

<p>Institution: Manchester Metropolitan University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: C19 Business and Management Studies</p>
<p>Title of case study: Manchester Metropolitan University Research: Empowering Stakeholders In Town And city Centre Change</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Research carried out by Manchester Metropolitan University into the management of town and city centres has directly led to key changes in policy and practice - in particular, the acceptance and adoption of new partnership approaches to town and city change now supported by the Departments of Business Innovation and Skills, and Communities and Local Government. The research has also impacted on professional practice internationally, through the development of a comprehensive set of principles, standards and approaches disseminated through the Institute of Place Management and aimed at empowering communities to better manage town centres for the benefit of the local community.</p> <p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Many British high streets are in decline. Despite their importance to disadvantaged groups (low-income, non-car owning, disabled, the elderly), once bustling town centres are now all but deserted. The reasons for this are multifold but include the relaxation of planning laws, the growth of out-of-town retailing and the pressures of a prolonged economic downturn. Research at Manchester Metropolitan University's (MMU's) Business School by Professors Cathy Parker, Chair of Marketing and Retail Enterprise (1995-present), David Bennison, Chair of Retailing (1987-2012), Gary Warnaby, Senior Lecturer (1991-2001), Dominic Medway, Senior Research Fellow (1996-2006), Dr John Byrom, Senior Lecturer (1999-2004) and Ojay McDonald, Retail Enterprise Network Marketing Officer (2006-2007) has focussed on solutions and interventions to reverse the decline.</p> <p>Between 1999-2000 MMU researchers conducted interviews with stakeholders responsible for the marketing of two English cities as shopping destinations (e.g. senior managers for economic development, public-private partnerships agencies, shopping and town centres) [1] and examined the use of marketing planning concepts and specific marketing promotional techniques in five contrasting UK town centre management schemes [2]. Findings highlighted the differences between the planning processes in this context as opposed to private sector organisations. Researchers identified three broad types of marketing activities (footfall drivers, participation builders and awareness builders).</p> <p>Using data from interviews with US business improvement district managers (2002-03), the researchers contrasted performance measurement in terms of concept, design and use in the UK and the US. This provided further critical reflection on practices, such as the lack of evaluation inherent in many schemes [3]. The work continued to expand its international scope, and, from 2006, formed part of the £2.7m EQUAL (European Social Fund) AGORA project (led by Parker). MMU researchers undertook a survey of >1,500 place managers in the UK, Spain, Sweden and Australia and explored and piloted alternative place management models in eight towns and cities in the UK (2006-09). Findings included the identification of two fundamental factors to explain the development of different types of town centre partnerships (the type of funding and the level of formality of the scheme) and the development of a comprehensive set of principles, standards and approaches to place management [4].</p> <p>Parallel MMU research has comprised the study of retailing as a fundamental driver of town and city change. Through case studies of retailers such as A. Goldberg and Sons [5] and Tesco [6], researchers identified a range of complex factors both internal (such as poor management decision making) and external (e.g. lobbying by major retailers to influence government policy) that have contributed to the demise of independent retailers. Much of this research was funded by £6m+ made available via the EU EQUAL initiative (see grants section). As part of this funding, MMU and</p>

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other researchers (led by Parker and McDonald) administered the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Small Shop's non-judicial inquiry into the future of the High Street (2004-06). Their report '*High Street Britain 2015*' highlighted the problems of smaller retailers, drawing attention to their social as well as commercial role.

3. References to the research

[1] Warnaby, G., Bennison, D., Davies B.J. and Hughes, H., 2002, Marketing UK Towns and Cities as Shopping Destinations, *Journal of Marketing Management*, 18, 9/10, 877-904. (ABS 3*) DOI:10.13620267257012930402

[2] Stubbs, B., Warnaby, G. and Medway, D., 2002, Marketing at the public/private sector interface; town centre management schemes in the south of England, *Cities*, 19, 5, 317-326. (ABS 2*). [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0264-2751\(02\)00040-9](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0264-2751(02)00040-9)

[3] Hogg, S., Medway, D and Warnaby, G., 2007, "Performance measurement in UK town centre management schemes and US business improvement districts: comparisons and UK implications." *Environment and Planning A*, 39,1513 -1528. (ABS 4*). DOI: 10.1068/a38105

[4] Coca-Stefaniak, J.A., Parker, C, Quin, S, Rinaldi, R and Byrom, J., 2009, Town Centre Management Models: A European Perspective, *Cities*, 26, 2, 74-80. (ABS 2*). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2008.12.001>

[5] Pal, J, Medway, D and Byrom, J., 2006, "Analysing retail failure from an historical perspective: A case study of A. Goldberg & Sons plc." *The Service Industries Journal*, 26, 5, 513-535. (ABS 2*) DOI: 10.1080/02642060600722817

[6] Pal, J. and Medway, D. 2008, "Working the system." *Environment & Planning A* 40, 4 pp.761-765 (ABS 4*). DOI: 10.1068/a40249

Grants

- £3,600,000 Retail Enterprise Network; Cathy Parker; EQUAL; 2002-2006. <http://www.equal-works.com/searchadvanced.aspx?search=Retail+Enterprise+Network>
- £2,700,000 Agora; Cathy Parker; EQUAL; 2005-2008 <http://www.equal-works.com/searchadvanced.aspx?search=Agora> www.placemanagement.org

which funded:

- House of Commons All Party Small Shops Group, 2006, High Street Britain; 2015. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/15_02_06_highstreet.pdf

EQUAL funding was highly competitive and only a small number (76 and then 98) of large development partnerships were funded in the UK, within the two rounds.

4. Details of the impact

The report '*High Street Britain 2015*' (*HSB-2015*) used MMU research to highlight how small business failures threaten key government policies including the drive for diversity and social inclusion. It galvanised decision makers and stakeholders at national, local and community levels who used MMU research to inform key policy changes and new strategies for place management.

Impacts on public policy

In April 2008, the Competition Commission completed its inquiry into the UK Grocery Retail Sector concluding that action was "needed to improve competition in local markets" including a strengthened and revised Code of Practice, to be enforced by an independent ombudsman: both

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recommendations based on MMU research on the independent retail sector's role in supporting town centres, presented in oral evidence to the inquiry by Parker [A]. This led to 2010's **The Groceries Code**, a legally binding document for retailers designed to ensure all businesses have access to fair and open markets, and, in April 2013 to **The Groceries Adjudicator Bill** which created the UK's first independent adjudicator to oversee the relationship between large supermarkets and their direct suppliers [B].

MMU research on the role of place management models in providing a mechanism for public/private partnerships to add commercial and social value directly informed Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (DBIS) guidelines. It is cited in '**Understanding High Street Performance**', the 2011 DBIS guide to issues that the public, private and third sectors need to consider when investing in high streets. Similarly, the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG's) **2012 review of shopping parades** draws on MMU research on the demise of the independent retail sector [C]. *HSB-2015* continues to be referenced in government publications including the 2012 **Parliamentary Briefing Paper on Town Centres, Planning and Supermarkets** [D].

As a direct result of the AGORA project, MMU-developed principles of place management were adopted and continue to inform UK Government initiatives impacting at local level. Examples include the DCLG's **Business and Town Centres Project** which uses AGORA's model of partnership funding to underpin analysis and support for 36 towns (15 added since 2008)[E].

During 2011, Parker was guest speaker at the annual general meeting of more than 100 members of the local community action group that successfully challenged a £50m Sainsbury redevelopment plan for Crosby's town centre [F] and chaired Bristol's High Street Scrutiny Inquiry. In Bristol, Parker's keynote committee address, introducing the issues and giving examples from other cities of how the problems might be addressed, was webcast live. 'Cover it live' technology allowed >130 local stakeholders to participate in the discussion. Bristol's new High Street Strategy includes recommendations regarding accessibility and funding for place management directly informed by MMU research [G].

Impact on professional practice

The **Institute of Place Management** (IPM) is an international organisation supporting people working in urban planning, town and city centre management based on a concept developed by MMU researchers. Established in 2006, it has grown to 300 full and >600 affiliate members (July 2013). Through IPM, professional standards and models of place management identified in the AGORA project are disseminated through a programme of continuing professional development, master classes, conferences and, through the *Journal of Place Management and Development* (launched in 2008 and edited by Parker) and the *Place Bulletin* circulated to >900 subscribers worldwide [H]. Impact can be demonstrated by Hallett Cove's (Australia) adoption of a new structure for place management in 2013. The town's urban designer (details uploaded to the system) said "... (IPM's) masterclass offered insight into how others are applying best practice place management...and into the types of strategies which could engender sustainable and resilient place outcomes". Rev Kevin Wood, member of the Hallett Cove steering committee said "To get local people involved (...) really is exciting." [I]

The President of the National Association of British Market Authorities says "MMU research and the IPM has been the driving force professionalising the place management sector." [J]

Media and increased public understanding

In May 2013 BBC Radio 4's You and Yours (Y&Y) programme broadcast a week-long series on the various challenges facing the high street (3.5m listeners). Parker featured in two of the programmes in the series. Y&Y's reporter/producer, said "Cathy's analysis of both national and local policy helped the production team's understanding of the issues, contributed to the structure of the series and gave context to the complex subject matter. The points raised were put to the

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Minister responsible, Mark Prisk" [K].

Other recent media appearances by Parker include in-depth interviews for BBC News 24 (13/12/11), BBC1's *Sunday Politics Show*, Radio 5 Live, and Andy Crane's BBC Manchester programme (all May 2013).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

[A] http://www.competition-commission.org.uk/assets/competitioncommission/docs/pdf/non-inquiry/rep_pub/reports/2008/fulltext/538

Code of practice and ombudsman - both mentioned for first time on p. 6 and <http://www.biz-mag.co.uk/pdf/groceries-cc.pdf>

"Response to the Office of Fair Trading's Proposed Decision to Make a Market Investigation for the Grocery Sector" prepared by John Byrom, Ojay McDonald and Cathy Parker

[B] Web link to news story on The Groceries Adjudicator Bill:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/groceries-code-adjudicator-bill-receives-royal-assent>

[C] Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012, *Parades of Shops: Towards an understanding of performance & prospects* (MMU research referenced on p.3,4 5,6,7 and 9)

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/regeneration/pdf/2156925.pdf>

[D] UK Parliament Briefing Papers, 2012, *Town Centres, Planning and Supermarkets* (High Street Britain Report referenced on p.2)

<http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/sn01106>

[E] Department for Communities and Local Government, *Managing Town Centre Partnerships: A Guide for Practitioners* (p.27,28,29)

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/towncentrepartnerships>

[F] Web link to story on Parker's role in Crosby Town Centre

<http://www.crosbyherald.co.uk/news/crosby-news/2011/02/03/high-street-expert-to-give-views-on-how-crosby-can-help-shape-its-future-68459-28104805/>

[G] Bristol City Council, 2011, *High Street Scrutiny Report*, November. (Especially p.13 and 15)

https://www.bristol.gov.uk/committee/2012/sc/sc024/0202_10.pdf

[H] <http://www.placemanagement.org> the website of the Institute of Place Management

[I] Hallett Cove Steering Committee Steering Group Video <http://vimeo.com/66546447>. Testimony from the town's urban designer can be made available on request.

[J] NAMBA testimony – can be made available on request corroborating impacts of the Institute of Place Management on professionalising place management

[K] Testimony, BBC Radio 4 "You and Yours" Producer – corroborating impacts on the communication of retail policy available on request.