve their policy outcomes, with an implicit assumption that the community will naturally be empowered and strengthened by its involvement in the scheme, producing stronger communities as a policy output. However, the findings of this research demonstrate that the way in which community-led activity is conceived, supported and evaluated by policymakers and funders can have a significant impact on the efficacy of this strategy.

Through schemes such as the SDF, community-led groups become the voice of and conduit to "the community". However, as the findings from the interviews have revealed, the small, self-selecting, agenda driven groups are not necessarily representative of the geographic community in which they operate. Assuming the overarching aim of employing communities in public schemes, such as the SDF, is to widen the uptake of more sustainable communities beyond those who are already engaged, the observation that primarily only "usual suspects" were engaged suggests that it may not be a particularly effective approach.

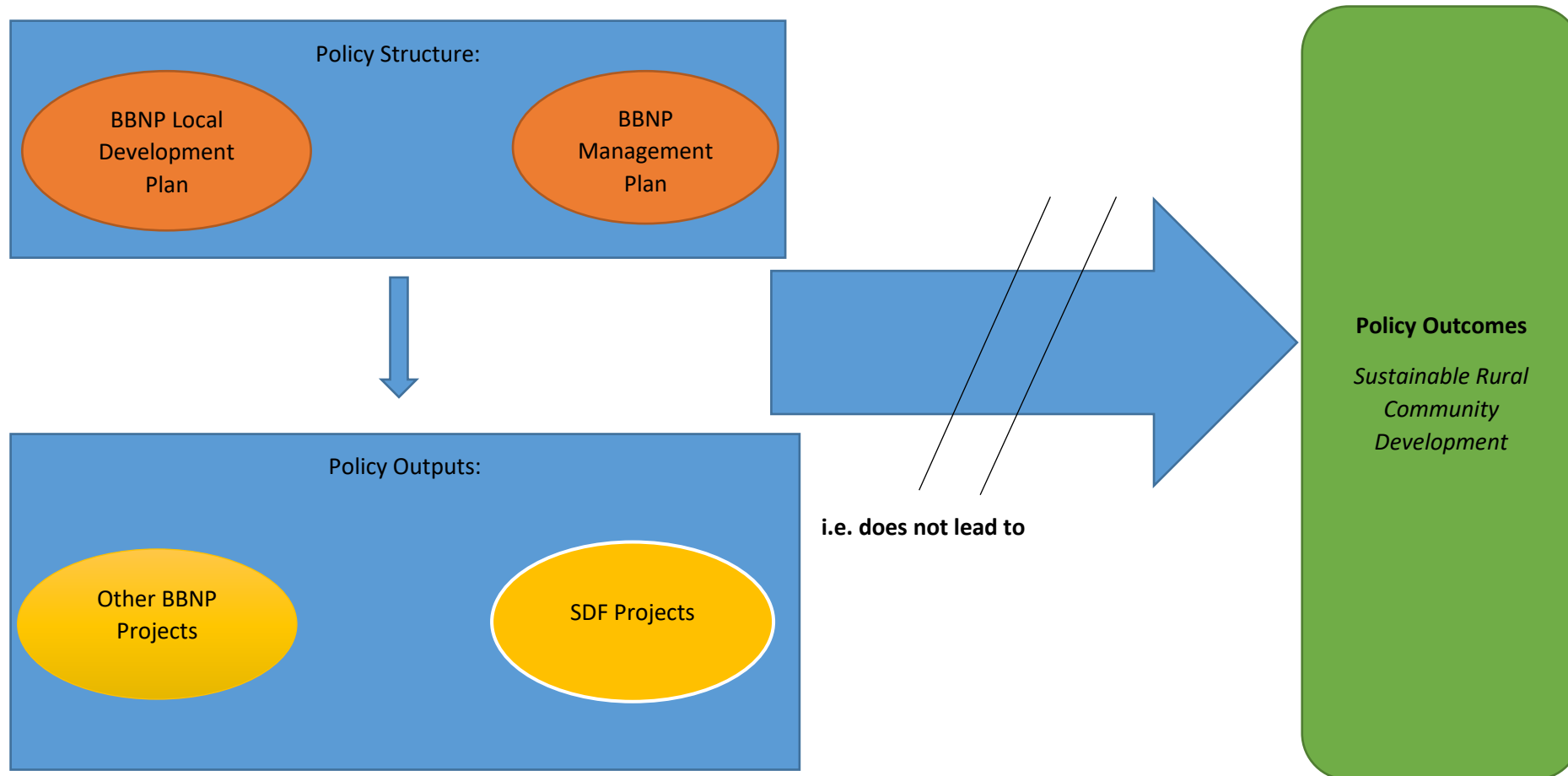Figure 9.2: Model of Current SDF Structure in the BBNP, *Source*: Author

Policy Structure:

BBNP Local Development Plan

BBNP Management Plan

Policy Outputs:

Other BBNP Projects

SDF Projects

i.e. does not lead to

Policy Outcomes

Sustainable Rural Community Development

The research findings illustrate that the NPA assume that local communities know best what their communities' need, which in itself is a contentious point. Arguably, communities need help in deciding what and how they should develop in order to achieve sustainability. If not, those groups with the social capital to do this will continue to prosper at the expense of all others. The SDF is essentially a competitive bid process (only so much funding is allocated each year to go into projects). The current state of play indicates that those with social capital skills in this process are at an advantage. Therefore, there is a need to even up the bidding landscape to help those parts of the community to develop their ability to identify projects, make bids and run projects. So far, the "urban refugees" seem to be able to do this, not the established population.

This is not to suggest that the NPA should not be supporting community level action. Bottom-up, community based initiatives have an extremely valuable role in sustainability policy, but to view the community solely as a channel through which to deliver community development to a predefined criterion (as set out by NPA objectives) drastically undervalues their role.

One potential opportunity has been highlighted by White and Stirling (2013) which is the valuable role that "intermediary organisations" can play in facilitating community led schemes to stay closely connected to the community. The intermediaries act as a mediator and coordinator that is one step removed from the communities themselves, which allows them to link together, and learn from, multiple grassroots projects, and give guidance, training and support to new initiatives. White and Stirling (2013) noted that intermediary organisations were also found to remove some of the bureaucratic pressures and output expectations from the small, volunteer led schemes, and allow them to remain closely tied into the multiple and evolving needs and wants of the communities they serve. This serves to underline the importance of seeing community driven sustainability activities, not as a series of isolated projects, but as components of wider, multi-actor networks and complex systems.

Since the years of the New Labour government, partnership arrangements and shared responsibilities have been increasingly popular mechanism for policy delivery. The research findings illustrate there is little evidence to suggest that these new arrangements have actually led to a transfer of power to rural communities. The competition for top down grants for isolated community led projects that have been observed in this research are unlikely to be conducive to effective rural development. If local

empowerment is a genuine NPA objective, policy-making needs to address and support localism. Instead of treating the community as another delivery partner, community led action should be appreciated for and enabled to perform, the unique role it can play in society, namely, as the arena in which highly localised, experimental and innovative approaches to sustainable community development can be pursued.

The research findings illustrate that there are obstacles to overcome in involving communities with SDF schemes. One of the main problems discovered is with initiating and sustaining participation. Given that participation is key to the development of the community and of their social capital, the NPA must address this issue to bring about meaningful community development.

The research here, suggests that, the NPA illustrate only limited insight into both understanding how a community operates and the processes that help it to do so. This is in line with criticism made by Jewson (2007) about the lack of analytical capabilities of public authorities in developing participation within community initiatives. Although it may be practical and easy to provide a checklist of achievements or policy outcomes, this does not help address the issue of participation. However, developing a framework of "common interest" may be of assistance, as "commonality" is associated with place attachment and this can act as a catalyst for participation where community development initiatives operate.

The interplay between NPA policy outputs and the reality of community development within the NP is the key finding of this research because understanding reasons for place attachment can provide a structure that offers a reason for communities to take part in community development schemes. Place attachment helps align their feelings with community development actions. This is not only important for securing initial participation from the wider geographic community but in sustaining that participation. Therefore, using techniques to ignite people's feelings of place attachment is a sound starting point for the potential of SDF schemes.

To ignite the dynamic drivers outlined in Figure 9.1 it may be advisable for the NPA to tailor policies and initiatives to increase the development of social capital. Most notably the strengthening of community-based groups and the promotion of partnerships among communities aimed at providing

SDF scheme participants with the necessary training, thus obtaining the skills required to benefit the SDF. If projects are to be successful, some stakeholders may need extra assistance and training to be effectively involved.

This research has identified that a major barrier to community development is the absence of communication between the various stakeholders. There appears to be no common vision that unifies the development of the local economy (including tourism projects) and the SDF initiatives. Processes whereby information on SDF schemes or ideas are shared amongst communities is practically non-existent as is communications between the key SDF projects and SDFOs.

Furthermore, tourism has emerged as a powerful economic engine within the BBNPA. The research findings have demonstrated that the NPA need to realise that the issue of support and communication is complex. Gursoy and Rutherford (2004) pointed out that public authorities thinking of developing tourism need to consider perceptions and attitudes of residents before they start investing resources if the proposed developments are to be successful. The research findings illustrated that there is much ambiguity and confusion in understanding not only what tourism is, but what role it can play in supporting SDF schemes. Arguably, to improve decision-making in the use of tourism by involving communities that contributes towards community development and sustainability may be beneficial.

Consequently, Figure 9.3 identifies 5 building blocks to help ignite the dynamic drivers of community development within the BBNP. These are the need to:

- Reconceptualise what and how to employ a "community" within the SDF schemes (as bottom-up initiators rather than top-down delivery partners).
- Redefine measures of success to permit experimentation and innovation in the development of SDF schemes (the breadth and longevity of community participation rather than economic success of projects).
- Strengthen networks to communication and partnerships.
- Develop intermediary organisations for facilitating tourism and SDF development
- Develop a framework to create commonality, via the concept of place attachment, between the NPA and communities to strengthen participation and empowerment.
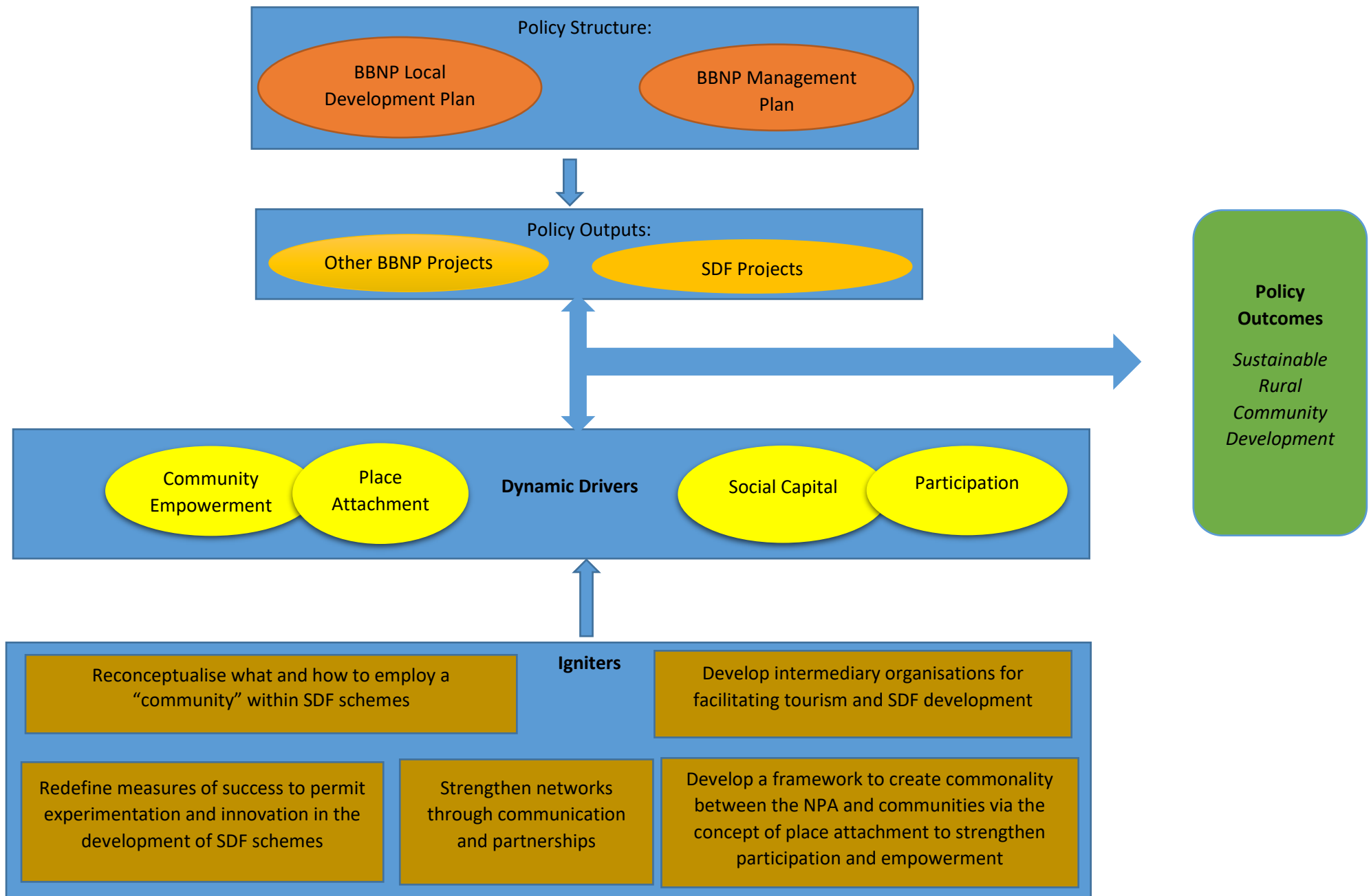
Figure 9.3: Proposed Model for Supporting and Developing Sustainable Communities in the BBNP, *Source*: Author

Overall, the research concludes that within the shifting population and economy of the BBNP isolated, top-down projects that fail to develop communities' social capital before implementing projects do not benefit the communities or their economies. Instead, there needs to be an earlier stage of community development focusing on social capital development, identification of place attachment factors and developing participatory techniques and structures. This has implications for policy outputs and structures, as it questions the validity of the fundamental rationale that financial support for community groups, *per se*, is an effective way of encouraging more sustainable communities.

9.3 Contribution to Knowledge

This research began with the following aim:

- *To gain in-depth and detailed insights into whether the SDF as a community driven initiative assists in the creation of more sustainable communities.*

This broad aim was the foundation for the following three research objectives which emerged as the research enquiry progressed:

- *Understand how the concept of "community" manifests itself through Sustainable Development Funding programmes within the BBNP*

- *To analyse and evaluate how the Sustainable Development funding framework contributes to creating sustainable rural communities in the changing BBNP economy.*

- *To evaluate the use of tourism projects to assist in the development of sustainable communities via the SDF in the BBNP.*

9.3.1 The Concept of Community

In response to the first research objective, the findings and analysis presented led to the conclusion that a community is perceived to be both the "tool" in which community led schemes achieve sustainability ambitions, and an ambition or "outcome" of the initiatives in itself.

However, the research indicated only a small proportion of the local residents were actively engaged with the SDF schemes. Therefore, the geographic community could legitimately be identified as the "tool" through which the objectives of the project were being achieved, they did not align with the smaller community that is being strengthened as an "outcome" of that project. During these investigations together with the existing literature on social capital (Bridger and Luloff, 2001; Putnam, 2000), it was argued that the SDF schemes are creating potentially divisive pockets of social capital within geographic communities. As the bonds between the SDF groups increased their social capital, the group's relationship with positions of authority were enhanced, there is a risk that those not in the group are inadvertently excluded. Therefore, by analysing the name of the community in regard to SDF sustainability policy there is evidence that there are two roles that the community plays as a "tool" and as an "outcome" - often assumed to be complimentary - can, in practice be contradictory.

This thesis has purported that the oversimplification of the concept of a community in the BBNP can lead to the assumption that the community groups being funded are able to speak on behalf of the geographic community. The findings illustrate that those involved in SDF are a specific subset of "the community". Therefore, it is misleading to suggest that they represent the interests of the geographic community as a whole. Instead of being representatives of the pre-existing geographic community these groups create new communities within communities. Therefore, the funding of SDF groups, rather than building social capital throughout the geographic communities, create isolated pockets of social capital within the communities.

This thesis has also provided evidence that the sub communities within the wider community dominated by "urban refugees" or "incomers" who seek to enforce their own identity as a "local" by taking active roles in initiatives such as SDF. Arguably, in rural communities, there is a risk that community led initiatives can end up taking the identity of the "incomer" which may then go on to create or widen existing segmentation of the community and serve to deter, rather than encourage, wider community participation. By linking the previously identified tendency for community led sustainability initiatives to disproportionately attract the "civic core" (Mohan 2011; Woods, 2011) to the observed dominance of the "incomer", this research has furthered the understanding of the ways in which community driven initiatives can unevenly engage, and subsequently segment, remote rural communities. Therefore, if community led initiatives such as the SDF are led by the social elite, who, understand how to be successful in

the funding process, then in fact the schemes and the manner in which they progress are in fact following a top-down approach rather than a bottom-up approach. This observation links with previous authors, who have argued that the political motivation behind the promotion of a community is not necessarily based entirely on the rationale of sustainable development. This thesis purports that as opposed to empowering communities, the SDF is objectifying a community in a need to attempt to create a picturesque, idyllic notion of what a community is (Aiello *et al,* 2010).

9.3.2 The Rural Community in the Brecon Beacons National Park

Rose (1996) indicates that it is common for programmes of government to presuppose the allegiances of communities where they do not immediately appear to exist. Rose states in reference to urban regeneration schemes that:

"They attempt to "empower" the inhabitants of particular inner-city locales by constituting those who reside in a certain locality as "a" community, by seeking out "community groups" who can claim to speak "in the name of community" and by linking them a new ways into the political apparatus" Rose (1996, p.336).

This resonates strongly with the findings presented in this thesis where participants of SDF claim to speak "in the name of community". The respondents involved with SDF schemes were originated and run by well educated, middle-class individuals. This supports existing evidence to suggest that it is characteristic for sustainable activities to be dominated by the well-educated social elite (Svensson, 2012). The tendency for sustainable community action in rural areas to be a niche pursuit of the middle class has been presented in the literature as a persistent criticism of the movement. As Mohan (2011) noted the "civic core" had a tendency to be involved in community led action through what he referred to as a form of partial participation. Whereby, these people who are generally middle-aged, well-educated and financially secure take a more active role but only in initiatives that are aligned with their sensibilities. Arguably, this is a fundamental flaw in the mechanisms of public participation in sustainability initiatives.

The process of participation examined in this thesis highlighted how, as a result of the stipulations of the SDF grant, involvement in these schemes have altered the way individuals operated, shaped their ambitions, an influenced their position in the community. Consequently, through participation of the SDF, some communities have been linked into the political apparatus of the BBNPA due to the fact that these communities' projects moulded to more closely align with NPAs ambitions. The information from the interviews indicated that when preparing an application for SDF respondents were obliged to make sure that the objectives of the SDF projects were of their central priority. Although this may be right in order to obtain funds, arguably, it has exaggerated the dislocation and detachment of certain SDF schemes from the wider geographic community that they were attempting to represent.

The rationale for schemes such as the SDF rests on the ability for communities to take responsibility for elements of their own development. In order for this to be possible, these community must gain the skills, knowledge, and network of relations that enable them to successfully direct themselves (Herbert-Cheshire and Higgins, 2004). Consequently, in order to gain the funding, communities must align themselves by adopting the same processes and concepts as those set by the funding bodies. As McAreavey (2009, p.319) observed that those in the UK Government funded community regeneration programmes *"must abide by the complex rules of the game, they must operate within predetermined boundaries"*.

Sofield (2003) argued that if sustainable tourism is to be achieved, local communities need to be involved in decision making about development and a degree of real power should reside with the host community. Jackson and Morpeth (1999) also argued that community involvement is central in the implementation of sustainable tourism development. Based on the results of this study, however, two problems need to be pointed out with regard to community participation: the limited capacity of community residents and the community's apathy towards environmental issues caused by attitudes excessively oriented toward economic benefits.

Community participation issues need to be reconsidered more realistically. Despite the crucial role of community residents in the success of sustainable tourism, community participation faces many challenges that demand considerable effort. Nonetheless, these limitations should not be used as an excuse to underestimate the value of community participation or to abandon

it. Rather, sustainable tourism policy and management should consider how to enhance the awareness of community residents towards sustainable tourism and improve their capacity to achieve sustainability through effective participation. Training and educational programmes need to be provided for community residents before sustainable initiatives take place at the community level (Dewhurst and Thomas 2003).

As discussed in chapter 4, while social capital is often believed to be a key element of sustainability, it may also prove to be divisive if not managed accordingly. Arguably, through funding schemes such as the SDF, "communities within communities" can amass social capital as they become increasingly connected to sources of power and authority. However, they may fail to establish local bridging capital which would assist them in enhancing relationships within the pre-existing community. Consequently, through participation in the funding scheme such as the SDF, community groups can become increasingly alienated from the wider community. However, there is considerable evidence indicating that social capital influences community development and shapes residents' attitudes and behaviours, even towards tourism (e.g. Mason*, 2005; Nyamori *et al,* 2012).

Hall's (2011) typology of governance emphasises the relevant role of communities in tourism development. He notes that social capital is noteworthy in that it facilitates deliberative and direct democracy. This is similar to the work of Putnam (1993) noted in the literature review on page 41, whereby, the creation of social organisations, networks, norms and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefits are the preconditions for a successful and economically productive community. Furthermore Putnam believed that social capital should include public institutions, structures and policies, which is why the BBNPA need to reassess not necessarily the policy ambitions, rather the mechanisms used to achieve them.

The structure of the development of social capital in the BBNP via the use of the SDF programme and the way it has been interpreted in this thesis is outlined in Figure 9.4 (on page 266). This illustrates the top down structure of this policy and the way in which it has created isolated pockets of social capital by those participants that understand the nature of the funding process. This structure does not integrate or provide access to the wider community as the scope of each project is too narrow in its focus. The researcher suggests that a wider reaching

structure should be considered for SDF programmes that addresses these issues and have been illustrated in Figure 9.5 (on the page 265). By creating and sharing social capital based on individual projects that create meaningful sustainable locations the SDF programme could enhance the possibilities for sustainable rural development.
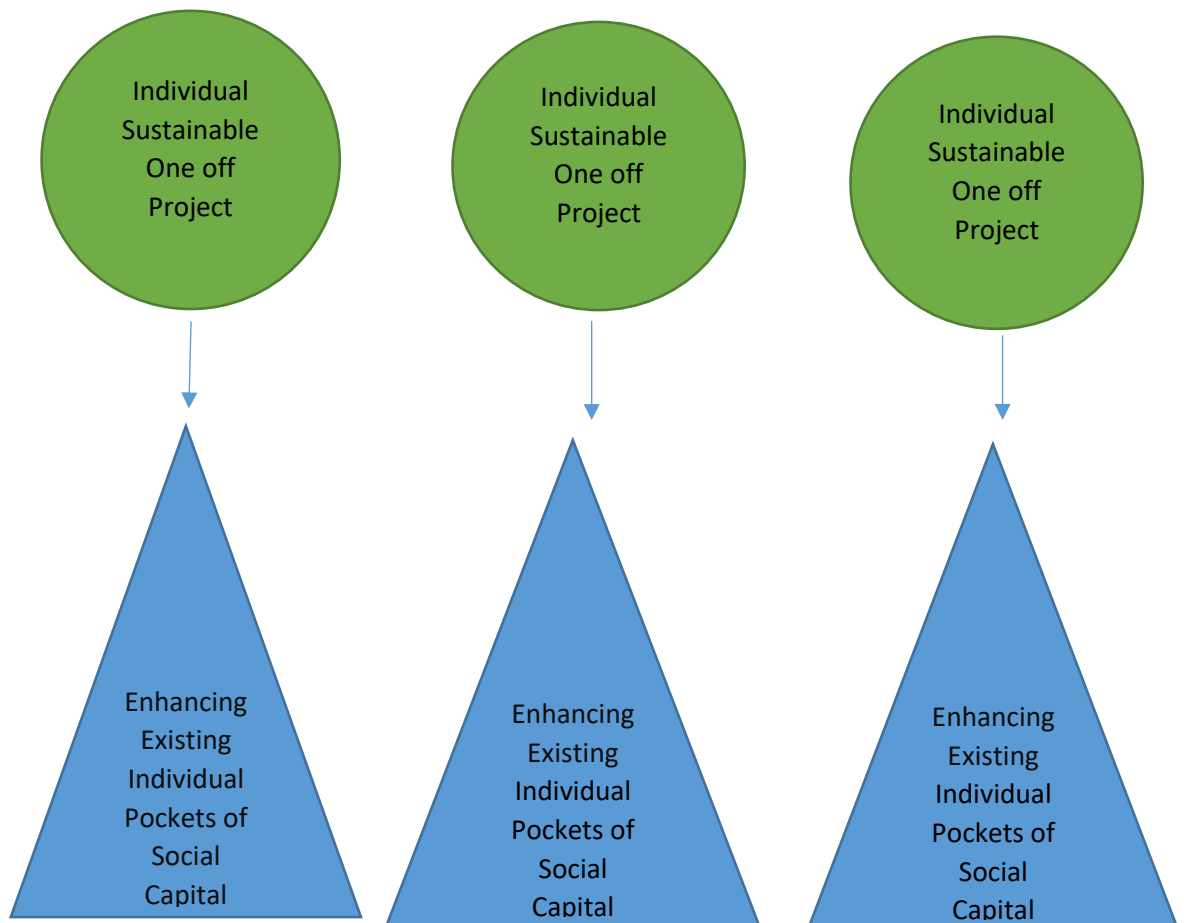
Figure 9.4: The development of Social Capital of current SDF programmes in the BBNP, *Source:* The Author
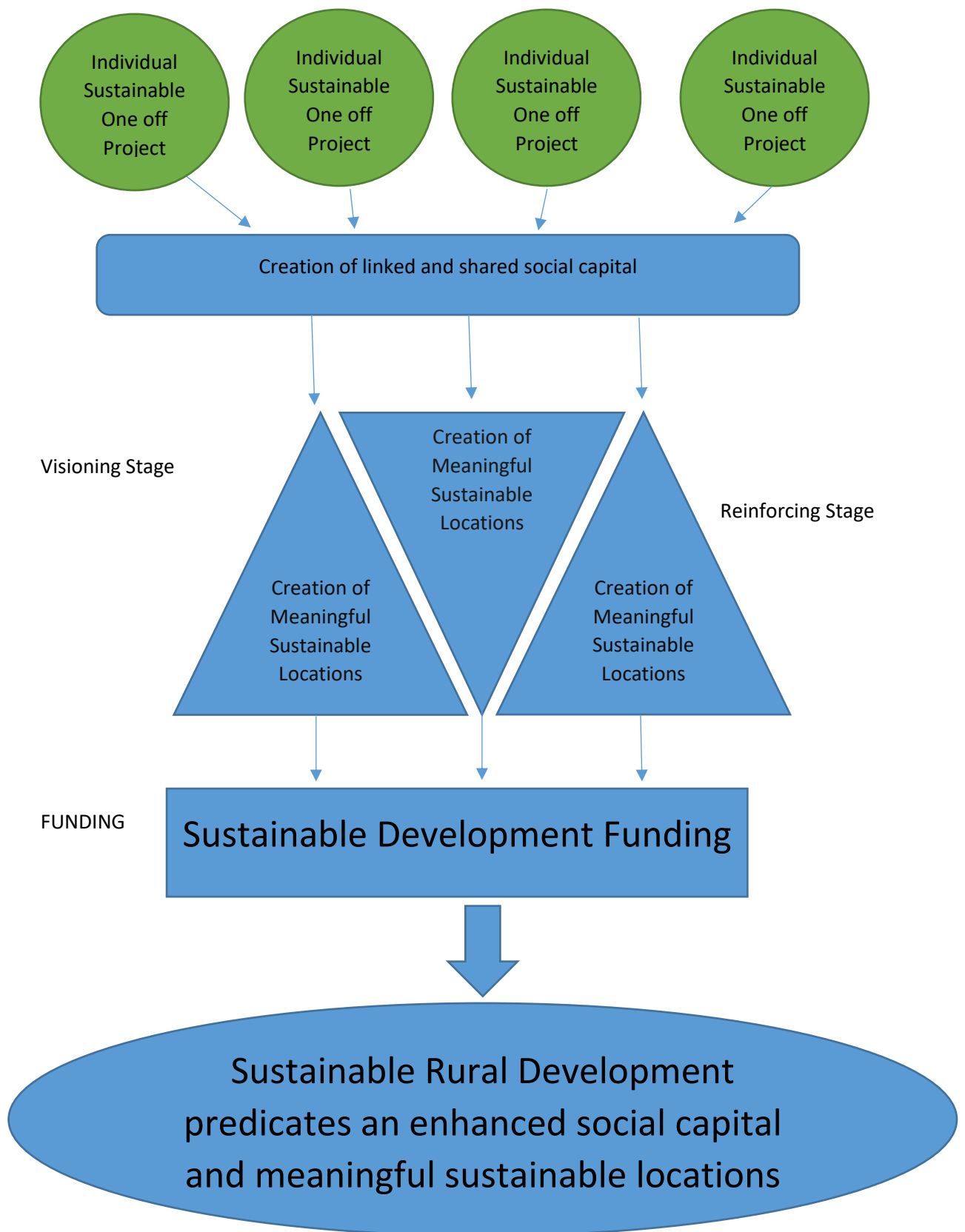
Figure 9.5: A Re-engineered structure for the development of social capital with possible outcomes for SDF programmes, *Source:* The Author

9.4 The Sustainable Development Funding Framework and Sustainable Communities

In response to the second research objective the SDF employs "communities" as the means by which to achieve sustainable ambitions and that in doing so the community will become sustainable and strengthened by its involvement in the project, producing sustainable communities as a policy end. However, the findings of this research have demonstrated that the way in which community driven activity is conceived, supported and evaluated by the funders can have a significant impact on the efficacy of this strategy.

Through SDF, the community is mobilised as an individual, bonded unit, and, as such, the funding granted is to "the community". This funding helps create individual one-off projects, which strengthen the power of "the community". However, as has been discussed, the "community" that is actively involved and consequently benefiting from the project, is not necessarily representative of the geographic community that is purported to be benefiting. Instead, the immediately apparent beneficiaries of the funding are a small subsection of the wider community. As such, resources intended to strengthen and empower "the community" are being channelled exclusively into a specific group within the community. This was arguably further perpetuated by the fact that SDF schemes were being initiated and developed by individuals considered as "urban refugees". Although these incomers bring with them skills and expertise, and, no resentment was evident from the wider geographic community, the "urban refugees" are developing schemes that are changing the configuration of communities. The notion of "communities within communities" that secure individual pockets of social capital could be viewed as divisive (Magis, 2010).

However, SDF schemes cannot (and should not) be relied upon to be representative of the community in which they operate. They are better understood as small, self-selecting sub-communities attempting to create sustainability within their location. The creation of "bridging" capital would assist in creating informal connections between the participants of SDF schemes and the wider community. Based on the observations of the findings and literature, it can be argued that community led initiatives such as SDF, need to be embedded within more democratic networks of local action and decision-making. Should the BBNPA follow a strategy as outlined in Figure 9.5 and create a network of SDF schemes that feed into one another by creating shared capital and consequently a number of meaningful locations that relate to one another then the enhancement of sustainable rural development might become more tangible. Currently, the strategy of SDF, which provides funding for isolated community-based projects,

fails to recognise the importance of integrating not only the wider community, but with other funded projects. Consequently, sustainability may not be within reach of these funded schemes as they do not establish effective, inclusive governance arrangements.

Through schemes such as the SDF, "community led" groups become the voice of, and conduit to the "community". Nonetheless, the findings of this research have revealed that these small, self-selecting, agenda-driven groups are not necessarily representative of the wider geographic community in which they operate. Assuming the overarching aim of utilising communities in schemes such as SDF is to widen the volume and scope of sustainable communities in the BBNPA particularly beyond those who are already engaged in it. Then the fact that the scheme is mainly used by the civic core or "incomers" suggests that it may not be a particularly effective approach.   This is not to suggest that the BBNPA should not be involved in such schemes as SDF. Bottom-up, community based schemes have an extremely valuable role to play in sustainability policy, but to view the community solely as a channel to deliver such projects warrants re-evaluation.

Arguably, the BBNPA needs to work with communities to help them create an individual distinctiveness for their area, in order to increase the appeal and facilities for tourists and residents alike to help create sustainable communities. The use of sustainable tourism through funded action such as the SDF schemes is crucial to creating rural development. The ability to deliver sustainable tourism through the actions and schemes of local communities is a strong asset for any NP. This research has highlighted that although the BBNPA have made considerable efforts in delivering sustainability initiatives the concern of fragmented, isolated communities which have differing and short lived capacity to cope with the influx of visitors warrants more attention. As does generating involvement from the wider geographic community. Arguably, the approach taken should enable and encourage communities to follow a route that matches the objectives of that vicinity in providing high quality experiences that fill a gap in provision whilst creating a long term strategic vision for that locality.

Therefore, a number of actions can be considered that could be carried out at the community level to help realise these ambitions. Firstly the creation of a structure, similar to Figure 9.5 on page 259 might enable the BBNP to provide guidance and support for SDF initiatives aimed at

the community level within the BBNPA, rather than focusing on one off individual projects. A framework is required to provide guidance and to assist in the coordination to help overcome the issues of fragmentation and isolation. This framework would help to ensure that activities are integrated into the BBNPA policies to help them make sure that resources are allocated effectively to help them deliver sustainability initiatives across the park.

In order to gain a deeper insight into how tourism impacts communities and their engagement with it, the framework could identify and increase the level of awareness amongst local communities of tourism, and, the potential contribution tourism can make to SDF schemes and consequently the wider community. The promotion of such, should help to develop the appreciation of the contribution that tourism can make to the differing aspects of community life and lifestyles

The creation of a more coherent structure, whereby, there is clarity as to how individual SDF projects are coordinated which then feed into the wider community level leading to connections to the BBNPA would be of value. This framework could communicate from the grassroots goings on up to the local policy level and, consequently to the national level. This part of the framework could help to establish or enhance community based structures for SDF schemes that could be replicated in other NPs. Some communities that participate in SDF do have existing members who are already involved in tourism. The creation of such structures should involve close consultation with all actors involved in the process, such as community councils, civic societies, the BBNPA or BBT to ensure that the structure is effective.

Communities need to clarify their vision, priorities and intended programmes of action. The establishment of how SDF schemes feed into community visions and existing programmes is an objective that communities themselves should attempt to ascertain. Communities need to decide what they want from sustainability initiatives and what they would like to see occur in the foreseeable future (normally a five year period to feed into the BBNPA management plan).

In order to integrate SDF with tourism more consistently the communities in the BBNP need to ensure that the visitor experience and orientation in each community is unique and effective. This may lead to an increase in visitors to the different localities in the park and increase the duration of stay from tourists. If local communities can connect multiple SDF projects which engross the curiosity of tourists and residents it will increase the likelihood of people exploring

the local area, spending more time and money at these destinations. Therefore, if communities can ensure that visitors know where to go and what to see and provide supplementary motivations for a visit or reason to spend time, tourism expenditure could increase.

The ability to involve with the agricultural community in the development of SDF (and tourism) is crucial to the success and sustainability in the BBNP as the activities of farmers and land managers are vital. Therefore, there is a need to pursue involvement more vigorously with the agricultural community. This community takes the lead for ensuring that the landscape that visitors come to experience is looked after as they manage the land over which access often takes place. The ability for the agricultural community to enhance not only the tourism industry, but SDF schemes, is crucial to the sustainability of the area. The agricultural community could benefit through the development by being able to diversify their current offerings to include more accommodation, new attractions and amenities such as the provision of food. There needs to be regular engagement with all the actors involved in tourism and SDF with this community on sustainability issues.

9.5 Tourism, Sustainability and the Sustainable Development Funding

In response to the third research objective, the findings indicate that the use of tourism as part of a rural development strategy is not sufficiently substituted or integrated into the SDF schemes. If one considers that it is communities that should be sustained to support tourism rather than the creation of "sustainable tourism" the local change requires that stakeholders participate in local development and pursue social capital in different social areas. According to this study, SDF schemes are not creating social capital in the wider geographic community. The analysis indicated that some people do not participate in community affairs. Such participation, inevitably, leaves out many community residents. Arguably, nonparticipation could signify resistance, or a form of protest, demonstrated in the research findings with many of the respondents from the survey indicating with "don't know" responses. The impact of SDF initiatives often do little to increase the economic vitality of an overall community in which the project has developed. Members of the wider community might feel alienated from the SDF development process resulting in the perception that the opportunities in the area are somewhat limited. Therefore, arguably, there is no incentive for inspiring local people to work collaboratively in the benefit of their community or encouraging them to take and engage in positive action connected to tourism development.

Murphy (1985) indicated that resident involvement early in tourism planning processes before key and often irreversible decisions are made is required. Furthermore, Joppe (1996) argued that for sustainable tourism development to occur within a community setting, a clear strategy involving the roles and responsibilities of the actors and outlining the objectives and players is necessary. In this research, the findings suggest that SDF groups acknowledge and acquire very few benefits from tourism because arguably they have little control over the way in which tourism has developed in their views are rarely heard. The survey indicated that residents believe that tourism should have a role in the local economy and that participation should occur from the local community. Consequently, local people should be consulted and accordingly tourism policies should be reconsidered. The implementation of tourism cannot succeed without community members being involved and consultation taking place with such people. If communities can share responsibilities for finding solutions to local development problems these would probably be more effective than imposed solutions. Tourism development by the BBNPA is, as Dargan and Shucksmith (2008) noted, a top-down approach utilising public funds. SDF participants interviewed demonstrated that their programmes generated social capital by them successfully organising themselves with many of the schemes involving visitors and consequently tourism. However, in accordance with Putnam's theory it is not possible to determine if social capital in terms of the wider geographic community is positively related to community development and the use of tourism. Nevertheless, those communities with a higher stock of social capital through the creation of SDF schemes were able to take advantage of tourism markets provided by the NPA. Arguably, residents expect the NPA to attract tourists to the area, what the tourists should be doing in the area also seems to rely heavily on what the NPA can offer them. This thought process requires rethinking by local communities so that they can build their local assets into more viable and accessible products for consumption.

9.5.1 Tourism as an Instrument for Rural Development in the Brecon Beacons National Park

Figure 9.5 illustrates the need for individual sustainable one of projects to be bridged together in order to link social capital. This concept is most applicable when using tourism in rural areas. Tourism destinations in marginal areas, such as many SDF schemes appear to be, require public bodies to encourage collaboration between dispersed communities in order to foster innovation. This thesis acknowledges the need for networking, participation and enhancement of social capital for the development of community sustainability. Interestingly, these key requirements are similar necessities for the transformation of tourism destinations into tourism innovation systems (Hjalager, 2002). In an area such as the BBNP, where SDF schemes are spread in peripheral areas around the NP and businesses and attractions are similarly dispersed there is a stronger need for these disparate communities to work together to establish a comprehensive destination experience (Romeiro and Costa, 2010). Consequently, the findings of this thesis highlighted that tourist hubs such as Brecon will benefit from tourism. Whereas, peripheral areas tend not to see such benefits and even when these areas are visited, it is for a short period of time, as the visitor will return to a hub such as Brecon to spend the majority of their income. Consequently, the geographic scale at which "working together" needs to occur to facilitate innovation is not clear (Carson *et al.* 2014).

Muscio (2006) noted that local innovation systems rely upon this success of the regional context and that this can often provide insights into how and why local systems succeed or fail. The overall vision for the BBNP was highlighted by the comments from the Sustainble Tourism manager and SDFO in chapter 8 in section 8.1, they indicated the fractional nature of the BBNP due to the fact that the park crossed many geographical boundaries. If the regional level is splintered and struggling to provide a coherent strategy, it is not surprising that local innovation is relatively unsuccessful. Subsequently, given that the majority of SDF schemes require visitors, they should consequently be integrated into a more cohesive tourism innovation for the park. This requires a stratagem that links the various one-off individual sustainability projects as noted in Figure 9.5 in order to establish shared social capital and create meaningful sustainable locations, not only for the community but tourist alike. Carson and Carson (2011) raised concerns that externally driven boundaries, such as in evidence in the BBNP, can have negative impacts on innovation as they ignore locally embedded perceptions of the area and can often force unconnected or competing communities to collaborate. The necessity for the NPA to reassess their top-down approach towards sustainability and tourism as illustrated in Figure 9.2 so that they can create meaningful sustainable locations that share social capital and

consequentially share tourists warrants their attention. Although the top-down approach is simpler to plan and manage (Nash, 2000), approaching a bottom-up innovative system as noted in Figure 9.5 may reap more sustainable outcomes for both tourism and the community.

9.6 Reflections and Limitations on Methodology

Constructivist realism has been well suited to the study of communities and rural development as it seeks to transcend the dualism between structures and processes and view them in a dynamic context that affects both the actors and structures within which they work. Consequently, constructivist realism appreciates that structures influence, rather than just constrain, the nature of decisions and actions. Thus, social contexts are not agents of casual effect because they are not the locus of decision and action where the action is in some sense a consequence of the actor's decision (Sibeon, 1999). Only actors can make decisions that affect actions and, therefore, make a difference to the cause of events (Lewis 2002). Implicit to this ontology is that the search for casual influences at a particular time can only be ascertained "after the fact" through empirical research. Constructivist realism has allowed this research to study the macro-meso and micro-level relationships occurring within the BBNP.

The generalisability of the findings are somewhat restricted by the mainly qualitative approach taken. Bryman (2012) reported that the significant limitation of case study research is that of "external validity". It is impossible to know from one case study whether the observations are representative of situations beyond those specific cases (Gilbert, 2008). The findings reported in this thesis are based on a survey, three focus groups, interviews with NPA representatives and from several participants involved in the SDF process and, as such, are not generalizable to other cases. Knowing this, meant that the research had to delve deeper through the triangulation of research strategies. However, as has been discovered in this thesis, communities are unique and are disorderly groupings of social relations and therefore, the findings purported here are likely not to be replicated in exactly the same way in other rural communities.

9.7 Research Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

Further research which investigates possible alternatives to the current mechanisms by which community led sustainability activities are supported and evaluated will be extremely valuable. A better understanding of the most appropriate ways of enabling and evaluating community action is crucial to creating and sustaining sustainable communities. As with all case study research, it will be valuable to replicate the study to other remote rural areas and compare whether the findings are consistent with those reported here. The SDF is a scheme used by many NPs around the world and it would be stimulating to complete the same research in other rural communities to compare the findings. This will be particularly interesting in terms of the manifestation of "community" as there are likely to be significant differences in the way in which community led initiatives are perceived and received in these contexts. For example, would the relevance of the "incomer" and "local" be as relevant in other NPs as they have been for the BBNPA. Would the integration of tourism be stronger in other NPs than was found in this instance? Finally, there is a need for more comprehensive research into the way in which current policy that strives to create rural sustainability is affecting local governance systems. Evaluations of schemes such as the SDF tend to be limited to assessing outputs on project by project basis. However, of much greater importance than these, inevitably minor, project level achievements, is gaining a better understanding of the impact of these policies at a systems level. That is, understanding how, and if, these projects are contributing to sustainability, communities and tourism.

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Appendix 1: *Questionnaire*

My name is Edward Isaacs I am currently studying at London South Bank University where I am working towards a PhD. I am trying to find out about how people in Brecon feel about their local community, tourism development and the National Park. I would be most grateful if you could assist me by answering the questions below:

Community and Associations. In this section we would like to have your opinions on some aspects of place attachment and participation in local associations. We are interested simply in what you yourself think.

1. What does "community" mean to you:

_____

____

2. What does "Community Development" mean to you:

_____

____

3. Please look at the statements on the left hand side of the following table. Check one of the boxes that corresponds the closest to how you feel about the statements.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am more attached to my village than to my community					
There is a more strong sense of community at the village level than there is at the county level.					
People work together to get things done more at the village than at the community level					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
People would get along better if each one would mind his/her own business and others take care of theirs					
I would never join an association in this community that is not located in my village					
What goes on in other villages of this community is not of my concern					
I never participate in activities in other villages of this community.					

4. How many local associations are you a member of (and what are the associations)?_____

_____

_____

5. Do you hold any office within the association and if so what position do you hold?

_____

_

6. Have you been an active member of an association in the past?

_____

____

Tourism in the National Park. We would like your opinion about what role the National Park has in development the general of communities and whether it has been a constructive factor for developing tourism locally.

7 The National Park has done enough in terms of. (Please look at the following statements of the following table. Check one of the boxes that corresponds the closest to how you feel about the statements.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
Creating or providing tourist accommodation units					

Maintaining the landscape					
Preserving built heritage					
Providing information and interpretation for tourists					
Promoting the area as a tourist destination					
Creating recreational activities for tourists and residents					
Promoting environmental education for local people and visitors					
Valuing traditional local knowledge Contributing to local employment					
Preserving traditional cultural activities					
Providing suitable training for potential entrepreneurs					
Organizing local events					
Creating and/or improving tourist attractions					

Creating or assisting shops selling local products					

Residents Opinion about Tourism. In the next section we are interested in your developing opinion about tourism as a way forward for communities in your area.

Please indicate your opinions about each of the following questions about tourism in your community.

8. What is your general opinion about how tourism has been developed in this area?

[ ] Very satisfied   [ ] Satisfied   [ ] Neutral   [ ] Dissatisfied   [ ] Very dissatisfied

9. How important is it for you to be involved in decisions about tourism development and planning in this area?

[ ] Not at all important   [ ] Not important   [ ] Somewhat important

      [ ] Very important   [ ] No Opinion

10. Tourism development can cause both positive and negative changes. Can you give examples of any positive or negative changes from tourism development that have affected your community?

Positive_____

_____

Negative_____

____

11. Have you ever taken an active role in the development of tourism in your village/community:

[ ] Yes   [ ] No

12. If so what role did you play (e.g. Responded to planning applications, consultations, setting up a business)

_____

____

Socio-demographic information. The next few questions are intended to help us analyse your previous responses by key characteristics, none of these answers will be traceable back to you.

13. Gender?   [ ] Male   [ ] Female

14. Current village/town of residence: _____

15. How long have you lived in this community?____ years

16. What is your age category: [ ] 18-30   [ ] 31-45

                                 [ ] 46-60   [ ] 60 and beyond

17. Does your income depend on tourism?   [ ] Yes   [ ] No   [ ] In Part

> ***Thank you for your valuable time and cooperation in this research.***

Appendix 2: *Focus group schedule*

Focus groups were conducted in three separate locations in August 2015. 10 participants took place during each session.

Focus Groups took place August 2015

Brecon	**Date 08/08/15**
Participant	**Profile of Participant**
FG 1	Owner of Public House
FG 2	Architect
FG 3	Member of Women's Institute
FG 4	Local Resident
FG 5	Member of Rotary Club
FG 6	Farmer
FG 7	Member of Rotary Club
FG 8	Local Resident
FG 9	Owner of Business
FG 10	Local Resident

Pencelli	**Date 15/08/15**
Participant	**Profile of Participant**
FG 11	Member of Women's Institute
FG 12	Local Resident
FG 13	Local Resident
FG 14	Member of Women's Institute
FG 15	Local Resident
FG 16	Local Resident
FG 17	Member of Women's Institute
FG 18	Local Resident
FG 19	Retired General Practioner
FG 20	Retired Local Resident

Bwlch	**Date 22/08/15**
Participant	**Profile of Participant**
FG 21	Local Resident
FG 22	Member of Women's Institute
FG 23	Local Resident
FG 24	Owner of Café
FG 25	Member of Women's Institute
FG 26	Member of Women's Institute
FG 27	Artist
FG 28	Local Resident
FG 29	Retired Local Resident
FG 30	Member of Llangorse Sailing Club

Appendix 3: Summary Transcript of Focus Group

No.	Question	Key findings
Q1	What you understand by the term "sustainability"?	This question was asked to see how the concept of sustainability would be interpreted by the focus group members. Responses included: *This is about thinking about tomorrow making sure that were all able to survive and prosper in the future"* (Respondent FG 28) *Is this making sure we all have jobs tomorrow?"* (Respondent FG 8) *Making sure we all have jobs in the future"* (Respondent FG 15) *This is ensuring that the land of today is fit for use in the future"* (Respondent FG 6) *I know that sustainability is really important thing for the National Park. I never really considered the idea that our community or tourism can be linked to sustainability and at the moment I am struggling to make ends meet so thinking about the future in terms of a community based sustainability project or creating links to tourism projects is a little far-fetched* (Respondent FG 2) *I thought this is all about being green. Recycling, waste reduction, it was that programme on TV called Hugh's War on waste that really made me think about this he kept mentioning sustainability all the time. It had not really crossed my mind that sustainability was to do with community survival or tourism these are separate things that require separate approaches.* (Respondent FG 12) *It's a process where members of the community come together to take some form of collective action and try and sort out problems that have some sort of outcome such as economic or environmental*(Respondent FG 14) *It's a grassroots process where people try to organise themselves and try and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Communities then try to develop plans or options that try to benefit the community.* (Respondent FG 21)
Q2	What does sustainable development mean to you?	Following on from the previous question participants were asked this question to see if they could discern the difference between sustainability and sustainable development. Responses included:

		I tend to think that trying to conduct your business in a way that is going to have little as effect on the environment as you possibly can... but you do not know what is the best thing to do and how you can go about even making a start at it (Respondent FG 11)
		We want more and more people to come to us [sounds of agreement], and yet we don't want to spoil these lovely little villages, the country lanes, and everything else, you know……guess what we are getting at here is that there is a basic dichotomy, you know, a basic problem there (Respondent FG 1)
		I agree with the comments about sustainable development in terms of increasing opportunities but at the same time preserving what we have but maybe we should think about sustainable development in terms of thinking that more isn't always better maybe sustainable development should be about reducing our dependencies. Maybe sustainable development is about lowering our levels of consumerism, decreasing our need to rely on external sources by this I mean the number of products and services produced abroad and imported into the country, maybe development is not about growth but rather change. (Respondent FG 14)
Q3	What do you understand by the term "sustainable community"?	This question was used to move the discussion into the area of sustainability and community which allowed for other probing questions to generate discussion including: • What is a community? • Who do you think is in your community? • How do you define your community? Responses included: *I know that sustainability is really important thing for the National Park. I never really considered the idea that our community or tourism can be linked to sustainability and at the moment I am struggling to make ends meet so thinking about the future in terms of a community based sustainability project or creating links to tourism projects is a little far-fetched* (Respondent FG 2) *I thought this is all about being green. Recycling, waste reduction, it was that programme on TV called Hugh's War on waste that really made me think about this he kept mentioning sustainability all the time. It had not really crossed my mind that sustainability was to do with community survival or tourism these are separate things that require separate approaches.* (Respondent FG 12)

		Community is all about being together and community development is about sticking together. (Respondent FG 30)
		It's about being more than an individual………… and community development is thinking about long-term issues that affect us, such as lack of housing. (Respondent FG 11)
		It's about creating long term links with the people who live around us, maybe even the people who govern us. Whereas community development is about making sure that these two groups of people interact correctly. (Respondent FG 5)
Q4	What does community development mean to you?	This question purposely focused on building from the previous question whereby having established what a community is discussions around development could take place. Responses included:
		It's a process where members of the community come together to take some form of collective action and try and sort out problems that have some sort of outcome such as economic or environmental(Respondent FG 14)
		It's a grassroots process where people try to organise themselves and try and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Communities then try to develop plans or options that try to benefit the community. (Respondent FG 21)
		When you live in an area like Wales terms like sustainability and community development been bandied around for many years now by local councils, reading about it in the local newspapers and magazines and of course the NPA has been pushing issues around community development for at least the last 20 years. (Respondent FG 1)
		The hotel industry in the area has been trying to get community involvement for quite some time now and I don't just mean employing local people and referring to the idea of getting the community behind the benefits of what our business can bring to the area and of course how they can take advantage of an increase in the number of visitors to the area" (Respondent FG 18)
		My community is just the farmers in Bwlch, I don't mix with the people on the estate, or the incomers. (Respondent FG 6)

		*Everyone in the community thought the development of the village hall would be excellent for local residents. The intention was to create a village hall that was a hub for the community where we could offer lots of activities using different businesses in Pennorth. At our original meeting the attendance was really positive but by the time we reached our third meeting where we started to complete the paperwork for the sustainable development fund there were just four of us. (*Respondent FG 8)
		I could see the area was in need of regeneration and I have read about other examples where the funding had been successful, and I thought to myself that this will be the perfect way to make our community stronger and richer. I would be satisfied if what I get out of this is seeing long-term survival of our little community. I'd like to see more people come to the area and spend more money in our village and visit the ruins and maybe we can create new businesses such as cafe or even a visitor's centre. There is no financial incentive for me, this is purely for my own satisfaction". (Respondent FG 3)
		*My community is much wider than my neighbours and my village. My community is all my girlfriends from the Women's' Institute. The quality of life I have is really down to the social aspects that this Institute has provided me. I get to travel around not only the local area but the whole country and I find I have an immediate bond with other women from the WI. When I think about community development and thinking in a broader sense. All right there are certain initiatives that we take that are to benefit the immediate vicinity but some of the activities I'm involved in are trying to influence the government in some of their policies which mean to me the community development things that you're talking about are a more national scale. (*Respondent FG 16)
		*I have been involved with the Women's Institute in the development of local fetes, organised walks and arranging speeches from various members of the community on behalf of the Women's Institute. (*Respondent FG 12) *Every year we offer strawberry picking which is very popular with the tourists (*Respondent FG 6) *I am involved in the organisation of the Brecon Jazz Festival which takes place in August (*Respondent FG 2) *I am part of the Brecon business club which involves local businesses joining together to improve our efficiency, communication and provide support to one another (*Respondent FG 28)
Q5	What are the barriers that prevent people from getting involved in community	Following on from the previous questions, this question attempted to elicit what would stop people from engaging in community development activities. Responses included: Not wanting to be involved. This is down to personal motivation so perhaps the NPA could create some stimulus that would create a desire for people to become involved.

	development activities?	Not knowing you could be involved. There needs to be a more expansive marketing program that lets local people know what is going on and how they could become involved. Lack of time/resources/expertise to get involved. Providing knowledge and resources (not necessarily financial but technical and expert knowledge would be beneficial). Lack of understanding what is required when being involved. Clear guidelines could be provided on the roles and responsibilities of the people getting involved. Not approving of the proposed development. Providing a persuasive argument for the proposed development. Lack of mobility Providing transportation. Lack of interest/effort. Not understanding what personal gain can be obtained from getting involved. Providing a clear and identifiable benefit that people can understand they will get from becoming involved. *My business commitments in running a pub mean I don't have any time to get involved with anything else will stop my business needs me 24 hours a day seven days a week* (Respondent FG 7) *We are so busy in our business just surviving on an ad hoc fashion. I literally don't know if I'm able to survive. I need to think about who's working in the bar of the hotel is at the reception desk if someone calls in sick and need to be around to cover and that doesn't even give me a chance to do the administrative work. The trying to get involved with some kind of development programme that doesn't have an immediate impact on our business is just too timely*" (Respondent FG 18) "*Gaining involvement from members of the club was hard to achieve, everyone liked the concept but only a few people were instrumental in obtaining the funding. "We got a great idea, we have a rough idea how that plan will translate into reality but what we are lacking is the support of a couple of the businesses that are key to our proposed bid".* (Respondent FG 4) "*It's all very well having a great idea about how we can bring in people to the area and get them to use local businesses and facilities but it's another matter getting members of the local community together in order to work out a well-structured and well considered bid for the SDF. What I found is that there are two or three key members to the committee who are willing to put in the time and the effort in order to prepare to meet the sustainable development officer to discuss the plan and to try and*

		work out the nitty-gritty of what surprising about this is that the local businesses who perhaps might gain the most in a financial sense are not willing to get involved as I thought it would be". (Respondent FG 3)
		It was easy to get people to attend the annual general meeting where we discussed the SDF bid but after that initial meeting there was just a handful of us who attended the follow-up meetings and then there were just two of us involved in the application. (Respondent FG 4)
Q6	How do you feel that you have been empowered in terms of taking control of your own development	This question reduced to identify the participants understanding of empowerment and see to what extent they believed they were and empowered community. Responses included: *It's the NPA that established these programmes, they are offering money, and they provide the guidelines so why would I would need to get involved?* (Respondent FG 22) *The state propose the programme what say do I have? I mean the government should take responsibility in rolling out and managing these types of programmes, they are the ones with the expertise and skill, not me.* (Respondent FG 13) *I am retired and moved to the area nearly 20 years ago and I have seen the decline in the fabric of our community. Farmers are finding it hard to make money, local craftspeople (such as my wife who is a painter) are having to travel further in order to sell their work, local pubs are shutting and the makeup of our village is changing considerably as more people are moving into the area and I can see the Welsh locals being ostracised. I thought the scheme would be a good way to try and integrate the "outsiders" and rural locals working towards one common goal.* (Respondent FG 3) *I have been involved with the Women's Institute in the development of local fetes, organised walks and arranging speeches from various members of the community on behalf of the Women's Institute.* (Respondent FG 12) *Every year we offer strawberry picking which is very popular with the tourists* (Respondent FG 6) *I am involved in the organisation of the Brecon Jazz Festival which takes place in August* (Respondent FG 2) *I am part of the Brecon business club which involves local businesses joining together to improve our efficiency, communication and provide support to one another* (Respondent FG 28)

		My community pretty much looks after itself, all right the government and local council establish various rules and procedures and some of these are implemented by the National Park but generally we are left to our own devices with regards to how we manage our livelihoods. (Respondent FG 5)
		It's the NPA that established these programmes, they are offering money, and they provide the guidelines so why would I would need to get involved? (Respondent FG 22)
		The state propose the programme what say do I have? I mean the government should take responsibility in rolling out and managing these types of programmes, they are the ones with the expertise and skill, not me. (Respondent FG 13)
Q7	What does the term "tourism" mean to you?	This question was intended to determine the level of understanding that local people have about the tourism industry and led to the following probing questions: • Who are the tourists visiting the area? • Where do you see tourists? • Who (in the focus group) is involved in tourism? • What local businesses are involved in tourism? Responses included: *I can see the development of new recreational facilities aimed at local people but I am not sure how these developments are trying to improve community sustainability………. After all the community is what you make of it which in my case involves me embedding myself with my neighbours?* (Respondent FG 28) *I always see notices and read in the local paper about initiatives and consultation processes taking place in the area with regard to tourism and using local resources and local people. My wife has got involved with one such collaboration and I can see how it brings people together working towards a common goal, but this was not something that I wanted to get involved in.* (Respondent FG 19) *We all know it can be busy during the summer for a couple months irrespective of what the weather is doing. We know that the Dutch will migrate and fill out all the campsites. We know that the arts, music and literature community will descend upon us in August for all their festivals. These tourists know that there will be things for them to do even if it's raining. They all assume that there will be enough accommodation and transportation and food to look after them which means that all our services come under a great deal of pressure for a few weeks of the year.* (Respondent FG 16)

		We seem to know what we're talking about, as far as tourism is concerned. What the concerning thing is that we do not seem to understand what `sustainable tourism' is, and this is very worrying. Is there some trendy lefty trying to invent an expression we, Joe Public, are meant to understand, or is this academic jargon? It is nonsense. It ought to be so that the likes of us, Joe Public, can actually understand what people are talking about. (Respondent FG 17) *If we did more environmental stuff…... a lot of people will come out of season. I really do push to try and get out of season trade* (Respondent FG 22) *These are all beautiful things we have. It is our environment, and in a sense it is the environment we should be promoting*" (Respondent FG 4) *We cannot afford to reduce the number of people coming into the area. The number of people who are coming into the area is less than it was twenty years ago, and they need people. It is no good talking about environmental issues if you haven't got the people coming down, because the area would just... (Bwlch) just wouldn't exist, because it relies so much on tourism*. (Respondent FG 7)
Q8	What are the impacts of tourism on you?	Group members were asked to discuss the impacts they had seen from tourism, during discussions they were prompted with the following questions: • How to tourists impacts your daily routines? • How do you benefit from tourism? • What are the drawbacks of tourism? Responses included: *We know that the impacts of tourism destroying the environment and place strains on our resources and clearly with lots of people come to the area there can only be one outcome and it won't be a positive one. There might be some positive things that happen but surely the negative impacts far outweigh the positive ones. The increase in traffic has got to be bad the strain all of our services such as transportation isn't great. I know during the summer if I don't get into Brecon early I won't get a parking space so for the residents of the area we see an increase in traffic and people it can only be a bad thing for our day-to-day life"* (Respondent FG 12)

		They [the impacts of tourism] ought to be entirely detrimental. If you want to look at it in its purest terms, bringing people into an area cannot possibly have a positive effect on it. There might be positive spin-offs, but the first impact has got to be detrimental. As they drive their car down the road it has got to be detrimental. (Respondent FG 1) *Well the environment can cope with the impacts of people and tourism as it basically has three quarters of the year to recover.* (Respondent FG 24)
Q9	What is the Sustainable Development Fund?	This question was asked to see how if participants knew what the SDF was doing. Responses included:
Q10	What SDF projects are you aware of in the BBNP?	This question was asked to see how if participants were aware of any SDF projects. Responses included: *I have a friend who lives in Camaes (North Pembrokeshire) her local community received over 20 grand of the SDF funding. They are trying to get rid of plant species known as the Himalayan Balsam. The origin of this project was that the community wanted to get rid of the Japanese knotweed which had appeared in the area. Local residents got together to get rid of this species, and in doing so, they identified a new plant species to the area called the Himalayan Balsam. The project involved them sawing and pulling and brush cutting to get rid of this invasive plant.* (Respondent FG 2) *"I found that getting the local community behind the grant application process was more about creating my own little spider's web rather than a network. This is because networking is all about individuals communicating and creating more connections. I wanted to link up with people who would help me get through the SDF process. I, therefore, thought of it as my own spider's web where I am the spider and all the people I needed to help me achieve the grant process were caught in my web.* (Respondent FG 4) *I know about a project that about educating children about wildlife and how they can help protect it. The project involves bringing aquatic life into the classroom so children can feel and experience such things as rock pools and what you can find on beaches it's part of their marine wildlife awareness programme and they got some of the sustainable development funding.* (Respondent FG 6)
Q11	What role does the NPA play in	This question was asked to see a focus group members can explain the relationship between the NPA and their activities with regard to the three concepts under review. Responses included:

	developing the community, sustainability and tourism	*"Gaining involvement from members of the club was hard to achieve, everyone liked the concept but only a few people were instrumental in obtaining the funding. "We got a great idea, we have a rough idea how that plan will translate into reality but what we are lacking is the support of a couple of the businesses that are key to our proposed bid".* (Respondent FG 4) *"It's all very well having a great idea about how we can bring in people to the area and get them to use local businesses and facilities but it's another matter getting members of the local community together in order to work out a well-structured and well considered bid for the SDF. What I found is that there are two or three key members to the committee who are willing to put in the time and the effort in order to prepare to meet the sustainable development officer to discuss the plan and to try and work out the nitty-gritty of what surprising about this is that the local businesses who perhaps might gain the most in a financial sense are not willing to get involved as I thought it would be".* (Respondent FG 3)

Appendix 4: Raw data from the questionnaire from SPSS

Question 3

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am more attached to my village than to my community	49	15	3	7	4
There is a more strong sense of community at the village level than there is at the county level.	69	5	3	1	0
People work together to get things done more at the village than at the community level	32	14	11	18	3
People would get along better if each one would mind his/her own business and	10	7	13	18	30
others take care of theirs					
I would never join an association in this community that is not located in my village	9	11	7	16	35
What goes on in other villages of this community is not of my concern	0	2	2	23	51
I never participate in activities in other villages of this community.	2	1	9	44	22

Question 7

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
The National Park has done enough in terms of creating or providing tourist accommodation units	18	16	10	24	20
The National Park has done enough in terms of maintaining the landscape	38	25	11	4	0
The National Park has done enough in terms of preserving built heritage	32	29	6	2	9

The National Park has done enough in terms of providing information and interpretation for tourists	28	21	11	5	13
The National Park has done enough in terms of promoting the area as a tourist destination	22	33	6	13	4
The National Park has done enough in terms of creating recreational activities for tourists and residents	42	21	3	10	2
The National Park has done enough in terms of promoting environmental education for local people and visitors	24	39	8	5	2
The National Park has done enough in terms of valuing traditional local knowledge	2	13	12	16	35
The National Park has done enough in terms of contributing to local employment	21	27	8	11	11
The National Park has done enough in terms of preserving traditional cultural activities	12	15	26	10	15
The National Park has done enough in terms of providing suitable training for potential entrepreneurs	0	11	16	7	44
The National Park has done enough in terms of organizing local events	9	16	29	5	19
The National Park has done enough in terms of creating and/or improving tourist attractions	34	27	4	9	4
The National Park has done enough in terms of creating or assisting shops selling local products	18	24	8	12	16

Questions 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17

Q5	Q6	Q8	Q9	Q10 positive	Q10 negative	Q11	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17
2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	Bromley	19	1	2
2	2	4	3	1	1	2	2	Raglan	25	1	2
1	1	5	4	1	1	1	2	Brecon	20	2	3
2	1	3	3	1	1	2	1	Abergavenny	47	3	2
1	2	2	4	1	1	1	1	Llanfrynach	19	2	2
1	1	4	5	1	2	2	2	Brecon	5	1	2
2	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	Libanus	6	1	3
2	2	4	3	1	1	2	1	Crickhowell	25	1	2
2	1	3	3	1	1	1	1	Llanddew	30	3	3
2	2	4	3	1	1	1	1	Libanus	39	3	2
2	2	3	3	1	2	2	2	Brecon	11	2	2
2	2	2	4	1	1	1	2	Landdew	24	1	1
1	1	4	3	1	1	2	1	Talylln	33	2	3
2	2	3	5	1	1	2	2	Pencelli	26	3	2
2	2	3	5	1	1	2	2	Brecon	2	1	2
2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	Tregare	27	1	2
2	2	3	4	1	1	2	2	Brecon	0	1	2
2	2	4	3	1	1	2	2	Talybont	30	4	1
1	1	3	2	1	1	2	2	Brecon	25	1	1
1	2	3	4	1	1	2	2	Tallybont	35	3	2
1	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	Brecon	2	1	2
1	2	4	4	1	1	2	2	Brecon	2	1	1
2	2	3	5	1	1	2	1	Aberbran	21	1	3
2	1	3	2	2	1	2	1	Monmouth	45	4	2
2	2	4	3	1	1	2	2	Penepont	40	2	1

2	2	4	2	1	1	2	1	Pencelli	30	3	2
2	2	4	3	1	1	2	1	Brecon	18	3	2
2	2	2	4	1	1	1	2	Brecon	1	1	1
2	1	5	5	3	1	1	2	Brecon	1	1	2
2	2	5	3	1	1	2	2	Brecon	1	2	2
1	2	4	4	1	1	2	2	Brecon	1	3	1
2	2	4	4	1	1	2	2	Brecon	10	1	3
2	2	5	3	1	1	2	1	Libanus	27	3	2
2	2	3	3	1	1	2	1	Llanwern	30	2	2
2	2	1	3	1	1	2	2	Scethrog	2	1	2
1	2	2	4	1	1	1	2	Aberbran	25	2	3
2	2	3	3	1	1	2	2	Crickhowell	20	1	1
1	2	3	3	1	1	1	2	Scethrog	5	1	2
2	2	4	3	1	1	2	1	Raglan	5	3	2
2	2	5	4	1	1	2	2	Monmouth	31	2	1
2	2	3	4	1	1	2	2	Brecon	2	1	2
1	2	3	3	1	1	2	2	Brecon	10	1	1
2	2	4	2	1	1	2	1	Brecon	1	1	2
2	2	3	2	2	1	2	2	Pennorth	1	4	2
2	2	4	2	2	1	2	1	Pennorth	12	1	2
2	2	2	4	1	1	2	2	Brecon	10	1	2
2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	Brecon	24	1	2
1	2	5	3	1	1	2	1	Brecon	15	4	2
2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	Brecon	50	4	2
1	1	5	4	1	1	1	1	Libanus	64	4	2
2	1	4	4	1	1	2	2	Aberbran	20	3	2
1	2	4	4	1	1	1	2	Brecon	10	4	3

1	2	4	3	1	1	2	2	Brecon	15	2	2
2	2	4	3	1	1	2	1	Llanfrynach	5	2	2
2	2	3	3	1	1	2	2	Llechfaen	34	4	2
2	2	4	3	1	1	2	1	Libanus	41	4	2
2	2	4	4	2	2	2	1	Brecon	22	3	2
2	2	3	4	1	1	2	1	Brecon	34	1	2
2	2	4	4	1	1	2	2	Libanus	25	4	2
1	1	3	4	1	1	1	2	Aberbran	20	4	2
2	2	4	3	2	1	2	2	Brecon	16	3	2
2	2	4	3	2	2	2	1	Pennorth	20	1	2
2	2	4	3	1	2	2	1	Pennorth	1	1	3
2	2	3	5	1	2	2	2	Pennorth	11	1	2
2	2	3	2	1	1	1	2	Brecon	2	1	1
2	2	4	4	1	1	2	2	Brecon	2	1	2
2	2	4	4	1	1	2	1	Trallong	6	4	2
2	2	2	4	1	1	1	2	Trallong	6	4	2
1	2	4	4	1	1	2	2	Llangorse	9	4	2
2	2	4	4	1	2	2	2	Llangorse	9	4	2
1	2	4	4	1	1	2	2	Brecon	6	1	2
2	2	3	5	1	1	2	2	Llangattock	47	4	2
2	2	3	3	1	1	2	2	Llangattock	22	3	2
2	2	4	3	1	1	2	2	Brecon	4	2	2
2	2	4	4	1	1	2	2	Llechfaen	1	3	2
2	2	4	3	1	1	2	2	Brecon	19	1	3
2	2	4	2	1	2	2	1	Llangorse	13	2	2
2	2	3	4	1	1	2	2	Brecon	10	2	2
2	2	3	2	1	1	2	2	Brecon	17	1	2

Sustainable Development

"Sustainability means thinking about the way we live and change our values and actions to ensure a good quality of life now and for future generations"

Thank you for your interest in the Sustainable Development Fund

On the following pages you will find the Sustainable Development Fund application form.

Please answer the questions in the spaces provided as succinctly as possible – and please read the guidelines before you start. If you have any queries that can't be answered by the guidelines – contact the Sustainable Development Fund Officers, who will be glad to help.

When filling in the application form on the computer we recommend that you use **ARIEL/ 10 point** for the best results.

"Sustainability means thinking about the way we live and changing our values and actions to ensure a good quality of life now and for future generations"

APPLICATION FORM

A. Name of organisation (including abbreviations/other names used)

Llangasty Village Hall Restoration Group in conjunction with

Llangors Youth & Community Centre

B. Contact name, position in organisation and address

Telephone   Fax   E-mail address

Llangasty

Llangors

C. The registered charity number of your organisation (if appropriate)

247177 (Llangors Y & C Centre)

The registered company number of your organisation (if appropriate)

If neither of the above is applicable, what is your organisation's status?

Llangasty Hall was built by the Raikes family for use by the community. The running of it was handed over to the Brecon & Swansea Diocesan Trust in 1935 under the terms of the Trust Deed. It is managed by a Committee consisting of 2 members of the family that built the Hall, the Rector & a Church Warden. Events, activities & fundraising are organised by members of the local community who have established the Llangasty Village Hall Restoration Group.

Does your organisation have a constitution?

Yes

Does your organisation produce an annual report?

Yes Verbal to AGM

Does your organisation have a bank account?

Yes

When was your organisation established?

Llangasty 1929 / Llangors 1924 New Hall 2000

How many members are there?

Llangasty   Llangors

Committee 12 + helpers/ Committee15 +

D. Please give a brief description of your organisation

Llangasty Village Hall Restoration Group has been busy since 2001, trying to save, improve and develop our hall for the benefit of everyone who lives in the area. This year we completed painting the outside, repaired the toilet roofs, installed new heaters and almost finished decorating inside. The problem for us still remains that the villages we serve are small and our hall is insufficiently used.   We have therefore developed a strategy which, over time, will bring us income and enable us to sustain the hall for the use of the community.   To achieve our aims we have linked with Llangors Youth & Community Centre situated on the opposite side of the lake.

Llangors Youth & Community Centre was established c.1924 & charity formalised in 1969 (Llangorse Public Institute). Purpose – 'the provision & maintenance of a village hall'. Committee of up to 15 established new hall in 1999 & works to maintain it. They organise events mainly to fundraise but the hall is also available for other users: Youth – Cubs, large Youth Club, Badminton for youngsters. Other – Art Class, Camera Club, Ball Room Dancing, Belly Dancing, Badminton, Over 60's Luncheon Club, whist, meetings by range of bodies & visiting groups & sailing club AGM.   The Hall is not economically used during the day.

E. Please give a brief description of the project for which you require support and what you aim to do

Project name: ROUND THE LAKE - O GWMPAS Y LLYN

Llangasty Village Hall plans to promote itself as a Field Study Centre with display and exhibition space.   The location of Llangors and Llangasty Village Halls on opposite sides of the Llangorse Lake provides an excellent Village Hall Trail around the lake to the hide at Llangasty (near the church) and up the Allt to study the geological features, with starting points suitable for all abilities. We will develop a marketing strategy, design a website and promote the field study centre to local schools, colleges, BBNP, Wildlife Trust, TIC etc, as well as to a wider national audience, so that some lettings will be on a commercial basis to provide income to the Hall and others (local school groups etc) need not be constrained by budgetary restraints as we feel it is important for as many people as possible to enjoy our facilities regardless of their ability to pay commercial rates.

In order to achieve this 'round the lake' project Llangasty Hall needs further refurbishment to the kitchen, toilets, signage and to buy such equipment as is necessary for a field study centre and Llangors Hall plans to enhance its facilities to cater for groups seeking information on the area and ensure the hall is suitable for presentations and provides material on activities to compliment the natural history of the area. It also plans to install solar panels in order to ensure a renewal source of energy.

PLEASE READ OUR Business Management Plan & Project Timetable (enclosed)

F. How have you identified the need for your project? (Tell us who has been involved and consulted)

Llangasty & Llangors have a proven track record of groups that use the Hall for day activities

We have consulted the local community, businesses, and those listed below who have used our Hall in the past and enclose copies of supporting letters from a number of interested parties.   We have been encouraged by those writing to use the facilities when developed:

- Family Activities days for visitors and local families sponsored by BBNP
- Brecknock Wildlife Trust
- Welsh Water
- Recreation/activity days for refugees & asylum seekers from Cardiff and Newport organised by the Welsh Refugee Council
- Swansea University and other colleges have used the Hall as a base for the study of the management of conservation and recreation around the lake, led by the Park Warden
- Mosaic Project – encouraging the use of National Parks by ethnic minorities
- National Park
- University of West of England for planning studies
- School groups & visiting groups to the area
- Scouts / Cradoc School

G. Please tick the box for the area or areas your project encompasses

☑ **Sustainable Communities.** Projects which empower communities to develop skills, confidence and knowledge to improve their quality of life.
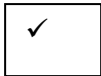
☑ **Sustainable Tourism Projects.** Projects which increase public enjoyment of the Park's special qualities and foster the vitality of local communities.

☑ **Biodiversity Projects.** Projects which conserve and enhance the biodiversity, habitat and species of the Park as a contribution to local, national and global diversity.

H. How do the aims of your project match those of the Sustainability Development Fund? (See guidance notes)
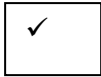
| ✓ | **Countryside Access.** Projects which promote public access to and within the Park for the enjoyment of its special qualities**. |

| ✓ | **Cultural Heritage**. Projects which conserve, enhance and support the cultural life and traditions of the Park. |

I. What will the outcomes of your project be? (Be as specific as possible)

Our project will lead to the enhancement of income in the following areas:

- Both halls will be used for additional lettings particularly during the day.
- Renewable energy is expected to reduce heating costs which are rising considerably.
- The greater use and publicity will attract additional visitors and tourists to the area and halls.
- The reduced reliance on fund raising and grants will ensure a more sustainable balance sheets and buildings.
- Businesses in the area will benefit through increased visitor numbers.
- Greater appreciation by all age ranges, particularly children and young people of the quality of the National Park plus history & development issues and parallel activities (see attached list of points of interest)

J. Is the project linked to other projects or strategies in your area? If so, please give details

We checked the 6 guiding principles of our Community Strategy and found we ticked 'yes' to at least five – sustainability, equality, Welsh Language, social inclusion and partnership & co-ordination but not sure if we fit in with 'diversity'.   We also feel our project will be making a contribution towards 3 of the 5 Themes for Priority Action: lifelong learning, environment, economic development.

K. List all partner organisations and briefly describe how they are involved in the project

We have applied to the Enterprising Community Building Funds (ERDF) for a grant.   The ECBF exists to provide funds for a limited number of village halls to develop enterprise projects both to demonstrate increased income and less reliability on grants and to act as exemplar projects.

Both Brecknock Wildlife Trust & BBNP Education and Warden Sections are keen for the project if not partners as such.

L. When will the Sustainability Challenge Fund work take place? (Please attach a project timetable and development plan)

Start date: February 2008

Expected completion date: February 2009

O. Who owns the land and/or building where your project will be located? (If applicable)

N/A

Is there a lease? | **If yes, how long for**

How long remaining?

Is there written permission from the owner for the proposed work?

(If yes, please enclose a copy).

N/A for Llangasty / planning permission to be sought for solar panels for Llangors

Will be sought before refurbishment takes place and if necessary for solar panels

FORMAL REQUIREMENTS - Do you need

Planning permission?

Yes

Yes

Building regulation approval?

P. Has a risk assessment taken place? (If applicable)

We have emergency light & fire alarm testing regime. We instruct users on the building

Is there an agreed Health and Safety plan?

(If YES, please enclose a copy)

We intend to train staff prior to opening in health & safety and customer care

Q. Who will maintain the completed project? (If applicable)

Both halls make extensive use of volunteers. Llangasty has a caretaker and booking officer who are both volunteers. Llangors has a caretaker/janitor paid a small honorarium & there is a designated booking officer. Future developments for the envisaged project are expected to be as follows: Caretaker/Booking Officer. Designated people with greater use of honorariums, if required more formal employment. Computer Website maintenance by volunteers. Visiting Groups – we anticipate some groups will use existing information coupled with their own expertise. For those requiring talk, guidance or help there are two proposals: (1) Direct us of BBNP Staff and/or Brecknock Wildlife staff either as part of their duties or paid appropriately. (2) Advertising to form a register of people with specific expertise who could be called upon as & when required at agreed fees (preferably self-employed or from established organisations) subject to any checks on suitability. (see Business Management Plan p.3 - 4)

R. How will the maintenance and long term insurance be funded? (If applicable) It is vital to plan this

We anticipate a rise in income as a result of the project which will undoubtedly help. Fundraising will always be a part of what we do but can increasingly become oriented to community requirements rather than fundraising *per se*. (see Business Management Plan p.4)

T. Please let us have the following items (if appropriate)

Plan(s)		**Cost estimate / quotation**	✓
Maps		**Planning permission**	
Accounts	✓	**Development plan for the project**	✓
Health and Safety plans		**Management plan for the project**	✓
Written permission from the owner		**Insurance cover**	✓
2 Photographs	✓	**Building regulation approval**	

Please read the following statement

Ple

"I certify that I have been authorised by the group named in section 1 to complete this application form. I certify that all the information provided in the application is true to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any materially misleading statements (deliberate or accidental) given at any stage during the application process could render the application invalid and the applicant

Signature [   ] *Date* [   ]

Name (Block capitals) [   ]

[   ]

Please give us the name and address of two referees who will support your application. They should not be members of your group, but should be familiar with your work and proposed project.

1. Core Criteria	Yes	No	?	For official use
A. Does the project comply with National Park purposes?	✓			
B. Does the project benefit the National Park?	✓			
C. Does the project last beyond the funding?	✓			
2. Environmental Criteria				
A. Does the project conserve biodiversity? (by teaching respect for existing flora/fauna)	✓			
B. Does the project 'reduce, rescue or recycle' waste?				
C. Does the project use traditional materials?				
D. Does the project involve a 'cradle-to-grave' approach?	✓			

E. Is there a Management Plan for the project?	✓			
3. Social Criteria				
A. Has a local appraisal been carried out?	✓			
B. Will the public have equal and open access to the project?	✓			
C. Is there local participation and ownership in the project?	✓			
D. Are there community structures in place to manage the project?	✓			
E. Does the project involve young people?	✓			
4. Economic Criteria				
A. Does the project generate its own income?	✓			

B. Is there a business plan for the project?	✓			
C. Does the project help the local economy?	✓			
D. Does the project provide jobs' training or volunteers?	✓			
E. Does the project bring in new funds?	✓			
F. Is the project cost effective?	✓			
<u>5. Cultural Criteria</u>				
A. Does the project have cultural and historical links?	✓			
B. Does the project demonstrate imagination and creativity?	✓			
C. Does the project have pleasing setting and design?	✓			

D. Does the project demonstrate good use of the arts?					
E. Does the project make use of engaging interpretation?	✓			

S. <u>**PROJECT BUDGET DETAILS**</u>. **Please include copies of cost estimates/quotations.**

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">Materials</th></tr>
<tr><th>Aspects of Project</th><th>Details</th><th>Cost</th><th>Value of items to be donated</th><th>Amount to be paid by the group</th></tr>
<tr><td>Llangasty upgrade</td><td>Kitchen/toilets/ramp</td><td>32,766</td><td>1,150</td><td>500</td></tr>
<tr><td align="right">Display</td><td>Internal exhibits & equipment</td><td>6,173</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Signage</td><td>2,938</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

			Gross Cost	Value of labour to be donated	Cost of labour to be paid by
Marketing	Website/leaflets	2,046	560	
	Operating costs	1,000		
Llangors Presentation	Curtains/blackout/screens	4,113		600
Displays		1,240	240	
Marketing		1,450	150	
	Operating costs	750		
Renewable energy	Solar panels/planning	9,177		
Totals (A)		61,653	2,100	1,100

Labour				
Provided By	**Details**	**Gross Cost**	**Value of labour to be donated**	**Cost of labour to be paid by**
Llangasty				
	Project admin & management	1,2000	1,200	

331

Llangors	Project admin & management	800	800	
	Staff (adverts, training etc)	1,250		
	Totals (B)	3,250	2,000	

Project Totals

	Gross Cost	Donations in kind	Net cost to group
	C	D	
Total Cost of Project (A+B)	64,903	4,100	1,100

Fundraising					
Activities and Grant Applications **Please list where you are applying to**	**Amount applied for/expected from activity**	**Amount secured/ already raised**	**Date secured**	**Fundraising outstanding**	**Date outstanding amount expected**
Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations Enterprise Grant	24,500			24,500	
Low Carbon Fund DTI	4,500	1,100		4,500	
Own funds					
Total	**29,000**	**E** 334 **1,100**		**F** **29,000**	

Budget Summary

	£
TOTAL COST OF PROJECT (from **C**)	**64,903**
LESS TOTAL ALREADY FUNDRAISED (from **E**)	**1,100**
LESS TOTAL FUNDRAISING OUTSTANDING (from **F**)	**29,000**
LESS TOTAL OF DONATIONS GIVEN IN KIND (from **D**)	**4,100**
LESS AMOUNT REQUESTED FROM THE SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGE FUND	**30,703**
SHORT FALL	**-**