Introduction: of neighbourhoods and governance
Eileen Lepine, Ian Smith, Helen Sullivan, and Marilyn Taylor

in Disadvantaged by where you live?: Neighbourhood governance in contemporary urban policy

This chapter offers an overview of the development of neighbourhood policy in the UK and an introduction to a decade of New Labour policy on neighbourhoods. It also introduces key New Labour policies and some key academic debates on the nature of governing and being governed. It explores the idea and practice of neighbourhood governance, which frames the key issues and themes throughout this book. It notes that the different aspects of the new governance can be argued to have created room for the emergence of neighbourhood governance as an important component of a multi-level and multi-actor environment. It suggests that the emergence of neighbourhood governance can be understood in terms of sites, spaces, or spheres, each with distinctive characteristics but also with potentially overlapping rules, structures, and processes.

Disadvantaged by where you live?
Ian Smith, Eileen Lepine, and Marilyn Taylor (eds)

This book distils lessons from work on neighbourhoods carried out within the Cities Research Centre of the University of the West of England over the past seven years. It offers a major contribution to academic debates on the neighbourhood both as a sphere of governance and as a point of public service delivery under New Labour since 1997. The book explores how ‘the neighbourhood’ has been used in policy in the UK; what the ‘appropriate contribution’ of neighbourhood governance is and how this relates to concepts of multi-level governance; the
tensions that are visible at the neighbourhood level and what this tells us about wider governance issues. The book explores and reflects on the notion of neighbourhood governance from a variety of perspectives that reflect the unique depth and breadth of the Centre's research programme. Neighbourhood governance is examined in relation to: multi-level governance, city-regions, local government, mainstreaming, cross-national differences in neighbourhood policy, community, civil society, diversity, different conceptions of democracy, and evaluation and learning. In doing so, the book identifies useful conceptual tools for analysing the present and future contribution of policy to neighbourhoods.

The future of neighbourhoods in urban policy
Eileen Lepine, Ian Smith, and Marilyn Taylor

in Disadvantaged by where you live?: Neighbourhood governance in contemporary urban policy
Published in print: 2007 Published Online: March 2012
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This chapter draws on concepts of neighbourhood governance in terms of ‘sites’, ‘spaces’, and ‘spheres’ to examine its realities. It brings together key issues raised by contributing authors in order to examine the potential place of neighbourhood governance in a new settlement between central and local government, community and citizen. It explains that in doing so, it does not claim that neighbourhood governance is the answer to all the challenges of a complex society — it also addresses the limitations of neighbourhood governance — but it argues for an understanding of its proper place in a complex polity. Hence, this chapter examines the importance of context in shaping developments in neighbourhood governance, the place of the neighbourhood within multi-level governance, and the assumptions about democracy that underpin these new forms of governance.

Subversive spheres: neighbourhoods, citizens and the ‘new governance’
Helen Sullivan

in Subversive citizens: Power, agency and resistance in public services
Published in print: 2009 Published Online: March 2012
Item type: chapter
Changes to governance institutions and practices in western democracies have created the conditions for multilevel governance, and have supported the development of new forms of political agency and organisation. This chapter sees government itself as engaged in processes of subverting or unsettling institutionalised governance processes by its emphasis on neighbourhood governance. It argues that the roots of this apparent disconnect between purpose and outcomes in neighbourhood governance are located in the differences between the values and practices of ‘big’ versus ‘small’ local governments and the tensions which arise when attempts are made to combine them. The chapter uses research evidence from an ESRC study of public participation to illustrate how the coexistence of these different interpretations generates conflict over the design and implementation of neighbourhood governance initiatives and creates opportunities for local citizens to subvert formal policy goals via strategies of reshaping, disruption, and sabotage.

Mainstreaming and neighbourhood governance: the importance of process, power and partnership
Ian Smith, Joanna Howard, and Laura Evans

in Disadvantaged by where you live?: Neighbourhood governance in contemporary urban policy

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This chapter considers the importance of engaging core mainstream service providers within neighbourhood partnerships as the preferred mechanism for getting resources to neighbourhood renewal. It notes that one central element of contemporary urban regeneration is that exceptional funding is not enough on its own to tackle area-based disadvantage. It plots the state of mainstream agency engagement in neighbourhood renewal and considers the degree to which this demonstrates the limitations of neighbourhood governance to act. It asks the question whether mainstreaming is an effective agenda for the delivery of the neighbourhood management of core public services.
The Self-Governed Neighborhood

Emily Talen

in Neighborhood

Published in print: 2018 Published Online: April 2019
Item type: chapter

This chapter focuses on the issue of neighborhood self-governance, including the pros and cons of self-determination and local control. Strong, self-regulated neighborhoods fit well within a self-help narrative about residents taking control of their own destinies. But the downside, as the debates reveal, is the loss of power and the potential for insularity, which can further deplete power. At the same time, higher-level authorities are often resistant to relinquishing control, putting added stress on the ability of neighborhoods to self-manage. With a stronger sense of neighborhood, the debate can be resolved through better connection to wider political networks as well as better application of innovative budgeting and governance procedures that are already in place but not widely in use. Resolution of the self-determination debate, then, capitalizes on existing procedures, regulations, and governing authority that exist at the neighborhood level but have not been activated by an explicit understanding of neighborhood.

Neighbourhood governance and diversity: the diverse neighbourhood

Yasminah Beebeejaun and Lucy Grimshaw

in Disadvantaged by where you live?: Neighbourhood governance in contemporary urban policy

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This chapter takes on the problematic issue of diverse communities within neighbourhood governance. It recognises the potential of neighbourhood governance to respond to diversity but rejects easy assumptions about its capacity to do so. It notes and challenges the tendency to see equalities questions as answered through the representation of particular groups and suggest that homogenising assumptions about groups lead to a failure to understand neighbourhood dynamics and recognise complex, multiple identities.
Neighbourhoods, democracy and citizenship
Joanna Howard and David Sweeting

in Disadvantaged by where you live?: Neighbourhood governance in contemporary urban policy

This chapter explores the nature of democracy in neighbourhoods in England in the context of the government's neighbourhood agenda. It examines tensions between forms of democracy through an analysis of key programmes in the government's Neighbourhood Renewal Agenda. It notes that the current emphasis on neighbourhood governance promises to reconfigure local democracy and the neighbourhood level is presented as having the potential for widespread citizen participation and engagement. It observes that the government asserts that ‘neighbourhood arrangements must be consistent with local representative democracy’, but government prescription remains ambiguous on the nature of democracy.

Social Clustering
Luigi Tomba

in The Government Next Door: Neighborhood Politics in Urban China

This chapter addresses the social clustering and classification that accompanied the recent housing privatization, which resulted in significant flexibility in the governing strategies. It compares different types of neighborhood and how their residents are differently exposed to techniques of government. It finds that, in gentrified residential areas inhabited by “high suzhi” (upper middle class) citizens, residents enjoy a significant autonomy to govern themselves and successfully avoid the direct control of public neighborhood organizations. In socially troubled neighborhoods, however, the presence and visibility of the state has often increased after the reform and rapid urbanization of the last decade. The practices described by this phenomenon are referred to as “social clustering,” and it is argued that the deployment of such a specific form of government is made possible by a spatial and social
classification of social groups to which both public and private actors have contributed.

**Leading change**
Margaret Attwood

There is continuing government pressure on public services to ‘reform’ and change. Expectations of new forms and standards of delivery, joined-up practice, and the re-connection of services to users are high. Unfortunately, many policy makers have become dangerously reliant on mechanistic top-down audit and inspection regimes as the means of implementation. This book sets out to redress the balance. It argues that whole systems approaches are required to lead the changes towards the demands for new service configurations, partnership working, and local and neighbourhood governance. The book outlines the theory behind whole systems development and gives good practice guidance on how to effectively develop ‘systems’ to improve joined-up working.

**Communicative Capacity**
Koen P.R. Bartels

Participatory democracy has become an unshakable norm and widespread practice. Nowadays, public professionals and citizens regularly encounter each other in participatory practice to address shared problems. But while the frequency, pace, and diversity of their public encounters has increased, communicating productively in participatory practice remains a challenging, fragile, and demanding undertaking that often runs astray. This book explores how citizens and public professionals communicate, why this is so difficult, and what could lead to more productive conversations. This done by comparing cases of community participation in neighbourhood governance in three European countries (the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Italy). An emergent, grounded theory is presented based on interpretive research of the narratives citizens and public professionals tell about participatory practice. The theory of communicative capacity holds that citizens and public professionals tend to sustain habitual communicative patterns that limit their ability to cooperatively solve the problems they are facing.
together. Therefore, they need the ability to recognise and break through these habitual patterns by adapting the nature, tone, and conditions of conversations to the ‘law of the situation’. Exercising communicative capacity will enable public professionals and citizens to have more integrative encounters leading to shared understandings, joint activities, and cooperative relating. As such, the book presents policy makers, practitioners, students, and academics with a much needed evidence base for understanding and appreciating the often overlooked impact of communicative practices in participatory theory and practice.

Executive Structures
Ian Leigh
in Law, Politics, and Local Democracy

This chapter presents an overview of the legal framework for decision-making through delegation to committees and officers. It then considers the strains on this framework in the position of ‘backbench’ councillors and ‘hung’ councils, and from the introduction of a compulsory competitive tendering (CCT). It lastly considers the question of political leadership and current form of executive structures, including the introduction of cabinets and of directly elected mayors. It considers the argument that the roles of backbench councillors and the political elite should be strengthened by providing a clearer separation of them.

Micro-Governing the Urban Crisis
Luigi Tomba
in The Government Next Door: Neighborhood Politics in Urban China

This chapter focuses on the formal structures of administration and government (the resident committees and community committees, shequ weiyuanhui) in the city of Shenyang, where industrial decline required an overhaul of neighborhood governance to deliver essential services to a large number of unemployed people through grassroots organization. It considers both the working practices of these offices and the role of community cadres. One of the by-products of the devolution
of social functions to the shequs is a new generation of low-level cadres who are often forced to engage with the social distress produced by the recent transition. The chapter investigates the careers, experiences, perceptions, and strategies of these cadres (often themselves the victims of economic restructuring) directly involved in the reproduction of Party rhetoric but also exposed to the struggles of the disenfranchised. It suggests that, while the burden of governing in middle-class neighborhoods is becoming “lighter,” the government of social distress involves more resources, “heavier” governing practices, and new challenges at the grassroots level, according to a strategy known as micro-governing. This trend signals the continuity of paternalistic practices of socialist governance.

A Contagious Civilization
Luigi Tomba
in The Government Next Door: Neighborhood Politics in Urban China
Published in print: 2014 Published Online: August 2016
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This chapter investigates the practical and material consequences of the dominant discourse of a “civilized” middle class on China's urban governance, and addresses the significance of the newly emerging neighborhood-based stratification for the overall project of governing Chinese cities. It shows that the discourse and practices it produces are functional to the creation of “value.” Urban renewal and the rebranding of traditional urban centers as postindustrial and global metropolises rely heavily on the promotion of “middle-class” exemplarism. The “values” produced through this process are both monetary and political. By targeting the middle class as potential buyers, the state increases the value of use rights, thus encouraging local governments to redevelop traditional, dilapidated, and industrial areas in the city center to rebrand them as “middle-class paradises.” The educated and affluent groups inhabiting the new compounds also become exemplars of a self-responsible, well-behaved, and “high-suzhi” (quality) citizenry that embodies the values of the civilizing project China embarked on.