



BUILDINGS: Regeneration

What is regeneration?

Regeneration means bringing something 'back to life' or 'renewing' it. This can apply to buildings or even whole communities that may have been run down due to lack of investment, loss of an industry in that area or a downturn in the local economy.

Local economic downturn can be caused by a lack of trade that is important to that community e.g. a shortage of hotel visitors to a seaside town, due to bad weather; or a business closing down, leaving many people unemployed. With a lack of income, these people would then spend less and thus not pour as much money into their local economy. This, in turn, could lead to more businesses closing down and produce a negative spiral effect within the community.

A poor local economy and lack of investment can, over time, lead to shops going out of business, buildings becoming run down and a rise in crime. When an area is neglected there is often also an increase in anti-social behaviour such as graffiti and vandalism, which can bring the local economy down even more.

The regeneration or economic renewal of an area can turn all of this around and, by pumping money, training and support back into an economy, it is possible for that community to thrive once again.

Funding regeneration

Local authorities are ultimately responsible for the well-being of their community or neighbourhood, and funds for regeneration projects largely come from them. Lobbying and other forms of gathering support are ways communities can encourage action and raise funds for the regeneration of their local area. See fact sheet **5.2 Communities – Community Action** for more information.

Businesses can also invest in the economy of their community by supporting social housing programmes that enable local people to have affordable accommodation or by funding training courses for local residents. This can then lead to local employment opportunities and a healthy, more sustainable community.

Case study: Castleford, West Yorkshire, UK

A once-booming mining town, Castleford in West Yorkshire, has been hit hard over the last 20 years. With the loss of employment opportunities for local people, the town suffered and the local economy needed reviving. After securing investment for a regeneration scheme, the town went through dramatic improvements and, in collaboration with the local council, regeneration agencies and a TV documentary team, citizens took a lead in the town's renewal. The project started with experts interviewing local people to find out how they wanted to see their town renewed. Projects included creating a play area for children, renovating public spaces (e.g. subways), developing an arts and culture centre and building a pedestrian bridge. Funds for the regeneration started with a £150,000 grant from a TV channel, but grew to £19 million from a variety of funding sources. This has generated over £200 million of additional private investment into the residential and commercial development of Castleford. The bridge project was also awarded the grand prize in the 2009 Regeneration & Renewal Awards, as having the most outstanding regeneration impact.

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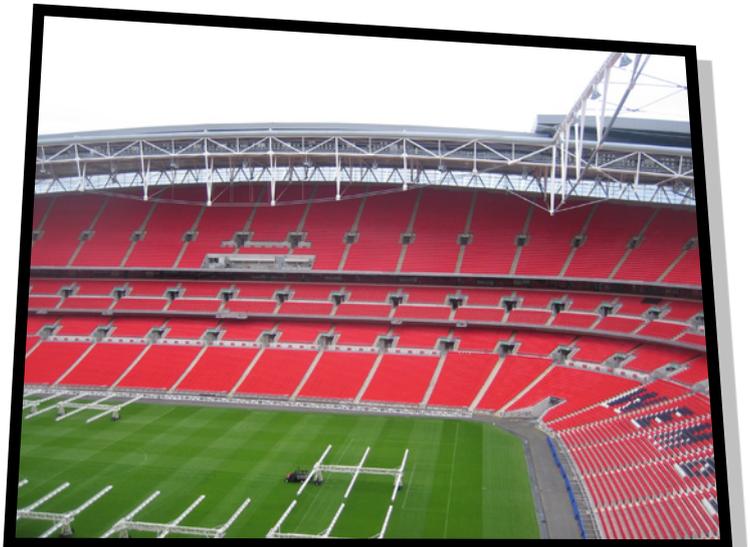


BUILDINGS: Regeneration cont'd

Regeneration projects around the country

The City of Liverpool was awarded the title of European Capital of Culture in 2008, prompting a series of projects to regenerate the docks, waterfront and central village. Since 2005, around £73 million has been spent on improving the roads and open spaces in Liverpool, while £1 billion has been spent on rebuilding and improving the Paradise Street shopping district.

London will be hosting the Olympic Games in 2012. This has prompted large scale regeneration projects across the capital. The Games are being looked on as an opportunity to help regenerate some of the poorest areas of London, particularly in the East End, as well as improve transport routes throughout the city. The budget for all of this work is £9.3 billion with £1.7 billion of this being spent on regeneration and infrastructure.



Did you know?

The regeneration of Wembley Stadium has sparked an investment of over £70m to upgrade the surrounding area and transport links.