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Civic Culture, Community and Citizen Participation in Contrasting Neighbourhoods

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Summary. This paper uses survey and qualitative evidence from four neighbourhoods in two cities to explore the hypothesis that citizen participation in urban governance is fostered by political structures and public policy as well as by a civic culture supportive of citizen involvement. The analysis shows that although the prospects for citizen participation are likely to be least propitious in poor neighbourhoods demonstrating lower educational attainment levels, for example, such factors may be mitigated by political mobilisation and the approaches to urban governance, including citizen participation, adopted by local institutions. Citizen participation may be fostered as much by the creation of opportunity structures that build confidence in the efficacy of participation as by the intrinsic levels of civic culture. The key policy lesson is that the effort devoted to creating greater institutional thickness and participatory structures is not wasted.

Introduction

The Ascendancy of Citizen Participation

The current ascendancy of citizen participation in urban governance can be seen as a response by governments and citizens to a simultaneous crisis of confidence in the ability of the state and the market to create socially cohesive and economically successful cities. The roles of the state and the market need to be complemented, it is argued, by citizen participation beyond the ballot box: it has

> become conventional wisdom that communities need to be involved both in designing what is to be done and in implementing it, and that the best policies work through genuine partnerships (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998, para. 2.3).

Policy rhetoric is matched by evidence of a general growth of 'community participation' arrangements in Britain (Lowndes *et al.*, 1998; Goodlad, 2001).

Citizen participation appeals to many constituencies and could be seen as having four sets of origins. First, the Right and the Left support it equally as they retreat from post-war conceptions of the welfare state dominated by professionals in partnership with

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élite policy-makers (Held, 1996). Social democrats support participation for its capacity to build on the social rights gained in the post-war settlement through a new type of political right and for its concern to ensure that public as well as private corporations do not exploit consumers' ignorance or vulnerability (Roche, 1992). For the Right, the emphasis is more on individual citizens' capacity to make state services work for them than on participation in governance processes. This consumerist citizen participation uses market mechanisms to free consumers to exercise choice, secure their own welfare and receive redress when things go wrong. However, the Left's collective citizen participation and the Right's consumerist participation can merge together in instances such as housing co-operatives, an example of citizen control of services.

Secondly, citizen participation is seen as a response to the discrediting of local electoral mandates and traditional local government practices. Local government is exhorted to involve citizens in order to secure 'democratic renewal' (DETR, 1998) and policy for neighbourhood renewal stresses the value of participation in planning

> the best combination of complementary procedures of representative and participatory democracy (including direct democracy) (Buček and Smith, 2000, p. 3).

Similarly, thirdly, citizen participation is also used as a response to the questioning of the lack of accountability of new non-elected local institutions. It has been developing in a complex context of restructuring of local governance, with greater numbers of public, voluntary and private agencies delivering publicly funded services. Resulting criticism of poor formal arrangements for democracy (closed meetings, no elections and so on) has been met by the development of new democratic practices for engaging citizens directly in planning and service delivery. The new agencies of local governance include some examples of participatory democracy at neighbourhood level, such as school parent governors and housing co-operatives (Pollitt *et al.*, 1998, ch. 7). Finally, for some professionals, consumerist participation fits into the critique of self-serving bureaucracy that made the introduction of private-sector management ideas so attractive to them (Osborne and Gaebler, 1993). Transformations in the management of public services have therefore paradoxically incorporated consumerist participation in strengthened managerial control.

Citizen Participation and Urban Policy

Citizen participation has not been promoted by national governments equally for all policy issues. From the 1970s, it has been particularly favoured for assisting to reveal or resolve controversial town planning issues and for tackling the complex problems of urban decline, poverty and dereliction in deprived neighbourhoods. In the 1990s, it has been promoted as a necessary component of public service delivery at local level, with models of participation varying from customer complaints procedures through consultation to consumer control of services. The ascension of participation to such a prominent place is more apparent in urban policy than in almost any other area of public policy. Poor neighbourhoods are often seen as the most appropriate location for developing participation, and urban renewal in particular is seen as the focus. National and local governments see community involvement as essential to the development and implementation of successful area regeneration (Foley and Martin, 2000).

The strengthening under the Labour government elected in 1997 of the 'turn to the community' detected by Duffy and Hutchinson (1997) is illustrated by the National Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (Social Exclusion Unit, 2001) and by several high-profile British initiatives such as Health Action Zones that target resources and attention onto neighbourhoods, with sanctions for non-delivery of citizen involvement built in. In the words of one civil servant:

> Whilst we've said for years that the community must be involved, this time we

really do mean it (Foley and Martin, 2000, p. 482).

The neighbourhood has provided an arena for experimentation with forms of local participatory democracy that are intended to extend democratisation of the state as well as for concerted assaults against urban decline and degeneration. Policy for neighbourhood renewal stresses the role of residents' groups and voluntary organisations as providers of services, as well as individual citizens. Community groups are seen as sources of mutual aid or social cohesion and as a possible foundation for citizen involvement in governance. 'Community participation' may therefore carry several meanings and this paper concentrates particularly on the involvement of citizens in the formal structures and processes of governance at neighbourhood level, encompassing both strategic and service planning and the detail of service delivery at neighbourhood level, while recognising that citizens' involvement in other collective activities, such as sports or community service, may lead to attempts to influence public policy.

Political Culture

Much policy attention has been devoted to determining the best institutional arrangements to support or facilitate citizen participation in governance structures at neighbourhood level (Duncan and Thomas, 2000). Less attention has been devoted to whether there is a political culture in society or more locally, at city or neighbourhood level, which fosters citizen engagement in whatever institutional arrangements for neighbourhood governance exist. This neglect is despite a long debate amongst political scientists and economists about the nature of the association between, on the one hand, distinctive cultural features in national or regional populations—termed a 'civic culture' after the book of the same name (Almond and Verba, 1963)—and, on the other, democratic efficacy and economic competitiveness.

A civic culture is said to be constituted by psychological attitudes amongst citizens that support the development of an active role for them in governance and create

> substantial consensus on the legitimacy of political institutions and the direction and content of public policy, a widespread tolerance of a plurality of interests and belief in their reconcilability, and a widely distributed sense of political competence and trust in the citizenry (Almond, 1980, p. 4).

The values and attitudes that work to sustain a civic culture relate to citizens' perceptions of their relationships with state institutions as well as with other citizens:

> a democratic political culture should consist of a set of beliefs, attitudes, norms, perceptions and the like, that support participation (Almond and Verba, 1963, p. 178).

Evidence for the existence of a civic culture has been sought mainly in attitudes towards fellow citizens and government. However, sometimes the nature of civil society and other 'intermediate institutions', including the family, and political behaviour such as voting, are used as a mark of a culture that is more or less conducive to political participation. This is confusing culture with the sort of behaviour or institutions that particular cultures are said to foster. This paper restricts 'political culture' to attitudes, norms and beliefs rather than political behaviour.

Too much may be expected of a civic culture. An active civil society is said to guard citizens from excessive state power and to support democracy, mitigate social ills, improve government performance and increase the quality of life. In addition, in both social science and public policy, a civic culture is seen as simultaneously supporting stable liberal democracy and economic competitiveness:

> the available evidence indicates that the values and cultural norms held by given peoples are a major influence on whether

> or not democratic institutions are viable (Inglehart, 1990, p. 432)

and a

> nation's well-being, as well as its ability to compete, is conditioned by a single, pervasive cultural characteristic: the level of trust inherent in the society (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 7).

Sociability and social collaboration are therefore valued not only for supporting stable democratic political institutions, but also for fostering economic prosperity.

Several criticisms have been levelled at Almond and Verba's *The Civic Culture* (for example, Barry, 1970; Pateman, 1980; Muller and Seligson, 1994) of which three have particular relevance here. First, the 'judicious mixture of activist and deferential orientations' (Lijphart, 1980, p. 50) required to sustain the form of representative democracy dominant in the middle decades of the 20th century is far removed from the contemporary rhetoric of citizen participation outlined here. Almond and Verba appeared to place value on a form of stability in democratic institutions that left women and the poorest citizens largely excluded (Pateman, 1980) and that leaves no space for developing the new democratic practices that are seen today. Indeed, the expectations on today's citizens to be less deferential and less content with electing élites to represent them and to be more willing to engage actively in the governance process might have been seen by Almond and Verba as a threat to democratic stability. This change in the political environment does not need to subvert our aim of examining the nature of political culture and the effects it may have on political processes and practices. It means, though, that we have to take account of contemporary expectations about political behaviour and attitudes in designing the research and interpreting the results.

Secondly, in generally treating civic culture as the independent variable and democratic stability as the dependent variable, Almond and Verba's (1963) study has been interpreted as saying that there is a unidirectional effect on political structures created by civic culture. Their accusers ask:

> Might one not argue that a 'democratic' political culture—such as the 'civic culture'—is the *effect* of 'democratic' institutions? (Barry, 1970, p. 51).

Almond denies the charge, saying that *The Civic Culture* was

> one of the first studies to stress the importance of adult political socialization and experiences (Almond, 1980, p. 29).

Others equally see no such simple causal link. Although never referring to each other's work, Inglehart and Fukuyama both suggest a strong but complex interaction between economy, society, polity and culture. Culture is said to influence both democratic practice and economic competitiveness.

> Culture not only responds to changes in the environment; it also helps shape the social, economic and political world (Inglehart, 1990, p. 432).

Muller and Seligson (1994) find no support for the thesis that civic culture has an independent effect on democracy except in the case of attitudes favourable to gradual reform (as distinct from revolutionary change or commitment to defending the *status quo*).

In summary, culture affects polity, society and economy; and economy, society and polity affect culture. If a culture supportive of active participation exists in particular places—a modernised 'civic culture'—then it will be easier, we hypothesise, to establish there the new institutions and practices that foster participation. In addition, it will be easier to forge the new relationships between citizens and between citizens and institutions of governance implied by an extension of participatory democracy beyond the election of élites. Recent uneven experiences of creating an institutional context supportive of active citizen participation may, therefore, be explained by the nature of the local cultural context. Equally, however, the right policy and institutional context may support the de-

velopment of active participation and of a civic culture. The pattern and level of citizen participation will not be explained only with reference to civic culture or only by reference to political structures and policies intended to bring it about.

Thirdly, Almond and Verba's comparison of national survey data fails to take account of sub-national and socioeconomic differences in populations. A civic culture and high levels of trust are associated with features of advanced economies and their populations such as high levels of education and of associational activity (Inglehart, 1990; Verba and Nie, 1972; Parry *et al.*, 1992). Variations in civic culture at sub-national level require to be explained by reference to these compositional characteristics as well as by local effects and traditions and the legacies of past experiences. The state of research technology in the early 1960s provides an excuse for this neglect. The possibility of cultural factors, such as vibrancy of civil society and community identity, being distributed unevenly in space has been recognised for some time (Verba and Nie, 1972), but the implications have remained relatively unexplored—despite evidence that the uneven distribution of the characteristics associated with trust and civic culture amongst different social groups does not explain all the differences observed between areas (Parry *et al.*, 1992). The most systematic study of political behaviour and attitudes ever carried out in Britain concluded that although much of the variation in political behaviour in six case-study areas could be explained by 'compositional factors' (for example, highly educated populations are more active), not all of it could be and that 'locality counts' (Parry *et al.*, 1992, p. 347). But Parry *et al.* were unable to draw definitive conclusions about the factors at work, although they suggest that high participation rates are associated with central location (physical proximity to a metropolis and integration into urban patterns of communication) and with high levels of mobilisation. The latter is more easily open to influence by public policy. At regional level, much has been written about the differences in patterns of association that may lead to differences in economic performance or social cohesion following Putnam's (1993) study of northern Italy. At neighbourhood level, the importance of 'community' is invoked in similar terms, with community used as a synonym for neighbourhood, despite evidence about sharp variations in the patterns of sociability between areas (Forrest and Kearns, 1999; Paddison, 2001). We can hypothesise from this evidence that variations in civic culture at neighbourhood level will be partly explained by reference to the compositional characteristics of the population as well as by local effects and traditions and the legacies of past experiences.

Civic Culture and Social Capital

The nature of the relationship between the concept of civic culture and that of social capital requires elaboration. Social capital is usually conceptualised as inhering generally in the relations between citizens, demonstrated in trust, and arising as a consequence of social interaction, whereas civic culture is a particular form of *political* culture that is seen as pre-existing, as well as probably resulting from political experiences and behaviour. The concept of social capital has developed from the premise that 'the social networks' generated by patterns of sociability

> constitute an important form of 'social capital' in the sense that they increase the trust that individuals feel towards others and enhance their capacity to join together in collective action to resolve common problems or to ensure that governments address such problems (Hall, 1999, p. 418).

Social capital can be seen therefore as a generalised outcome of culture (including political culture), of social conditions (including political institutions) and of social behaviour that foster trust in institutions of all types. Social capital is detected in a variety of ways. Putnam (2000) uses measures

of a combination of phenomena including trust in other citizens, associational behaviour and social norms supportive of co-operation, whereas Coleman (1988) stresses the trust that people feel in others. Whether such a complex, multidimensional concept can be of value is not a question we need be concerned about here, although we need to note the conflation of measures of attitude as well as behaviour in much social capital research.

Recent writing about social capital provides useful background for our interest in civic culture and citizen participation. At national level, the evidence from the UK is that, since the 1950s, associational behaviour has not declined although its character may have changed; that levels of social and political trust have declined, especially amongst working-class and younger people; and, more tentatively, that the sustenance of relatively high levels of social capital may be accounted for with reference to higher levels of educational attainment, changes in the labour market and government action in support of association formation (Hall, 1999). Instead of sharing the view that governments have difficulties "understanding how to build" social capital (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 110), British scholars are persuaded that the state—and political institutions—can have an influence in creating the conditions in which social capital is generated. However, critics have suggested that the presence of phenomena such as generalised trust cannot explain political participation rates in particular places: "The significance of trust, therefore, can only be ascertained with reference to a specific social/political context" (Pennington and Rydin, 2000, p. 236; Foley and Edwards, 1999). This is illustrated in the case of a neighbourhood with high levels of social capital if measured within the neighbourhood but low levels of interaction with the outside world, including local or national political institutions (Forrest and Kearns, 1999).

Some of the factors involved in the reported patterns of associational and political behaviour suggest clues to the scope for variation in the nature and incidence of civic culture at neighbourhood level. Hall's review of social capital in Britain may have particular relevance to neighbourhoods, given its emphasis on associational behaviour. He shows that the level of community involvement by women has converged with the rates for men, as measured by associational membership, but that

> people in the middle class have twice as many organizational affiliations as those in the working class [and they] are likely to know twice as many of their neighbours fairly well as do those in the working class (Hall, 1999, p. 438).

Residence in larger urban areas is

> associated with lower levels of social trust … for most groups of people except … the upper middle classes (Hall, 1999, pp. 443–444).

Lower social trust is associated with dislocating experiences such as divorce, poverty or unemployment and possibly the greatest decline in associational activity in the 1980s was in trade unionism, strongly associated with working-class solidarity. Overall, the two groups

> left out of civic society and increasingly marginalized from it are the working class and the young (Hall, 1999, p. 455).

However, participation in a club is not the same thing as political involvement and so Parry *et al.*'s review of political behaviour complements Hall's analysis by showing that participation beyond voting is a minority habit: 'inactives' and 'just voters' account for over two-thirds of the population. Factors that predispose people to political participation are: high educational attainment; psychological attachment to a political party; and not being young. But other factors can intervene—of which membership of formal groups and associations and a high level of political interest are most important in motivating people to participate (Parry *et al.*, 1992). However, at city level, the actions of city institutions may mitigate these effects: Maloney *et al.* (2000) show in a detailed

study of Birmingham "a significant increase in civic involvement over the last 30 years and not a precipitous decline" (p. 219). The role of political institutions in fostering social capital is "significant … at least in helping to sustain civic vibrancy and probably also in stimulating its growth" (Maloney *et al.*, 2000, p. 222).

Aims

This paper uses evidence from two cities to explore the nature of political culture in four contrasting neighbourhoods since neighbourhoods have provided the focus for so many regeneration and democratic innovations. Some clues to the likely predispositions of citizens in the four neighbourhoods reported here to engage in citizen participation have become apparent in the above review of political culture, social capital and political behaviour. Socioeconomic characteristics such as education are likely to be reasonable predictors of participation behaviour, but differences between neighbourhoods and between social groups may be further explained by reference to the role of civic culture on one hand and local political institutions and public policy on the other. Although the prospects for citizen participation are likely to be least propitious in poor neighbourhoods demonstrating lower educational attainment levels and higher unemployment, such factors may be mitigated by other local factors such as strong civic culture, political mobilisation and the approaches to and techniques for urban governance, including citizen participation, adopted by political institutions, which may need to be varied to mitigate adverse local factors including an unsupportive political culture.

The paper examines the similarities and differences between neighbourhoods in the nature of the political attitudes and practices of citizens and the relevance of this to the opportunities and arrangements for participation in neighbourhood governance. The key question posed is how citizen participation operates at the intersection between political culture and local political institutions. The key hypothesis is that both political culture and political institutions will influence the participation practices and attitudes of citizens. If differences in the extent of civic culture between neighbourhoods can be explained entirely by socioeconomic characteristics, such as education and social class that predispose citizens to participate or not, then there is no place left for political opportunity structures or public policy to make an impact on citizens' attitudes. If such differences in the stocks of civic culture cannot be explained by reference to compositional factors, then a number of possible explanations present themselves of which characteristics of the neighbourhood context and local political institutions may be relevant. Are there, for example, local political institutions or practices that provide legacies of participatory experience that foster or discourage activism, as we would expect? These are the issues that the paper now examines, starting with an account of the four neighbourhoods and the arrangements for citizen participation that exist within them. Data from a household survey are then used to construct an index of neighbourhood civic culture, which is used to examine whether there are factors other than socioeconomic compositional ones that may explain the observed differences in civic culture between neighbourhoods. The paper next seeks to explore the behaviour and perceptions of citizens in relation to participation, again exploring the factors involved through the construction of indices of neighbourhood political behaviour and inclusion. Finally, conclusions and pointers to further research are drawn out.

The research reported here draws on data collected in a study of economic competitiveness and social cohesion in central Scotland. The four neighbourhoods were chosen to reflect the diverging characteristics of local places in Glasgow and Edinburgh, with one deprived neighbourhood and one more prosperous neighbourhood in each city. Both pairs are in the same general geographical area of the city, to ensure that, as far as possible, both belonged to the same wider housing and labour market areas. Aliases

Table 1. Household survey neighbourhood response rates

Neighbourhoods	Number of households	Addresses issued	Numbers of achieved interviews	Response rate (percentage)
Dalside	2 529	385	190	53
Lockhart	1 972	490	198	44
Westfields	2 305	350	208	64
Leaflie	3 095	350	184	57
Total	10 046	1 575	780	53

have been used in recognition of some interviewees' concerns about stigma. The household survey from which quantitative data are drawn was conducted early in 2000. Around 200 householders were interviewed in each of the 4 neighbourhoods. The sample was stratified to capture a minimum number of residents living in new housing. The overall response rate was relatively low, with a total number of interviews of 780 representing a response rate of 53 per cent, lower in Edinburgh than in Glasgow, with higher than expected rates of refusal and non-contact in the 2 more affluent neighbourhoods (Table 1). Qualitative interviews with key actors in city-wide agencies in both Edinburgh and Glasgow, and with public officials and activists in each of the four neighbourhoods, were undertaken in the first half of 2000. In addition, focus groups of residents were conducted in Dalside, Leaflie and Westfields.

In the reporting of survey results, we outline statistics describing the perceptions, attitudes and behaviour of citizens in the four neighbourhoods. The data are drawn from the household survey, which included a number of questions measuring political attitudes and behaviour as well as questions about socioeconomic characteristics. Interviewees were asked to respond to a number of different questions according to a standard 5-point Likert scale and in other cases questions requiring 'yes' or 'no' answers were grouped together to create a number of indices. These attempt to measure the extent of neighbourhood civic culture, political behaviour and perceptions of inclusion. A 3-, 4- or 5-point scale (0–2 to 0–4) was used to measure responses, with the scores adjusted for the directionality of the question (so that a higher score indicated a positive response). The data were analysed using ordered logistical regression techniques, with a range of profile characteristics measuring housing tenure, employment, social class, educational qualifications, self-rating of the area of residence and whether respondents felt that the area was changing for the better, or otherwise, together with the sample neighbourhoods being used as independent variables (see Appendix). Discussion is restricted to those variables that achieved explanatory power in the indices (95 per cent level of significance).

Four Neighbourhoods

Contrasting Contexts for Civic Culture and Citizen Participation

In both Edinburgh and Glasgow, the neighbourhood has been a key focus for regeneration, for some innovations in 'democratic renewal', for citizen involvement in urban partnerships and for user control of services such as housing. Despite the headline contrasts between Glasgow's long-term post-industrial economic and social decline and Edinburgh's slow but steady growth, both cities are home to severely deprived neighbourhoods with long histories of citizen participation in regeneration and governance more generally (Bailey *et al.*, 1999). In Glasgow, deprivation and social exclusion are widespread, with over half of the city's postcode sectors placed in the most deprived 10 per cent of Scotland, according to the most

Table 2. Tenure, by neighbourhood (percentages)

	Neighbourhood				
Tenure	Dalside (E)	Lockhart (E)	Westfields (G)	Leaflie (G)	All four neighbourhoods
Owned	27	67	19	73	46
Private renting	2	20	1	1	6
Public sector (mainly council)	49	3	51	25	32
Housing association	22	8	27	2	15
Other	1	3	2	1	1

Source: household survey ($n = 780$).

recent assessment (Kearns *et al.*, 2000). The picture in Edinburgh is somewhat different, with the three peripheral estates standing out more clearly as pockets of severe deprivation in a city which is much more affluent overall. In addition, a number of recent developments at city level in both cities taken with older established mechanisms for citizen participation set the context for neighbourhood participation. These include the development of initiatives to foster the voluntary sector, to engage community representatives in discussions about the future of particular neighbourhoods and to measure citizens' views of service provision. For example, both cities have developed representative citizens' panels to enable citizens' views to be fed into strategic service planning and review. As well as reflecting local councils' desires to understand better the service demands and aspirations of their populations, the citizens' panel and other initiatives also acknowledge the influence of national policy on 'democratic renewal' and service quality.

Dalside (Edinburgh) and Westfields (Glasgow) are peripheral estates, built by the local authorities largely in the 1950s and 1960s to provide public housing for people displaced from inner-city slums. Following the economic recessions of the 1970s and 1980s, both neighbourhoods suffered from increasing unemployment and out-migration. As a result, both now have a legacy of deprivation, including poor housing conditions, worklessness and ill-health. However, both areas also have a long history of physical and social regeneration initiatives, some of which have achieved substantial improvements in the physical environment. In particular, both neighbourhoods have seen the development of 'community-based' housing associations, which have either renovated older former local authority stock or built new houses for rent or shared ownership following demolition of poor-quality council housing. As local authority stock continues to be transferred, renting from housing associations is becoming more prevalent and was the current tenure of over 20 per cent of residents in Dalside and Westfields (Table 2). Decades of socially selective out-migration mean that social classes D and E (semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers) are vastly over-represented (Table 3), with other groups—particularly professionals and managers in groups A and B—greatly underrepresented in these areas. These neighbourhoods have many more times the proportions of lone parents (12 per cent and 19 per cent) than are found in the more prosperous comparators (Lockhart: 4 per cent and Leaflie: 1 per cent).

Lockhart and Leaflie contrast in a number of ways with each other but more especially with the peripheral estates. For example, over two-thirds of the Lockhart (68 per cent) and almost 4 in 10 (38 per cent) of the Leaflie respondents are in non-manual occupations. In many ways, they represent 'aspirational' neighbourhoods for the residents of Dalside and Westfields, not only because

Table 3. Social class, by neighbourhood (percentages)

	Neighbourhood				
Social class	Dalside (E)	Lockhart (E)	Westfields (G)	Leaflie (G)	All four neighbourhoods
AB	2	25	1	12	10
C1	15	43	8	26	23
C2	16	16	9	27	16
DE	67	17	82	36	51

Source: household survey ($n = 780$).

many people migrate to them from the nearby peripheral estates when their personal circumstances allow, but also since they represent the kind of neighbourhood that the estates themselves might become if successfully and comprehensively regenerated, with higher proportions of people in employment and a lack of the stigma associated with residence in Dalside and Westfields. However, the built form and demographic structure of Lockhart are very different from Dalside. In total, flats represent some 82 per cent of Lockhart's housing stock. This built form, coupled with the area's proximity to the service economy of Edinburgh city centre, is reflected in the number of respondents living in single-adult households (49 per cent). Lockhart is also the only one of the four neighbourhoods to have a substantial private rented sector (20 per cent of the households). Leaflie provides a contrast in its built form, since it has the lowest overall proportion of flats of the four areas, at 26 per cent. The majority of houses in the area (55 per cent) are detached or semi-detached and another one-fifth (20 per cent) are terraced, ranging in period from inter-war to recently built. Reflecting its housing stock and relatively high status, the neighbourhood has a high proportion of couples and families (and a low proportion of single people). The social mix is much less polarised than in the other neighbourhoods, and includes the highest proportion of skilled manual workers of the four (27 per cent), although groups A and B remain underrepresented in comparison with many other Glasgow suburbs.

Participation at Neighbourhood Level

Many formal mechanisms for citizen participation at neighbourhood level exist in Glasgow and Edinburgh. They include, for example, area committees with councillor and community representation (since the early 1980s in Glasgow), community councils, a Scottish alternative to parish councils (Glasgow and Edinburgh), the devolution of responsibility for service delivery to tenant management co-operatives (Glasgow) and to community-based housing associations (both cities) and the establishment of local economic development agencies with voluntary-sector involvement (Glasgow). However, several of these do not always fulfil their promise as structures operating at neighbourhood level in Westfields, Dalside, Lockhart and Leaflie. Area committees and local economic development agencies in Glasgow cover large parts of the city and may therefore barely touch the consciousness of citizens. Community councils, established following the 1975 reorganisation of local government, were intended to act as a conduit to local government (Goodlad *et al.*, 1999). However, their coverage and activity levels remain patchy at best, particularly in Edinburgh, where only part of Lockhart was covered by a community council; in Glasgow, only one of the two neighbourhoods, Leaflie, had a community council.

The extent and maturity of the infrastructure for citizen participation vary considerably between the four neighbourhoods. As is to be expected with their long history of

regeneration, the two peripheral estates have relatively well-developed structures. In general terms, at neighbourhood level, most attention by public agencies in Scotland to fostering citizen participation appears to have been given to three matters: increasing resident involvement in housing issues; supporting the voluntary sector which in turn provides many social services; and involving representatives of the community to join partnerships of agencies working to co-ordinate strategies for renewal in poor areas.

Starting with the last of these: Westfields and Dalside are designated as 2 of Scotland's 34 area-based 'Social Inclusion Partnerships' (SIPs). Partnership boards are made up of a range of public, private and community representatives who co-ordinate strategies to improve conditions. Both Westfields and Dalside have a history of being categorised 'for priority attention', while neither Leaflie nor Lockhart has. In Westfields and Dalside, the SIP partnership provides a key focus for funding the voluntary sector and for carrying out methods for citizen participation such as a local citizens' panel—again at a scale that is bigger than the 'neighbourhood' scale of our survey, but which appeared to have real meaning to interviewees and focus group participants. In addition, other partnership structures work alongside the SIPs. In Dalside, for example, a local partnership was founded in 1990 to distribute the funding received from an EU anti-poverty grant. The partnership is governed by a board of local city councillors and 5 community members, each elected by local people in one of the constituent neighbourhoods. Following the end of the initial grant, the partnership developed new areas of responsibility to support community involvement in the regeneration process in the area, to manage the community's SIP funding and to develop projects and services that help address poverty and maximise community resources.

In contrast, there is very little partnership activity in Lockhart and Leaflie. With less history of regeneration initiatives, there are no formal partnership organisations. Although a diverse range of voluntary and community organisations exists, there is no umbrella organisation at the neighbourhood level to co-ordinate their activities. The relative absence of an opportunity structure for citizen participation in governance was shown in the perceptions of residents in a focus group in Leaflie, who were aware of the efforts to engage the community in regenerating Westfields and who felt that their own opportunities to influence neighbourhood governance were more limited. Focus group participants and activists in Westfields shared the view that efforts were being made to improve their neighbourhood, but varied in the extent to which they felt they could participate or have any influence over the relevant agencies.

Secondly, participation in housing is particularly associated with the conversion of several *tranches* of council housing to community-based housing associations, as Westfields and Dalside demonstrate. 'Community-based' housing associations are generally viewed as successful and participative by their residents (Clapham and Kintrea, 2000) and operate typically at the scale of 200–500 housing units in these neighbourhoods, very much smaller than the scale—around 3000 units—of city council neighbourhood housing offices. Housing associations employ staff, operate from local offices, have management committees made up largely of local residents and have a higher reputation than the council for tenant involvement in development and management processes. Community-based housing associations might be seen as a bottom–up institution. However, their growth from the mid 1970s onwards would not have occurred without the strong support, including funding, they received from city and national institutions. As well as providing a mechanism for citizen participation in neighbourhoods, associations combine to act together in city-wide, regional and Scottish forums to lobby local and central government on housing and other community issues. In Westfields, the community-based housing associations and co-operatives have their own forum from which they are represented on

bodies such as the SIP partnership. Glasgow also has a network of over 20 tenant management co-operatives, including one in Westfields. The council as landlord also maintains a number of structures for participation, including liaison between tenants' associations and neighbourhood managers. Current proposals to transfer the remaining housing stock are being discussed in neighbourhood forums.

Thirdly, particularly in deprived areas, including Westfields and Dalside, there is a history of council funding for the voluntary sector at neighbourhood level. There is evidence that some voluntary organisations are established with public support in order to take advantage of funding, including in response to government requirements that community participation is a criterion for funding, or to assist the public agencies and community groups in conducting a relationship between themselves. Voluntary groups contribute to participation by mobilising and channelling the concerns of citizens and by themselves providing services to plug gaps, often with public funding. They often send representatives to partnership structures formed in response to programmes, such as EU Social Fund streams.

In Dalside, a community alliance exists to act as a co-ordinating organisation for voluntary and community groups in the area. It too is organised on the basis of five neighbourhood units, each of which provides a forum for the exchange of information and experiences at the neighbourhood level. In Westfields, the SIP partnership, housing associations and a variety of specific relationships between local service providers and community groups provide the most long-term structures for participation. However, officials and some community activists report a vexed history of unsuccessful attempts to create sustainable local voluntary organisations for community involvement that command loyalty and respect, apart from community-based housing associations. The recent history of funding for the voluntary sector is particularly troubled. Five neighbourhood forums had been seen as a method for feeding views and concerns to the partnership and other agencies, but methods for securing community representation on the partnership board in the future were unclear at the end of the fieldwork.

This account of the formal mechanisms for citizen participation at neighbourhood level has shown that, largely as a result of the adversity that may lead residents to be less than highly active citizens, Westfields and Dalside nevertheless have acquired attention from public agencies on a scale that means they demonstrate in some ways a more propitious environment for citizen participation than Leaflie and Lockhart. If structures and policies favourable to citizen participation exist—an opportunity structure supportive of participation (Maloney *et al*., 2000)—this may encourage people to hold positive attitudes towards other citizens and political institutions. These civic culture attitudes are now explored in the next section.

Civic Culture in Four Neighbourhoods

Civic culture is inherent in beliefs, attitudes, norms and perceptions. We were interested to see, first, whether the neighbourhoods demonstrated the same levels of trust and willingness to work with others for the common good—typical civic culture attributes. Similarity in the degree of civic culture would have been as intriguing as differences, given the neighbourhoods' varied socioeconomic characteristics. Several measures of attitudes that demonstrate or constitute civic culture were made, focusing on trust in the city council, willingness to work together with others to improve the neighbourhood and trust in local community groups. The first two of these echo questions asked in national surveys of civic culture in the past. However, contemporary notions of neighbourhood political participation and governance accord a higher prominence to the role of community groups than in the past, so trust in community activists by less active citizens is also required.

In relation to trust in the city council, in all four neighbourhoods a higher proportion disagreed or disagreed strongly than agreed or

Table 4. Trust in the council by neighbourhood (percentages)

'Most of the time you can trust the council to do what is right'	Neighbourhood				
	Dalside (E)	Lockhart (E)	Westfields (G)	Leaflie (G)	All four neighbourhoods
Agree strongly	2.6	1.5	1.9	4.3	2.6
Agree	31.1	34.3	28.4	25.5	29.9
Neither agree nor disagree	15.8	19.7	15.4	14.1	16.3
Disagree	30.5	32.8	28.8	29.3	30.4
Disagree strongly	20.0	11.6	25.5	26.6	20.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: household survey ($n = 780$).

Table 5. Willingness to work together by neighbourhood (percentages)

'Willing to work together with others on something to improve my neighbourhood'	Neighbourhood				
	Dalside (E)	Lockhart (E)	Westfields (G)	Leaflie (G)	All four neighbourhoods
Agree strongly	30.5	14.6	31.3	22.8	24.9
Agree	42.1	53.5	46.2	48.4	47.6
Neither agree nor disagree	15.3	21.7	9.1	22.3	16.9
Disagree	8.9	9.1	10.6	3.8	8.2
Disagree strongly	3.2	0.5	1.0	2.2	1.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: household survey ($n = 780$).

agreed strongly that 'most of the time you can trust the council to do what is right' (Table 4). Lockhart's residents were most trusting—44 per cent disagreed or disagreed strongly whereas 39 per cent agreed or agreed strongly. Elsewhere, there was little difference between Dalside, Leaflie and Westfields, with between 52 and 56 per cent expressing distrustful attitudes and between 30 and 33 per cent showing some trust.

Secondly, a strong civic culture is said to predispose people to act collectively, so residents were asked if they would be willing to 'work together with others on something to improve my neighbourhood'. The results showed a broadly consistent pattern between neighbourhoods with a higher proportion of Westfields' residents (78 per cent) claiming agreement or very strong agreement with this statement, compared with scores of 71 or 72 per cent for the other neighbourhoods (Table 5).

Thirdly, we asked whether 'most people who are active in local community groups are out for themselves'. This question, it might be argued, will produce more negative results than a question similar to that asked about trust in the council. In other words, people might still trust community groups to do the right thing even though they believe the activists are 'out for themselves'. But in fact, the level of trust in community leaders was stronger overall than the level of trust in the council. In any case, since we are interested in the relative positions of the neighbourhoods, it is a question that has the potential to explore a further dimension of civic culture attitudes without damaging the

Table 6. Attitude to community activists (percentages)

'Most people who are active in local community groups are out for themselves'	Neighbourhood				
	Dalside (E)	Lockhart (E)	Westfields (G)	Leaflie (G)	All four neighbourhoods
Agree strongly	11.1	3.5	17.8	7.6	10.1
Agree	27.4	15.7	22.6	15.8	20.4
Neither agree nor disagree	21.1	26.3	20.2	29.3	24.1
Disagree	29.5	49.5	31.3	36.4	36.7
Disagree strongly	11.1	5.1	8.2	10.9	8.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: household survey ($n = 780$).

integrity of the research design. Responses to this question showed a higher level of trust in community groups amongst residents of Lockhart and Leaflie than Westfields and Dalside (Table 6). Overall, there was evidence that people in social classes C2, D and E were more sceptical than others. More people disagreed or disagreed strongly (44 per cent) than agreed or agreed strongly (32 per cent) with the statement, but in Dalside and Westfields the proportions were similar and in Westfields a slightly higher proportion (41 per cent) agreed or agreed strongly than disagreed or disagreed strongly (39 per cent). The results echo the attitudes displayed by activists in interviews. For example, some activists agreed strongly that other activists were 'in it for themselves', although most felt that commitment varied significantly between individuals. There was a consistent view that activists regarded in a negative light were often more interested in pursuing an involvement in local or city (party) politics *per se*, rather than in the specific activities of their community group itself.

Overall, residents appear to be slightly more trusting of local community groups than the city council and to be positive about taking collective action at neighbourhood level. With one or two exceptions, the results are consistent with what we might expect given the socioeconomic composition of the neighbourhoods. In order to examine further some of the possible factors at work in explaining civic culture in the neighbourhoods, we constructed a 'neighbourhood civic culture index' from these three sets of findings, concerned with

—agreement that 'I would be willing to work together with others on something to improve my neighbourhood';
—agreement that 'most of the time you can trust the council to do what is right';
—disagreement that 'most people who are active in local community groups are out for themselves'.

High neighbourhood civic culture is indicated by trust in the council and in local community groups and willingness to work together to improve the neighbourhood. A 5-point scale (0–4) was used to measure each response and individual scores were added together to create a civic culture index ranging from 0–12 for each respondent. The mean for the entire sample was 6.63 and the variations between neighbourhoods were fairly small. However, the two poorer areas—Westfields and Dalside—displayed the lowest civic culture scores of 6.41 and 6.56 respectively; Leaflie's score of 6.65 was only slightly higher, with Lockhart's mean score of 6.90 highest of all.

Analysis using ordered logistical regression techniques started by treating the sample neighbourhoods as independent variables (see Appendix). In order to try to account for the differences, we examined the

characteristics of the populations of the areas. As the Appendix shows, for the first test, the neighbourhood civic culture index (Table A1), high scores were associated with those individuals who rated their neighbourhood as a very good place to live, those who thought their neighbourhood had improved over the past two years and people with a degree or academic school qualifications. Counter-intuitively, higher social classes did not display significantly higher levels of civic culture and, less surprisingly, nor did several other characteristics produce significant results, such as household type, employment status and the neighbourhood area variable. Neither was gender found significant. However, the regression model rejected the tenure variable due to high correlation.

Qualitative evidence produced more detail, suggesting that while residents of Westfields and Dalside had a sense of community and belonging with strong ties to family and friends in the area, when asked about relationships to and attitudes towards political institutions, including local community groups, they were less trustful than people in the two other neighbourhoods. In particular, council tenants in Dalside and Westfields showed less trust in the city councils, largely because they perceived housing services to be poor and unresponsive. In contrast, tenants of housing associations had more positive attitudes towards the responsiveness and quality of service provided by housing associations. Lockhart demonstrated little sense of community in the ways shown by Westfields' and Dalside's strong local ties, yet it provides the highest score for civic culture.

Although the two areas with the highest scores for civic culture are those with generally higher socioeconomic status, we are left with differences in the measures of civic culture between the neighbourhoods that we cannot fully explain. Since part of the difference in the stocks of civic culture is attributable to compositional characteristics of the residents, particularly education, it may be that a further part of the difference can be accounted for by characteristics (such as health) that were not investigated in the survey. A more sophisticated research design might hope to capture these. It may be, however, that the differences would have been smaller or greater but for factors associated with the neighbourhoods as places, such as the opportunities for participation and the behaviour of residents in responding to problems and issues they see. The possibility of such a complex set of relationships between civic culture, on one hand, and local political institutions and behaviour, on the other, both acting on citizen participation, is the key issue this paper seeks to address. If civic culture or a supportive local institutional context predisposes people to participate actively in public affairs, there should be evidence of that in the behaviour as well as attitudes of citizens. These possibilities are explored in the next sections, starting with political behaviour.

Political Behaviour

We have seen that the neighbourhoods differ in the stocks of civic culture, in the socioeconomic characteristics of their residents that might lead to high political activism and in the opportunities that are available for citizen participation. But the opportunities available to residents are of little relevance if people do not seek to use them. So residents were asked about what they would do 'if the council was proposing something you felt was unjust or harmful in this neighbourhood'. (The council was used as a local political institution of which all would be aware, unlike more specialist institutions.) Broadly, possible answers were in two categories. Respondents could say they would take action that would conform closely to the classic civic culture attitudes of action combined with deference for authority—contacting elected representatives, for example. Alternatively, they could say they would take direct action, such as going on a demonstration.

In order to examine some of the possible factors at work in explaining political behaviour in the neighbourhoods, we constructed two neighbourhood political behaviour indi-

Table 7. Political contacting behaviour by neighbourhood (percentages)

	Neighbourhood				
Action would take	Dalside (E)	Lockhart (E)	Westfields (G)	Leaflie (G)	All four neighbourhoods
Contact their MP or MSP	34.2	42.9	29.3	33.2	34.9
Contact their councillor	44.7	42.4	33.7	48.9	42.2
Speak to an influential person	12.1	8.6	9.6	10.3	10.1
Contact a department of central government	5.3	10.1	11.1	11.4	13.5
Contact a local newspaper or radio or TV	15.8	15.7	11.1	11.4	13.5
Sign a petition	45.3	58.6	36.5	39.7	45.0

Source: household survey ($n = 780$).

ces from the survey findings. The first was concerned with behaviour that was mainly about contacting political institutions or institutions potentially in a position to influence political institutions, so it is called the 'neighbourhood contacting index'. The second was concerned with what might be termed direct action and is called the 'neighbourhood direct action index'. Anyone answering 'no' to all the responses offered was scored 0. Any person answering 'yes' to one or more of the responses was deemed to be active and placed on a scale from 1 to 6 (contacting index) or 4 (direct action index).

For the neighbourhood contacting index, each respondent was asked whether s/he would

—contact their MP or MSP;
—contact their councillor;
—speak to an influential person;
—contact a department of central government;
—contact a local newspaper or radio or TV;
—sign a petition.

For the neighbourhood direct action index, each respondent was asked whether s/he would

—raise the issue in a voluntary group of which they were a member;
—go on a protest or demonstration over the issue;
—form a group of like-minded people in response to the problem;
—stop paying their council tax in protest.

While only 9 per cent of residents overall would take none of these 10 actions, the action that would be taken was concentrated heavily amongst the contacting rather than direct action behaviours. The mean number of contacting actions that would be taken was 1.36 (out of 6) and the mean number of direct actions that would be taken was 0.24 but the mean varied from one neighbourhood to another and not always as would have been predicted. The mean score for contacting for Westfields—the poorer Glasgow neighbourhood—was lowest (0.14) and the score for the other Glasgow neighbourhood, Leaflie, was second-lowest (0.32). Edinburgh's Lockhart scored 1.54 and the poorer area, Dalside had the second-highest mean score (1.43). The mean for direct action was 0.24 (out of 4). The highest neighbourhood mean score was Dalside (0.37), followed by Lockhart (0.28). The more prosperous Glasgow neighbourhood, Leaflie, came next (1.32) and Westfields showed the lowest score (1.14) (Table 7).

Overall, the results emphasise the low

level of activity, as might be expected from studies that show that voting is the main form of political activity for most citizens (Parry *et al*., 1992). The most striking aspects are the differences between cities as well as neighbourhoods and the position of Dalside. Despite Glasgow's long-standing reputation as a place characterised by radical politics and popular protest, including substantial demonstrations against the 'poll tax' in the 1980s, the likely action of people in Westfields and Leaflie was lower than in Edinburgh's Lockhart and Dalside. There was little difference in the results between the two neighbourhoods in each city, suggesting that there is a 'city' rather than a neighbourhood effect. However, since these questions asked about action that *would be* taken, caution is required in assuming that intentions would match behaviour. If activity is measured by claims about actual voting behaviour, then the city effect seems to disappear. Self-reported turnouts at the 1997 general election varied from 67 per cent to 78 per cent, with Dalside lowest, followed by Westfields, and Lockhart highest. As might be expected, the lowest rates are in the two poorest estates. Reported turnouts for the first Scottish Parliament elections in May 1999 (which coincided with city council elections) showed a similar pattern, but with around 10 per cent lower turnout rates. These figures can be compared with actual turnouts for the UK election in 1997, which was 71 per cent, and for Scotland in 1999, which was 59 per cent.

The logistical regression analysis for the neighbourhood contacting index (Table A2) revealed important impacts of place. Residents in Dalside were significantly more likely to contact someone regarding an issue concerning them than residents in each of the other three neighbourhoods. Social class was also found to be an explanatory variable, with social classes D and E less likely to make contact. For the direct action index (Table A3), the regression could not be carried out because so few people reported taking direct action.

The qualitative investigations suggest some reasons why the intended levels of activity differ between the neighbourhoods and the two cities. The most intriguing neighbourhood is Dalside, where levels of intended activity are higher than Lockhart in one case and second to Lockhart in the other. Lockhart has higher stocks of the human capital that might lead to political activity than Dalside, where, however, the opportunity structures for participation are more stable and the history of community involvement and support for community groups is less troubled than in Westfields (its comparator in Glasgow) and more extensive than in Lockhart. In addition, there is a history of protest demonstrated in low deference towards local political institutions that appears to lead to more people than might be expected being willing to take some form of political action. The evidence therefore, suggests that Dalside residents' political activity can be at least partly explained by neighbourhood factors, including political institutions. In contrast, in Glasgow, focus group participants, with few exceptions, felt a degree of hopelessness and futility about the idea of taking direct political action over issues for which the council has responsibility, although in Leaflie around a half (49 per cent) said they would contact a councillor (the highest neighbourhood proportion favouring this action). Leaflie was previously outside the area covered by the city council and some people felt that the change of boundary in the 1970s had left a legacy of alienation from the city council.

Overall, the differences in political behaviour between the neighbourhoods within each city are poorly explained by the survey or possibly by the methods available to analyse it. Neighbourhood differences are as striking as city differences, but exploring these fully would require a different research design. Although the qualitative findings suggest some factors at work here, we are left unsure about how the compositional factors that might lead to higher levels of political activity are interacting with neighbourhood, city, Scottish or UK factors. We can, however, explore one further issue of relevance

to explaining what determines local citizen participation and which potentially illuminates the key question we started with—namely, the extent to which civic culture or political institutions and practices influence political behaviour. Residents' political behaviour may be affected by their perceptions of the extent to which local political actors or institutions are responsive to citizens. This set of attitudes is acquired from citizens' experiences of political behaviour rather than being innate, as some accounts of civic culture suggest. Whatever the objective structures and opportunities for participation are, we anticipate that residents' perceptions of the extent to which local political actors or institutions care about the area and operate participation structures that citizens feel involve them will help determine their sense of political efficacy and hence their likelihood of getting involved in governance.

Citizen Perceptions of Consultation and Participation

The survey asked a number of questions about political participation and perceptions. The council was chosen as the potential focus of citizens' perceptions since, despite recent changes in local governance that have introduced new agencies to each area, it has the advantage of visibility and relevance to all citizens. Three questions were used as the basis for a 'neighbourhood inclusion index'. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with three statements

—The council does not care about this neighbourhood;
—The council does not keep residents in this neighbourhood informed;
—The council involves residents in decision-making in this neighbourhood.

Table 8 shows the general pattern of responses to these statements individually. Residents in the two Glasgow neighbourhoods were more likely to feel neglected by their local council, with responses in Westfields particularly strong. A similar pattern was found for the second statement, with Westfields' residents most likely to feel that the council did not inform them about developments in their neighbourhood. This contrasts with Dalside residents' responses, since people in that neighbourhood were much less likely to feel ignored by their local council, and most likely to report citizen involvement in local decision-making. These results correlated with qualitative evidence from the neighbourhood focus groups. Residents in Dalside spoke of significant on-going engagement with their local council on local matters, claiming that the neighbourhood's stock of active community groups had encouraged the local council to adopt a more active stance towards citizen participation. Residents in the two Glasgow neighbourhoods were more likely to draw on personal experiences of council decisions which they regarded as negative, with many of these experiences related to the council's role as housing provider.

From responses to these three statements, the neighbourhood inclusion index was then constructed in the same manner as the civic culture index, combining Likert scores (adjusted for directionality) for each. Anyone who answered 'agree strongly' to the first and second of the statements and 'disagree strongly' to the third received the lowest possible score of zero. Conversely, respondents who took the opposite view on all three questions were scored at 12, indicating the highest perceived level of inclusion. The mean score for all neighbourhoods was 5.4 but the mean varied considerably from one neighbourhood to another and from one city to the other. The mean for Dalside—the poorer Edinburgh neighbourhood—was highest of all four at 6.5 with Lockhart, the other Edinburgh neighbourhood, at 5.4. In contrast, Westfields, the poorer Glasgow neighbourhood, had the lowest mean score of 4.6, and the mean for Leaflie was second-lowest at 5.0.

Again, the mean for Dalside is the most intriguing since we would expect, all else being equal, a poor neighbourhood to have a low score. We saw in the previous section that the residents of Dalside are relatively

Table 8. Citizen perceptions of political inclusion by neighbourhood (percentages)

	Neighbourhood				
	Dalside (E)	Lockhart (E)	Westfields (G)	Leaflie (G)	All four neighbourhoods
'The council does not care about this neighbourhood'					
Agree strongly	7.4	3.5	14.4	8.7	8.6
Agree	15.8	21.2	27.4	19.6	21.2
Neither agree nor disagree	8.4	26.3	18.3	32.1	21.2
Disagree	55.8	47.5	34.1	34.8	42.9
Disagree strongly	12.6	1.5	5.8	4.9	6.2
'The council does not keep residents in this neighbourhood informed'					
Agree strongly	7.9	5.6	22.1	12.0	12.1
Agree	32.1	40.4	29.3	31.5	33.3
Neither agree nor disagree	14.2	22.7	12.5	28.3	19.2
Disagree	38.9	30.3	28.4	25.0	30.6
Disagree strongly	6.8	1.0	7.7	3.3	4.7
'The council involves residents in decision-making in this neighbourhood'					
Agree strongly	2.1	0.0	2.4	0.5	1.3
Agree	28.4	13.1	18.3	9.2	17.3
Neither agree nor disagree	26.3	26.8	24.0	27.7	26.2
Disagree	26.3	50.0	30.8	37.0	36.0
Disagree strongly	16.8	10.1	24.5	25.5	19.2

Source: household survey ($n = 780$).

highly active citizens and it might be expected that this relative lack of deference to authority reflects a perception of lack of inclusion. But it might equally reflect a sense that such activism is worthwhile. Is there any evidence of this in the data? There are some significant associations with other variables, as the details of the ordered logistical regression show (Appendix, Table A4). The rating of the neighbourhood given by its residents as a place to stay correlated strongly; in general, the lower the rating the less the sense of inclusion. Yet a smaller proportion of Dalside's residents rated their neighbourhood as good or very good (69 per cent) than any other neighbourhoods' residents (Westfields: 80 per cent; Lockhart: 93 per cent; and Leaflie: 90 per cent). However, a more dynamic view of neighbourhood was found to have some explanatory power. If instead of asking about 'absolute' perceptions of neighbourhood, residents are asked for views on how it is changing, this is found to provide significant results. Residents who perceived that conditions had stayed the same or got worse, were significantly more likely to feel excluded. Here may lie at least part of the answer to the high mean score for Dalside—only 45 per cent of residents felt that conditions had stayed the same or got worse—far fewer than in Westfields (71 per cent) or the other neighbourhoods (Leaflie: 88 per cent; and Lockhart, 81 per cent). Dalside also had by far the highest proportion of residents (44 per cent) who felt that the neighbourhood had improved. Next-highest was Westfields (23 per cent). Other variables were also significant. As might be

expected, people in the default social classes A/B were more likely to feel included than those in other classes. Differences in housing tenure also influenced residents' sense of inclusion; in particular, residents living in housing association housing were alone among those who rented property in feeling included. Finally, a neighbourhood effect was significant in the case of Westfields, where residents tended to feel significantly less included by their council (see Appendix, Table A4).

These results were also reflected in the comments made by many local interviewees. In Dalside and Westfields, for example, focus group participants saw signs of improvement in their area but were unaware of many efforts to consult or involve them, outside the activities of housing associations. Local activists and community workers were more aware of participation structures but claimed that local people did not perceive the councils to consult with their citizens directly, despite having put in place a number of mechanisms, including citizens' panels. Activists were also generally negative about the impact of their involvement except in the case of housing associations, although some said they saw beneficial effects. Several commented that although their views were listened to and noted, they doubted whether the council actually changed any policies or priorities as a result. Just as, in the survey, a perception that the area was getting better was significant, so too activists seemed to feel that the ultimate test of participation was the difference it made to their material conditions.

Summary and Conclusion

The key question posed in this paper was how citizen participation operates at the intersection between civic culture and local political institutions. Our hypothesis was that citizen participation in governance will be influenced by local political institutions and public policy as well as by the levels of civic culture that are innate or acquired in childhood. Can differences in the extent of civic culture between neighbourhoods be explained by socioeconomic characteristics or by local factors in the neighbourhood or political context that foster or discourage citizen participation in governance? Can differences in the degree of activism and participation be accounted for by the perceptions that citizens have of their inclusion in the governance process?

Before concluding, it is useful to summarise what has been found so far. The findings suggest, first, that differences in civic culture between neighbourhoods are not fully explained by reference to compositional factors of the population; and, secondly, that, although residents of the poorer areas had a stronger sense of community and belonging with strong ties to family and friends in the area, they were less trustful of local community groups and political institutions than people in the two other neighbourhoods. Largely because of the adversity of the economic and social conditions in the two poorer areas, greater efforts had been made to support voluntary activity and create opportunity structures for participation in governance. These opportunity structures may help to explain why differences in residents' inclination to be active politically were not well explained by reference to the socioeconomic composition of the areas and in particular why Dalside's residents scored relatively highly in their perceptions of inclusion and in their willingness to take political action. Dalside's structures for participation were particularly well-developed, reflecting a better legacy of community organisation than Westfields as well as a similar current policy context of support for participation in regeneration. Predictably, factors such as class and education were important, but also significant were the rating of the neighbourhood given by its residents, housing association tenure and perceptions of whether things were getting better. These seem to have come together in the case of Dalside to create the conditions for a sense of inclusion and for a greater than expected willingness to take political action, especially direct action. This suggests that, in Dalside, residents' en-

gagement with the governance process was influenced by the political institutions and public policies affecting the area. Broadly, people felt it worthwhile to participate because such participation was having an effect in securing improvements and because they felt they were listened to.

Although the measure of civic culture in Dalside was higher than that for Westfields, it was lower than for the two other neighbourhoods. We are left unsure about whether it might have been lower still, but for the effects of local political institutions and opportunity structures, or whether the local conditions compensated as far as they could be expected to in building civic culture and participation, or whether other factors beyond the reach of our research method are intervening. The question arises as to why the results for Dalside differ from those for Westfields, given the similarity in its socio-economic structure, history of regeneration activity and efforts to involve citizens. The survey and qualitative findings suggest some clues to this in the lack of confidence of Westfields' residents that their area is improving or that it is worth taking political action. The reasons they feel this may lie beyond the scope of this paper perhaps in the impact of social and economic change rather than in the current efforts to involve citizens, which differed in detail only from the efforts in Dalside. The next logical development of this research would be to attempt to design research that would allow factors such as the economic and social context of cities to be examined for their impact on local attitudes to governance, participation and civic culture.

In summary, we have been unable to show fully what determines civic culture, but we have been able to show that citizen participation can be affected by political institutions. However, that political institutions and public policy have the potential to influence citizens to participate and feel included does not mean they will always have that effect. We are unable to account for why the same broad policies and institutions do not have the same effect in different places. In addition, we have not been able to tease out the relative effects of regeneration activity and public involvement in governance. Our hypothesis that the pattern and level of citizen participation cannot be explained only with reference to civic culture or only by reference to political structures and policies intended to bring about citizen participation is confirmed, but we have to add that neither do the two factors together provide a full explanation of the incidence of citizen participation.

These results suggest some policy implications. First, we found some confirmation of the kinds of factors, personal and those found in the neighbourhood context, which correlate strongly with high levels of political activity and perceptions of inclusion. Most of those variables that registered significant relationships do not depart radically from factors such as education identified in previous empirical studies of political participation (see, for example, Parry *et al.*, 1992). Policy-makers and practitioners can therefore be reassured that their task of engaging citizens in poorer areas justifies additional resources to compensate for the likely effect of lower educational attainment and at the same time can emphasise the key importance of achieving improvements in educational attainment in regeneration areas for their long-term benefits in the exercise of citizenship as well as shorter-term economic benefits. In addition to the well-known effects of education, housing tenure—and in particular housing association tenure—plays a new role. It would be wrong though to conclude that housing associations have been shown to be somehow intrinsically better than local authorities as landlords or builders of civic culture. They appear to be so in present circumstances and the challenge is to create in other rented tenures the material conditions and social relationships that create a similar sense of inclusion and confidence. However, the evidence suggests that even when the opportunity structures for participation are in place, there may be other factors that intervene to prevent a sense of inclusion or civic culture from developing.

Although few definitive conclusions emerge, and these tentative conclusions might be capable of other interpretations, the evidence points towards a possibility that citizen participation may be fostered as much by the creation of opportunity structures that build confidence in the efficacy of participation as by the intrinsic levels of civic culture. The key policy lesson is that the effort devoted to creating greater local institutional thickness and participatory structures is not wasted. Without them, efforts aimed at regeneration of the poorer areas are working even harder against the political alienation that citizens feel. Also, given the co-existence of the current policy emphasis on citizen participation and the legacy of past experiences, professionals and policy-makers need to appreciate that citizens may choose for themselves how to make their views known. Direct action may be seen both as a sign of disaffection and as a positive indicator of willingness to engage in the process of governance. Although tentative, the evidence suggests that local political or civic institutions such as housing associations can assist in fostering the type of action that can lead to a stronger sense of inclusion. Future research should be able to use existing quantitative and qualitative research instruments to explore further the implications for civic culture and social capital and to develop and refine indices for measurement that will seek to capture the effects of other factors.

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Appendix. Ordered Logistical Regressions

Variables are described in the table at the end of this Appendix. For each regression, variables that achieved explanatory power at the 95 per cent level of significance are shown in bold and at the 90 per cent level are shown in italics.

Table A1. Neighbourhood civic culture index

Civindex	Coefficient	Standard error	z	$P>\|z\|$	[95 per cent confidence interval]	
RTB	0.1029492	0.3214253	0.320	0.749	– 0.5270328	0.7329313
Rating_2	**– 0.6208047**	**0.2412454**	**– 2.573**	**0.010**	**– 1.093637**	**– 0.1479723**
Rating_3	– 0.4062772	0.4045808	– 1.004	0.315	– 1.199241	0.3866867
Rating_4	0.0192961	1.094259	0.018	0.986	– 2.125413	2.164005
NdChg_2	**– 0.6186303**	**0.2999118**	**– 2.063**	**0.039**	**– 1.206447**	**– 0.030814**
NdChg_3	– 0.5284683	0.3731474	– 1.416	0.157	– 1.259824	0.2028872
NdChg_4	0.1770206	0.7560105	0.234	0.815	– 1.304733	1.658774
Sex	*– 0.3833602*	*0.22866*	*– 1.677*	*0.094*	*– 0.8315256*	*0.0648052*
Hhold_2	0.2699235	0.6453336	0.418	0.676	– 0.9949071	1.534754
Hhold_3	0.3103929	0.9871657	0.314	0.753	– 1.624416	2.245202
Hhold_4	0.1745867	1.001008	0.174	0.862	– 1.787353	2.136527
Hhold_5	1.425334	1.200368	1.187	0.235	– 0.9273442	3.778012
Hhold_6	– 0.6262494	0.9958305	– 0.629	0.529	– 2.578041	1.325543
Wkstat_2	– 0.8658419	0.6794289	– 1.274	0.203	– 2.197498	0.4658142
Wkstat_3	– 1.178232	1.17381	– 1.004	0.315	– 3.478857	1.122393
Wkstat_4	– 0.7318577	1.098076	– 0.666	0.505	– 2.884047	1.420331
Wkstat_5	– 1.817099	1.316081	– 1.381	0.167	– 4.39657	0.7623723
Wkstat_6	– 1.981957	1.374481	– 1.442	0.149	– 4.675891	0.711977
Wkstat_7	– 0.9495685	0.8595333	– 1.105	0.269	– 2.634223	0.7350858
Area_2	0.1800903	0.4256558	0.423	0.672	– 0.6541797	1.01436
Area_3	0.1485587	0.455398	0.326	0.744	– 0.7440049	1.041122
Area_4	0.290495	0.4011516	0.724	0.469	– 0.4957476	1.076738
Class_2	– 0.305999	0.3973133	– 0.770	0.441	– 1.084719	0.4727208
Class_3	– 0.2309425	0.4349851	– 0.531	0.595	– 1.083498	0.6216126

Table A1.—*Continued*

Civindex	Coefficient	Standard error	z	$P > \|z\|$	[95 per cent confidence interval]	
Class_4	− 0.6350316	0.4666343	− 1.361	0.174	− 1.549618	0.2795547
Hiqual_1	**0.4933506**	**0.2818529**	**1.750**	**0.080**	**− 0.059071**	**1.045772**
Hiqual_2	0.2877349	0.4110577	0.700	0.484	− 0.5179234	1.093393
Hiqual_3	**0.8682313**	**0.4981024**	**1.743**	**0.081**	**− 0.1080315**	**1.844494**

Ordered logit estimates

Number of observations = 292
LR $\chi^2(28) = 41.38$
Prob $> \chi^2 = 0.0495$
Pseudo $R^2 = 0.0333$.

Log likelihood = − 601.01688

Table A2. Neighbourhood contacting index

Reactind	Coefficient	Standard error	z	$P > \|z\|$	[95 per cent confidence interval]	
RTB	− 0.2698215	0.3166713	− 0.852	0.394	− 0.8904858	0.3508427
Rating_2	**− 0.4180389**	**0.2544233**	**− 1.643**	**0.100**	**− 0.9166993**	**0.0806216**
Rating_3	− 0.4791127	0.4225543	− 1.134	0.257	− 1.307304	0.3490784
Rating_4	0.2882431	1.059904	0.272	0.786	− 1.789131	2.365618
NdChg_2	0.1312614	0.3038708	0.432	0.666	− 0.4643144	0.7268371
NdChg_3	0.2362303	0.3862919	0.612	0.541	− 0.520888	0.9933485
NdChg_4	− 0.1195817	0.693907	− 0.172	0.863	− 1.479614	1.240451
Sex	− 0.3198598	0.2389695	− 1.338	0.181	− 0.7882315	0.1485119
Hhold_2	− 1.026723	0.7044295	− 1.458	0.145	− 2.407379	0.3539338
Hhold_3	1.921208	1.298917	1.479	0.139	− 0.6246217	40.467038
Hhold_4	1.909976	1.304914	1.464	0.143	− 0.6476095	40.467561
Hhold_5	0.3834622	1.234252	0.311	0.756	− 2.035627	2.802552
Hhold_6	0.5023636	1.060189	0.474	0.636	− 1.575568	2.580295
Wkstat_2	**1.574326**	**0.7033404**	**2.238**	**0.025**	**0.1958038**	**2.952848**
Wkstat_3	− 0.422306	1.446653	− 0.292	0.770	− 3.257694	2.413082
Wkstat_4	− 0.839767	1.379661	− 0.609	0.543	− 3.543852	1.864318
Wkstat_5	0.3900586	1.559688	0.250	0.803	− 2.666874	3.446991
Wkstat_6	− 0.0599636	1.419819	− 0.042	0.966	− 2.842757	2.72283
Wkstat_7	0.5052133	0.9339222	0.541	0.589	− 1.325241	2.335667
Area_2	**− 0.9570987**	**0.4272935**	**− 2.240**	**0.025**	**− 1.794579**	**− 0.1196188**
Area_3	*− 0.7278183*	*0.4399526*	*− 1.654*	*0.098*	*− 1.59011*	*0.1344729*
Area_4	**− 1.03695**	**0.4017124**	**− 2.581**	**0.010**	**− 1.824291**	**− 0.2496079**
Class_2	− 0.1302091	0.3898426	− 0.334	0.738	− 0.8942866	0.6338684
Class_3	− 0.2985587	0.4300092	− 0.694	0.487	− 1.141361	0.5442438
Class_4	**− 0.8937697**	**0.4567948**	**− 1.957**	**0.050**	**− 1.789071**	**0.0015316**
Hiqual_1	0.0343305	0.2789388	0.123	0.902	− 0.5123796	0.5810406
Hiqual_2	0.4534149	0.4339567	1.045	0.296	− 0.3971247	1.303954
Hiqual_3	0.6296579	0.482142	1.306	0.192	− 0.315323	1.574639

Ordered logit estimates

Number of observations = 292
LR $\chi^2(28) = 51.35$
Prob $> \chi^2 = 0.045$.
Pseudo $R^2 = 0.0593$.

Log likelihood = − 407.28527

Table A3. Neighbourhood direct action index

Ordered logit estimates	Number of observations = 292
Convergence not achieved (estimated coefficients questionable)	LR $\chi^2(28) = 39.34$
	Prob $> \chi^2 = 0.0756$.
Log likelihood = − 195.69546	Pseudo $R^2 = 0.0913$

Note: Five observations completely determined. Standard errors questionable.

Table A4. Neighbourhood inclusion index

Inclusn	Coefficient	Standard error	z	$P > \lvert z \rvert$	[95 per cent confidence interval]	
RTB	0.3357357	0.3027815	1.109	0.268	− 0.2577053	0.9291766
Rating_2	**− 0.4980883**	**0.2413768**	**− 2.064**	**0.039**	**− 0.9711782**	**− 0.0249985**
Rating_3	**− 0.8557198**	**0.3979519**	**− 2.150**	**0.032**	**− 1.635691**	**− 0.0757484**
Rating_4	− 0.7207551	1.081963	− 0.666	0.505	− 2.841364	1.399854
NdChg_2	**− 1.019822**	**0.3024539**	**− 3.372**	**0.001**	**− 1.61262**	**− 0.4270231**
NdChg_3	**− 0.7702723**	**0.3671569**	**− 2.098**	**0.036**	**− 1.489887**	**− 0.0506581**
NdChg_4	0.4022805	0.6860285	0.586	0.558	− 0.9423107	1.746872
Sex	0.0683676	0.2297345	0.298	0.766	− 0.3819038	0.518639
Hhold_2	− 0.002303	0.6116844	− 0.004	0.997	− 1.201182	1.196576
Hhold_3	1.237464	1.276941	0.969	0.333	− 1.265295	3.740223
Hhold_4	1.086898	1.281309	0.848	0.396	− 1.424422	3.598218
Hhold_5	1.049665	2.113126	0.497	0.619	− 3.091986	5.191316
Hhold_6	0.4449694	0.9980138	0.446	0.656	− 1.511102	2.40104
Wkstat_2	− 0.3400451	0.6533515	− 0.520	0.603	− 1.62059	0.9405003
Wkstat_3	− 1.340502	1.39527	− 0.961	0.337	− 4.075181	1.394178
Wkstat_4	− 0.8178959	1.324973	− 0.617	0.537	− 3.414795	1.779003
Wkstat_5	− 1.216631	1.526166	− 0.797	0.425	− 4.207861	1.774599
Wkstat_6	− 1.203813	2.204431	− 0.546	0.585	− 5.524418	3.116791
Wkstat_7	− 0.8959328	0.8869016	− 1.010	0.312	− 2.634228	0.8423624
Area_2	− 0.5709541	0.4229903	− 1.350	0.177	− 1.4	0.2580917
Area_3	**− 1.378246**	**0.4491207**	**− 3.069**	**0.002**	**− 2.258506**	**− 0.4979853**
Area_4	− 0.5579066	0.3943585	− 1.415	0.157	− 1.330835	0.2150218
Class_2	**− 0.9410427**	**0.3815948**	**− 2.466**	**0.014**	**− 1.688955**	**− 0.1931306**
Class_3	**− 0.8891236**	**0.4063868**	**− 2.188**	**0.029**	**− 1.685627**	**− 0.09262**
Class_4	**− 0.9374633**	**0.4299865**	**− 2.180**	**0.029**	**− 1.780221**	**− 0.0947053**
Hiqual_1	0.514599	0.2686724	1.915	0.055	− 0.0119892	1.041187
Hiqual_2	**0.8105408**	**0.3989297**	**2.032**	**0.042**	**0.0286529**	**1.592429**
Hiqual_3	0.623899	0.46308	1.347	0.178	− 0.2837212	1.531519

Ordered logit estimates	Number of observations = 292
	LR $\chi^2(28) = 61.00$
	Prob $> \chi^2 = 0.0003$
Log likelihood = − 615.32454	Pseudo $R^2 = 0.0472$.

Table A5. Variable definitions

RTB	Property bought under right-to-buy legislation	1	Yes
		2	No
Rating	Rating of the neighbourhood as a place to live	1(default)	Very good
		2	Fairly good
		3	Fairly poor
		4	Very poor
NdChg	How neighbourhood has changed over the past 2 years	1 (default)	Got better
		2	Stayed the same
		3	Got worse
Sex	Sex of respondent	0	Male
		1	Female
Hhold	Household type	1 (default)	Single adult
		2	Lone parent
		3	Couple, no dependent children
		4	Couple, dependent children
		5	Single pensioner
		6	Pensioner couple
		7	Other
Wkstat	Household work status	1 (default)	Single adult unemployed
		2	Working single adult
		3	Couple, both work
		4	Couple, one works
		5	Couple, neither works
		6	Single pensioner
		7	Pensioner couple
		8	Other
Area	Sample neighbourhood area	1 (default)	Dalside
		2	Lockhart
		3	Westfields
		4	Leaflie
Class	Social class	1 (default)	A/B
		2	C1
		3	C2
		4	D/E
Hiqual	Highest qualification	0 (default)	None
		1	School qualifications
		2	Further education
		3	Degree