

To what extent does shopping locally increase
a sense of community in Wadebridge, Cornwall

Jenifer Flynn

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Abstract

During the most recent recession in the UK, government policy has become more concerned with the levels of wellbeing amongst the population. At the same time, the cultural turn in human geography during the late 1980s, saw more attention being paid to the development of local communities. This dissertation analyses the contested meaning of community, and the extent to which the feeling of community is enriched by shopping locally. Drawing on feminist methodologies I used a mixed methods approach to construct a case study of the Cornish town Wadebridge. This research aimed to explore how the notion of community is understood and embodied locally, with specific reference to the challenges faced by seasonal tourism. This provides an empirical example against which broader trends could be tested.

This study found the local high-street played an important role within the community of Wadebridge. The sense of community promoted a shared feeling of togetherness, strengthened by the importance of community participation in various organisations and activities. Shopping was performed as a community ritual for members to socially interact and stay informed. Finally, tourism appears to benefit the community in two key ways: it provides economic support for the town as well as reaffirming a local identity via a process of self-othering.

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1) Introduction

1.1.) Context and Argument

Since the 1980s there has been a revival of the term community, influenced by the notion of the imagined community (Anderson, 2006). It has also become a ‘buzzword’ in recent policy debates in the UK. In academic geography the concept of community has polarized opinion with some arguing the term has become ambiguous and meaningless (Cater and Jones, 1989). In the context of these debates, community remains an important topic for inquiry.

Debates have also emerged around the shifting retail geography of the UK (Wrigley, 2010). According to the APPSSG¹ (2006:11) report, the rise of supermarkets and the increasing number of out-of-town shopping malls has altered the nature of the British high-street: “[small]² shops are less likely to be found clustered together in the central market place of towns and villages”. Despite this, media commentators have discussed the recent ‘revival’ of the high-street, in contrast to reports of supermarkets’ cancelling or mothballing new development sites (Butler, 2013; Goodley, 2014). It has been argued this revival has been supported by shoppers seeking to support local businesses (Burn-Callander, 2015; Rayner, 2014).

The above debates have remained separate within academic discourse; in my research I will investigate whether shopping locally can help shape a sense of community identity. To do this I will focus on the case of Wadebridge, North Cornwall. The existing literature on these debates tend to focus on a national scale, therefore this study will provide a smaller-scale empirical example through which these broader debates can be explored.

1.2.) The case of Wadebridge

Wadebridge is a market town in North Cornwall with a population of around 8,000 (WREN, 2012). It is situated between the north coast and Bodmin Moor (Wadebridge Town Council, 2014); making it an ideal tourist destination and a base from which to travel the county, thus it is important the role of tourism is considered in this research. In 2011

¹ All-Party Parliamentary Small Shops Group

² Small shops are owned by a sole trader and have fewer than 5 employees (APPSSG, 2006)

Cornwall received 18,349,000 visitors who spent £1,855,422,000, the tourist industry accounts for around 25% of employment in the region (Visit Cornwall, 2011).

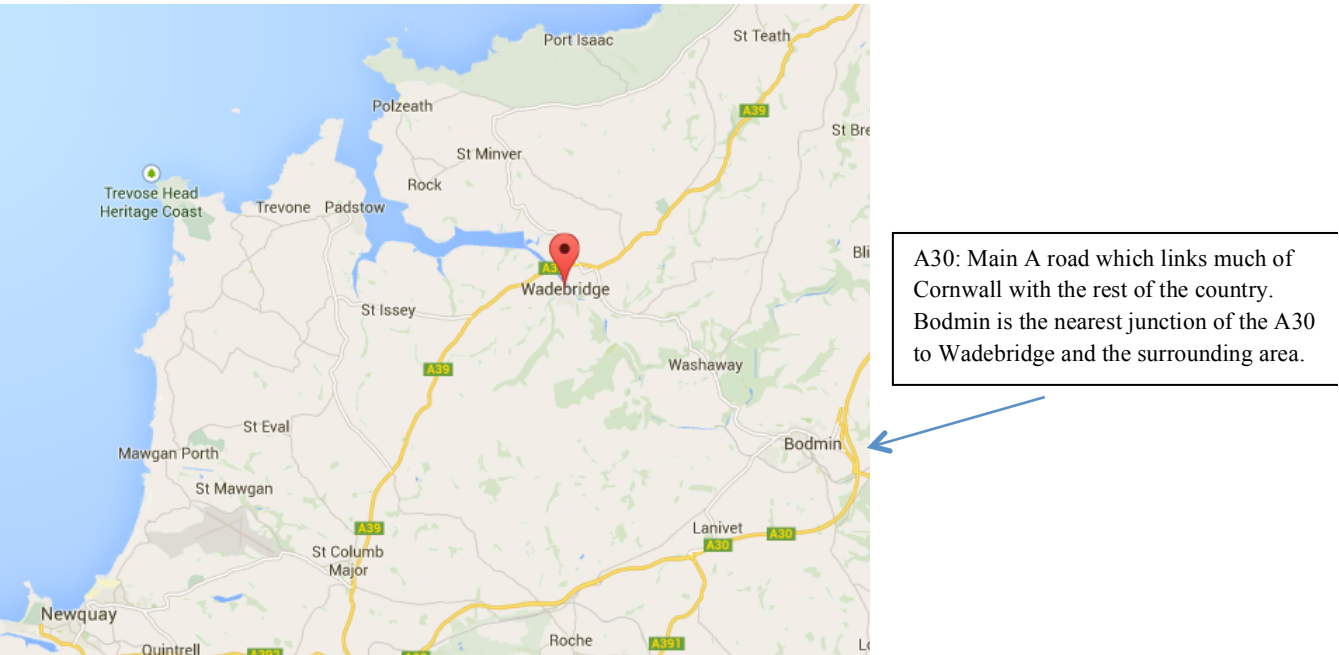


Figure 1: Map of Wadebridge, Cornwall (Google, 2015).

The popularity of the town as a tourist destination is supported by Visit Cornwall (2013) survey data (see Figure.2) whereby Wadebridge was the third most popular tourist ‘base’.

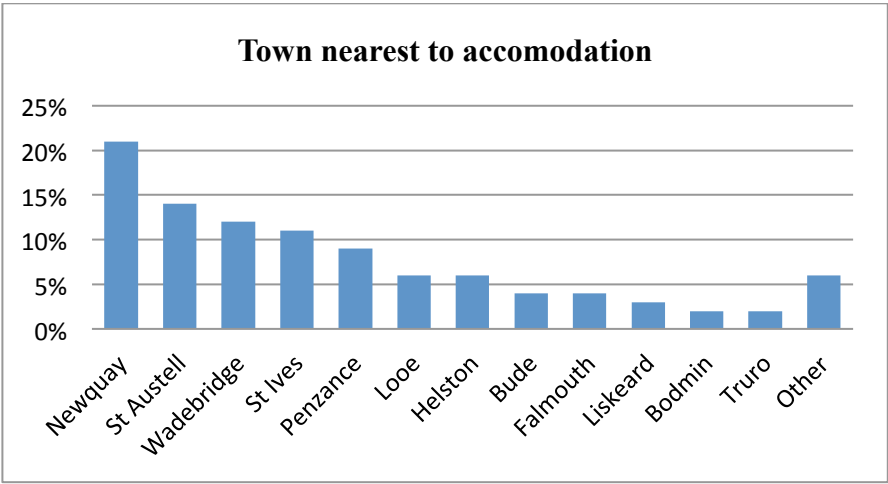


Figure 2: Responses from tourists when asked where their nearest town was.

Adapted from Visit Cornwall (2013). Sample size 1,002.

In this study I will explore how the role of tourism shapes the community of Wadebridge. Previous studies of the region have suggested there is generally a positive attitude to tourism, illustrated in Figure 3., this is explained in the literature by residents' recognising the economic benefits of tourism which outweigh the negative impacts (Getz, 1994). My research will explore whether this trend differs in the town of Wadebridge.

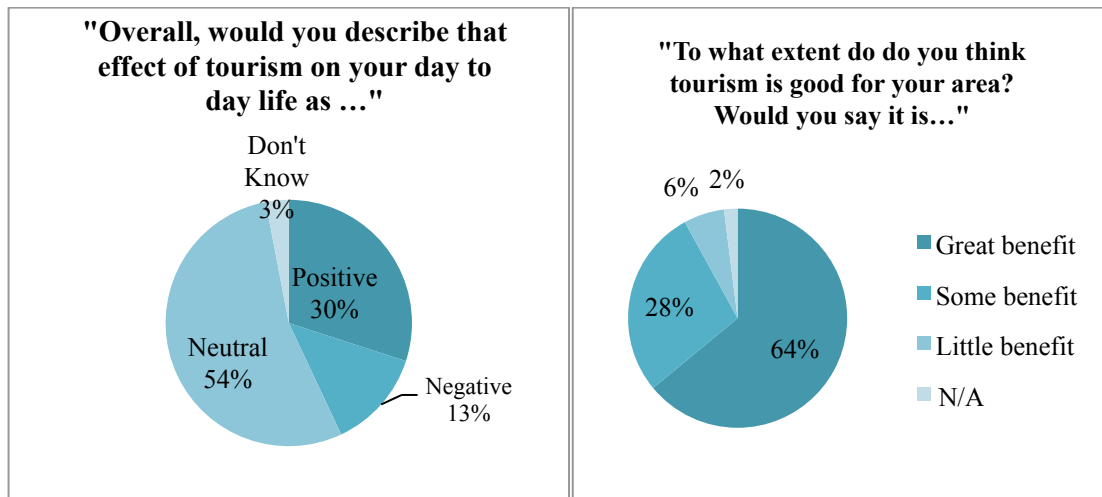


Figure 3.: Pie graphs showing results from Cornwall Development Company Community Attitudes Survey (Adapted from: Power Marketing, 2012).

1.3.) Research aims

In order to investigate the issues highlighted in this introduction the following research aims have been created:

1. *What does community mean in Wadebridge?*
2. *How and why do people shop locally?*
3. *What role does tourism play in shaping the community and local high-street?*

1.4.) Structure

This report will begin with a review of the existing literature, highlighting the gap this research aims to fill. Next, I will move on to justify and explain the methods used in this research before analysing the results this produced. Finally I will provide a summary of the findings and highlight areas for future research.

2) Literature Review

2.1.) The Cultural Turn and the concept of community

The cultural turn in Human Geography occurred during the 1980s; this shift increased attention given to culture, consequently leading to a focus on community (Nayak and Jeffery, 2011). At the same time, the second-wave feminist movement challenged the previously dominant role of males in knowledge production (Nayak and Jeffery, 2011; Bell and McEwan, 1996). This movement championed a move away from quantitative research methods which often used pre-existing categories which they argued followed the male orientated understanding of society. In this study I will draw on these movements, which aim to explore the everyday lives of individuals within their social realms, to assess the importance of a thriving local high-street to a sense of community.

2.2.) Community: definitions and debates

The concept of community is central to my research; therefore in this section I will chart the changing attitudes towards the study of community throughout academic geography.

The idea of a natural community was introduced by the Chicago School of Human Ecology at the beginning of the twentieth century; Park and Burgess used the analogy of plant invasion, competition and selection to describe how communities were created (Valentine, 2001; McKenzie, 1967). However this idea of natural communities was criticised by Davie (1937) who argued access to transportation links determined the emergence of communities. Alternatively, Firey (1945) discussed the retentive power of shared values, identity and a common cultural history. Despite losing favour, the work of Park and Burgess remain seminal texts for the study of neighbourhood communities, particularly during the 1960-70s. These studies aimed to map and explore the cohesion of neighbourhood communities.

Similarly to Firey (1945), Selznick (1994) argued communities are “all connected by bonds that establish a common faith or fate, a personal identity, [and] a sense of belonging” (359). This is supported by Cater and Jones’ (1989:169) definition of a neighbourhood community as an interactive space of close-knit households whom “engage in mutual aid and support and are conscious of common identity, a belonging together”. The idea of an ideal community remains contested; however there appears to be some

consensus around the need for face to face interaction (Cater and Jones, 1989, Badcock, 2002; Talen; 1999 cf. Davies and Herbert, 1993; Webber, 1963) and a united identity (Young, 1990; Cole and Goodchild, 2000; Selznick, 1994). I will draw on these ideas to assess how the community of Wadebridge constructs a shared identity.

The neighbourhood approach to community has been criticised by some authors who suggest the term has become meaningless (Cater and Jones, 1989; Valentine, 2001) and romanticized (Bell and Newby, 1971; Rose, 1990; Cornwall, 1984). In her study of Poplar, London during the 1920s, Rose (1990) argues these communities which were presented as neighbourly and caring, in reality were exclusionary characterized by rivalry particularly among young people and different streets. Cornwall (1984) suggests community studies particularly of those in a state of flux have been represented as united (see for example Young and Wilmott, 1957). Conversely, Cornwall's research uncovered issues of inequality and economic struggle therefore highlighting the tendency for communities to be thought of nostalgically, often veiling the reality.

Gibson and Cameron (2001) adopt a feminist approach to this debate, problematizing the 'authoritarian' use of exclusion to create a united community. This is expanded by Young (1990) who critiques the concept of community for three reasons: it is often unrealistic, prizes unity over difference (which can encourage the suppression of individuality such as sexuality) and that it generates exclusion via a process of self-othering. Alternatively, due to the advancement of communication technology, some authors have argued communities without propinquity (Webber, 1963) are less exclusionary and instead empower individuals by offering access to a diverse range of online communities that extend beyond immediate locality (Davies and Herbert, 1993; Silk, 1999).

The revival of the notion of community since the 1980s as "a structure of meaning or imagining" (Valentine, 2001:105) has been characterized by the idea of the imagined community (Anderson, 2006). According to Anderson (2006:6) "all communities larger than primordial villages of face to face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined", that is, the members of communities will never know most of their fellow members "yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion". Therefore, communities require activities and boundaries to aid a clear understanding of the limitations of that community (Cohen, 2013). Cohen (2013) states as the scale of that boundary reduces (for example from British to Cornish to Wadebridge) the boundaries of community become "more

important to their members for they relate to increasingly intimate areas of their lives” (Cohen, 2013: 13). Simultaneously, he argues as one descends the scale there is an increasing need for a collective consciousness attached to boundary expressing symbols, for example community activities of rituals, this links to Billig’s (1995) argument for the role of symbols in constructing a banal nationality. The role of the Wadebridge Renewable Energy Network (WREN) in providing a community boundary will be assessed in this study.

The shift in community debate to recognise the importance of a sense of belonging to individuals highlights the importance of this to the mobilization of communities in various social and political movements; referred to by Etzioni (1995) as communitarianism. Although some have criticised Etzioni (1995) for presenting an idealized view of community empowerment without illustrating how this can be achieved (Low, 1999), this notion of community has been echoed in recent policy debates. Under the New Labour administration there was an increased focus on the idea of balanced communities within housing policy (Cole and Goodchild, 2001), this aimed to create more sustainable communities by avoiding social exclusion particularly of underclasses and promote a sense of active participation (DETR, 1998). More recently, the idea of active participation has been mobilized by the current coalition government. Cameron’s ‘Big Society’ agenda is characterized by “plans to bring neighbourhoods together [and] to increase social action” (Cameron, 2010, p.1). These ideas have been evaluated within academic literature (North, 2011; Tam, 2011; Coote, 2011). Cameron’s vision has been situated within the period of recession and austerity in the UK, suggesting it represents “a play to cover a neoliberal inspired fundamental withdrawal of state provision” (North, 2011, p.817). The movement towards greater social action through neighbourhood interaction has been echoed in recent town planning strategies, for example ‘new urbanism’ is described as a new wave of planning which seeks to build communities by promoting social capital and reviving lost community spirit (Talen, 1999). In my research I will explore a more empirical basis for these policy movements.

2.3.) Retail Geography

Traditionally, studies of community and retail geography have remained separate. However in my study I will explore the links between these bodies of literature, to facilitate this, the following section will provide an overview of retail geography literature.

High-streets are widely regarded as the “heart of towns and communities” (Portas, 2011:3). Griffiths et al (2008) discuss the cultural connotations of the high-street in evoking a feeling of shared local identity (Badcock, 2002), arguing the high-street acts multi-functionally as a

“communal hub; a place where near neighbours ‘bump’ into each other on their way to the post office, parents accompany children to the library and the elderly swap local gossip at the bus stop” (Griffiths et al, 2008:1155).

However, these types of the communities are threatened by multiple factors, including: the increase of out-of-town shopping malls; the spread of chain stores; car ownership rates and the advent of internet shopping (Griffiths et al, 2008; Bennison et al, 2010). The battle between local independent shops and big businesses dates back to the emergence of the department store in the nineteenth century (Kay, 1987). This has accelerated in recent years; by 2007 eight chains accounted for 85% of grocery expenditure in the UK (Wrigley, 2010). Some authors argue the dominance of chain stores has decreased diversity on British high-streets and given rise to “clone towns” (NEF, 2005), where globalisation has been seen to erode the presence of local independent firms, which are increasingly replaced by global businesses (NEF, 2005; Wrigley, 2010). Conversley, Wrigley et al (2009) note the positive associations between ‘larger’ corporate retail entries into a town which draw in footfall for smaller stores. These studies explore broader themes thus would benefit from a more local scale case study to assess the extent these changes have occurred in a particular location. This is something which could be addressed in the case of Wadebridge.

Bennison and Jones (2002) conducted a study of six town centres in Greater Manchester, (3 towns where supermarkets had recently opened) to explore the impact of supermarkets on town centres. They found an increase in shop vacancy rates (supported by Wrigley and Dolega, 2011) and the number of charity and discount stores. However, they did not find any significant differences between towns which related to the opening of a supermarket (Bennison and Jones, 2002).

Despite the academic view that supermarkets do not cause a negative impact on town centres, there was public dispute in Wadebridge in which a community group was formed to protest against the opening of a second supermarket on the outskirts of the town (BBC, 2011). They believed the addition would negatively impact the town’s high-street.

In keeping with this national consciousness, there seems to be a public movement towards shopping locally. This has been encouraged by the government backed Small Business Saturday event which aims to raise the profile of shopping locally on one Saturday during the festive shopping period (Small Business Saturday, 2015). However, this shift has been criticised by some as romantic and unsustainable (Rayner, 2014). According to Rayner (2014), supermarkets since the 1950s have empowered women by reducing the time it takes to complete food shopping by bringing together products under one roof, additionally they have made food more affordable, benefitting those on low incomes. However, the rising demand for Foodbanks across the UK, particularly in rural areas such as Wadebridge (Foodbank, 2014) demonstrates a limit to the benefit and affordability of supermarkets. Furthermore Raynor (2014) highlights the problematic oligopoly of supermarkets in the UK which has led to a driving down in the prices paid to farmers leading to weaker food security.

The creation of local currencies has been a further way communities have aimed to “support the local economy and the process of economic relocalisation” (Longhurst, 2012:174). Examples of this can be found in the UK in the transition towns of Totnes (Longhurst, 2012) and Lewes (Dyrendom Graugaard, 2012). Transition towns emerged to promote a community response to the pressures of climate change (Aiken, 2012), situating these projects within a wider ‘green’ movement. These initiatives have been criticised as “being overly rural, middle-class and lacking in diversity” (Aiken, 2012) and promoting a homogenized view of community. In my research I will draw on these debates to explore the Wren currency in Wadebridge.

2.4.) Tourism

The broader trends which have been discussed above will be applied to the case of Wadebridge in my research; here national challenges to the high-street are combined with the vulnerability of many Cornish towns’ economies to seasonal tourism (Shaw and Williams, 1988; Gilligan, 1987; Busby et al, 2013). In this section I will review the literature which discusses the impact of tourism on communities and the contested nature of the tourist industry.

One of the key benefits provided by tourism is employment (Williams, 1998; Shaw et al, 1991). According the Visit Cornwall (2011) study, tourism provided 60,921 jobs in 2011, with 45,017 of those registered as full time equivalent employment (FTE).

However, Williams (1998) criticises tourism employment as low paid, unskilled and part-time/seasonal with an over dependence on female labour. Furthermore, some authors problematize the measure of employment from the 'tourist industry' (Leiper, 1990; Hall and Lew, 2009). Hall and Lew (2009) highlight the difficulty in measuring tourist industry impacts as visitors will consume both tourism and non-tourism commodities, just as residents of an area will consume tourism commodities. Similarly, Leiper (1990:602) argues

“Saying that a firm is in the tourism business or industry merely because it has customers who can be described as tourists is... analogous to observing red-heads among the customers of the butcher, baker, and candlestick maker and deducing the existence of a 'red-heads' industry”.

Smith (1998) concludes that tourism can be thought of as a 'synthetic industry'.

Within tourism research, in their seminal text 'The Tourist Gaze', Urry and Larsen (2011:78) raise the idea of “performative labour” conducted by those who work in the tourist industry. They suggest the “leading role of the smile and positive body language... signals the power of the tourist gaze in orchestrating service encounters” (Urry and Larsen, 2011:80), therefore highlighting the subordinated role of the resident/employee.

Much of the research which documents the negative impacts of tourism on communities tends to focus on the cultural erosion of indigenous groups which have been opened up to tourism (see for example American Indian Country tourism in Hall and Lew (2009)). However, there appears to be less attention on the impact of local communities within the UK. One exception of this is Getz (1994) research into residents' attitudes to tourism in Spey Valley, Scotland. In his research Getz (1994) found any negative views of tourists held by locals were balanced by the acceptance of most people of the economic dependence on tourism. Similarly, King et al (1993:650) found “residents of communities dependent on tourism can clearly differentiate between its economic benefits and the social costs”.

This literature review provided an overview of the debates in academic geography around the concept of community. It then tracked the recent trends within retail geography before moving on to a discussion of tourism. This review also highlighted the merit for exploring the connections between these distinct fields through the case study of Wadebridge. In the next section, I will discuss the methods used to achieve this aim.

3) Methodology

In this section the methodology applied to this study will be described. The methods chosen will be justified by highlighting their strengths and weaknesses. This intensive study uses qualitative methods which provide an insight into the social worlds and experiences of individuals (Baxter and Eyles, 2000).

3.1.) A mixed methods approach

This study uses triangulation of qualitative methods to more fully address the research aims. A mixed methods approach can “enhance capacities for interpreting meaning and behaviour” (Davies et al, 2001: 67). This was appropriate for this study as triangulation can enable greater immersion into a community (Cook, 2005). For example, Cook (2005) suggests interviews with key members of a community can introduce your study to the community and identify other key groups and networks. In my research I conducted initial interviews with WREN which then led to further interviews and an invitation to a bimonthly networking event. Furthermore, Valentine (2005) highlights how interviews can provide an opportunity to give more detail to a questionnaire survey, in my study this was also facilitated by informal conversations during my ethnography. Other studies into communities have focused on archival research (for example Cresswell, 2014; Cornwall, 1984; Rose, 1990), however this method was unsuitable for exploring the present relationship between the community and local high-street, this would also cause issues of accessibility.

3.2.) Interviews

In my study I conducted 3 semi-structured interviews with key members within the community. Interviews are considered an effective way of investigating both the consensus and diversity of opinions on real issues (Dunn, 2010). My interviews were semi-structured following the guidelines set out by Valentine (2005). This allowed for a pre-determined list of topics to be covered (which were emailed to interviewees beforehand at their request), making it easier to keep interviews relevant, unlike unstructured interviews. Semi-structured interviews also allowed some flexibility to the order in which these were

discussed and the specific questions asked (Longhurst, 2003). However, this flexibility can make interview data more difficult to compare, thus limiting conclusions that can be drawn (Kitchin and Tate, 2000), despite this structured interviews are considered impersonal (and were therefore felt unsuitable). Each interview lasted between 60 and 90 minutes and was recorded via Dictaphone with consent sought before commencing the interview. The interview was then transcribed and coded to identify themes to suit an inductive approach (Kitchin and Tate, 2000).

I chose to contact key groups within the community of Wadebridge such as Love Wadebridge, the chair of the chamber of commerce and WREN. From this, I conducted 2 interviews with members of WREN. These were organised when convenient for the participants, as such one interview involved two members and one a single member. Although this could be seen as a limitation due to inconsistency, this format allowed for the views of 3 key members to be expressed. These interviews led to a further interview with a member of the local Foodbank organisation, and attending the town's bimonthly 'Power Breakfast' event. This helped introduce my project into the community, which aided the response rate of my questionnaire research (Cook, 2005).

3.2.1.) The 'Go Along'

In recent human geography research it is argued there has been a rise in 'mobile methodologies' (Waters, 2014; Adey, 2010; Evans and Jones, 2011; Cresswell, 2006) reflecting a broader shift within geography to recognise the constitutive role of mobilities in everyday life (Waters, 2014). Anderson (2006: 254) calls for place to be harnessed in interviewing, arguing talking while walking "offers the potential to bolster and add new layers of understanding to social science research". In my research I drew on these debates and conducted 3 go along interviews with residents of Wadebridge. I recruited these participants via gatekeepers I already knew in the community. These interviews were unstructured, but topics to discuss were introduced based on my research aims. This allowed me to explore the relationship between shopping and a sense of community in practice, something which would not have been facilitated by sedentary techniques (Evans and Jones, 2011). The go along is seen to combine participant observation with interviewing; the interviewer accompanies participants as they go about an everyday

routine (such as shopping) and asks questions along the way (Evans and Jones, 2011). Therefore, the researcher can capture the hidden or unnoticed habitual relations within a community (Kusenbach, 2003). There has been some debate around who decides the route taken during this method (Evans and Jones, 2011). In my study I was guided through the town by the participants shopping habits, although this could take longer and be unpredictable (Jones et al, 2008), I aimed for each go along to last 60-90 minutes as recommended by Kusenbach (2003). This method enabled a more representative example of an activity within the community.

3.3.) Questionnaires

Similarly to studies into communities by Getz (1994) and McGuirk and Dunn (1998), I conducted a questionnaire survey, receiving 48 responses. I designed two questionnaires, one for residents and one for local businesses. I used snowball sampling for the resident questionnaires (Kitchin and Tate, 2000) whereby I handed out 60 questionnaires with stamped envelopes to known individuals in the community who passed them on to others residents of Wadebridge. Although this method is not a random form of sampling, it allowed me to target a larger sample of the population to gain a more representative idea of community. The questionnaires featured open-ended questions which are seen to 'give voice' to the participants (McGuirk and O'Neill, 2010). The disadvantage of this is the time taken to fill out the questionnaire which can lead to a lower response rate and more varied responses making analysis more difficult (McGuirk and O'Neill, 2010). I received 28 completed resident questionnaires.

Due to the size of Wadebridge, businesses questionnaires were able to be handed out to all independent businesses in the centre of the town, due to the response rate 20 are analysed here. Questionnaires were chosen over interviews with business owners due to the research taking place in the summer months when the town is busiest. Therefore, questionnaires were suitable because they were left with owners to fill out whenever they had time, and were then collected on a convenient day/time.

3.4.) Ethnography

The final method I applied to this research was ethnography. This method connects the study of people and place, unlike other techniques which are often less focused on the spatiality of participants (Nayak, 2003). This approach analyses what participants actually do, rather than their account of daily life, for example in questionnaires or interviews, allowing for a deeper analysis (Nayak and Kehilly, 2008). Therefore, drawing on the basis for go along interviews, further ethnography allowed me to explore community 'in practice' (Bryman, 2008). A limitation of this approach was the lack of clear hypothesis (Bryman, 2008), however in this study the aim of the ethnographic research was to provide further analysis into the everyday nature of the community (Nayak and Kehilly, 2008).

In my research, I stayed in Wadebridge for a month over the summer. During this time I attended a mothers' coffee morning, a business networking 'power breakfast' and visited the local Foodbank to gain insight into the different community events and groups. In addition to this I was able to observe the day to day use of the high-street by community members.

3.5.) Positionality and Ethical Considerations

During my research there were a number of ethical issues to be addressed. One of the first problems to be addressed is the complex power relationships between the researcher and the researched. In my research I drew on feminist debates around methodologies (England, 2002; Ekinsmyth, 2002); within this approach geographers highlight the importance of not subordinating respondents and raise the issue of situated knowledge (England, 2002). The idea of situated knowledge highlights the role of context and the researchers own opinions, experiences and feelings in influencing the findings (England, 2002), arguing it is impossible to fully remove the voice of the researcher. However, these debates call for a researcher- researched relationship which is "reciprocal... based on empathy, mutuality and respect" (England, 2002: 209), I aimed to reflect this within my research.

A further ethical consideration is the role of my positionality; having grown up in the town of Wadebridge my personal opinions could have caused bias. However, some feminist geographers have suggested researching groups to which we are an 'outsider' is difficult

and poses issues surrounding who has the right to speak for whom (Ekinsmyth, 2002), in this light my personal background may aid my ability to immerse myself within the community to gain a deeper understanding. Despite this, there was a need for me to remain aware of my own positionality and the influence this may have, once more linking back to the debate around situated knowledge.

A final ethical consideration was made to ensure the anonymity and consent of all participants. For the questionnaires an information sheet was handed out to ensure the participants knew the nature of my project, were aware they could freely chose to end their participation and were offered the opportunity to provide details to receive a research summary (Valentine, 2005). Furthermore, at the beginning of each interview I handed out a consent form and offered the opportunity to choose whether their names or the names of the business they own/work at are changed.

This section has explored and justified the methodology of this study, in the next section I will discuss the results produced by this.

4.1.1.) Questionnaire Responses

The following section discusses responses to the question: ‘How would you describe community in Wadebridge?’

Figure 4 maps the words used to describe the community of Wadebridge in questionnaire responses, with the more frequently used words appearing largest. We can thus see the idea of community in this context promotes feelings of togetherness and a sense of belonging, supporting the idea of community raised by Badcock (2002) and Selznick (1994). In Selznick’s discussion of community, he argues “a flourishing community has high levels of participation” (1994: 364), this was evident in resident and business owner responses which listed a variety of groups and activities which promoted a sense of cohesion. For example, one response stated:

I feel that Wadebridge has a strong sense of community, people generally look out for each other and with events such as ‘The Big Lunch’ which is held every year, it gives families and people on their own a chance to network or come together socially.

Resident

The variety of opportunities to ‘come together’ was celebrated by respondents, who felt this offered a chance for each member of the community to share in this sense of belonging; this was exemplified in the following definitions of community:

Cancer fundraising groups, Supermarket charity donations, Old Cornwall society, WREN, Wadebridge Male Choir, Cricket club, Pubs/Social clubs, Chamber of Commerce...

Resident

A good range of shops, things to do, safe activities for children/teenagers.

Resident

Many groups promoting this sense in Wadebridge- creative hub, WREN, carnival group, scouts, brownies, churches, Big Lunch, carn to cove events, local pub and café owners

Business owner

4.1.2.) Towards a balanced community?

The idea of community consisting of a social mix of members as discussed above relates to the discussion of a 'balanced community' (Cole and Goodchild, 2001). Cole and Goodchild (2001) reviewed housing policies in the UK which aimed to encourage balanced communities defined as a cross-section of social and economic groups living in the same neighbourhood; this was believed to promote a more sustainable community (See also p.11). However, in their review, Cole and Goodchild (2001) argued social homogeneity is more likely to promote feelings of togetherness and sense of community whilst social mix is likely to increase conflict. This argument contests the way residents of Wadebridge described their community, raising the question over whether the definitions of community from questionnaire responses were conceived in a romanticized way (Valentine, 2005; Bell and Newby, 1971; Rose, 1990), veiling the reality of exclusion (Young, 1990). However, the questionnaire responses were collected from a cross-section of social and economic groups including residents and business owners, yet there was a shared notion of Wadebridge's community. Additionally, there was a sense of community spirit and support; although this may lead to exclusion of those considered outside of the community there was a lack of internal exclusion. Therefore, unlike other communities where cross-sectional cohesion is imagined in romanticized terms, in Wadebridge community participation (Selznick, 1994) in events such as the 'Big Lunch' and organizations like WREN have created a dialogue between disparate groups within the community. WREN in particular creates a mutual interest which benefits all members of the town (for example via the retentive nature of the Wren currency and the community fund this supports-section 4.3) which aids this sense of inclusion. For example, one business owner's definition of community (below) focuses on the support mechanisms in place for members of the community in times of need, illustrating the sense of care and compassion for others in different economic situations.

[Organisations like the] Church/Wadebridge Christian centre, Outreach through Foodbank, Children's work in Wadebridge Youth Project

Business owner

4.1.3.) Ethnographic results and the ‘imagined’ community

The idea of a collective community identity (Selnick, 1994; Badcock, 2002; Silk, 1999) draws on the concept of the ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 2006). In Cohen’s (2013) discussion of ‘imagined communities’ he highlights the role of symbols in the construction of a community. Symbols can include “Language or dialect, religion, dress, cuisine, 'landscape' in the broadest sense of the term including buildings, monuments” (Silk, 1999: 10). According to Cohen (2013: 15) “symbols do not so much express meaning as give us the capacity to make meaning”, he argues symbols are interpreted differently by each member of a community while at the same time are held in common, thus allowing for a mutual consciousness of what it is to belong to said community. This idea was supported by the findings of this study, for example the Wren currency which can only be spent within Wadebridge, denotes the town’s willingness to create its own institutions. Visual reminders of this currency appear in shop windows where the Wren logo denotes the currency is accepted in that store.

Furthermore, Cohen (2013) identifies the importance of the symbolic boundary to enriching a sense of community (see p.10). In Wadebridge, local identity seems to be strengthened by a feeling of isolation from larger cities and the rest of the country; this is exemplified in the following excerpt:

Discussed the town as isolated. Nearest city is Truro or Plymouth- over 40 minute drive which discourages people from shopping there frequently. Public transport also keeps people in the town as it is infrequent and unreliable... others mentioned missing job interviews/visiting family members due to poor public transport. Despite this, resident said ‘you don’t need a car as you can get everything you need locally’

Go Along 16/07/14

This section has demonstrated the strong and united sense of community in the town of Wadebridge. In the next section this study will discuss how this idea of community is ‘performed’ to explore the causal relationship between a sense of community and the local high-street.

4.2.) Shopping as a community activity

This section focuses on the second research aim to explore how and why people in Wadebridge choose to shop locally. The preceding section has demonstrated the importance of the high-street within the definition of community in Wadebridge, highlighting the merit in further investigating the role of shopping as a community activity. This research found most residents use the local high-street for smaller shops in between ‘big’ shops. Furthermore, shopping was found to be both a leisure and informative practice.

4.2.1) The ‘Go Along’

The following section discusses the results of my 3 go along interviews to access how shopping is practised in Wadebridge by local residents and why it is performed in this way. In my research I found there was not one key factor which influences how people shop but a multitude of smaller factors which represent the complexity of people’s motivations. Below I will discuss the roles of: parking; sensory experience; the ‘top-up’ shop and gender as some of the factors identified in this research which map the way shopping is conducted.

Go along	Name given to resident	Services used
1	Jane	Coffee shop Supermarket Bank Butcher Fishmonger Grocery Gift Shop
2	Sarah	Post Office Grocery Bakery Supermarket
3	Laura	Clothing Bank Butcher Bakery Newsagents Gift Shop Deli

Figure 5: Table of services used during go along interviews

During each of the go alongs, shopping was conducted in a mix of independent and ‘chain’ stores or supermarkets. For example, one go along started by driving from the residents

home, a 15 minute walk up-hill from the centre, to the Lidl carpark on the edge of town. There are two small supermarkets in the centre of Wadebridge (see Figure 7), parking is free for Lidl customers whereas at the Co-Op an hours parking is refunded in store if you spend over £10 (having recently increased from £5 causing discord among residents). Jane discussed the issue of parking; this was also raised by 12 of the 28 resident questionnaire responses. This demonstrates the role parking plays in influencing shopping patterns; however the results of this seem to mostly affect the choice of smaller supermarket visited rather than independent stores.

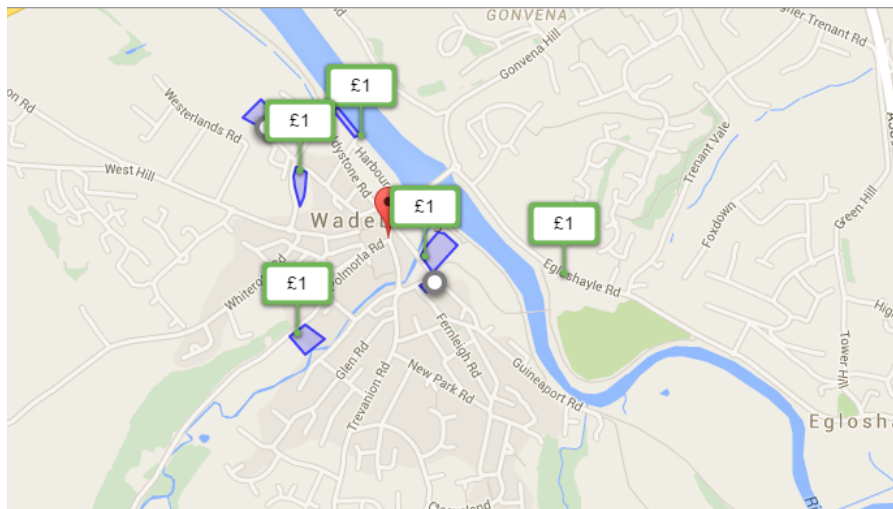


Figure 6: Map of car parks in Wadebridge and website generated price for 1 hours parking (actual price from £0.5-£1) (excluding for customers of Lidl/Co-op). Source: Parkopedia (2015)

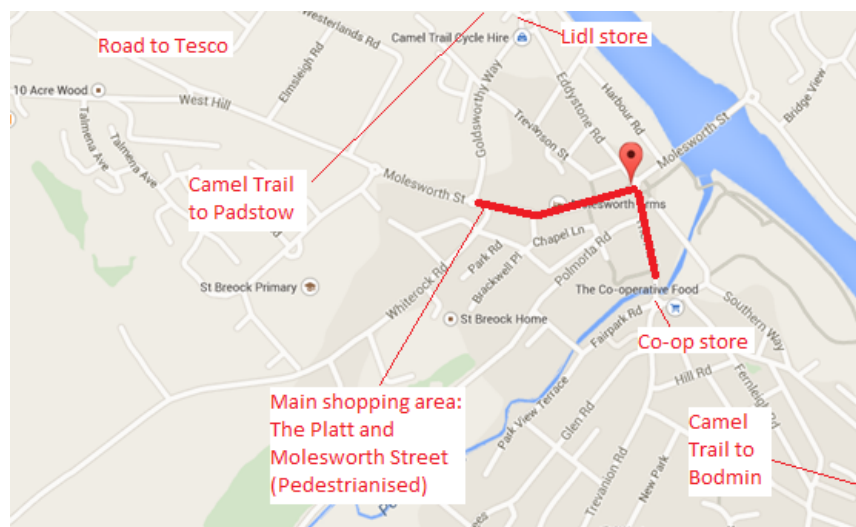


Figure 7: Map showing the main shopping area of Wadebridge. Source: (Google, 2015)

Whilst in Lidl Jane bumped into a friend who worked there and chatted about their families. Despite this community engagement, chain stores such as Lidl are largely absent from discussions about community from residents. This implies a fluid sense of community which praises independent stores over chains, supporting the views raised by Griffiths et al (2008). Similarly, in their research into clone towns, NEF (2005:5) argue there has been a “death of diversity” which subsequently “undermines democracy, attacks our sense of place and belonging and therefore well-being”. In Wadebridge actors such as the Chamber of Commerce and ‘Love Wadebridge’ group have worked to prevent the homogenisation of Wadebridge’s high-street, promoting a sense of resistance to externally owned businesses entering the community. This is evidenced in the absence of chain stores from discussions of community as described above.

The data collected by the go alongs also highlighted the importance of the senses within the shopping experience, reflecting the call from autoethnographers to recognise both the influence of the self (researcher) and of the 5 senses in conducting research (Borer, 2013). An example of this can be found in the following excerpt;

As we walk past the bakery the smell of freshly baked bread mixes with the smell of pasties eaten by customers outside on benches, Jane notes how these are better than pasties bought anywhere else and the sense of local pride is reinforced. We then go to the butcher followed by the fishmonger and the smells are as distinctive as the products on offer.

Go Along 30/06/14

This example demonstrates the multi-sensory way in which shopping is experienced, the familiar smells and sights of the Wadebridge high-street provide a more stimulating shopping experience than the uniformity of supermarket shelves.

The common theme across the go alongs was how shopping was ‘topped up’ by supermarkets and then individual items sought elsewhere. This practice allows residents to select which items they wish to purchase from a specialist shop while buying the bulk of their shopping in either Co-Op, Lidl or in Tesco (5 minute drive uphill from centre). This leads to Rayner’s (2014) claim that shopping locally in independent shops is romantic and

inaccessible due to time and budget constraints. However, the shopping patterns practiced by these residents illustrate how these constraints are managed and prioritised. For example, Sarah was able to purchase fruit and vegetables from the green grocer (next door to Co-Op) where offers on in-season products were displayed outside the store, before visiting the Co-Op to purchase the items that were unavailable or more expensive.

Rayner's (2014) article also raises the issue of the gendered nature of shopping. Similarly, Kwan (2000) problematizes the division of domestic tasks between men and women, stating women are still disproportionately responsible for grocery shopping despite their employment status and having similar amounts of free time as their partners. In my research, each of the go alongs were conducted with women and in my ethnographic notes I depicted seeing a greater presence of women using the high-street. Thus, there appears to be a gendered nature to the shopping practices within the community, this is echoed by Cockburn-Wooten et al (2008: 407) who argue

“rather than providing an empowering space for leisure, grocery shopping actually reproduced and positioned these women within traditional discourses of housewife and mother.”

Therefore, as well as highlighting how shopping is practiced in the community of Wadebridge this raises the importance of considering who does this shopping and why.

This section has discussed how shopping practices are shaped by the following factors: parking; sensory experience; the ‘top-up’ shop and gender. The next section will focus on why people choose to shop locally in Wadebridge.

4.2.2.) Shopping as a leisure activity

High-streets have been regarded as communal hubs of activity within communities (Griffiths et al, 2008; Portas, 2011). In the case of Wadebridge there is evidence of this, for example during the go alongs I conducted there were numerous instances of “neighbours bump[ing] into each other” (Griffiths et al, 2008), for example;

Passed a bike hire shop and the owner waved and shouted hello from the yard; she used to childmind his children. We then went to the butchers... one of the staff used to deliver meat to her mother-in-law by bicycle as she became less mobile.

We walk past the cashpoint and the user is a neighbour so they stop and chat about family and friends, and an upcoming wedding.

Go Along 30/06/14

Met with a friend for coffee, served by a waitress who is their next door neighbour: chat about how their house is for sale.

Go Along 16/07/14

The nature of these encounters contest the issue raised by authors about the gendered nature of grocery shopping (Kwan, 2000; Cockburn-Wooten et al, 2008). Cockburn-Wooten et al. (2008) focus on grocery shopping in supermarkets, in contrast, participants of my go alongs used a combination of smaller supermarkets and independent shops to buy groceries as well as other commodities (such as gifts). This suggests a more social form of shopping which is practiced as a leisure activity whilst fulfilling the needs of the grocery shop. Furthermore, this provides opportunities for face-face interaction which is regarded by some authors as essential to facilitating a sense of community (Cater and Jones, 1989; Badcock, 2002; Talen, 1999). In my findings, there was some consensus around performing a 'big shop' in a large supermarket then 'topping this up' with this more sociable shopping practice.

Another way shopping was used by residents was as an informative practice. Whilst shopping, posters in shop windows and conversations with vendors inform residents of upcoming events; this activity creates a space for a community dialogue. Events such as the Big Lunch and Small Business Saturday are supported by local businesses and actors like the Chamber of Commerce and help to create a perimeter within which the community can be expressed and cohesion promoted, linking back to the discussion of community participation (Selznick, 1994).

This section has assessed the role of shopping in creating a sense of community by exploring how this is practiced and the reasons for this. The results highlight the role of shopping as way of ‘performing’ membership to the community, as well as an exercise for leisure and information.

4.3.) The WREN

In this section, I will discuss the WREN organisation; this group play a central role in connecting the high-street with the community, particularly through the Wren currency scheme. Therefore it is important to assess how this influences the sense of community in Wadebridge and how WREN shapes the shopping practices of residents. The existence of WREN demonstrates the commitment of members of the community to join together to create the group.

4.3.1.) Who, What, Why?

WREN is a not-for-profit cooperative founded by residents of Wadebridge and run by elected volunteers. WREN has over 1100 members (WREN, 2014) and over 50 local businesses accept the Wren currency. The motivation to set up the group

“came off the back of a campaign around supermarkets and then the ‘Love Wadebridge’ movement... they wanted to do something that was positive [and]community based”

Daniel, Interview 07/14

In Wadebridge opposition to supermarkets (see p.13) was used positively as a springboard into a new project to benefit the community.

The 6 main aims of WREN are illustrated in Figure 8, they centre on the themes of community engagement, transition to a low-carbon economy and local ownership of energy resources. For example,

“...if somehow we could generate our own energy, locally, and keep the benefits within the community there would be a gain, potentially for everybody. And so you are converting an individual cost into a community asset”

Tom³, Interview 07/14

³ All interviewees names have been changed

The movement towards a greener community reflects wider policy discourses around carbon emissions reduction at varying geographical scales (for example the ‘Green Cornwall’ initiative at the regional level (Cornwall Council, 2015)).

Aim	Explanation
Generation	For 30% of Wadebridge’s energy needs to be produced by renewable sources by 2015.
Reduction	To reduce energy consumption by increasing efficiency and changing behaviours.
Retention	To retain the economic value of Wadebridge energy economy locally via local ownership and community fund projects
Engagement	To engage the whole population with energy as an everyday activity
Replication	To create a model which can be replicated elsewhere
Economic Development	Create a ‘green brand’ which will create new opportunities for existing and new businesses

Figure 8: Key objectives of WREN (Adapted from: WREN, 2012:7)

In other towns there have been similar movements (see Longhurst, 2012; Dyrendom Graugaard, 2012; North and Longhurst, 2013). However, in my research it was suggested other initiatives, for example Totnes,

“are... non-specific, so we [WREN] really wanted to focus on one thing; energy. Naturally that leads on to other things and that’s health and wellbeing... [and] whilst it does go out to a broader spectrum of issues, we could focus on one specific thing.”

Daniel, Interview 07/14

Therefore, WREN’s approach has been to focus on the theme of energy to engage local people and shape the local community.

Despite WREN’s vision for the low-carbon future of Wadebridge, North and Longhurst (2013: 1424) problematize the “capacities of subaltern groups to remake growth-based

capitalist market economies”, arguing community-based groups are excluded from the forces of the private-sector market of energy production, instead they warn these movements are “radical and utopian” (North and Longhurst, 2013: 1424). This view is challenged by the progress made by WREN: over 150 households and businesses have undertaken projects to reduce their carbon footprint (WREN, 2014). Furthermore, North and Longhurst (2013) suggest projects need to be large-scale to facilitate large-scale impacts, however as stated in Figure 8, WREN’s key objectives remain focused at the local level to create a model which can be replicated in other communities.

In the following sections I will discuss the extent to which WREN has played a role in the community and local high-street, with reference to the first and second research aim.

4.3.2.) WREN in the community

Initiatives in other parts of the country have been subject to the criticism that they prioritise an elite group of community members and lack diversity (Aiken, 2012). Contrastingly, WREN promote a sense of inclusion in their objectives, exemplified below:

“We are seen to be a part of the community rather than apart from the community”

“The local community is critical, the high-street and business part of the community is critical”

Tom, Interview 07/14

This attitude is echoed in WREN’s 2012 Business Plan where they state “WREN seeks to engage the entire population, rather than those already concerned with these issues” (WREN, 2012: 5). Furthermore, the role of community opinion was highlighted in my research; when discussing a proposal for the construction of an innovation hub for renewable technology, the community consultation stages of planning were considered essential.

“...if a majority of the people say that’s not what we want... then that’s it. [We] have to find other ways of doing it...And we will do that because the community is the key on this...The community has to want to do it.”

Andrew, Interview 07/14

The extent to which community engagement with WREN has been achieved can be examined; membership equates to around 1/8 of the population of Wadebridge (over 1100 members). The Community Fund operated by WREN also provides a way for community groups to become involved, it is democratically controlled via WREN members and is available to groups that “contribute to the social, cultural, sporting and environmental life for the town” (WREN, 2012: 21). The work of WREN within the community acts as a boundary-marking symbol (Cohen, 2013), whereby it provides a space within which community identity can be formed and expressed. Finally, residents can also engage with WREN in their energy shop on the high-street, this physical presence in the town helps provide a contact point between residents, businesses and members of WREN.

“we thought it was absolutely key that we had a shop presence... it’s not a shop in the normal sense...we wanted people just to feel comfortable, that there was a physical presence in the town so...it’s not an abstract conversation that people are having...people can physically come in and talk to us”

Andrew, Interview 07/14

This relates to the discussion of WREN on the local high-street which will be further explored in the following section.

4.3.3.) Wren on the high-street

‘Spend money in Wadebridge, keep the High-Street strong, and help build the Community Fund!’ (WREN, 2014)

This section will primarily discuss the Wren currency project in order to assess the role of WREN on the local high-street; this also aims to respond to my second research aim. This

section also demonstrates the way the Wren connects the high-street with the sense of community in Wadebridge.

The Wren currency project was initiated in 2012, there are currently two denominations: Wr5 and Wr25. Initially the project was designed to be used as an incentive for low-carbon schemes affiliated with WREN; however notes can be purchased from the energy store to be used in over 50 businesses in Wadebridge.

“rather than us giving ordinary cash back incentives to people, which they could...spend on Amazon.... Instead they have to spend it in the town and use this. And then, those shops and businesses can then use it themselves if they want to. So if it was used in a restaurant and they needed some hardware they could go to [the local hardware shop], and continue to use the Wrens.”

Andrew, Interview 07/14

The response from local businesses to the Wren project has been mixed; the main issues raised were the cost to business to ‘buy-in’⁴ to the Wren project and the lack of circulation, this is detailed in Figure 9.

⁴ businesses are charged a 10% exchange rate, for example Wr25 would be exchanged for £22.50, money from which helps fund the community fund

Business Type	<i>‘Are there any local initiatives or organisations that provide support for your business, if so in what way?’</i>
Food; Finance/Legal; Fashion; Hair/Beauty; Gifts; Leisure; Café/Restaurant; Other	
Other	Unsure
Other	Nothing with impact on my business
Deli	Local currency ie. WRENS I don’t agree with no small businesses can afford to take £2.50 off of a £25 bill
Legal	Member of Chamber of Commerce
Other	Local currency, chamber of commerce
Hardware	Chamber of commerce
Gift Shop	Chamber of commerce
Hair/Beauty	There is a local Chamber of commerce and currency but I am not sure how the currency has worked out- I have not participated in this
Gifts	We have a local currency which promotes local spending
Clothes	Our local Chamber of Commerce offers the best support
Gifts	There is a Chamber of Commerce but they offer limited support for businesses and focus more on ‘event’ planning
Greengrocer	-Chamber of commerce help promote our town - There is a currency called the WREN which can be used in selected shops - On the whole I feel relations are strained between local council members and residents (could be better)
Opticians	Chamber of Commerce
Hardware	British Hardware Federation
Café	We have a local currency called the Wadebridge WRENS- but not one has been spent or seen!
Other	Chamber of commerce, local currency, local council has kept chain stores out

Figure 9: Table showing business questionnaire responses

Despite this, the following go along excerpt demonstrates the visual presence of the Wren currency and the potential for this project to grow as members of the community become more aware of it; this may be aided by the recent creation of the Wr5 denomination.

...we pass several stores where the Wren logo denotes the local currency is accepted here. This visual symbol is another marker of local sense of place. I ask Sarah whether she is aware of the Wren currency and what she thinks... “I think more people are beginning to

become aware of the [Wren]; The principle of encouraging people to spend locally is important, we're lucky to have a group fighting for this".

Go Along 03/07/14

These findings suggest the Wren project holds the potential to benefit the community. Similarly, the existence of the currency is an important marker of the commitment to future development of Wadebridge: despite the mixed response from businesses, most of those surveyed accept Wrens, further demonstrating this shared commitment.

4.4.) Tourism

This section will discuss the role of tourism in shaping the community and local high-street in order to explore the third research aim.

4.4.1.) Benefits of tourism

Figure 10 features questionnaire responses from business owners discussing the importance of tourism to their business. The majority of responses state tourism plays a vital role; however infer a seasonal nature to this. The businesses which found tourism less important tended to be services such as opticians and legal which are less likely to attract holiday makers. Throughout these responses tourist are continued to be presented as outside of the community (see section 4.1), linking to the discussion of identity below.

The responses also suggest tourists tend to pass through the town as *'Wadebridge is almost a link to a lot of North Cornwall'*; access to the main A30 road in Bodmin from the coast is via Wadebridge. However, this does not guarantee visitors as people can also chose to *'bypass'* the town centre. Wadebridge is also presented as a transitory town via bicycle and foot due to the Camel Trail (Sustrans, 2014). The Camel Trail was frequently mentioned in resident questionnaire responses, for example:

Camel Trail in particular brings in many people who, having cycled through the town often stop or come back for a second look. It is a useful base for campers to stock up on supplies.

Resident

Business Type Food; Finance/Legal; Fashion; Hair/Beauty; Gifts; Leisure; Café/Restaurant; Other	<i>‘Due to the location of Wadebridge within the holiday destination of North Cornwall, how does tourism influence your business?’</i>
Other- Photography Shop	Tourism is important to us especially in the summer and with the beaches so close we find that we are much busier during the summer months.
Other- Retail and Therapy Centre	Although we do not rely on holiday trade, they are a nice addition
Other- Deli	Some days very quiet as the bypass each end of town, as people give the town as miss
Legal	Not greatly
Hardware	Very busy in July and August with campers and cyclists
Gifts	A great deal without it I doubt we could survive
Other- Craft Co-operative Shop	Big influence- this business only running since March- business has increased now its summer
Café	Winter- more locals, summer- holiday makers, although holidaymakers are around most of the year
Hair/Beauty	We do get busier in summer but our clients are still mostly local with a few holiday home owners using our facilities. The holiday makers now have more choice as many hotels offer spa treatments so this has impacted on my business rather than shopping trends
Fashion- Outdoor wear	By a good deal
Gifts	It does help bring in more people but I do my buying based mainly on what sells all year round not just in the holidays so locals influence my buying rather than tourist items
Food- Greengrocer	Very much so as Wadebridge is almost a link to a lot of North Cornwall. Tourism is a huge influence. It certainly helps having the Camel Trail going through town.
Other- Opticians	It doesn't
Other- Hardware/cookshop	No
Food- Café and Deli	Greatly. If it's very hot it is usually quiet as people are at the beach. A cooler or rainy day- we are busy. It would be hard to survive without the tourism.

Figure 10: Table of Questionnaire Responses from Local Business Owners

The geographical location of Wadebridge is therefore attractive to visitors and hence perceived positively by residents and business owners who acknowledge the economic benefit of tourism. Furthermore, this discussion demonstrates the need for tourism to support the local high-street.

4.4.2.) Challenges of seasonal tourism

As suggested by the wider literature (Getz, 1994; King et al, 1993; Schluter, and Turgut, 1988), communities, where tourism plays a large part in the industry of a region with little

other opportunities, are generally positive about the benefits offered by tourism. Despite this, some negative attitudes were raised in this research.

One of the key challenges raised during busy tourist periods was congestion, an example of this can found in the following go along excerpt:

Tourism is highlighted as a determining factor in choosing the time to go shopping: would go early or later in the day or early on Saturday- most common change over day for holiday accommodation. Tourism is discussed more negatively in reference to nearby Padstow where tourism is blamed for killing the town centre.

Go Along 30/06/14

Therefore, the way in which this resident uses the town centre is negotiated by avoiding using it at the same time as tourists, once more reinforcing the idea of tourists being seen as outside of the community (Getz, 1994). The contrast made by this participant between Wadebridge and Padstow highlights a feeling shared by other members of the community; Padstow is seen to have been more negatively impacted by second home ownership, exemplified below:

“Padstow has sold it's souls to tourism in order to survive... Padstow is on the coast and [is] a popular fishing village... second home owners have cashed in on this by buying property in the town both for themselves and as a lucrative second income”

“...Wadebridge, however, doesn't have many second homes because of its position as a crossing rather than a destination”

Go Along 03/07/14

This was also echoed by business owners attending the bimonthly ‘Power Breakfast’ networking event:

Tourists play a significant role in boosting the local economy without eroding the presence of local people. There hasn't been the same issue with second home ownership as in other towns locally.

‘Power Breakfast’ 01/07/14

4.4.3.) Tourists as the collective ‘other’

To further explore the third research aim of this study, this section explores the link between tourism and community.

The results of the ethnographic research found tourism played a key role in helping to shape the community. In particular, tourism helps construct an ‘imagined’ identity, further linking to earlier discussion of the ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 2006). An example of this is the use of the word ‘emmet’ to denote a tourist: the Cornish word for ‘ants’, it refers to the way holiday makers are seen to ‘swarm’ on the area in summer (Heald, 2002). The use of this provides a form of non-derogatory self-othering aiding a shared sense of community; this can be seen to support Rose’s (1990) view of community promoting exclusion. The concept of self/other binary was introduced by Said (1978) and his theory of Orientalism which argued the world is divided into a dichotomy of East versus the West. The process of othering in Wadebridge is contradictory; tourists are seen as outside of the community as ‘emmetts’, however the discussion below highlights how tourists are welcomed in to the community. The temporary exclusion of tourists from the community is linked to issues of traffic congestion, busy shopping streets (determining when locals go shopping) and the impact of second homes on house prices (mostly in other towns).

In contrast to this, one business owner drew attention to the welcoming attitude of Wadebridge, and Cornwall more widely, to visitors, stating:

We are customer service focused as a county, with a culture of wanting to welcome and please the customer to encourage return custom. We want to do things differently here.

‘Power Breakfast’ 01/07/14

This welcoming attitude is seen as part of the town’s identity as a friendly place where people greet one another and share in a feeling of togetherness (see section 4.1.). There is also a desire to share the sense of togetherness with visitors:

When walking down the street, people stop to say hello- they don’t recognise me so can’t know whether I’m a tourist or not. Customers in front of me in a queue are treated with the same friendly manner whether they are next door neighbours discussing an upcoming wedding or holiday makers down for 10 days talking about the weather.

This suggests, although there is a clear dichotomy between local and tourist, “the overall positive attitude towards tourism and growth reflects the belief that the industry’s benefits outweigh the costs to residents” (Getz, 1994: 257). Furthermore, the way locals and residents are seen to be treated equally in this way contests Urry and Larsen’s (2011:78) influential notion of “performative labour” conducted under the tourist gaze. In the case of Wadebridge, the local culture is not performed; rather the community identity is embodied as part of everyday life.

Instead of being seen as a challenge to the community and local high-street, tourism has been used in Wadebridge as a way of helping to support and preserve the locality for residents, business owners and tourists alike.

5) Conclusions

My research aim was to explore the causal relationship between shopping locally and a sense of community. This research has demonstrated the sense of community in Wadebridge is both shaped by and shapes shopping practices. The local high-street in Wadebridge acts as a ‘communal hub’, supporting the view raised by Griffiths et al. (2008), whereby members of the community use the high-street as a leisure space and a way of keeping in touch with the community. There was a sense of pride about the local high-street and a desire to protect it from negative external forces, in this case preserving the presence of independent retailers. The idea of pride and resilience is embodied by WREN which aims to engage the community in working towards a greener economy where the benefits are retained locally. In the following section I will summarise the key findings for each research aim before highlighting areas for future research.

5.1) Research Summary

Aim 1: What does community mean in Wadebridge?

The notion of community plays a central role in the creation of a shared local identity which is supported by a number of factors, notably: community participation, the social mix of the community and the existence of community symbols.

According to Selznick (1994), high levels of community participation are considered key to levels of cohesion. The questionnaires and ethnographic results of this study support this claim. The variety of community groups and events in Wadebridge were celebrated as a way of encouraging a diverse range of community members to come together and share in a sense of belonging. Furthermore, these findings contest the argument put forward by Cole and Goodchild (2001) who believe social mix can lead to conflict. In Wadebridge there was a united sense of community shared by a cross-sectional socioeconomic group, and hence a lack of internal exclusion which appeared to further strengthen the community.

Another important factor in shaping a sense of community in Wadebridge was the role of symbols, in particular the community group WREN and the currency scheme. The role of symbols in creating a shared identity has been discussed by Cohen (2013) who argues this facilitates a tangible sense of an otherwise imagined community. Similarly, the strong sense of community in Wadebridge is aided by the existence of WREN who create a

dialogue of mutual interest between disparate members of the community. Additionally, the Wren currency also acts as a marker of the town's commitment to the future of the community.

Therefore, the community of Wadebridge has a strong sense of a place-specific identity which seeks to strengthen the cohesion between all its members.

Aim 2: How and why do people shop locally?

The way in which residents of Wadebridge 'perform' the community ritual of shopping is determined by a number of factors, in this research the roles of parking facilities, the desire to maintain independent rather than chain stores (which is also promoted by WREN and the Wren currency) and sensory experience are all highlighted as factors which influence and map the way shopping is performed. Furthermore, this research found a common practice of residents doing a 'big' shop at a larger supermarket and then topping this up with more local 'small' shops throughout the week.

In Wadebridge people appear to choose to shop locally for leisure and to keep informed. As stated in previous sections, the high-street acts as a space for members of the community to 'bump into' other people they know. Shopping is a way of finding out what is going on in the community both by visual advertising such as posters in shop windows but also through word of mouth. Therefore, shopping helps the community feel connected and illustrates the importance of the local high-street in promoting and maintaining a local sense of community.

Aim 3: What role does tourism play in shaping the community and local high-street?

The final aim of this study sought to recognise the importance of tourism within the community of Wadebridge due to the geographical location of the town in the tourist region of Cornwall. The results of this research demonstrate how tourism has been used in Wadebridge to help sustain the town for the benefit of residents and business owners as well as tourists.

Tourism also aids the sense of a local identity; this is achieved by a non-derogatory form of self-othering. This is complicated by the contradictory way in which tourists are received in the town. Tourists are welcomed as local residents when they are perceived positively such as when they are customers interacting with the people serving them. Alternatively,

tourists are seen negatively, often when in large numbers, when they are causing disruption to the flow of the town, for example when causing traffic congestion.

Despite this fluid notion of inclusion/exclusion, generally tourism is seen as a benefit to the town, proving employment and spending which further boosts the economy of the town and helps to preserve both the community and local high-street.

5.2) Limitations

The main limitation to this study was my positionality as a former resident of Wadebridge; this could have led to instances of bias in my research. However, as a former resident I was able to use this connection with the town to identify respondents without being considered outside the community. A further limitation was the seasonality of my research; conducted during the summer the role of tourism is likely to be seen differently to winter when there is a lower physical presence of tourists. A longer study period would have provided a more general view of the community; however this was unsuitable given the time and word limit constraints of this dissertation.

5.3) Future Research

This study has provided a case study example of the relationship between a sense of community and the local high-street; however this example is place specific and thus limited in its application to other areas. Therefore, future study would benefit from exploring this causal relationship on a broader scale. In particular, study into communities with similar organisations to WREN and the Wren currency scheme would provide an opportunity to explore whether there are similarities to this case elsewhere.

Word Count- 10,461

6) Appendix

6.1.) Example Interview Transcript

Interview transcript from interview with member of WREN, July 2014.

Jen: So, how would you describe community in Wadebridge?

Tom: um. Traditionally within the WREN context it has been geographically defined, so Wadebridge, Egloshayle, St Breock are the geographical limitations. But also with WREN it is a community as defined by common interests, in particular the need to look very carefully about how Wadebridge generates its energy, how it pays for it, where the benefits go, and those sort of issues. So. I think, for me, geographically defined and by interest would be two obvious ways in which you could define the notion of community.

Jen: Yeah. So, um, what made you choose Wadebridge in particular to set up the renewable energy network?

Tom: Erm (laughs), it happens to be where I live. The, um, I became aware of what WREN was trying to do and I thought it was a worthy aim. And at the time it was formed we were very small and, um, there was a need to try and establish some kind of structure, and I happened to have fairly recently retired but my background was in education so it was felt there might be a role for me initially liaising with colleges and universities and encouraging students that might be interested in research for us. So, it was sort of happenstance really, it was perhaps something that I felt that was important and I could make a contribution to. Um, and I think Wadebridge is quite tightly defined so it is quite a neat area to look at.

Jen: Yes. What would you say the key objectives of WREN were?

Tom: To use the strap line really, to try and make what is traditionally an individual cost into a community asset. So, traditionally people have paid their gas and electricity to Scottish Power or EON or whatever, and there has been a cost to them and they have to budget that and for some that is a real struggle, but if somehow we could generate our own energy, locally, and keep the benefits within the community there would be a gain, potentially for everybody. And so you are converting an individual cost into a community asset and it is that transition which is quite exciting, but fraught with difficulties.

Jen: Mmm. So how have you rallied the support of local businesses and residents?

Tom: I think with the launch of the WREN currency, the support of businesses has been critical, because if they decided not to accept the WREN then we would be torpedoed below the water level. But generally speaking there has been a lot of support from local businesses because they can see that what the potential benefit is that it keeps expenditure within the locality. So, potentially that benefits all the local businesses and keeps the money in the town. And I think that the er, recent launch of the 5 WREN note as opposed to

previous sole denomination of 25 WREN that'll make it much more acceptable because it'll be used for lower purchases, lower value purchases, so the businesses support has been critical and we have tried to engage with the chamber of commerce, the town council, because it should be, you know, a collaboration, we should have similar aims to try to do what's best for the town. So we are not competing, we are trying to collaborate and support one another for the support of the town. So the business angle is very important and some student research that we've had done is looking at ways in which we can better engage with businesses and what benefits we could, if you like, sell to businesses.

Jen: Yeah.

Tom: And, er, that's been something we've been working on for two or three years.

Jen: Do you have, do you also have, an aim for local businesses from an energy point of view?

Tom: We would wish as we would with everybody to make businesses more aware of the costs they incur through energy, and to encourage them, for example to move to LED lighting and to switch lights off in the evening and not leave them on, or to look at ways they can improve insulation in their shop or premises, those sorts of basic things, and er, obviously businesses could benefit from switching tariff and switching provider if they wanted to because it is a cost for them. And if we can do something to save them money hopefully that improves their bottom line.

Jen: Do you think, erm, to Wadebridge high street being made up of mostly independent retailers? Do you think that has been an advantage to you?

Tom: I think it has. I think it is one of the characteristics of Wadebridge, that distinguishes it from other towns and when visitors come to Wadebridge, one of the things that they often talk about is that they like the variety of small independent shops, rather than the big multinational chains. And that's something that I think we need to preserve. So we have got for example, a lot of coffee shops, but we don't have a Starbucks or a Costa, so, we have an independent green grocers and butchers, I think those are very important for maintaining the fabric of the community.

Jen: Why would you say that WREN is succeeding when government initiatives such as Big Society or the Portas Review appear to be attracting mostly negative criticisms?

Tom: Um, well I hope we are succeeding, I mean we need to avoid complacency, I think credibility is critical, I think people trust WREN rather more than they do a political party, um, I think our agenda is known, we are not trying to play games, erm, we have the benefit of all right at the heart of what we do. Whereas, I think people view politicians and central government initiatives perhaps with a degree of scepticism, and that one size doesn't necessarily fit all. But, because we've got good links with many local businesses for example we are seen to be a part of the community rather than apart from the community and I think if we weren't trusted as an organisation we'd fail and that's always a risk.

Jen: To talk a little more about WREN and the currency, how and why did you decide to initiate this project?

Tom: The WREN particularly?

Jen: Yes.

Tom: Um. It had been tried in various other communities; Bristol, Brixton, Taunton and Torbay so we knew the idea could work. We thought that it would raise the profile of WREN in the community. We thought that it would (0.2) demonstrate to local businesses that we wanted the money that people spend to stay within the town. And by using a WREN local currency that was one way in which we could try to move that forward and demonstrate that, you know we meant what we said. And, because there is a cost to a business for saying they will accept WRENs, um, it sort of enabled them to buy in a little bit to what we are trying to do and of course it meant that WREN anchored then secure funding for community projects that benefit the town. Because if a business comes in with a 25 WREN note having accepted that from somebody, then they only get reimbursed £22.50, so 10% is kept by WREN and put into the community fund, so you know the businesses are making an investment and WREN is making an investment in the community, so each feeds on the other really. So I think that the idea of introducing a currency was a logical extension of what WREN was about in terms of being central to the community.

Jen: Have you encountered any major obstacles within the WREN project?

Tom: I think, personally, in terms of the WREN currency I [presume?

Jen: [Yeah.

Tom: Personally, no. Not all businesses have accepted it, but 50+ have within the town which is a pretty good percentage. I think possibly at the outset we could have done more to explain how it all worked and to make it as seamless and as straightforward as possible for a business to accept it, I think there was perhaps initial sort of perhaps overly bureaucratic procedure but that's been ironed out. Generally speaking I haven't met resistance; there's been quite sensible questions, but not resistance.

Jen: How do business publicise that they will accept the WREN [currency?

Tom: [Through obviously the little logo you see on the shop windows and doors of businesses. Um, that's the principle public demonstration that WRENs are accepted here which is very important. Plus on the website the list of businesses which accept WRENs are stated so that's if you like a form of indirect free advertising for the business which shows that perhaps they have invested a little bit in the community. So I guess the little logo is the most obvious.

Jen: Do you know how many people have used them, or how popular with local residents they have become?

Tom: That's a very good question Jenifer, I'm embarrassed to say I do not know the answer; it tends to be that the finance, the treasurer that deals with that. I know that when I'm in the shop sometimes people come in and either buy WRENs or want them redeemed etc. I should know the answer but I'm ashamed I do not.

Jen: So, if somebody was given say a 25 WREN and they wanted to spend it, would they have to spend the whole 25 in one transaction, um or how do you cope with change?

Tom: Yeah. Um. That's another very good question; can I remember all the ins and outs? I think, I think there is the possibility for people to be given change, so if they buy something say for 18 quid and they've only got a 25 WREN note then actually having said I'm sure I'm not sure whether it is possible

Jen: OK

Tom: You're finding out everything I don't know, it's embarrassing

Jen: That's OK. I think we have touched on this before, but to reiterate how you think that having a local currency in particular can aid the local community?

Tom: Primarily because it encourages people to spend locally, that's the key. Because they can't use a WREN outside of Wadebridge so it is focussed very much on maintaining and supporting the local economy. That's the key.

Jen: Do you think, you hope, this is something quite unique to Wadebridge or would you hope that this could be used as inspiration for other towns?

Tom: I think so. I think it could be rolled out to other communities. It could be rolled out to Padstow for example, its an obvious one, just thinking fairly locally, but yes I think the principle could work in anywhere if there was that sort of commitment, if it was driven by people that had that vision and ambition to do it. I don't see why not, I think it could be replicated.

Jen: So, I think one of the trends which has come up in the academic debate around high streets and the notion of community is the erosional effect supermarkets and out of town shopping centres have had. Do you think there is evidence of this in Wadebridge?

Tom: I think that the Sainsbury's initiative created a great deal of um discussion within the town. I think it tended to polarise opinion. Some people thought it would be good because it would be competition for example Tesco, the Co-op, and therefore that's to be encouraged, and other people though no it's just gonna suck business out from the town and people will go either to Sainsbury's or Tesco and won't spend money in the town. So it seemed to polarise opinion, there was great division and a lot of heat was generated. And of course the decision wasn't taken by the town, the decision was taken by Cornwall council, er, and as it turns out Sainsbury's for whatever reason have said they are going to mothball the site. Whether they will then sell the site to somebody else with planning permission and make a profit or whether they will just bide their time and say OK next year we will build or I don't know. But I think it was a very contentious issue and I think

the great fear was that it would mean that Wadebridge became less like Wadebridge and more like any other town that have got out of town supermarkets and the life in the town is just taken out. I think it has been; it's an issue that's raised a lot of controversy.

Jen: Yeah. I guess with initiatives such as the WREN, the currency, and things like that though, are things that can help Wadebridge become more resilient to those kind of forces.

Tom: And equally under the section 106 agreement with Sainsbury's, that they agreed to pay a sum of money for various community initiatives, some of which would have been administered by WREN, for the benefit of the community. So potentially there was a financial gain for WREN, now, the key question is whether that money will still be paid or not or if it has, who has it at the moment, because it's not us, so there is a number of unanswered questions.

Jen: What does WREN hope for the future of the town, and how important is the local community and the high street in this vision?

Tom: Critical. The local community is critical, the high street and business part of the community is critical. I think what WREN will hope is that we will be able to generate meaningful amounts of renewable energy and we would then be able to have a local tariff from which everybody could benefit and if we could invest in storage technology when generation exceeded demand that excess could be stored and then released back in when there was demand at a preferential price and I mean that's a bit of a no brainer really everybody could gain from it and it would be renewable based and it would mean that Wadebridge could have its own tariff and we would be free from the shackles of the big 6. So, that is if you like the dream and really it's technology driven, it's finance driven, and we have some control but not ultimate control of either of those things, sadly. But if we could increase the generation capacity within Wadebridge and the surroundings, though it would be a great thing then everybody would see the benefits but of course in years gone by as you know most towns had their own source of power, they had their own gas stations, their own electricity generator, it's just going back to the future, it's not that wacky an initiative really. But of course the big 6 are not too keen on it as it reduces their powerbase, but that's another story. So, the support of the community is critical, if we don't have that then we're sunk.

Jen: Do you think that has grown over time?

Tom: I would like to think so, the membership would seem to suggest that it has, that we are attracting new members and I think the profile of WREN is perhaps being raised, we are often talked about, I think in many contexts we punch above our weight. We have some people who drive the vision who are very very capable and politically astute which helps. And idiots like me, who support behind..

Jen: Yep.

Tom: So the community angle is absolutely critical and the business as part of the community is central.

Jen: I think that more generally though that national attitudes towards renewable energy are becoming more positive

Tom: It's nice to think so but of course today the big news item is the new fracking licences and how that is going to pan out and what the future holds I don't know. So I do think what we have achieved in a relatively short amount of time has been pretty impressive and I think that other towns could do what we have done. And we could sort of revolutionize the whole energy market in a way, it is about moving from an individual cost to a community asset.

Any other questions?

Jen: No that are the main ones. I think we got a lot of background of WREN and more detail of how it operates from the interview with your colleagues so it was good to add a little more about some of the local currency

Jen: Do you think that in the future there would be potential for there to be a different denomination or do you think that you would stick to 25 and 5.

Tom: I think we would suck it and see really. See what happens. In principle there is nothing to stop us having a 1 WREN if that's what we wanted, obviously there is a cost implication for producing as thus far it is just paper currency rather than coins but if the principle holds good then theoretically any denomination could be offered.

6.2.) Example Resident Questionnaire and information sheet

QUESTIONNAIRE RESEARCH

Newcastle University

Email: j.flynn@ncl.ac.uk

STUDENT: Jenifer Flynn

MENTOR: Dr. Helen Jarvis

RESEARCH TITLE: 'To what extent does shopping locally increase a sense of community?'

Project Information

This study will explore the meaning of community to different stakeholders in the town of Wadebridge, Cornwall. Following the most recent recession in the UK, many local high streets have suffered shops closing down and the rise of 'clone towns' or an increased presence of charity shops and discount stores. This study will investigate how Wadebridge has become resilient to those forces and the extent to which having a thriving high street is important to the community atmosphere of the town. This will be achieved by questioning local residents and local business owners.

Your Participation

Your participation in this study will help to create a case study of Wadebridge, using the thoughts and feelings of local residents and business owners. Therefore, your participation is highly appreciated and valued, however is optional and you may freely decide to end your participation at any stage. To ensure anonymity, your names will be changed during the writing up process. There will also be an opportunity for you to read the research summary, please provide contact information below if you wish to receive a copy of this

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESEARCH- Jenifer Flynn, Newcastle University

This should take 15-30 minutes to complete. Please continue responses overleaf if you run out of room.

Thank you for your participation

1. Are you male / female / other

2. Please indicate your age: Under 16 17-25 26-45 46-65 Over 65

COMMUNITY

3. What does community mean to you?

4. How would you describe community in Wadebridge? Are there any events/groups/organisations which promote this sense of community?

5. In 2010 David Cameron introduced the 'Big Society' an initiative aimed at empowering local communities and promoting a culture of volunteerism. Were you aware of this, if so how successful do you think it has been?

6. In the last year debate around the notion of community has been prompted by the Channel 4 documentary 'Benefit Street', defined as:

"A documentary series revealing the reality of life on benefits, as the residents of one of Britain's most benefit-dependent streets invite cameras into their tight-knit community" (Channel 4, 2014).

Some have argued there is more of a community spirit on this street than is found in many neighbourhoods, particularly more affluent ones. Do you agree with this view, if not please explain why?

LOCAL HIGH STREET

7. How important is having a thriving local high street?

8. Does Wadebridge differ from 'clone towns'? (Described as having the same chain stores/charity shops/discount shops)

9. How do you use Wadebridge high street?

10. Which shops/services in Wadebridge are most important to you?

11. Are there any particular factors which encourage you to shop locally? (For example more personal service/better choice of products and services/supporting local economy/pedestrian area)

12. Are there any particular factors which deter you from shopping locally? (For example parking (limited/charges)/time constraints/limited availability of goods/higher prices)

14. In other parts of the country, local high streets have been negatively impacted by the presence of out of town shopping centres or supermarkets, to what extent has this occurred in Wadebridge?

15. How important do you feel tourism is to supporting the high street in Wadebridge?

16. In what way could Wadebridge high street be improved?

6.3) Example Business Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE RESEARCH- Jenifer Flynn, Newcastle University

This should take 15-30 minutes to complete. Please continue responses overleaf if you run out of room.

Thank you for your participation.

1. What is your business type?

Food Finance/Legal Fashion Hair/Beauty Gifts Leisure Café/Restaurant Other

Please specify if you wish:

COMMUNITY

2. What does community mean to you?

3. How would you describe community in Wadebridge? Are there any events/groups/organisations which promote this sense of community?

WADEBRIDGE

4. Do you live in Wadebridge? If yes, how long have you lived here and why? If not, are there any specific reasons why not?

5. How does Wadebridge differ from 'clone towns'? (Described as having the same chain stores/charity shops/discount shops)

6. How would you describe local shopping trends/ your customer base? (for example proportion of local residents/local businesses/tourists)

7. Due to the location of Wadebridge within the holiday destination of North Cornwall, how does tourism influence your business?

YOUR BUSINESS

8. How long have you owned your business?

9. Did you buy or take over an existing business, or introduce a completely new one?

9b. Why did you chose Wadebridge?

10. Has the internet impacted upon your business, if so, in what way and what has been your response?

11. What other challenges do you face as a local independent business?

NATIONAL TRENDS

12. In other parts of the country, local high streets have been negatively impacted by the presence of out of town shopping centres or supermarkets, to what extent has this occurred in Wadebridge?

13. In 2011 Mary Portas released an independent review into the future of Britain's high streets, do you think this has increased public support for their local high streets and, has this affected shopping habits in Wadebridge?



14. Another initiative, launched with the support of Parliament, was Small Business Saturday, an event which encouraged people to shop with small local businesses rather than larger chains on Sat 7th Dec 2013 (to be Sat 6th Dec 2014). Were you aware of this, do you think this will help the prevent decline of traditional high streets?



LOCAL FUTURE



15. Are there any local initiatives or organisations that provide support for your business, if so in what way?



16. Is there anything you feel could be done to maintain or enhance Wadebridge's businesses?

6.4) Dissertation Mentor Meeting Records

Meeting date: Early October		
Area/s on which student has been working most since commencing	Areas requiring most attention before next meeting	Specific issues to which attention should be paid
<p>Over the summer have collected data including: 3 go along interviews/ethnographies; 3 interviews with key figures/organisations in the community; went along to a 'power breakfast'; 16 local resident and 18 local businesses questionnaires. Focused on the town of Wadebridge in Cornwall, spent 1 month there.</p> <p>This data has been transcribed and have begun the coding process.</p>	<p>Begin coding of the data to highlight key themes to write about- in particular the causal relationship between local shopping and (the sense of) community.</p> <p>Looking further into how people's responses show that shopping locally did or did not matter. Also considering themes such as tourism/sense of identity/friendship.</p>	<p>The direction my argument will take in presenting the relationship between shopping locally and a sense of community and/or belonging. How this sense of community is constructed by locals and the way in which local business owners play a role in shaping this notion of community.</p> <p>The different ways in which people interact with the idea of community: what is included and excluded from this vision.</p>
Student Signature: 	Mentor Signature: 	

Meeting date: Mid-Semester One		
Area/s on which student has been working most since last meeting	Areas requiring most attention before next meeting	Specific issues to which attention should be paid
Some limited coding of data, exploring emerging themes.	Focus on Literature Review and Analysis section of dissertation. Break up the analysis into the different ways community is perceived to be shaped by shopping locally.	<p>Focus not on trying to specifically answer dissertation question with a yes/no answer: instead demonstrating the causal relationship between a sense of community and shopping locally. Paying particular attention to: the WREN currency and how this promotes the idea of shopping locally; shopping as a leisure activity and shopping as a way of knowledge sharing within the community of Wadebridge.</p> <p>Also consider the ways in which other rural communities are brought together, for example via nightlife/pub scene or single employer, and how this differs to Wadebridge- whether shopping plays a similar role here.</p>
Student Signature: 		Mentor Signature: 

Meeting date: Pre Xmas Vacation		
Area/s on which student has been working most since last meeting	Areas requiring most attention before next meeting	Specific issues to which attention should be paid
Data analysis and key themes that have emerged and literature review	Finish literature review and complete draft chapter for hand in	<p>Do not make generalisation or sweeping statements that are not backed up.</p> <p>In methodology also explain why other methods were not appropriate.</p>
Student Signature: 		Mentor Signature: 

Meeting date: (February for personal feedback on draft)		
Area/s on which student has been working most since last meeting	Areas requiring most attention before next meeting	Specific issues to which attention should be paid
Analysis chapters	Finishing off analysis and writing up final draft	<p>Make sure I explain how a finding came about.</p> <p>Discuss contradictions as a finding</p> <p>Do not stretch quotes to fit a section</p> <p>Make reference to the process of othering in reference to tourists from residents. Can be seen as a non-derogatory from of self/othering</p> <p>Go further in talking about the literature which discusses an industry as a form of community</p>
Student Signature: 		Mentor Signature: 

6.5) Risk Assessment

Newcastle University, School of GPS			
Geography dissertation fieldwork & travel risk assessment form			
Note	<p>Risk Assessments MUST be completed electronically and approved (signed) by your Dissertation Mentor (GEO3099) BEFORE starting your fieldwork. If you need to begin your fieldwork before mentors are assigned, any member of academic staff who is familiar with your fieldwork activities/locations may sign it. Travelling without an appropriate risk assessment may prejudice subsequent insurance claims. It is the responsibility of the person in charge of the fieldwork to ensure that this risk assessment is made available to all participants in the fieldwork.</p> <p>If you go to the Blackboard <i>GPS Undergraduate Community</i> pages you will find a folder called <i>School Health and Safety Information</i>. This folder contains the <i>GPS Field Safety Guide</i>. This guide has examples of completed risk assessment forms, and information on common fieldwork hazards. For overseas travel, refer to the FCO website for country-specific advice https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice</p> <p>Once complete, one copy of your signed risk assessment form must be left with the GPS School Safety Officer. You must take the other signed copy with you on your fieldwork.</p>		
Project title & fieldwork activities	To what extent does shopping locally increase a sense of community in Wadebridge, Cornwall.		
Your name	Jenifer Flynn	Other participants	Peter Flynn, Margaret Flynn
Name of GEO2111 Mentor	Michael Richardson	Fieldwork dates	7 th June 2014-30 th June
Name of dissertation mentor (if known)		Date form completed	16 th March 2014
Fieldwork Location (attach map)	Wadebridge, Cornwall. Specific locations of Focus Groups and Interviews are not yet known but will be within Wadebridge. I will be interviewing small business owners within the town centre, specific business not yet known but area shown on the map attached.		
Emergency contacts			
* = required for overseas travel only			
Contact overseas*			
Accommodation	34 The Culvery, Wadebridge, Cornwall, PL27 7DX		
Emergency services	999 in case of serious emergency. Nearest minor injuries: Bodmin Community Hospital, Boundary Road. Nearest A&E: Royal Cornwall Hospital, Truro. Nearest doctors surgery: Bridge Medical Practice, Harbor Road.		
British Embassy*			
Insurance*	<p>Emergency claims are dealt with by Chubb Assistance:</p> <p>Tel: +44 (0) 207 895 3364</p> <p>Your policy number is: 64811698</p> <p>Also contact Newcastle University immediately regarding all claims:</p> <p>Email: insurance@ncl.ac.uk or Telephone: +44 (0) 191 222 6520</p>		

Newcastle University contact	GPS Office telephone number: +44 (0)191 208 3923
Travel & fieldwork itinerary	I will drive from Newcastle to Wadebridge on 7 th June, I will then be staying in Wadebridge between the 7 th -30 th June, during the first week I will mostly be working at home creating materials needed to conduct the planned focus groups and interviews which will occur between 13 th -27 th June. These will take place within the town centre, shown on the map.
Other contacts	Contacts I will be staying with in Wadebridge- Peter Flynn telephone: 01208 816282. Margaret Flynn telephone: 07806618877 Address as above.

Hazards and risks

In the space provided below, you must outline ALL of the hazards and risks associated with your project

Hazard 1	Travel & transport (consider vehicles, roads, public transport)
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car accident or similar. Walking.
Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the highway-code and abide by driving laws, taking regular rest-stops to avoid fatigue. Carry out checks on the vehicle before departure. Ensure all safety equipment such as high visibility jacket, red triangle, are stored in the vehicle. Mind traffic when walking.
Hazard 2	Accommodation (consider security and fire safety standards)
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire or theft
Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check all smoke detectors in the house are working, ensure all entrances/windows are locked when out or during the night.
Hazard 3	Dealing with people and cultural differences (consider safety in public and private places, culture, political issues, landowners, authorities)
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theft or violence
Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Never travel alone, avoid traveling at night, following local laws and guidelines on public safety. Avoid asking overly sensitive questions during focus groups/interviews.
Hazard 4	Infections and health conditions (consider food, clean water, pests, immunizations, allergies.)
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food poisoning, allergy, insect bite/sting
Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all food is cooked thoroughly, if focus groups or interviews take place in an establishment which serves food/drink check the food safety standard certificate of the establishment. Ensure any participants with an allergy are carrying the necessary medication.
Hazard 5	Extreme weather conditions (consider hot/cold/wet climates, hurricane season, etc)
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flooding
Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check weather forecast daily looking out for any weather warnings and alter plans accordingly.
Hazard 6	Fieldwork Activities (Add more space if needed to list all activities (eg. Interviews, focus groups, visits to companies/organisations and their regulations, water/soil sampling, coring, use of hazardous equipment, transporting heavy samples/equipment, and hazardous locations such as cliffs, rivers, tides, soft sediments, volcanoes, glaciers)
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with small business owners at their premises: fire, robbery
Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply common sense, check fire safety at location
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus Groups (location currently unknown): fire, violence
Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chose a location which complies with local fire safety guidelines, avoid asking overly sensitive questions
Hazard 7	Specific FCO advice relating to this location (overseas travel only)

Risks	•
Control Measures	•
Hazard 8	Other
Risks	•
Control Measures	•


Emergency Procedures

Despite all preparations and no matter how careful you are, accidents can happen. In the space below outline the procedures you will follow in an emergency (who will you contact? where will you go? could an ambulance reach you at the field site? who will know where you are? how often will you send them updates? what should they do if they don't hear from you when expected?) You need an Emergency Plan even if you are undertaking UK based fieldwork.

When travelling I will inform a relative or friend where I am, I will take a mobile phone with me. When conducting focus groups or interviews I will ensure I have phone reception at the location beforehand. If an emergency occurs at a small business whilst I am interviewing the owner I will follow their emergency procedure. In case of any other emergency I will contact a relative who lives close by, or in a serious emergency will dial 999 for the emergency services. I will always have identification on my person in case of personal injury/unconsciousness.

Approval

Your signature and the signature of your dissertation mentor is needed in the spaces below before you can begin your fieldwork

Assessor (Student)		
Name: Jenifer Flynn	Signature: 	Date:

Dissertation mentor		
Name:	Signature:	Date:

Submit:
 Signed copy 1: Keep with you on fieldwork, keep it safe to hand in with your dissertation
 Signed copy 2: Your Dissertation Mentor will give it to the GPS School Safety Officer (SSO) located in Daysh 1.33 (email: physgeog-technicians@ncl.ac.uk).

Review:
 When multiple field visits are planned, or changes made to the planned field visits, review the RA and revise as necessary, get changes approved (signed) by your Mentor and submit another copy to the SSO

YES	NO	Geo2111 Mentor feedback: is more info needed?	Have you included...
SECTION 1: Project overview			
		Title boxes need to be updated.	Project title & specific field <i>activities</i> (rather than academic background)
			Your name?
			Names of people going with you (no lone working allowed)?
			Your Mentor's name?
			Specific dates?
			Specific locations? Included a map?
SECTION 2: Emergency contacts & itinerary			
			Address and phone number for all emergency contacts listed?
			Contacts at organisations you will be working with? The name of your 'gatekeeper'?
			As much detail as you can about your itinerary (travel to and between field sites and what you are doing)?
SECTION 3: Hazards, risks and controls			
			TRAVEL: Details of all travel, including getting to the area, day-to-day, between locations? Have you been there before? Is anyone showing you around? If going abroad – have you checked FCO advice about public transport, driving, etc?
			ACCOMMODATION: Details about your accommodation, including about its reputation, fire safety procedures, security?
			PEOPLE: How to avoid tense/dangerous situations with landowners/general public/FCO advice on political demonstrations, etc?
			HEALTH: All risks related to clean water/food, allergies, animal/insect bites, local diseases /FCO recommended immunizations?
			WEATHER: All risks related to climate & weather?
			ACTIVITIES: Risks associated with each individual field activity, and how to avoid these risks? (eg no interviews behind closed doors or in homes, think about controls for river/lake sampling, coring, entering caves, dangerous equipment, etc).
			FCO ADVICE: Anything on the FCO website not already mentioned above?
SECTION 4: Emergency plan			
			Who do you contact, where do you go?
			Whether an ambulance can reach you?
			In case of an accident where you're out of mobile range, or unconscious, who will know where you are and when/how do they get help to you?
SECTION 5: Approval			
			YOU (the student) are the assessor. Have you signed and dated your form?

Signature of Geo2111 mentor:

MR. [Signature]

Date:

3/4/14

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