Beyond Place Branding? The Emergence of Place Reputation: A Comparative Study of NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol

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Abstract

While it has become widespread in an international context, place branding has reached an impasse in theory and policy alike as several weaknesses have been uncovered: i) places are too complicated to be branded; ii) place brands have lacked breadth in terms of their application; iii) place brands have proved homogenous and indistinctive and; iv) the outcomes and impacts of place brands have proved difficult to measure. This project examines the proposition that the conceptualisation of place branding can be repositioned as part of a more comprehensive and rounded notion of *place reputation*. Adapting ideas of personal and corporate reputation, an alternative is proposed that argues that places can improve their standing by constructing and accumulating *reputational capital* with various audiences. The specific aims of the study are: i) to engage critically with the place branding literature and develop a new conceptual and theoretical basis for the emergent idea of place reputation; ii) to map and explain the different stakeholders involved and the way in which they shape the reputations of places and; iii) to compare the differing processes developed in the case-study cities used to form, shape and manage the reputations of cities and regions. The empirical work focuses on three in-depth case studies of second-tier cities in England: NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol. This strengthens the tenuous connections made between reputation and place in the corporate and place branding literatures and transfers the idea of *reputational capital* to geographical entities, the thesis makes three contributions. First, place reputation and place branding are interrelated and there is a degree of complementarity between branding practices and place reputation. Second, place reputation is a relational concept and the reputations of places need to be understood in relation to particular audiences (e.g. internal, external), sector (e.g. public, private, civic) and/or domain (e.g. economy, culture). Third, the effectiveness of leadership in a city or region can be fundamental to the quality of the reputation of that specific place.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Why reputation matters

Reykjavik and Mexico City are two of the destinations included by the well-known travel guidebook, the Rough Guide in their list of the top ten global cities to visit in 2016. Surprisingly, they are joined by Hull, an English second-tier city, somewhat isolated in East Yorkshire and previously maligned having been named as Britain's number one 'Crap Town' by the arts and culture magazine *The Idler* at the beginning of the last decade (*BBC News*, 2003, *The Independent*, 2016). This landmark moment not only illustrates how a place's reputation can change but also starts to provoke questions of how we can better understand and conceptualise the reputations of geographical entities as a whole. It is asserted here that place reputation should be considered as a credible alternative to the established place branding concept. Place branding is a technique that has been adopted by a wide range of different places, but it suffers from a fundamental inability to contend with the complicated geographical entity (Kavaratzis, 2009, Van Ham, 2008) and has led to uneven results, particularly in English second-tier cities. In addition, to Hull, two further cities – NewcastleGateshead and Bristol are analysed in terms of their reputations as part of a comparative study which embraces the use of case-studies within a national context.

This thesis investigates whether researching the reputations of cities and regions is a worthwhile task, particularly when compared to the established practices of place branding. This is timely, as place branding is reaching an impasse in terms of its conceptual and practical application. As such, it is proposed that place reputation can become a credible alternative; a broader notion incorporating a repositioned place branding perspective that retains a role that compliments the new concept. Essential to this understanding is the idea of reputational capital, an approach originally focusing on corporations and products which claims that reputations can be constructed and accumulated with several audiences, in different domains and various sectors (Jackson, 2004, Wreschniok and Klewes, 2009). Also, the thesis develops a framework that draws on some fragmented evidence from the interdisciplinary place branding, corporate and human geography literatures that aims to apply reputation to geographical entities.

Tying in with the topical nature of reputation and relating this back to Hull, in an attempt to apply the idea to places, *The Independent* (2016) article itself stated

that 'The East Yorkshire city used to have a reputation for being the epitome of the 'grim north'. In stark contrast to its former reputation, Hull produces a topical example of how a place's reputation can fluctuate over time. Also, this shows that place reputation is a deeply embedded construct and that it can take years to revoke longstanding, negative perceptions and that any reputational change undertaken benefits from long-term thinking (Kuss, 2009). Here, a period of controversy in local politics and a longstanding inability to fulfil its potential started to be overwritten after Hull was named the UK City of Culture for 2017 (*BBC News*, 2013a). Also in 2013, Newcastle City Council announced plans to completely withdraw its budget for culture, which has placed the vast cultural reputational capital accumulated over previous years under threat, highlighting the delicacy of place reputation (*BBC News*, 2013b). Conversely, Bristol's reputation contrasts with both that of Hull and NewcastleGateshead due to its location in the more prosperous South West and, being much closer to London, and from not enduring the same negative effects of severe single-pillar economy job losses. Nonetheless, despite the city's reputation being well received externally and having recently being named Europe's green capital for 2015, internally, Bristol has experienced disharmony with the city being labelled the "*Graveyard of Ambition*" on numerous occasions (*The Spectator*, 2014).

This also begins to explain the relational nature of reputation, in that the strength of a place's reputation and any perception developed of it is entirely dependent on the who perceives it alongside which domain and sector this concerns. Here, the study focuses on three domains interrelated of reputation – culture-led regeneration, governance and inward investment. By identifying these domains some more precise strands of analysis for the broad notion of reputation have been established. Consequently, this adds further weight to an exploration of the reputations of cities and regions which have yet to be fully understood theoretically or in geographical or policy terms (Kuss, 2009, Heebels, 2013). Overall, this project explores whether place reputation can become a credible alternative to the established place branding concept and looks to better understand the degree of interrelation between the two ideas assisted by the notion of reputational capital.

1.1.1 The limitations of place branding

Notwithstanding the fact that place branding has been at the forefront of the minds of stakeholders in cities and regions for around the last twenty years, its application is beginning to fade. While, there is still an emphasis on place branding in academia and the notion does have some uses in policy, this project centres on some embryonic evidence that suggests that we should now move towards interpreting reputations (Anholt, 2006, Kuss, 2009, Go and Govers, 2011). Originating from Anholt's (1998) tentative documentation of a transition occurring from a relatively minor place marketing idea largely undertaken by civic bodies into a more professionalised concept, this coincided with the rise of branding activities implemented by nations. Accordingly, this acted as a prompt for place branding to be applied at various scales, and many examples appeared in the early 2000s (Van Ham, 2008). This has been defined by Ashworth and Kavartzis (2007:521) as 'the practice of applying brand strategy and other marketing techniques and disciplines to the economic, political and cultural development of cities, regions and countries'. This is one of the multiple definitions that have struggled to capture the precise essence of a concept that has not yet been fully understood.

Nonetheless, after years of application with varying success, place branding has started to lose momentum. The most prominent criticism is that the practices typically designed for corporations and products have been unable to cope with the more intricate geographical entity (Anholt, 2010a). In turn, a lack of breadth (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2007), its homogenous and indistinctive nature (Turok, 2009), alongside a difficulty in measuring its outcomes and impacts (Zenker, 2011) could add further weight to argument that place branding may require greater critical reflection. Moreover, heightened by the worldwide recession towards the end of the 21st century's first decade and austerity measures imposed in the UK shortly thereafter, significantly fewer resources are available for stakeholders to pursue branding activities. A loss of credibility between stakeholders and customers involved with corporations and products following a period of brand dominance (Fisher-Buttinger and Vallaster, 2011) could also be applied to stakeholders and the various audiences involved in place. As a result, there is some potential in focusing on the reputations of geographical entities, and an increasing

prominence of this in theory and policy alike signals a greater need to consider how this operates in relation to, and is manifest in, cities and regions.

Although geographers do make important contributions to the place branding literature (Medway and Warnaby, 2014, Pasquinelli, 2013. Pike, 2009, 2011, Turok, 2009), its fragmented nature has typically become dominated by business and marketing scholars alongside several other disciplines including sociology and planning. While more recent efforts have started to appear in geographical journals, such as Kavaratzis and Kalandides (2015), none of these attempts have gone far enough in establishing a geographical basis for furthering this with an understanding of the reputations of cities and regions. In turn, this amalgam of different perspectives has resulted in place branding lacking a clear academic grounding and is thus unsuitable to be pursued from a specific theoretical viewpoint due to being a 'chaotic conception' (Sayer, 2010). This can provide some foundations to be conceptually reinforced by human geography literature which understands place (Cresswell, 2004). In this regard, Turok's (2009) work, where he positions place branding in a wider context of mechanisms designed to make cities appear more distinctive in a global environment is cited as a key influence for this project. However, this can only be advanced with the assistance of some clear aims and research questions which each seek to explore a different aspect of the reputations of places. This stance is further strengthened by an analysis of the relational and territorial debate in economic geography, which not only helps to position my work in the interdisciplinary notions of branding and reputation but also in more precise geographical terms as well (Bulkeley, 2005, Hudson, 2007). Asserting that this research is being tackled from more of a relational perspective ensures that the notion of place reputation is clearly being approached from an urban and economic geographical viewpoint within human geography. Moreover, it is combined with the idea of reputational capital which has connections with Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) *Forms of Capital*; this reinforces the project's credentials within the wider social sciences too and adds some theory to a cohesive geographical attempt at a disparate interdisciplinary notion. When measured against the shortcomings of place branding, this presents a rationale for the project. As such, some of these fragmented, yet encouraging attempts at applying reputation to cities and regions could be furthered with human geography work

that seeks to conceptualise place as a credible alternative to the established place branding concept.

1.1.2 Why reputation?

Referring back to *The Independent* (2016) article, the presence of Hull alongside more major capitals in the Rough Guides top ten global cities to visit begins to signify that more attention may start to be devoted to some lesser-heralded geographical entities. There is now a greater need to understand how the reputations of some smaller cities, both in terms of eminence and population, are formed, managed and shaped over time. An elite global city such as London or Tokyo may find that place branding does have an effect through their already well-established reputation. The uneven success of these practices and the challenges faced by smaller and less fashionable places may provide a more fruitful avenue to explore during this study when conceptually reinforced by a greater geographical understanding and by embracing the notion of reputational capital.

    The identification of corporate reputation and subsequently place reputation attempts to exploit some of the shortcomings of place branding. Primarily, this is more sympathetic to the intricacy of place, constitutes a more comprehensive strategy and compensates for the often homogenous nature of place branding alongside demonstrating some measurability. As Klewes and Wreschniok (2009:3) state, 'reputation can best be understood as the sum of the expectations that the public places on the future behaviour of an agent or institution based on the public's direct or indirect experiences'. This concept is underpinned by an organisation's ability to demonstrate higher levels of trust (Ind and Schultz, 2010) and communication (Thißen, 2009) over a long-term period. A key part of this is the notion of reputational capital which proposes that companies can gradually accumulate and then mobilise their intangible assets over time to improve their reputation with various audiences (Jackson, 2004, Klewes and Wreschniok, 2009). Linking this idea with those discussed in Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) *Forms of Capital*, this project argues that this concept can be applied to places who can also harness reputational capital to enhance their standing; however, this can only be understood relationally. As such, cities and regions can only build reputational capital with a certain audience such as residents, students, tourists or investors and in different domains including culture, governance and inward investment and

various public, private and civic sectors in order to improve their reputations. A good example of this is how NewcastleGateshead's cultural reputational capital was questioned in 2013 when Newcastle City Council threatened to completely revoke their budget for culture (*BBC News*, 2013b). Therefore, by utilising the idea of reputational capital as an important concept for the study and by approaching this interdisciplinary and embryonic subject by utilising some essential geographical literature when assisted by the notion of reputational capital, this may help to address some gaps identified in the literature.

1.1.3 Aims, objectives and research questions

In order to exploit gaps identified in the literature there is also a need to develop an overriding aim supported by some research questions to assure that this study maintains a clear and coherent focus throughout its execution. Additionally, to sufficiently conceptualise the idea of place reputation there is a requirement for research questions that challenge the interdisciplinary notions of place branding and corporate reputation from a geographical viewpoint. The overall aim of the study is to *understand and explain the idea of place reputation and investigate whether this could become a credible alternative to the established place brand*. Moreover, the project recommends that, instead of overlooking branding activities altogether, the two concepts should instead be viewed as interrelated and can act as complimentary to one another. Key to this understanding is the idea of reputational capital and it is asserted that this elusive notion can be constructed and accumulated with several audiences, different domains and various sectors by stakeholders involved in geographical entities. This overall aim is also supported by three research questions to be examined in the cases of NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol:

The first of these considers *How can a critical understanding of place branding help us to develop a new conceptual and theoretical basis for the emergent idea of place reputation?* This question regards identifying some of place branding's shortcomings as a point of departure for the research and begins to establish a rationale for starting to move beyond the incumbent concept. Furthermore, this may help to identify some gaps in the literature, particularly a lack of a geographical conceptualisation of the reputations of places that will be aided by

the creation of a human geography framework outlined at the beginning of the literature review. In an attempt to explore gaps in the literature, this is addressed by the idea of reputation, a theory usually applied to corporations and products but not as of yet fully analysed in relation to cities and regions. Taken from this, the notion of reputational capital can be harnessed as a significant part of the thesis in proposing that cities and regions can construct and form this value with different audiences and in selected domains and sectors. When combined with the geographical understanding taken this demonstrates the potential to become a credible alternative to the fragmented notion of place branding that has reached a crossroads in terms of its development.

The second research question concerns *How can we map and explain the different stakeholder and institutional involvement and the way in which this helps to shape and change the reputations of places?* Here, I focus on trying to establish who the key stakeholders and institutions are involved when instigating reputational change in a specific place. This is achieved by mapping those stakeholders who are perceived to take a prominent role both internally and externally in broad social, economic, political and cultural categories within geographical entities. However, it is important to acknowledge that this is unlikely to be so distinct and stakeholders and institutions that function within a place can overlap and interrelate in various ways. As a result, trying to discern who the key stakeholders and institutions are and what they do to shape and change the reputations of cities and regions is not a straightforward task and any investigation of this needs to be sympathetic to the complexity of place.

The third research question examines *How and why do the case-study cities attempt to form, manage and shape the notion of place reputation?* This analyses some interventions undertaken in English second-cities that may assist reputational change. Building on the previous question, this focuses more on the processes exhibited by stakeholders and institutions in geographical entities to try and engineer reputational change rather than the stakeholders and institutions themselves. A wide range of mechanisms can be demonstrated by those involved in place to try and enhance their reputations. While place branding is an example of this, its limited and somewhat uneven track record across various geographical scales leaves it open to question; however it could still be effective as an interrelated and complimentary notion when it occurs in the right city at an

appropriate time. In this project, it is fundamental to concentrate on selected domains of activity to achieve a precise focus on how the broad notion of reputation can be shaped and changed. In addition, the domains chosen – culture-led regeneration, governance and inward investment (which are explored in greater detail in the next part of the introduction) - are focused on to form a key part of this research question. Overall, the creation of an overarching aim which is supported by three distinct research questions can help to further a geographical rationale for understanding the reputations of cities and regions which will be investigated throughout the duration of the project.

1.1.4 Exploring place reputation: candidate domains of analysis

Place reputation is a broad notion constructed from a wide variety of domains that may be of greater relevance in one location over another. Moreover, it is challenging to interpret a place's overall reputation and by selecting some domains in which to precisely target for analysis may produce a more fruitful investigation of place reputation. The domains identified should reflect the distinctive qualities of the particular cities and regions chosen as part of a comparative approach. For NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol, I could have selected from various domains with some options overlooked; two, which I did not include, were sustainability and retail. For sustainability, with Bristol being the 2015 European Green Capital, Newcastle being named at the top of the Sustainable Cities Index in 2010 (*BBC News*, 2010) alongside Hull developing a reputation for inward investment in the green economy, there could have been potential to use this domain for the project. Also, for retail, there are large shopping centres in NewcastleGateshead and a new shopping centre in Bristol. Alongside the increasing prominence of Business Improvement Districts' (BIDs) in all three cities, this underlines the credentials of retail as a possible domain for the study. However, these domains were not selected for this project as they were not evident in enough detail across the three case-study cities as much as those selected – culture-led regeneration, governance and inward investment. These chosen domains can help to achieve a consistent and a thorough understanding of some of the processes used to shape and change the reputations of NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol.

Culture-led regeneration is selected as a domain of place reputation to be studied here as it has played a significant role in transforming the fortunes of English cities and regions over the past twenty years (Evans and Shaw, 2004). Viewed as being a significant part of a strategy to instigate reputational change, within this context it can be understood as the process of developing infrastructure and hosting cultural events to help to enhance perceptions and gradually reputations too. Culture-led regeneration has been demonstrated by NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol at different periods in their history. First, NewcastleGateshead gained international recognition for the manner that it positioned culture at the heart of attempts to transform both Newcastle and Gateshead sides of the River Tyne in the late 1990s and early 2000s (NewcastleGateshead Initiative, 2009). Second, Bristol has also experienced a rejuvenation of its waterfront by utilising cultural practices, albeit in a longer-term fashion such as the opening of the Arnolfini art gallery in the 1970s (Bassett et al. 2002). Third, culture-led regeneration has been a more recent occurrence in Hull, with the city being named the UK City of Culture for 2017 in late 2013 and seeking to build on its cultural offer as a catalyst for wider reputational change.

Governance processes are the second domain analysed with the contrasting arrangements present in NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol constitutes a relevant topic to compare the three cities in terms of their reputations. This is important because the way that a place is governed at both local and regional levels can have an uneven impact on the reputation of a geographical entity. First, NewcastleGateshead's governance arrangements consist of two separate local authorities cooperating through a partnership and the NewcastleGateshead Initiative (NGI) for destination marketing. At a regional scale the area was previously under the jurisdiction of One North East, a Regional Development Agency (RDA) that fitted a well-defined geographical area that has since been replaced by the more ambiguous North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Second, in 2012, Bristol was the only English city to vote in favour of an having an elected mayor and independent candidate George Ferguson was unveiled later that year having previously been influential in the city's regeneration. Regionally, Bristol was formerly part of the South West RDA, a Regional Development Agency that accounted for an unnaturally defined geographical area. This has now been replaced by the West of England LEP, more concentrated around Bristol and

neighbouring Bath. Third, Hull possesses the most conventional governance arrangements of the three case-study cities, being solely presided over by Hull City Council. However, having been peripheral within a vast Regional Development Agency, Hull probably has more in common with Bristol than NewcastleGateshead. At a sub-regional scale the city is now overseen by the Humber LEP that is more constricted around Hull unlike Yorkshire Forward which focused more on the larger urban centres of Leeds and Sheffield.

Inward investment provides the third domain for analysis with the contrasting patterns of activity in NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol tying into their respective reputations. This is an important part of place reputation as the way that inward investment is managed can affect the likelihood of an English second-tier city attracting multinational corporations. A place with a more positive reputation may find it easier to draw human capital and students alongside new firms; compared to another with a more negative reputation that has to work harder to attract exogenous resources. First, NewcastleGateshead's inward investment activities are centred around three areas – creative and digital, science and health, and offshore and marine, new sectors linking in with the cumulative strength of the city's two universities (NewcastleGateshead Initiative, 2014). Second, Bristol, divides its inward investment strategy into five sectors – creativity, environmental technologies, microelectronics, aerospace engineering and financial services. Compared to NewcastleGateshead and Hull, Bristol may have less difficulty in enticing inward investment due to its proximity to London and possessing a more diversified economy that didn't suffer the same after effects of deindustrialisation (Bristol + Bath, 2014). Third, Hull specialises in ports and logistics, renewable energy and chemicals (Hull Bondholders, 2014). Recent inward investment activity has focused around the 'Energy Estuary' on the Humber and an expertise in renewable energy underlined by Siemens recent £160 million investment to manufacture offshore wind turbines (*BBC News*, 2014a). Overall, the choice of domains here are capable of bringing a more precise focus to a study of the reputations of NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol and will make a valuable contribution to furthering an understanding of place reputation.

1.2 The research subjects and methods

The research subjects chosen are English second-tier cities, with an investigation of NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol in terms of their reputations (Flyvbjerg, 2006). This project focuses purely on an English context avoiding complications between devolved entities in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. In turn, an international comparison is not made as the nuances between different countries and the tentative nature of the yet to be explored notion of reputation makes it difficult to be applied elsewhere until tested in a familiar setting. Here, I understand second-tier cities as English cities with a population of in between 250,000 and 450,000 people. I have chosen to focus on these cities in particular as cumulatively they make a large contribution to the national economy, however, are often overlooked in favour of London, Manchester and Birmingham (Parkinson et al. 2012). As such, they are important geographical entities, are often regional capitals and can develop reputations in both national and international contexts that can outweigh efforts of cities that are much larger, such as the example of NewcastleGateshead and culture. NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol are the three cities that I have chosen to focus on here, located in the North East of England, Yorkshire and Humber and the South West of England respectively as depicted in figure 1.1. These have been selected through a robust case-study selection process documented in section 3.3.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

The remaining thesis comprises eight chapters. The first of these, chapter 2 entitled *Beyond place branding* concerns the literature review of the study. This reveals the academic context and identifies some gaps that are to be explored here. This chapter starts with *Introducing place* (section 2.1), which considers some human geography literature that seeks to understand place and attempts to explore whether this work can better equip an investigation of the reputations of cities and regions. Attempting to develop a conceptual rationale, the relational and territorial debate in economic geography is also explored to achieve a more precise focus on the perspective that the concepts of place branding and reputation will be

approached from here. Section 2.2 centres on place branding; this starts by introducing the notion, its origins in neoliberal work, reviewing its many definitions and detailing a more recent transition towards bottom-up place branding. This section then adopts a more critical approach towards place branding and a fourfold critique of the practice is developed. This argues that places are too complicated to be branded, place brands have lacked breadth in terms of their application, place brands have proved homogenous and indistinctive, and that the outcomes and impacts of place branding have become difficult to measure. *Reputation* is the topic of focus in section 2.3 which starts with an explanation of an alternative to place branding, the corporate notion of reputation. This involves some definitions; the theme of reputational capital, a key concept for the project, alongside the idea of reputational risk which explores how exhibiting greater credibility and transparency are important principles of developing corporate reputation. The chapter then considers how fields of human geography, interdisciplinary place branding and corporate literatures have been unable to effectively translate the idea of corporate reputation to geographical entities. This reviews some embryonic approaches from all three fields (section 2.4). Section 2.5 entitled *Constituent elements* reveals some of the proposed aspects of the concept: soft power, place shaping and more community-oriented place branding, reduced and repositioned as part of a broader strategy. The final section (2.6) of the literature review centres on the framework itself, defining place reputation and analysing how reputational capital can be applied to cities and regions. This also looks at its tangible and intangible dimensions, how this can better cope with the complicated geographical entity and considers whether more trustworthy behaviour is linked to a stronger reputation.

Chapter 3 is the study's methodology and charts the overall approach that the project takes alongside research challenges and requirements that the methodology must fulfil. This outlines some of the difficulties that could be presented by a comparative approach and details how an intensive form of research will be conducted here. The start of the methodology also advocates for the suitability of adopting a largely qualitative approach. It is argued that quantitative research would not benefit an analysis of the branding practices and reputations of geographical entities and also emphasises the value that case studies can add to the research. Section 3.2 reveals the choice of methods; this

evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of using semi-structured interviews to question local and regional stakeholders, some of whom may be considered elites, on the topic of place reputation. This justifies the approach's flexibility and suitability for geographical research while reflecting on some potential shortcomings including the possibility of being overruled by an elite participant. The next section (3.3) documents the *Case-study selection* process. This chronicles how Hull and Bristol have been selected for comparison with NewcastleGateshead, reveals the variables used to decide this alongside a justification and explanation of this choice. The case-study selection process involves comparing Hull, Bristol and five other English second-tier cities with census data for NewcastleGateshead across six different variables with the respective best and worst performing cities to be taken forward for comparison. The *Research design* is outlined in section 3.4; this illustrates the project's research strategy and explains how place reputation has been narrowed down to focus on aspects of culture-led regeneration, governance and inward investment to achieve a more precise focus of a broad subject area.

Chapter 4 is the first of five findings chapters and focuses on results surrounding the topic of reputation and its relation to geographical entities. Section 4.1 is entitled *Reputation and place* and begins by introducing some of the key facets of reputation and place, including perceptions, its deeply embedded nature, place personality and the impact of performance on reputation. The chapter then moves towards an analytical framework (figure 4.2) that shows how the elements of a place's reputation can be understood and then followed by a discussion of the internal and external dimensions of place reputation (section 4.2). I then proceed to section 4.2 that centres on investigating reputations. This begins with *Understanding varying reputations* which asserts that a place's reputation cannot be viewed as straightforwardly as good or bad, before moving on to examine the possibility of measuring place reputation. Section 4.4 concentrates on three key institutions involved in reputation management and argues that a city council, university and Premier League football club can all play a key role in trying to transform reputations. Section 4.5 regards the topic of *Changing reputations* and starts by focusing on shaping place reputation. This suggests that any attempt at reputational change should be long-term before moving on to a debate on tangible and intangible reputational change alongside

looking into the influence of key individuals in assembling reputational capital. The chapter then moves towards *Place reputation and the media* (section 4.6) and assesses the evolving role of the media; social media and how these affect place reputation, before exploring the influence of the local newspaper in reputation management.

Place branding is the focus for the second findings chapter, chapter 5. This commences with section 5.1 that concentrates on three of the respective benefits and shortcomings of the place brand. The three benefits of place branding are identified; that it can be easily understood, it encourages collective thinking, and it can potentially be rewarding. Its shortcomings are that place brands are not usually grounded in reality, place brands are too expensive for what they are, and they tend to be a short-term strategy. The chapter's second section (5.2) starts to move more towards place reputation. This suggests that place branding can adopt a readjusted role as part of a reputation management strategy, that any branding retained should be based on reality and that it may be more effective when founded on a common message between stakeholders.

Chapter 6 centres on culture-led regeneration and its relation to place reputation. The first section (6.1) examines this link, opening with an exploration of the possible overuse of cultural practices in seeking to build reputational capital. This is followed by an evaluation of the weight of culture, in an overall regeneration strategy that is designed to improve a place's standing. *Culture-led regeneration, policy change and reputation* (6.2) investigates the effect that decreased money available to instigate cultural practices has on the reputations of English second-tier cities. This starts by scrutinising the impact of austerity on the amounts of cultural reputational capital accumulated in previous years by cities and regions. The second part of this section concerns the changing purpose of culture-led regeneration and the reputational consequences.

Chapter 7 looks into the relationship between governance and place reputation. Section 7.1 is entitled *Governance and reputation* and analyses whether better governance arrangements can be a precursor to a more positive reputation. Following this is a consideration of the significance of leadership when trying to accumulate reputational capital for governance, and an evaluation of the impact of increased collaboration on place reputation. The second section, 7.2, is presented in a similar vein to 6.2 and contemplates how governance and reputation's

relationship has changed following the installation of a new government in 2010. Split into three parts, this details the reputational implications of moving from Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), the effect of local government austerity, and an increasing emphasis on devolution. Chapter 8 is on the topic of *Inward investment* and begins with section 8.1 entitled *Inward investment and reputation*. Separated into two parts, this begins by studying the relationship between inward investment and an external reputation with multinational corporations. It then moves on to understand the compatibility of reputation with other factors associated with greater levels of inward investment. Section 8.2*, Reputation: attracting and retaining workers and students* begins by reflecting on how a place's reputation influences levels of human capital based on quality of life. This then proceeds to focus on students, particularly how perceptions of a place can influence their levels of reputational capital to attract and retain the best available students.

Chapter 9 is the conclusion chapter and commences with *The 'Northern Powerhouse' and continuing place brand cynicism* (section 9.1). Section 9.2 summarises the findings of the thesis and documents what each of the findings chapters brings to the study. Section 9.3 regards the conceptual and theoretical contributions of the thesis. Three contributions – place branding and place reputation are interrelated, place reputation is a relational perspective and the relationship between leadership and reputation are detailed here. The conclusion chapter ends with section 9.4 that reflects on the possible limitations of the study and proposes some future directions for research in light of this.

Figure 1.1 – A map of NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol's location within England
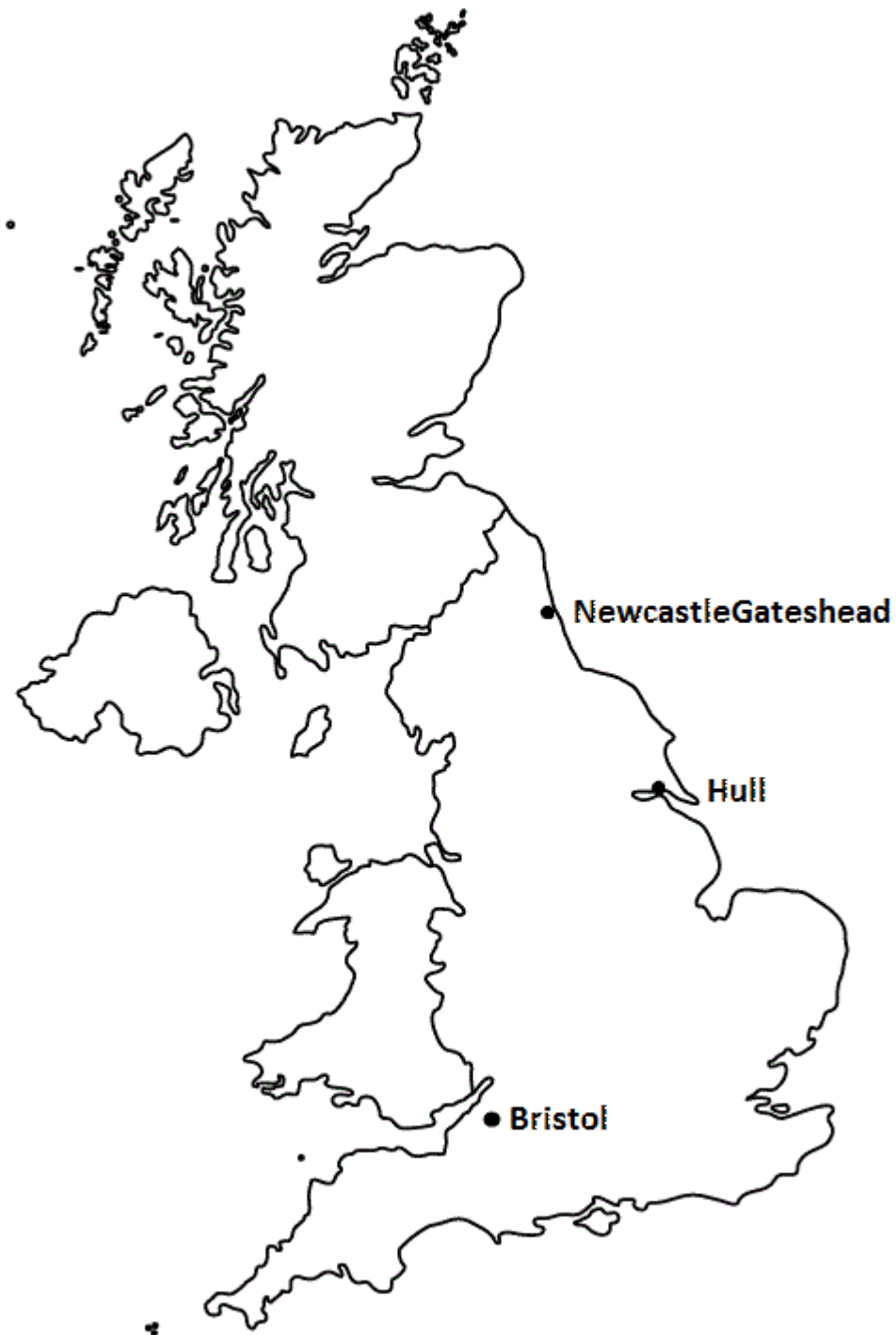
2 Beyond Place Branding

2.1 Introducing Place

This chapter introduces the study's academic context, explaining the idea of place reputation and investigating whether it could become a credible alternative to place branding. From this, the research recommends that place branding should be repositioned as part of the more comprehensive notion of place reputation. Further, it suggests that cities and regions can accumulate the intangible notion of reputational capital to improve their image. Split into six parts, the first part (2.1) begins by outlining the understanding of place adopted here. The relational and territorial debate in economic geography is detailed, followed by a section linking this to place branding. The second part (2.2) focuses on place branding, acting as a point of departure for the research. Beginning with a presentation of place branding's origins, definitions and key characteristics; this also considers the concept's increasingly bottom-up nature. This is followed by a critique of place branding which identifies four clear deficiencies of the concept. Based on this critique, I will begin to document a transition from place branding to place reputation. The third part (2.3) centres on reputation and starts with a section which introduces corporate reputation. The emergence of corporate reputation, some definitions and important themes - reputational capital and reputational risk are presented. The fourth part (2.4) presents the evidence for transferring corporate reputation to geographical entities and examines efforts from the interdisciplinary place branding and corporate literatures. The fifth part (2.5) explores the constituent elements of place reputation. This introduces theories of soft power, place shaping and a reduced place branding element, repositioned as part of place reputation. Finally the sixth part (2.6) unveils a place reputation framework. This begins by creating a definition for this notion and goes on to argue that this can better cope with the intricate place and justifies the role of trust in forming reputational capital for geographical entities.

2.1.1 Conceptualising place

This section attempts to explain the meaning of place to establish a suitable framework to support the creation of place reputation from a geographical perspective. Exploring accounts of place from a more general human geography

viewpoint, this begins by investigating how this work can contribute to the proposed research (Cresswell, 2004). The relational and territorial debate in economic geography is then examined, indicating that the research will be tackled from a more precise urban and economic geography perspective (Bulkeley, 2005, Hudson, 2007). This section ends by detailing the understanding of place adopted here and explaining how this relates to place branding and reputation (Pike, 2009).

Place is a fundamental object of study in human geography and it is important to establish what is precisely meant by this at the outset of the research. Cresswell (2004:12) argues that 'it has been one of the central tasks of human geography to make sense of it'. Therefore, it will be argued that place and human geography are inseparable and it is difficult to investigate place without a grounded geographical understanding. This is particularly important when approaching an interdisciplinary notion such as place branding as it will need to be clear that this topic is being tackled from a distinct human geography perspective. In turn, because place branding has been covered from a plethora of different angles and the proposed place reputation concept has roots in the corporate literature, it is significant that it is clear this is being approached from urban and economic geography. Emerging from the fact that place branding is what Sayer (2010) defines as a 'chaotic conception'; the notion is unsuitable to be tackled from a specific theoretical perspective. Consequently, it is important when developing an alternative in place reputation that some core geographical literature is utilised to create a conceptual framework that addresses the weaknesses discovered in place branding.

The research adopts the understanding that place can be viewed as a fluid and dynamic geographical entity. This is supported by Cresswell (2004), who offers a comprehensive overview of place influenced by the work of Yi-Fu Tuan (1977). It is important to define precisely what is meant by place at the beginning of this project. Cresswell (2004:12) defines this as 'place at a basic level, is space invested with meaning in the context of power'. His interpretation of the notion signifies that a sense of place is the result of the strength of emotional ties produced when attached to a certain geographical entity. This work also reaffirms the importance of power relations and that the way that they are expressed can shape and change a specific city or region. Place is also understood as a flexible geographical concept and Cresswell (2004:40) declares that 'place as an event is

marked by openness and change rather than boundedness and permanence'. Accordingly, this understanding views place as a fluid geographical entity and rejects claims that cities and regions are overly restricted by boundaries, a similar understanding to the relational perspective in economic geography. Amin (2004:34) introduces a relational approach as 'seen in this way, cities and regions come with no automatic promise of territorial or systemic integrity, since they are made through the spatiality of flow, juxtaposition, porosity and relational connectivity'. This interprets place as an unbounded and active geographical entity which is permeable and influenced by external pressures such as globalisation. Contrasting this is a territorial understanding of place which views geographical entities as being more rigid and defined by clear boundaries (Jonas, 2012). Traditionally, these concepts are interpreted as being divergent, however this project suggests this is not the case and they can be utilised together to produce a balanced comprehension of cities and regions.

Another idea associated with an understanding of place is time-space compression. Harvey (1996) argues that places have become products of the obstacle of distance which has become reduced by technological advances and globalisation. Harvey (1996:294) describes place as 'internally heterogeneous, dynamic configurations of relative "permanencies" within the overall spatio-temporal dynamics of socio-ecological processes'. This comprehends place as a fluid entity influenced by external forces which can be exhibited by geographical entities to shape processes of globalisation. Harvey's (1996) book also links in with early accounts of place marketing and he makes an explicit reference to how cities and regions can sell themselves intensified by a managerial to entrepreneurial shift in governance. Cresswell (2004:58) declares when referring to Harvey's (1996) work that 'the permanence of place and the mobility of capital are always in tension and places are constantly having to adapt to conditions beyond their boundaries. Places compete to get a share of the mobile capital – encouraging companies to invest in their particular form of fixity'. Accordingly, these perspectives could be useful when developing a conceptual framework as links have already been made to the place marketing literature which eventually became place branding.

This strikes similarities with Massey (1997) who explains the increasing impact of globalisation on the local geographical entity towards the 20th century's

conclusion. Massey's (1997:322) account of place is introduced as 'what gives place its specificity is not some long internalised history but the fact it is constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus'. As such, this views place as a fluid entity and gains its distinction not from its history but as a result of actively reinventing itself which is helping to shape and create a unique identity. This viewpoint also believes that places should not be restricted by clear-cut boundaries and can be interpreted as adjustable geographical entities. She argues (1997:322) that 'instead, then, of thinking of places as areas with boundaries around, they can be imagined as articulated movements in networks of social relations and understandings'. Thus, place should not be viewed as a rigid and motionless idea but can instead be susceptible to change and understood as an active construct influenced by forces of globalisation. The importance of this work is reaffirmed by Cresswell (2004:53) who claims that 'Doreen Massey's paper 'A Global Sense of Place' has been widely cited as a plea for a new conceptualisation of place as open and hybrid – a product of interconnecting flows – of routes rather than roots'. These progressive understandings of place (Harvey, 1996, Massey, 1997, Cresswell, 2004) could prove useful when developing a conceptual framework for the study as they all believe that place is a fluid idea imbued with contestations of power.

One of the recent debates in economic geography is whether to adopt a relational or territorial approach to conceptualising cities and regions. A relational understanding views place as open and unbounded, influenced by globalisation and social processes which help to create its distinctive identity. Alternatively a territorial approach views cities and regions as closed, more grounded and demonstrating tendencies which are confined to that specific geographical entity. The differences between the two approaches are summarised by Jonas (2012:263) as 'those notions of place and region that refer to bounded spatial units – the so-called territorial viewpoint – are being challenged and in some instances usurped, by concepts which draw attention to interspatial relations, flows and networks – the so-called relational viewpoint'. However, the terms 'relational' and 'territorial' are not as divided as they initially appear and it is possible for a conceptualisation of place to recognise and accept elements of both approaches. Additionally, it is feasible for an understanding to view places through a flexible, relational

understanding, however, simultaneously retaining a degree of structure more associated with a territorial viewpoint. Hudson (2007:1151) outlines that 'rather than take an either/or perspective on these dichotomies, therefore, it is argued that these must be seen from a both/and perspective'. This offers a balanced account of relational and territorial approaches to place and demonstrates that aspects of both perspectives can be acknowledged when developing an analytical framework. A similarly progressive stance is demonstrated by Bulkeley (2005:888) who argues that 'a recognition that scalar boundaries are fluid and contested, and that networks are bounded too, may provide the basis for further constructive dialogue'. These sources show that relational and territorial approaches are not as divergent as initially thought and advocates of both perspectives can recognise that a relational understanding of place can benefit from some aspects of a territorial approach and vice versa.

However, a largely relational perspective is adopted here and place will be viewed as a flexible geographical entity influenced by global processes and largely unrestricted by boundaries. Therefore, cities which are being investigated in this research are understood as adjustable in the wider context of overlapping with other cities and wider regions. Yeung (2005:48) expands this viewpoint by declaring that 'a relational approach to regional development seeks to identify the complex relational geometry comprising local and non-local actors, tangible and intangible assets, formal and informal institutional structures, and their interactive power relations'. Similarly, Pike (2007:1144) believes that 'regions are seen as open, porous and 'unbounded'. This interprets place as the total sum of the actors involved, its assets and characteristics, and views this in relation to globalisation and external, regional, national and international processes associated with that city or region. The relational perspective also connects with Massey's (1997) understanding of place. Amin (2004:34) states that 'within geography, Doreen Massey and her colleagues at the Open University have been formative in developing a relational sense of place and space supported by a rich vein of philosophical enquiry'. Based on this understanding, this project considers place as 'relational' and uses this understanding with other approaches in human geography in order to develop a conceptual framework for cities and regions. Nonetheless, the territorial understanding of place is not completely overlooked and the research also argues that cities and regions can maintain a degree of

structure and may still be considered as being bounded to an extent (Bulkeley, 2005).

In light of this an understanding can be established which attempts to conceptualise place for this research. Place can be defined as an unbounded notion influenced by external pressures, this project applies this understanding of geographical entities to develop a critical account of place branding and propose an alternative in the shape of place reputation. In turn, Bulkeley (2005) and Hudson's (2007) interpretation will be adopted asserting that both perspectives can work together to develop a conceptual framework for place reputation. This is similar in outlook to Pike (2009) who discusses the implications of applying the relational and territorial debate to place branding. Pike (2009:634) comments that 'polarised views that contrast *either* territorial or relational notions of space and place are poorly equipped to consider the often complex and overlapping ways in which tensions are evident in the entangled geographies of brands and branding'. In turn, this recognises Warnaby and Medway's (2013:358) assertion that a 'social constructionist and phenomenological dimensions of place' in the vein of Cresswell (2004) could be drawn upon in the place branding literature. The study aims to replicate this and demonstrates that it would be unsuitable to approach place branding and reputation from a distinct relational or territorial perspective. This is because places can demonstrate characteristics of both viewpoints and be considered both bounded to an extent and, nonetheless, not restricted by this but can also be viewed as open and porous, however still maintaining a degree of structure. On this reading, it is inappropriate to view relational and territorial approaches as dichotomous and this study, despite taking a mainly relational understanding, acknowledges and respects a territorial approach to produce a balanced conceptual framework. In addition, this chimes with Cresswell's (2004) conceptualisation of place as a fluid and dynamic construct that can be moulded by external influences such as globalisation. The next section focuses on place branding which firstly introduces the concept, presents some definitions and some key themes. This is followed by a presentation of a critique of place branding which is later addressed by corporate reputation and refers back to this conceptual understanding in the creation of a place reputation framework in part six.

2.2 Place Branding

This part introduces the concept of place branding and explains how it has become an important practice for local, regional and national governments alike. Place branding has garnered much attention over the last fifteen to twenty years as various places have begun to implement branding practices from the commercial sector. Many cities, regions and countries have invested vast resources in creating brands to attract greater investment and recognition. This section is split into two separate strands. The first strand (section 2.2.1) considers the origins, definitions and transitions of the place branding concept and is split into three parts. The first part presents the origins of place branding and outlines how this evolved from the 1980s idea of place marketing into the contemporary place brand (Harvey, 1989). The second part investigates the difficulty in establishing a precise definition and the key elements of a place branding campaign (Anholt, 2010a). The third part explains how some place branding initiatives are beginning to emerge which possess more community driven governance arrangements (Ind and Dokk Holm, 2012). The second strand (section 2.2.2) concentrates on a critique of place branding. This presents four of the most obvious flaws of place branding. First, this explains why places are too complicated to be branded (Kavaratzis, 2009, Van Ham, 2008). Second, this investigates how place brands have proved incomprehensive (Trueman et al. 2007, Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2007). Third, the homogenous and often non-distinctive nature of place brands shall be detailed (Turok, 2009, Anholt, 2010c). Fourth, the difficulty of measuring the effectiveness of place brands shall be assessed (Zenker, 2011, Go and Govers, 2012). This section concludes with an examination of the transition occurring from place branding to reputation management.

2.2.1 Place branding: origins, definitions and transitions

Despite being a relatively recent idea, place branding has existed in various forms for over a century and the idea of places using promotional activities to gain greater investment and recognition is nothing new. In fact, it has been done since the nineteenth century and was originally used to attract visitors to seaside resorts which had grown in popularity and became increasingly competitive due to the arrival of the railways (Ward, 1998). Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005:506)

introduce this as 'the conscious attempt of governments to shape a specifically-designed place identity and promote it to identified markets, whether external or internal is almost as old as civic government itself'. However, an academic understanding of place marketing did not emerge until the 1980s when a shift in the economic landscape began and cities progressed towards a more entrepreneurial approach to urban governance. Giovanardi (2012:33) declares that the 'place marketing discourse which ruled the field during the 1980s and the 1990s … can be considered the first organic effort of translating the application of marketing techniques to the realm of territories'. This resulted in the conceptualisation of place marketing, in which geographical entities attempted to transform their image by adopting approaches normally associated with corporations. Harvey's (1989) pioneering study on the shift from a managerial to entrepreneurial approach to governance occurring in the 1980s supplied the foundations for early attempts at place marketing. McCann (2009:120) reaffirms that "urban geographers' conceptualisation of contemporary city marketing is heavily influenced by David Harvey's classic article, "From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism"'. Chronicling the adjustment in governance that redefined the way that cities operated, the paper culminated in the emergence of several concepts including place marketing alongside the entrepreneurial city. The work on neoliberalism claimed that the purpose of cities was evolving from providing basic services and was expanding to include more enterprising activities, such as marketing, which intensified competition between cities and regions. This increased competition in a more globalised environment, and numerous geographical entities began to battle to stimulate greater economic growth.

Consequently, this intensified the need for the adoption of promotional activities to improve the reputations of places. In the UK, this coincided with deindustrialisation in the 1980s and the decline of the manufacturing industry. As these had defined many cities and regions for the past century, this incited social upheaval and meant that places searched for new functions to improve their standing. These shifts prompted the emergence of work on place marketing with notable examples including Ashworth and Voogd (1990) and Kearns and Philo (1993), which further aided the process of applying marketing practices to geographical entities. They recognised that a shift was occurring from a managerial to an entrepreneurial approach to governance and began to acknowledge an

increasing focus on promotional activities being adopted by UK towns and cities in the late 1980s and early 1990s. An example of a successful campaign is that of Bradford as referred to by Barke and Harrop (1994:106) as 'the celebrated pioneer was Bradford. [It] has become a model for marketing the industrial town'. This was achieved by applying new promotional techniques focusing on the city's connections with the Brontë family to boost tourism. A more prominent example of a successful place marketing initiative is Glasgow; the "Glasgow's Miles Better" campaign then became a blueprint for revitalising cities suffering after deindustrialisation. Gold (1994:23) emphasises that 'once popularly stereotyped as a city with poor housing ... labour discontent and gang violence, Glasgow tried hard to create a new imagery of culture and progress, typified by ... 'Glasgow's Miles Better''. Consequently, Glasgow became a good example of a place using promotional techniques alongside more tangible changes to the built environment to transform its image and change perceptions. Moreover, this highlights that marketing techniques used at the time were suitable for places and could prove effective in trying to improve their image.

The transition from place promotion and marketing to branding occurred in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Places began to follow the lead of corporations by producing branding campaigns to improve their reputation in what had become a highly globalised and competitive environment. A corporate brand is defined by Knox and Bickerton (2003) in Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2007:524) as 'the visual, verbal and behavioural expression of an organisation's unique business model'. Pasquinelli (2013:1) also claims that 'place branding consists in an adaptation of business theories and practices to places with an emphasis on corporate branding in order to establish a fair reputation and build a brand equity supporting the pursued development path'. This affirms the transition that materialised which encouraged places to adopt branding activities and enabled them to compete with cities and regions more globally. The arrival of place branding in academia is widely credited to a Simon Anholt (1998) article. Gertner (2011:91) reiterates that 'although earlier articles discuss place marketing, Simon Anholt's 1998 article is considered a turning point in the field's evolution, coining the idea of 'nation brands' and articulating the difference between 'place marketing and 'place branding''. Place branding began to differentiate between a narrow marketing approach consisting of logos and slogans to a supposedly more comprehensive

notion which included activities such as public relations. In spite of focusing on the nation state, this has resulted in the arrival of much work on place branding, whether for cities, regions or nations. As such, this has marked a major shift in theory and policy from the established place marketing concept towards a more inclusive notion of place branding. However, early efforts from the literature tended to concentrate on the concept's application to tourist resorts alongside a continued focus on how place branding relates to nations (Hankinson, 2001, Van Ham, 2001).

The shift from place marketing towards branding also marked a change in governance arrangements. Effectively, the concept expanded from being a minor activity solely undertaken by local authorities into a professional field managed by various public and private sector stakeholders overseen by destination marketing organisations (DMOs). Anholt (2006:2) reiterates that in relation to the nation state 'in most countries, there are many other bodies, agencies, ministries, special interest groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and companies all promoting their version of the country too'. Also, Van Ham (2008:129) suggests that 'numerous professional branding consultants offer their services to states, regions, cities and IOs [international organisations] who all doubt whether they can survive the demands of a mediatised global economy without adopting new strategies and tactics'. This emphasises the various actors from different sectors which can be involved in controlling a place brand. Also, this shows how the emergence of place branding intensified competition and interest in the concept with a wide range of new professionals becoming involved. Subsequently, place branding has transformed from being a minor activity carried out by some local authorities to one undertaken by numerous stakeholders in various towns, cities and countries. As such, marketing geographical entities has become an important global activity with high rewards for places that develop a successful branding initiative.

Trying to coin a precise definition of place branding is one of the concept's most debated aspects. Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005:508) declare that 'unfortunately there is no single accepted definition'. Additionally, Anholt (2010a:1) considers that 'it is difficult to see how a field of study or practice can mature unless some kind of consensus is reached on the definition of the field'. The lack of a definition is a product of the concept's interdisciplinary nature which has

seen perspectives from marketing, human geography and politics, to name a few, tackling place branding and has produced manifold definitions. Thus, an unclear analytical framework has been created which has caused confusion as to how the concept should be approached. Also, the judgement of whether a brand is a concrete and tangible product has further obscured the identification of an actual place branding initiative. Zenker (2011) in particular, argues that a brand is an intangible idea based on the perceptions of internal and external audiences. While Kavaratzis and Kalandides (2015:1370) argue that 'the mental associations that people form with brands are attributed crucial significance and very commonly, brands are defined as a set of associations or the sum of associations'. This viewpoint claims that a place can have a brand even if an actual branding campaign has not been created by local stakeholders and argues that this can still exist in the mind of various audiences.

A general definition would accept that place branding may be regarded as the application of branding strategies usually associated with corporations and products to different scales of place to attract increased investment and recognition. Hence, this implies that the unique characteristics and deeply rooted reputations of places can be replicated and simplified into a corporate-style branding initiative. However, a number of definitions from various disciplines are examined, to ascertain how the place branding concept has developed. First, Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2007:521), from a marketing perspective, claim that 'place branding is defined as the practice of applying brand strategy and other marketing techniques and disciplines to the economic, political and cultural development of cities, regions and countries'. Second, Van Ham (2010:136) from a constructivist, political viewpoint states that 'place branding can be considered an effort to manage, if not necessarily wield, the social power of a geographical location by using strategies developed in the commercial sector'. Third, Zenker and Braun (2010:3) from a more psychological perspective define a place brand as 'a network of associations in the consumers' mind based on the visual, verbal and behavioural expression of a place'. The differences in these definitions illustrate the clear difficulty faced in both theory and policy alike when establishing the precise meaning of place branding. However, the uncertainty can provide flexibility and with no clear guidelines on how to brand certain types of place differently, this enables decision-makers to create a somewhat distinctive

marketing campaign. Consequently, it is arguable that place branding does not require a single definition and that it could be accepted as a pluralistic concept, open to interpretation. Nonetheless, attempting to transfer an unclearly defined and ambiguous concept into practice as an effective long-term strategy, which garners increased awareness, economic growth and relates to a wide variety of audiences is an ambitious task. This has been widespread throughout theory and policy, with place branding retaining a largely top-down approach to governance, which has seen place brands, generated which focus specifically on certain audiences and overlooking others entirely such as residents (Trueman et al. 2007). The result of this has been the emergence of more grassroots, counter branding campaigns with prominent examples including Leeds and Birmingham. Disillusioned residents in Leeds campaigned against having the "Leeds, live it, love it" brand imposed upon them. In Birmingham, residents created a Facebook page which offered their thoughts on an alternative interpretation of their city (Braun et al. 2010).

Identifying place branding's key features has also proved an onerous task. There are multiple interpretations in the literature of what should be included in a branding campaign, how broad or narrow it should be, alongside its core purposes. Likewise, deciding whether this involves the more manageable, tangible aspects of a place or the more imagined, intangible perceptions is also debated. McCann (2007:120) argues that 'there is an intent by the actors described above to present what they see as the most attractive essence of their city to the world via an assemblage of cut-and-pasted tangible and intangible elements of its landscape, economy, society and culture'. Several tangible features, including the built environment, alongside intangible characteristics including visitor perceptions are important features of a branding campaign. This draws attention to the difficulties faced when developing a place brand, as it is not straightforward to improve intangible elements. At the same time, deciding the scale of the marketing activities to include as part of a place branding initiative has been contested throughout the literature. Kavaratzis (2009:26) declares that 'so far, obviously the most common application of place branding focuses on the visual elements of branding such as the creation of a new logo, the incorporation of a new slogan and, at best, the design of advertising campaigns around those visual elements'. Similarly, Van Ham (2010:137) argues that 'a place brand comprises "the totality of the thoughts,

feelings, associations and expectations that come to mind when a prospect or consumer is exposed to an entity's name, logo, products, services, events or any design or symbol representing them'. This underlines the lack of clarity in the literature in deciding what exactly should be created when using branding. Reductionist place brands which consist of a logo and a slogan and fail to match the breadth demonstrated in the literature have been produced. This raises doubts whether techniques developed in the marketing profession can really be reflected by places.

Recently there has been an academic focus on how some branding initiatives are becoming more community-focused. Ind and Dokk Holm (2012:46) explain that 'it is the process of brand building which is changing and becoming more open and participative'. This is beginning to show signs of evolution since the emergence of place marketing in the late 1980s. Place marketing was initially a completely top-down activity managed exclusively by local authorities. However, more recently, numerous interpretations of place branding have emerged particularly focusing on how some campaigns are now promoting greater resident involvement. This take on place branding has seen communities come to the heart of the consultation process when planning a brand and the idea has on occasions been constructed completely at a grassroots level by local residents. Braun et al. (2010:6) declare that 'since word-of-mouth is usually perceived as very authentic and trustworthy, this highlights again the important role of residents in the place brand communication process'. Also, Hospers (2011:173) considers that 'insights into the field of relationship marketing might guide the way for the development of warm marketing measures geared towards keeping existing residents and firms'. Subsequently, a shift is beginning to occur with academics recognising the importance of resident consultation when branding. The approach is starting to redefine the manner that place brands are managed by stakeholders and there is now a greater focus on word-of-mouth and community involvement when creating a brand. This provides evidence that alternative options are being adopted by stakeholders involved in implementing place branding. The emergence of more community-driven initiatives understandably shows that more authority is being delegated to local residents in the creation of some place brands. However, this could also be a product of the changing economic climate meaning that stakeholders do not have the available resources when designing a brand.

Although there have been some promising developments regarding place branding more recently I will now proceed to detail a fourfold critique of the concept as a point of departure for the study.

2.2.2 Place branding: an emerging critique

Although place branding has enjoyed increased popularity over the past 15 to 20 years, theory and policy have reached an impasse as several shortcomings have been uncovered. First, due to its interdisciplinary nature, the number of approaches investigating place branding have produced a plethora of definitions. Go and Govers (2010:xxiv) argue that 'a serious limitation of the field remains that is, it lacks a traditional theory to accommodate "the context specificity of places"'. Resulting in an unclear theoretical framework and a sporadic body of literature which is insufficient in effectively analysing place brands. Kavaratzis (2009:27) emphasises that 'place branding is certainly a complex issue and what seems to be missing is a 'common language' that would facilitate interaction and further theoretical clarification of the issues involved'. This means that there are differing opinions on how to form a coherent theoretical perspective for the interdisciplinary place branding concept. In addition, this is compounded by place branding being what Sayer (2010) describes as a 'chaotic conception', in that the wide range of backgrounds this notion has been approached from and the number of definitions coined renders the concept unsuitable to be tackled from a specific theoretical viewpoint.

Second, the main focus of the criticism is directed at the concept itself with Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005:510) declaring that 'place branding, like place marketing in general, is impossible because places are not products, governments are not producers and users are not consumers'. Anholt (2010b:2) declares that 'the idea to 'do branding' to a country (or to a city or region) in the same way that companies 'do branding' to their products is both vain and foolish'. In addition, more recent efforts claim that applying marketing practices and in particular branding to geographical entities creates many issues (Medway et al. 2015). This shows that place branding is being approached with increased reluctance in the academic literature. The inadequate concept stems from a pluralistic definition and

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unclear theoretical framework with no consensus in the literature on how place branding should be understood.

The first weakness of place branding is that places are too complicated to be replicated in a corporate-style branding package. This is due to the assumption by stakeholders that the intricate place can be branded in the same manner as the usually more straightforward corporation. Kavaratzis (2009:29) claims that 'the complexities involved in city branding are ever greater than corporate branding and the difficulties are more acute'. Turok (2009:26) emphasises that 'the branding of cities is infinitely more difficult than for commercial products because of their complex and contradictory qualities'. These quotes demonstrate that the assumption that places can be branded using the same methods as corporations and products is misguided. There are a number of sources of this complexity. First, places have several audiences to communicate with compared to corporations and need to be able to satisfy residents, students, tourists and investors alike to develop an inclusive brand. Anholt (2010b:5) reinforces that 'the tiniest village is infinitely more complex, more diverse and less unified than the largest corporation, because of the different reasons why people are there'. Similarly, Mueller and Schade (2012:82) emphasise that 'due to the number of mostly independently organised internal target groups of places with often diverging goals the problems of finding, communicating and keeping the brand promise is accepted to be a far more complex task compared to the branding of products'. This reinforces the difficulty of projecting a brand which has to encompass many different audiences compared to a corporation, indicative of the complexity of place and the sizeable task which stakeholders face. Although large corporations can possess multiple target audiences and demonstrate a degree of complexity, this is more straightforward compared to places as corporations were created with specific target audiences in mind. In contrast, places have a deeper history which creates more embedded perceptions and they need to simultaneously relate to several audiences to a varying degree to improve their reputations. Go and Govers (2012:6) reaffirm that 'some of the intrinsic characteristics of place make it difficult to control and manage place in a direct and straightforward sense as one might a commercial organisation'. Usually resulting in a narrow brand geared towards the requirements of one particular audience, this has failed to constitute a holistic strategy and cannot cope with the more complicated place.

Second, the governance arrangements in places are more convoluted compared to corporations. This is reflected in a typical city where stakeholders including councils, destination marketers and prominent local businesses are all involved in place brand management. Van Ham (2008:134) reiterates that 'place branding involves multiple stakeholders, often with competing interests; unlike product branding, place branding is seldom under the control of one central authority'. Furthermore, Clegg and Kornberger (2010:9) claim that 'brands are contested because diverse groups of stakeholders in the place … struggle over conflicting interpretations. Legally speaking, commercial brands are owned by organisations that hold the copyright over them, but who owns a city?". The public, private and civic sector stakeholders from various organisations involved in place brand management can often express different opinions on how the concept should be developed. Affecting the application of a place brand and the lack of agreement on how this should be utilised, this could restrict the brand from improving the profile of that specific place. Additionally, when combined with the range of audiences a place brand should communicate with, this indicates that attempts to reduce a place to a simple, corporate-style branding package are unrealistic.

The second weakness of place branding is that branding packages are incomprehensive. It has become common for place brands to focus on one aspect of a place and fail to relate to various associated audiences, becoming a highly selective entity. This has produced place brands concentrating on attracting one particular audience, such as students, and neglecting other important target audiences, usually residents. However, a place brand should be versatile and ensure that multiple target audiences are, to some extent being catered for. Trueman et al. (2007:21) suggest that 'to market city brands effectively there is a need to take an integrated 'warts and all' approach since local communities, the built environment, heritage and infrastructure, form a constituent part of image and identity'. Similarly, Turok (2009:26) explains that:

'The features that appeal to incoming students differ from … delegates attending business conventions, inward investors opening new offices, or suburban residents seeking good public services and sophisticated shopping. If

these different and sometimes conflicting needs are papered over, the city brand gets diluted and loses its impact'.

Moreover, place brands do not only suffer from inadequate scope in terms of their audiences but also of their full application, with only certain elements of place branding being implemented. Ashworth and Kavartzis (2007:522) reaffirm that 'all too often cities adopt only a part of the branding process, namely the development of a catchy slogan and/or the design of a new logo to be attached in promotional material'. This usually results in a narrow application of place brands which has seen stakeholders concentrate on a single aspect and producing a visual identity rather than a multifaceted image management strategy. In some cases, place brands have been created which only consist of a logo and a slogan and neglect other important aspects including attracting inward investment. The complexity of place also affects place branding's durability and questions the capability of stakeholders to properly implement a concept with origins in marketing. Van Ham (2010:139) emphasises that 'most policymakers still lack the mind set and the hands-on knowledge and experience to effectively construe and implement place branding strategies'. As such, the experience that stakeholders possess from various professions may have no relevance to place branding. Combined with overlooking key target audiences, this reinforces the lack of integration involved in place branding strategies and indicates that the activity is unsuitable for geographical entities.

The third weakness of place branding is that the brands created are homogenous and have proved to be vehicles of uniformity and convergence. First, some places have decided to develop their brand based on campaigns that have been successful elsewhere and near-identical place brands have subsequently emerged. Turok (2009:15) notes 'there is also a danger that the pursuit of distinctiveness has become a recipe with similar ingredients everywhere'. Also, Clegg and Kornberger (2010:9) claim that 'the problem is, however, that once an identity is perceived to be successful, it becomes an object for mimesis'. This reflects that rather than creating a brand which is exclusive to that particular place; stakeholders have instead developed one based on practices that may have worked in a particular place at a certain time. This results in various places adopting largely similar campaigns that have failed to create the image desired by

stakeholders and typically only constitutes a short-term practice. Although it is useful to follow procedures that have been successful in other places, this tends to involve the reproduction of similar logos and slogans (Kavaratzis and Kalandides, 2015). Therefore, this produces uniformity rather than distinction and makes differentiating between brands in a global marketplace difficult.

In addition to this, the brands developed have failed to capture the unique characteristics of place. However, it should be recognised that it is difficult for every city to develop a unique branding campaign, constructed in a novel and distinctive manner. Places have struggled to develop brands which succeed in reflecting local traditions and aid the creation of a distinctive identity. Anholt (2010c:13) underlines that 'most consultants and even some scholars persist in a naïve and superficial notion of "place branding" that is nothing more than ordinary marketing and corporate identity'. Moreover, Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005:507) claim that 'public sector planners have long been prone to the adoption, overuse and then consignment to oblivion, of fashionable slogans as a result perhaps of their necessity to convince political decision-makers who place a premium on novelty, succinctness and simplicity'. This results in the production of brands of little relevance to a particular place based on initiatives developed by corporations. The approach commonly used does not involve any long-term planning and relies on commercial strategies which can be inappropriate for the more intricate place. Also, this can be caused by failing to consult multiple target audiences and by isolating local residents from the decision-making process. Overall, imitating place brands that have been successful elsewhere combined with failing to develop a brand reflecting a place's unique characteristics and collaborating with local residents makes the concept unachievable for cities and regions.

Another weakness of place branding is the difficulty involved in measuring the concept's effectiveness. There have been many attempts to evaluate place brands such as the Anholt-Gfk Roper nation brand index and the Saffron European City Brand Barometer (Zenker, 2011). However, they have proved ineffective and unable to cope with the concept's ambiguity. First, this is due to the unclear definition of place branding and the lack of a precise consensus of what the notion actually entails. Van Ham (2008:133) reaffirms that 'measuring the success of place branding remains difficult, as does establishing a list of best practices'. In

addition, Zenker (2011:40) argues that 'place marketers differ greatly on their definitions of [place branding] … often rendering the techniques too simple and ineffective and the results too inaccurate and difficult to compare against other places'. This is a fundamental deficiency as being unable to identify a place brand makes an effective comparison unlikely and is caused by adopting only part of the branding campaign as outlined beforehand. For example, if a stakeholder's interpretation of place branding is just a logo or slogan it is unclear whether this constitutes a measurable branding strategy (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2007). However, this is mainly caused by a lack of theoretical grounding which makes defining place branding difficult and trying to compare different branding initiatives problematic. Comparing a poorly defined concept with an unclear theoretical background has created challenges for academics and practitioners alike that have been difficult to overcome.

Second, the different scales of place adopting brands makes comparison an arduous task. A cross-section of geographical entities including villages, market towns, major cities and nations have tried to implement place brands. This is complicated further by a lack of guidelines on how to brand a nation differently from a village and also borrowing branding techniques from corporations which have caused greater confusion. Go and Govers (2012:219) argue that 'the place branding concept refers to branding studies in the context of cities, regions and nation states. However, the properties of each differ markedly which renders definition ambiguous and comparison hard, if not impossible'. Furthermore, Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2007:529) state that 'cities launch and re-launch branding campaigns but as yet no framework of comparison allowing lessons to be drawn. Each new campaign remains unique to the place that initiates it'. This demonstrates the lack of guidelines which explain how to brand different geographical entities appropriately. However, the fact that selected cities are larger and more powerful than some nation states complicates matters. This obscures and makes the identification of a place branding campaign and brand measurement a problematic task as there is no evidence within the literature of how different scales of place should be marketed properly. Also, combined with trying to differentiate place brands from corporate or product brands, this exacerbates the difficulties encountered with measurement. In addition, attempting to compare a poorly defined and ambiguous concept with an elaborate

framework which fails to distinguish between various scales of place makes place brand measurement a complex undertaking.

The evidence presented in this section indicates that place branding is undergoing a transition and is experiencing increased criticism in academia. The concept's effectiveness and suitability for geographical entities is coming under scrutiny which highlights that applying marketing practices to places is a flawed idea. This is because places are too complicated to be branded, place brands are incomprehensive, fail to capture a place's unique characteristics and are difficult to measure. It is argued in this project that these weaknesses can be addressed by corporate reputation. This concept suggests that corporations can gain increased investment and recognition through establishing trustworthy relationships and greater communication with various audiences. The research aims to apply this to the more intricate geographical entity and claims that places can improve their standing by demonstrating these principles instead of producing an artificial branding campaign. Moreover, this tries to build on some embryonic evidence from both the corporate and place branding literatures of reputation being applied to place with more useful efforts utilised including Go and Govers (2011) and Kuss (2009). This is reinforced by geographical literature which attempts to conceptualise place in order to develop a theoretical understanding grounded distinctly in human geography (Cresswell, 2004). As such, this aims to create a comprehensive strategy composed of several constituent elements including soft power, place shaping and a repositioned place branding element designed to overcome weaknesses uncovered in the original concept. Also, by attempting to contend with the more complicated nature of places, assisted by the notion of reputational capital, this will hopefully be more capable of relating to various audiences with the ultimate aim of improving a place's reputation in various domains, with several audiences and in different sectors.

2.3 Reputation

This section examines the corporate idea of reputation and presents some of the characteristics involved with developing this strategy. First, it is detailed how

reputation has emerged as a key practice for corporations, outlining some common definitions associated with the concept (Ind and Schultz, 2010, Helm, 2011). Second, a key theme for the study, reputational capital, is discussed. This suggests that corporations can construct and form the elusive notion of reputation with various audiences to improve their standing over time (Jackson, 2004, Wreschniok and Klewes, 2009). Third, the idea of reputational risk is presented. This concept asserts that there is a need for corporations to continually monitor their reputations, in case of a negative event that may threaten levels of reputational capital (Eccles et al. 2007, Power et al. 2009). This then moves on to present some significant characteristics of corporate reputation. The first characteristic is the importance of exhibiting trustworthy relationships which can result in greater credibility being developed with stakeholders and customers alike (Eisenegger, 2009, Ind and Schultz, 2010). The second concerns the significance of demonstrating greater and different forms of communication with various audiences (Thißen, 2009, Fisher-Buttinger and Vallaster, 2011).

In the corporate literature, reputation has emerged as a popular concept as organisations seek to move away from branding activities and instead display greater trustworthy behaviour with stakeholders and customers (Ind and Schultz, 2010). Reputation management has always been important. However, this has increased in importance more recently by events including the global financial crisis and subsequent recession where the levels of trust and communication demonstrated by firms has been scrutinised. Related to this is the suggestion that branding campaigns produced by organisations are becoming ineffective having neglected honest relationships with various audiences. Fisher-Buttinger and Vallaster (2011:63) emphasise that 'numerous corporate scandals, the credit crisis, the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the war in Iraq, have all contributed to a general erosion of trust and increased general scrutiny of corporate actions. Against this backdrop of distrust, sustainability values and ethical behaviour enjoy newly won importance'. Additionally, Ind and Schultz (2010:1) argue that brands 'were seemingly powerful, and virtuous. Any inconvenient truths were hidden by glossy packaging … and big-bang marketing campaigns. Now, as organisations become ever more transparent, people can see behind the marketing façade, and are questioning what they are told'. The research suggests that places should follow

the lead of corporations and concentrate on developing a reputation management strategy rather than pursuing unsuitable branding activities.

Several definitions relating to corporate reputation have been formed. In their influential work, Fombrun and Van Riel (1997:10) define reputation as:

'A collective representation of a firm's past actions and result that describes the firm's ability to deliver valued outcomes to multiple stakeholders. It gauges a firm's relative standing both internally with employees and externally with its stakeholders, in both its competitive and institutional environments'.

Klewes and Wreschniok (2009:3) state that 'reputation can best be understood as the sum of the expectations that the public places on the future behaviour of an agent or institution based on the public's direct or indirect experiences'. Also, Helm (2011:13) claims that reputation is 'a stakeholder's overall evaluation of a firm in respect to its past, present and future handling of stakeholder relationships'. The varied definitions produced highlights the challenges faced when attempting to define a largely intangible concept. Also, trying to measure the strength of corporations on the basis of their reputations is a demanding task due to the difficulty involved in trying to create a widely-accepted definition. Operationalising such definitions is difficult, as it is hard to identify and measure intangible characteristics such as the levels of trust and the amount of communication exhibited by a corporation. However, the importance of these intangible attributes in the current economic climate are beginning to affect the strength of a corporations more tangible assets. This combined with a reduction in branding activities suggests that reputation management and measurement is growing in importance across the corporate literature. Moreover, this links in with places which, like corporations, also need to focus on managing their less tangible assets to improve their image and gain greater investment and recognition (McCann, 2009). The potential of applying this idea to geographical entities will be explored throughout the project, assisted by the notion of reputational capital and conceptually reinforced by human geography work that aims to understand place.

2.3.1 Reputational capital

Reputational capital is an intangible asset that can be constructed and formed by organisations over time to improve their standing. An elusive notion, when gradually harnessed by organisations during a long-term period, this can be deployed to improve their overall reputation with various audiences and in different domains and sectors. This has a theoretical base in Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) *The Forms of Capital* and is closely linked to social, cultural and symbolic capital. This idea may help to overcome some of the shortcomings associated with place branding. However, like reputation itself, reputational capital is not a straightforward idea to define. Jackson (2004:104) explains reputational capital as being:

'The trick is to move from establishing reputation and credibility to building reputational capital. Your firm's reputational capital expands as it pursues pathways of fundamental virtue that cut across all of its constituencies (stakeholder relationships) over time. It takes time to build trust. Reputational capital is built and sustained over the long term'.

Also, Wreschniok and Klewes (2009:364) added that 'this trust builds the informal framework of a company. This framework provides "return in cooperation" and produces Reputational Capital, the less the costs for supervising and exercising control'. These quotes illustrate the differences between reputational capital and reputation per se, in that reputational capital may be a more elusive asset garnered over the long-term. This also introduces the prominence of trust as part of building reputational capital, in that developing trustworthy behaviour with various audiences occurs in tandem with an accumulation of reputational capital as a whole. However, this suggests that through accumulating reputational capital that a firm may be able to progress its reputation through utilising an established and attractive reputation rather than persuasion. In this project, this is tested in relation to geographical entities and also explored whether cities and regions can adopt these practices to improve their standing in different domains with several audiences and in various sectors.

2.3.2 Reputational risk

Another concept is reputational risk which focuses on how corporations can monitor their intangible assets over time. This can be especially useful during a crisis situation as reputational capital can be safeguarded to ensure that a corporation's overall reputation does not suffer as a result of a negative event. Nonetheless, there is a requirement that firms should continually manage their reputation rather than responding to negative events as they occur. Eccles et al (2007:104) introduce reputational risk as 'in an economy where 70% to 80% of market value comes from hard-to-assess intangible assets ... organisations are especially vulnerable to anything that damages their reputations'. Power et al. (2009:317) declare that 'the further investigation and diagnosis of reputational risk as a logic of organising is one of the most pressing and important issues of our late modern age'. These quotes illustrate the importance of reputational risk, in that a place's reputation is such an elusive and delicate construct that it needs to be continually protected to ensure that it is not destroyed over time. While initially applied to firms, this could also be applied to places and strikes similarities with Go and Govers (2011) work on the subject which relates it to geographical entities. Especially following the inception of social media whereby organisations and places both need to be cautious in relation to their output on platforms including Twitter as the way in which they engage could influence levels of reputational capital which need to be protected (Aula, 2010). Overall, although this does not feature as prominently as reputational capital as a key conceptual theme for the study, it is still important to reflect on the implications of reputational risk for geographical entities.

2.3.3 Trust

It is clear in the corporate literature that establishing trustworthy relationships with various audiences is fundamental in attempting to develop a more positive reputation. Moreover, demonstrating trust with the key audiences associated with a firm can also help to gradually build credibility over time as well. Building trust can be achieved through displaying consistent, transparent behaviour over a long-term period that can translate into an honest relationship with different audiences. By developing a trustworthy relationship with several audiences, this may increase

the likelihood of reputational capital with those respective groups being protected in the event of a negative or crisis situation. Eisenegger (2009:12) presents this as 'the more we have learned to trust an agent ... the more comfortable we are likely to be relying on that agent in the long term. For, trust is based on the experience that an agent has fulfilled our expectations in the past. And trust creates confidence that this agent will also fulfil our expectations in the future'. Additionally, Ind and Schultz (2010:3) suggest that 'trust has to be earned over time through the experience of promises delivered, which means less of a focus on telling people how great your brand is and more on building relevant content'. Another concept originally applied to firms, trust is beginning to be considered in relation to geographical entities (Heebels, 2013).

2.3.4 Communication

It is apparent throughout the literature that greater and different channels of communication should be utilised as part of a reputation management strategy. Businesses have begun to focus on providing clear, consistent messages to stakeholders and customers when trying to create a good reputation. It has become important to manage this carefully, ensuring that communicative activities are conducted appropriately since corporate actions are now under increased scrutiny heightened recently by the arrival of social media. Thiβen (2009:216) argues that 'communication is the main vehicle for safeguarding reputation during times of crisis, but communication also poses a risk to reputation since dishonesty, inconsistency, dilatoriness or even deception will all cause great damage in the long run'. Similarly, Fisher-Buttinger and Vallaster (2011:60) state that 'proactive and tailored communication therefore is the key to successful corporate reputation'. However, this raises questions about transparency as deciding what to broadcast to specific audiences suggests that organisations are perhaps being selective with information communicated rather than being honest.

Although it is of basic importance that communication will be demonstrated, it is imperative this is undertaken properly as poorly managed communication could prove detrimental to a firm's long-term reputation. Since the inception of social media, this has become significant, particularly when using Twitter. Aula (2010:44) reaffirms that 'in terms of strategic reputation management, what is

important is that social media content cannot be controlled in advance and that content cannot be managed in the same way as ... conventional media such as TV or newspapers'. In turn, a thorough consideration of how to communicate appropriately with different audiences is required. For example, a place would not establish dialogue with students in the same way as they would with investors. This is important in the current economic climate where the actions of corporations and places are under greater surveillance. Consequently, demonstrating a professional attitude and transmitting controlled and appropriate responses to customers via communication networks is a key part of a reputation management strategy and this should be managed carefully to try and stimulate greater investment and recognition.

The evidence presented in this section of the literature review shows that corporations are beginning to minimise branding activities in favour of reputation management. It detailed the transition taking place, the definitions of reputation and the associated themes of reputational capital and risk. Also, it highlighted two important characteristics of reputation management – accumulating trust and increasing communication with various audiences. The project suggests that these two characteristics can be reflected by the more complicated geographical entity through various interventions such as being more transparent and embracing social media. Achieved by beginning to move away from marketing practices and instead focusing on developing a more comprehensive strategy, this may attract greater investment and recognition for places. The next section considers some of the more useful evidence present in the interdisciplinary place branding literature and in the corporate literature of reputation being applied to place. This provides some foundations to build which can be reinforced with the evidence explored in this section alongside human geography work that attempts to conceptualise place. Overall, this will aid the development of a reputation management framework for geographical entities in part six.

2.4 Placing reputation

This section presents evidence taken from human geography, the interdisciplinary field of place branding and the corporate literature of reputation being applied to geographical entities. Overall, there are currently only fragmented links made between reputation and place across all three bodies of literature. This has created numerous gaps which may be filled by literatures around corporate reputation and theoretically reinforced by human geography work which conceptualises place. By combining these with the idea of reputational capital, it is hoped that the shortcomings in the place branding literature can be overcome by a more credible alternative of place reputation. This section begins by investigating efforts from a human geography perspective, followed by reviews of place branding and corporate literatures of reputation as applied to cities and regions.

From a human geography perspective, there have been attempts which although relevant; fail to provide a sufficient conceptualisation of place reputation. For instance, work produced to date which appears to focus on reputation has instead centred on agglomeration and cluster theory rather than image and perception (Glückler, 2007). Another example that discusses reputation focuses on tourist destinations rather than cities and regions and is more quantitative in nature (Alderighi and Lorenzini, 2013). Work in the corporate literature generally does not engage with the reputations of spatial entities. A paper on the sizeable task faced when trying to brand China and manage its reputation has failed to apply the corporate theory of reputation to places and therefore does not constitute a suitable example to be used here (Loo and Davies, 2006). This existing literature offers a rationale for a greater geographical understanding of the reputations of places and identifies some gaps to be explored in the interdisciplinary place branding and corporate literatures in trying to further develop this understanding.

2.4.1 Reputation and place: the interdisciplinary place branding literature

In the place branding literature there are various examples that attempt to link reputation with cities and regions. This section chronicles the efforts to apply the corporate notion of reputation to geographical entities from an interdisciplinary place branding perspective. As such, this is explored across two separate strands.

First, this investigates literature which examines the reputations of geographical entities from the perspective of public diplomacy and looks at the theme of competitive identity (Anholt, 2006, 2010b, Van Ham, 2008, 2010). Second, this analyses more recent attempts which move towards more of a geographical understanding and utilise the idea of trust as a key method for places to enhance their reputations (Go and Govers, 2011, Heebels, 2013). Due to being a 'chaotic conception' (Sayer, 2010), this disparate body of literature, primarily focusing on place branding and has been approached from a wide variety of disciplines. Whilst place branding has usually received greater attention, there is some rudimentary, yet encouraging, evidence which has focused on the reputations of places; however, this typically remains subordinate to the established place brand. Early efforts tend to focus on reputation's application to the nation state and how the idea could be used in competition between different countries. Van Ham (2001:2) argues that 'having a bad reputation or none at all is a serious handicap for a state seeking to remain competitive in the international arena'. Writing from a constructivist viewpoint grounded in political science, this is the earliest example of reputation being applied to geographical entities. Moreover, this highlights how at the turn of the century, reputation management was starting to become more significant for nations in an increasingly globalised environment.

The strength of the relationship between reputation and place is increased through the lens of public diplomacy. Van Ham (2008:132) claims that 'branding, therefore is not only about selling products, services, and ideas and gaining market share and attention: it is also all about managing identity, loyalty and reputation'. In addition, Anholt (2010b:20) declares that "brand is a word that captures the idea of reputation observed, reputation valued and reputation managed; and we live in a world in which reputation counts for a great deal'. Therefore, from this perspective there has been more of a shift towards understanding the reputations of places, but this still maintains close links to place branding. However, the previously subordinate reputation has started to gain momentum and appears to be growing in prominence in relation to the increasingly ineffective and more criticised place brand. This critical stance is assisted by a wider context of public diplomacy and is illustrated by various national case studies. Also, this possesses conceptual links with Nye's (2004a, 2004b) idea of soft power, which claims that

nations can gain investment and recognition by being an attractive option rather than demonstrating military-style force.

Other more recent work continues in this vein still focuses on the application of reputation to nations, while engaging with questions of soft power, it still does so from the perspective of place branding, rather than place reputation. Van Ham (2010:136) asserts that 'states used place branding to affect, even modify their reputation to similar means and processes to commercial brands'. Thus, although place branding is now being approached with greater scepticism, this illustrates that reputation has yet to be explored as a valuable alternative to the established concept. However, there is evidence that a transition is occurring which underlines the potential of conceptualising reputation in relation to geographical entities and furthering this understanding. Van Ham (2010:157) also explains that 'the growing importance of place branding implies a shift in political paradigms, away from the modern world of geopolitics and force to the postmodern world of images and reputations'. This again resonates with Nye's (2004a, 2004b) work on soft power and explains a greater shift in emphasis towards the nation state becoming a 'soft' and attractive proposition in favour of using 'hard' and forceful military power. Nonetheless, regardless of some encouraging evidence, this still does not go far enough in constituting a sufficient conceptualisation of place reputation and the concept is still secondary to place branding. Moreover, Van Ham (2010) makes an assumption that there is a clear dichotomy between countries which undertake 'hard', military power and 'soft', coercive power, focusing on perceptions and judgements. This is misguided, as it is possible for nations to exhibit elements of both 'hard' and 'soft' power to improve and build a positive reputation whilst maintaining a strong military presence. Overall, despite Van Ham (2010) making an explicit reference to reputation, there is still a greater focus required from theory and policy alike when applying the concept to geographical entities. This is necessary to establish a more suitable reputation management strategy that is able to cope with the complexity of places and simultaneously generate greater investment and recognition for cities and regions.

A term closely linked to the public diplomacy strand of literature alongside the overall development of the concept of place reputation is entitled 'competitive identity' (Anholt, 2006). This notion suggested that cities and regions should align activities including inward investment with brand management as part of a joined-

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up initiative to gain greater investment and recognition. Anholt (2006:3) defines this as 'Competitive Identity is the term I use to describe the synthesis of brand management with public diplomacy and with trade, investment, tourism and export promotion'. This work represented an earlier shift in the place branding literature which instead of focusing on the development of logos and slogans, proposes a more comprehensive alternative strategy designed to improve a place's standing. Furthermore, the pertinence of reputation is acknowledged in this work and Anholt (2006:7) claims that:

'Every inhabited place on earth has a reputation, just as products and companies have brand images. The brand images of products and companies may be deliberately created through advertising and marketing, while the reputations of places tend to come about in a more complex and more random way'.

Hence, he recognises the growing significance of reputation and the difficulty involved with managing an elusive and intangible aspect of a place's identity usually understood in terms of culture and attractiveness. Also, these assets are more difficult to improve, no matter how many tangible changes are made, long lasting perceptions can often outweigh any concrete developments, hence, this is why reputation is an important concept.

The second strand of literature has started to move towards more of a geographical understanding of the reputations of places. In addition, this strand of literature utilises the idea of trust, a key part of corporate reputation, which adds further weight to arguments of a greater shift towards place reputation. These, more recent attempts have become increasingly clear-cut and provide some promising evidence to build on during this research. Go and Govers (2011:xii) state that 'in turbulent times, reputation is a territorial actors most precious asset'. They also claim that (2011:xxx) that 'the overall brand reputation of a particular territorial actors is a function of its reputation among various stakeholders in specific, multiple categories'. This underlines the growing prominence of reputation when connected to geographical entities and hints that the relationship between branding and reputation may now be swinging in favour of reputation. Moreover, this builds on a prominent theme of corporate reputation, reputational

risk (Eccles et al. 2007, Power et al. 2009), and provides a clear link between the corporate literatures and the interdisciplinary field of place branding.

In light of this encouraging evidence, there have been further attempts from this field that can help to enhance our understanding of place reputation. Heebels (2013) centres on how book publishers in Amsterdam can manage their reputations through the creation of trustworthy relationships with different stakeholders. Heebels (2013:257) recommends that 'future research should further examine the idea of the social construction of symbolic place and how different places are employed in cultural meaning-making and build on the various aspects of reputation and trust and how these are created and destroyed'. This shows that the interdisciplinary place branding literature is beginning to embrace a robust geographical perspective. In addition, despite Heebels' (2013) work being in relation to Amsterdam's book publishing industry rather than places per se, this is linked to Massey's (1997) influential theory outlined earlier which argues that place is a dynamic and fluid social construct and provides some foundations to be built on. In turn, this constitutes a valuable attempt at progressing an understanding of the reputations of cities and regions and illustrates that the literature may be starting to move away from place branding.

Trust, a key theme in the corporate literature has been reflected, predominantly in this strand of work which provides some embryonic evidence of reputation being applied to place from the interdisciplinary place branding literature. The asset of trust which if demonstrated over a period of time can be fundamental to accumulating greater reputational capital and developing a more positive overall reputation. Go and Govers (2011:xi) suggest that 'to regain public confidence in the wake of the economic crisis, overcoming the trust meltdown requires more than vaguely worded marketing practice'. Therefore, this illustrates the value of implementing this asset in the current economic climate where confidence and trust in corporations, stakeholders and relevantly those involved in places has diminished. Also, the significance of trust is reinforced as part of a reputation management strategy, as also demonstrated by Heebels (2013), this provides further evidence of corporate reputation being applied to geographical entities.

However, there is also evidence of trust being acknowledged as an important part of achieving a better understanding of place reputation in the public

diplomacy strand of literature. Van Ham (2008:128) states that 'similar to commercial brands, image and reputation are built on factors such as trust and customer satisfaction'. Also, Anholt (2010b:20) argues that 'the importance of reputation, in fact, tends to increase as societies become larger, more diffuse and more complex: this is because most human activities depend on trust in order to proceed'. The influence of trust is emphasised as underpinning a reputation management strategy, which chimes with the corporate literature where this is considered to be a fundamental principle of reputation. Additionally, this strikes similarities, not only with the corporate literature but also with work from more of a geographical perspective which adds further weight to a rationale for furthering an understanding of place reputation. Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged that trust can be acquired in many different ways and due to the intricate nature of places this should be achieved with multiple audiences to improve a place's standing comprehensively. Overall, this highlights that more recent evidence from the interdisciplinary place branding literature (Go and Govers, 2011, Heebels, 2013) is proving fruitful in trying to conceive the idea of place reputation. Although ideas of competitive identity (Anholt, 2006) and work tackled from more of a public diplomacy perspective (Van Ham, 2008, Anholt 2010b) have proved useful. The fact that reputation has remained subordinate to place branding indicates that there is still a requirement to advance this understanding. As such, encouraging yet somewhat embryonic evidence from the interdisciplinary place branding literature can be drawn on during the project to understand place reputation from a distinct geographical viewpoint.

2.4.2 Reputation and place: the corporate literature

This section presents examples from the corporate literature of reputation being applied to place to highlight the lack of work which adapts the concept to geographical entities. Generally, efforts from the corporate literature have solely concentrated on nations and also lack the academic grounding shown in the interdisciplinary place branding literature. The field is instead dominated by practitioners and consultants and a disparate body of literature has been produced; these will be discussed in as far as they are relevant. In a similar way to the place branding literature earlier attempts at applying reputation to

geographical entities have centred on its execution in relation to nations. Passow et al.'s (2005) work which focused on the principality of Liechtenstein proposes that a measurement system can be developed that is capable of comparing the standing of different countries. Nonetheless, in terms of place reputation, this attempt is unsatisfactory and a fundamental shortcoming regards their failure to acknowledge that places are more complicated than corporations. In essence this treats the nation state as nothing more than a large organisation. Passow et al. (2005:325) declare that 'in an increasingly globalised world, not only companies need favourable reputations, nations do as well. This is because they are competing for inward investment, trade and tourism. And in these fields an intact reputation is critical to success'. However, due to the wide variety of stakeholders involved in place at both local and regional level, highlighted as the fundamental shortcoming of the place branding concept, cities and regions are infinitely more complicated than their corporate counterparts. Therefore, places need to simultaneously relate to a diverse range of audiences. Due to their convoluted governance arrangements, trying to implement a reputation management strategy could prove to be a formidable task. In addition, by concentrating on nations and an inability to compensate for the more complicated geographical entity, Passow et al. (2005) fail to make a suitable contribution to debates on place reputation for this project.

There have been continued efforts from the corporate literature to apply the idea of reputation to nations rather than cities or regions. This views reputation as a valuable and measurable asset which, when managed carefully, can gradually allow a country to improve its standing over time (Yalçindag and Schankin, 2009). This is applied to Turkey and they argue that to gain admission to the European Union, assembling reputational capital, underpinned by trustworthy and honest behaviour is fundamental to achieving this ambition. They claim (2009:273) that 'in the last 10 years, countries and regions have increasingly realised that if reputation matters to them, it needs to be managed'. The work asserts that reputation management has experienced a recent growth in popularity and this recommends that the concept should be taken seriously and harnessed carefully to generate greater investment and recognition. Moreover, this underlines the growing scrutiny that nations now find themselves under. Exacerbated further by the arrival of social media, the actions of particular countries are under the

spotlight more than ever. They also outline (2009:275) that 'country reputation management is not about generating ideal and to some extent random images. It is also about demonstrating how the country manages to first fulfil and then shape the expectations of key stakeholder groups with respect to competence, integrity and attractiveness'. They indicate that reputation is about consistently meeting the expectations of different audiences to develop a trustworthy relationship that over time translates into reputational capital. Furthermore, this suggests that rather than focusing on developing a superficial branding campaign, an alternative can be found in the shape of reputation. In turn, enhancing a nation's reputation is achievable by demonstrating consistent, honest behaviour over a long term period as part of a strategy to generate greater investment and recognition.

An emergent theme in the corporate literature is 'community reputation' a notion that has attempted to devolve the idea of reputation to cities and regions rather than a continued focus on the nation state. Kuss (2009:367) argues that 'reputation management for communities and (federal) states, clusters and cities is seen as a panacea for declining populations and a lack of investors, political crises, a falloff in tourism and a lack of commitment on the part of citizens'. This understanding suggests that places are typically implementing reputation management practices in response to a negative event occurring within their boundaries, akin to the idea of reputational risk (Eccles et al. 2007, Power et al. 2009, Go and Govers, 2011). This supports Kuss' (2009) interpretation of reputation as a delicate notion that should be protected in a time of crisis. Nonetheless, enforcing an active reputation management strategy could be beneficial for a city or region. Especially in the age of social media, there is a need to react to positive news stories, in a way that can strengthen a place's reputation.

Additionally, there is a requirement that a geographical entity is guarded against more negative coverage to protect reputational capital both internally and externally. Kuss (2009:268) also declares that 'every statement and every message used in reputation communication must be anchored in fact'. This indicates that to acquire a more positive reputation that a truthful account of a place must be delivered which is reinforced by solid factual evidence. Also, an enhanced reputation should be formed by honesty and accurate information rather than a superficial marketing campaign that creates expectations that cannot realistically be met. Kuss' (2009) work is the most relevant example to be drawn from the

corporate literature and can be utilised in the development of a place reputation framework by virtue of applying this concept to cities and regions rather than nations. As such, the work of Passow et al. (2005) and Yalçindag and Schankin (2009), despite applying reputation to place, focus on nations, whilst Kuss (2009) devolves this idea of 'community reputation' to smaller geographical entities and is thus more valuable for a further conceptualisation of place reputation. In the present research, Kuss' (2009) paper is utilised alongside evidence from the interdisciplinary place branding literature (Van Ham, 2010, Go and Govers, 2011) and human geography work that conceptualises place (Cresswell, 2004, Bulkeley, 2005, Hudson, 2007). In addition, Turok (2009)'s effort at grounding place branding practices in urban and economic geography literatures could also help to further conceptualise place reputation when assisted by the idea of reputational capital (Jackson, 2004, Wreschniok and Klewes, 2009). However, the embryonic nature of the corporate literature reiterates the need to redevelop the link between reputation and place. This is currently producing an underspecified and loosely handled geographies of reputation which fails to conceptualise a framework suitable for cities and regions, instead focusing almost entirely on the nation state.

The evidence in this section presented efforts from the corporate and interdisciplinary place branding literatures of the corporate idea of reputation being applied to geographical entities. It identified the lack of literature available which applies reputation to cities and regions; although there are some encouraging attempts from both fields of literature (Go and Govers, 2011, Kuss, 2009). This is investigated further during the research and it is argued that places should follow the lead of corporations and begin to decrease branding activities in favour of managing their reputations (Ind and Schultz, 2010). Also, this attempts to transfer the notion of reputation to the more complicated geographical entity and recommends that places can improve their standing by developing a more holistic reputation management strategy in favour of branding practices. Key to this is the idea of reputational capital, an elusive asset that can be harnessed by cities and regions in various domains, with several audiences and in different sectors as a way of enhancing their reputation (Jackson, 2004, Wreschniok and Klewes, 2009). Links between reputational capital and Bourdieu's (1986) *Forms of Capital* adds conceptual weight to fundamental human geography work which conceptualises

place to develop an analytical framework suitable for the study. Place reputation is assisted by numerous constituent elements including soft power (Nye, 2004a, 2004b), place shaping (Collinge and Gibney, 2010) and a reduced, more distinctive and community-oriented branding element (Turok, 2009). The constituent elements ensure that place reputation is a suitably comprehensive concept and reaffirm this as a more credible alternative to the established place brand. While asserting that we should move on from place branding, this does not suggest that we should abandon the concept altogether and it will be investigated if this functions better when reduced and repositioned as part of a more comprehensive strategy. This is documented in the fifth part of the literature review which details the constituent elements that place reputation is supported by as part of an alternative notion.

2.5 Constituent elements

This section details the constituent elements of place reputation. First, the notion of soft power is introduced. Soft power suggests that nations can improve their standing through purely being an attractive option; this project, however, attempts to transfer this to cities and regions (Nye, 2004a, 2004b). Second, the idea of place shaping is outlined. Place shaping asserts that a place's identity can be created by local stakeholders to enhance its reputation (Collinge and Gibney, 2010). Third, a more distinctive and bottom-up branding element is presented. Repositioned as part of a wider reputation management strategy, this aims to capture the unique essence of a specific place whilst remaining grounded in the local community (Trueman et al. 2007).

2.5.1 Soft power

Soft power is a theory which originates from political science, in the sub-field of international relations and more specifically public diplomacy. It was championed by Joseph Nye (2004a, 2004b), an academic who had formerly been a high-profile figure in the US government under President Clinton. Soft power is usually applied

to nations and is based around the idea that a country can improve its standing by solely being an attractive option. Nye (2004a:256) defines this as 'the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments'. Cox (2012:170) further describes this as 'a nation's ability to accomplish its goals through attraction to its policies and culture, rather than coercion'. Soft power can be considered as an intangible way of generating increased economic growth for a particular place. This underlines the value of a place managing the more immeasurable aspects of its reputation such as culture and attractiveness. Fan (2008:5) reinforces that soft power 'is relative, intangible, and context based. Due to its diversified sources, soft power is difficult to measure and control'. Furthermore, regardless of the number of concrete changes a place makes to its more tangible assets such as the built environment, a city can still be renowned for outdated perceptions. There are various important characteristics linked with soft power. Nye (2008:95) lists 'the ability to establish preferences ... associated with intangible assets such as an attractive personality, culture, political values and institutions and policies that are seen as legitimate or having moral authority'. Therefore, it is clear that soft power is an elusive notion which is difficult to manage. However, this still needs to be monitored as being an attractive proposition and recognising less measurable outputs such as cultural assets can often outweigh more concrete developments such as improving the built environment.

Soft power can be considered as the opposite to hard power where nations use coercive military force to achieve their goals. Nye (2004b:256) defines hard power as 'the ability to coerce grows out of a country's military and economic might'. However, to view soft and hard power as binary as Van Ham (2010) does is misguided. He interprets the two concepts as being dichotomous; however it is entirely possible for a nation to exhibit elements of both soft and hard power to improve their standing. For example, it is not unusual for countries to try and improve their more intangible assets such as managing public relations whilst maintaining a strong military presence. The gap between these two concepts is played down by Nye (2008:107) who argues that 'power in a global age, more than ever, will include a soft dimension of attraction as well as the hard dimensions of coercion and inducement'. In the current global climate it is clear that soft and hard power are being combined for nations to achieve their objectives and wield

greater influence. An example being China who have accumulated vast soft power yet still maintain a strong military presence. Accordingly, it is feasible for a country to improve their image and concentrate on appearing attractive whilst undertaking more forceful operations designed to show a display of military strength. An example of how hard power can impact the more intangible and soft elements of a nation is America's involvement in the Iraq war in 2003. The attractiveness of the United States to other nations fell significantly following the controversial invasion of Iraq by using harder military-style force (Nye, 2004a).

The research seeks to transfer this notion to smaller geographical entities and claims that cities and regions should concentrate on improving their more intangible assets and try to become an attractive proposition to boost their standing. This is applicable to cities and regions as it has become increasingly important for geographical entities to manage their intangible characteristics to improve their reputation. As such, building on fragmented work from the public diplomacy strand of the place branding literature including Van Ham (2008) and Anholt (2010a) this tries to devolve this concept to the local and regional level. Therefore, it is hoped that soft power can be reflected by cities and regions as a useful tool to try and stimulate greater economic growth.

2.5.2 Place shaping

Place shaping is an underdeveloped concept linked to place leadership and formed in the field of local and regional development from more of a business studies perspective. Collinge and Gibney (2010:476) define this as the understanding 'that places can be created and changed – made and shaped – in a deliberate manner according to purposes that are consciously espoused by local agencies'. Place shaping aims to devolve decision-making to local authorities and suggests that an identity can be created, unique to that particular place, designed locally rather than through regional or national government. Moreover, this argues that economic growth can be achieved which is sympathetic to certain local characteristics rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach to economic development. The idea is a result of Lyon's (2007) report into local government which recommends that decision-makers should be given greater freedom and appointed the role of "place shapers" who are trusted to stimulate growth based around the strengths of that

city or region. Collinge and Gibney (2010:475) stated that the report 'emphasised the role of local authorities as 'place-shapers' with responsibility for developing not only the local economy and the built environment, but also for moulding the locality as a whole'. Lyon's (2007) report is of great importance as this illustrates the responsibility that should be given to local stakeholders to shape the purpose of their place based on distinctive qualities.

There have also been attempts to link this concept with place branding. Mabey and Freeman (2010:519) state that 'a deeper and more considered awareness of the historical, political and ideological context of a given place shaping project may assist a more sustained and successful leadership and branding of place in the long run'. This demonstrates the potential for place shaping to work in tandem with place branding as a constituent element of a wider reputation management strategy. The two are complimentary because they both possess similar goals in trying to create a unique identity for that particular place based on its strengths to attract greater investment and recognition. For place shaping this is achieved by delegating authority to local stakeholders to design a distinctive identity to improve their reputation. In contrast, a revamped place brand would reflect the unique features of that particular place and display greater community involvement to improve its image. It is apparent that both concepts can be used in combination to create an original identity for a particular place. This is accomplished by providing local stakeholders with greater responsibility alongside developing a distinctive marketing campaign that is grounded in the local community.

2.5.3 Bottom-up and distinctive place branding

A place branding element can be retained and repositioned as part of a wider reputation management strategy. A revamped place brand may express the unique characteristics of a specific place alongside remaining grounded in the local community as part of a bottom-up initiative. This follows Van Ham (2008:132) who argues that 'place branding stands in a long tradition of reputation management'. The proposed research also recommends that the significance of place branding should be decreased and absorbed into a more holistic reputation management strategy. First, this seeks to capture the unique qualities of a city or

region to develop a distinctive marketing campaign. Van Ham (2001:3) argues that 'to stand out in the crowd, assertive branding is essential'. Similarly, Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2007:525) declare that 'cities are neither products nor corporations in the traditional meaning of the terms and therefore, a distinct form of branding is needed'. As a result, a more diluted branding element may help to better capture the unique essence of that particular place assisting its promotion in a confident and more assured manner to improve its reputation. This can relate to multiple audiences and when adopted by institutions based in that place, this ensures that a consistent message is projected. However, it may be acknowledged that not every place can be unique and it is difficult to develop an original branding campaign exclusive to that selected locality. Turok's (2009:15) argument that 'there is also a danger that the pursuit of distinctiveness becomes a recipe with similar ingredients everywhere' links in with this understanding. It is suggested that in trying to appear distinctive, places are following the same practices that have been successful elsewhere and are generating homogeneity rather than distinction. As such, a distinctive place brand may benefit from an accurate representation of that place which translates into a feasible, long-term initiative relating to various audiences.

Second, a reduced place branding element can also be grounded in the local community. More recently, branding practices have started to promote greater resident engagement. Braun et al. (2010:1) outline that 'one major issue is the role of residents in the formation and communication of place brands and their involvement in the place branding process'. This demonstrates that academia is beginning to recognise that greater engagement with local residents is occurring in the conception of branding activities. Furthermore, this illustrates that place branding is starting to change from the completely top-down 1980s notion of place marketing managed solely by local authorities. Place branding is now becoming more grounded in the local community, seeing residents come to the centre of the consultation process when campaigns are designed. Hence, a reduced place branding element can therefore be retained as part of the more comprehensive idea of place reputation. A new branding initiative attempts to capture the unique essence of that place while simultaneously promoting greater community involvement. This also addresses the deficiencies discovered in the original

approach to place branding and should be more capable of coping with the complexity of place supported by a broader reputation management strategy.

2.6 Place reputation framework

Place reputation aims to provide a credible alternative to the established place brand. The proposed concept represents a more holistic, long-term initiative with place branding repositioned as one of several constituent elements. Primarily, it is hoped that place reputation is more capable of coping with the complex place. It is also anticipated that the concept can overcome the restrictive nature of branding campaigns, constituting a more distinctive strategy that can be measured in terms of its effectiveness. The framework is presented in three sections. The first section tries to develop a definition of place reputation. This begins with an analysis of literature which explains why reputation management is vital during the current economic climate (Kuss, 2009). Following this is an attempt to coin a precise definition for the concept (Anholt 2010b, Go and Govers, 2011). The second section outlines how place reputation could be more capable of coping with the intricate place. This starts by identifying work from the interdisciplinary place branding and corporate literatures that could aid the development of a place reputation framework (Kuss, 2009, Heebels, 2013). It will then be argued that human geography work which conceptualises place can help the alternative notion better contend with the complicated geographical entity (Massey, 1997, Cresswell 2004). The third section presents the importance of trust as part of the concept and moves on to justify how place reputation could become a more useful strategy than place branding (Eisenegger, 2009, Heebels, 2013).

2.6.1 Defining place reputation

The research suggests that places should follow the lead of corporations and begin to focus on reputation management rather than continuing to pursue branding practices. In addition, it is proposed that a more holistic and long-term initiative

should be developed in the form of place reputation that aims to address weaknesses uncovered in place branding. Using reputational capital, enhancing a place's reputation involves accumulating trust and increasing communication with several audiences, in different domains and in various sectors to achieve greater investment and recognition. It has become important to embrace these practices following years of economic downturn where levels of confidence in corporations, products and also decision-makers involved in place have diminished. Eisenegger (2009:20) suggests that –

'This crisis is not only about nose-diving share prices, the collapse of once reputable banks and automobile companies, the bankruptcy of entire national economies or the danger of a global recession. This crisis is much more than that. It is a giant crisis of trust and reputation for the entire economic system'.

Similarly, Kuss (2009:266) argues that 'the only new development in the light of the economic crisis is the shortage of money available to national states, institutions, regions and communities'. This illustrates the current state of the economic climate and hints at a lack of faith being shown in organisations, products and, most likely, stakeholders involved in place. Exacerbating this is the arrival of social media including Twitter which has meant that places are under increased scrutiny and need to manage their reputations continuously. Go and Govers (2011:8) comment that 'the growth of social media in particular has rendered communities immersive and caused decision-makers to redraw geographical, industrial and ethical boundaries'. They uncover some of the difficulties involved with social media and emphasise the need for decision-makers to manage their reputations carefully across various platforms.

The research follows claims made in the corporate literature that organisations are beginning to relinquish marketing practices and are instead focusing on reputation management. Ind and Schultz (2010:1) declare that 'marketers are increasingly turning away from traditional advertising and focusing on direct communications with customers'. Also, Zarco da Camara (2011:57) considers that 'marketing-based approaches will continue to be tactically useful but recent research implies that a more strategic and holistic view is necessary to capture the complexities of modern reputation management'. This evidence

explains that corporations are beginning to sacrifice branding campaigns in favour of forming and mobilising reputational capital with various audiences. The research argues that this can be translated to places and recommends that branding practices should be reduced and repositioned as part of the broader notion of place reputation.

One of the fundamental shortcomings of place branding is the lack of a precise definition and the absence of a consensus in the literature on what exactly constitutes a branding campaign. Working towards creating a definition for place reputation, this reviews attempts already undertaken from the interdisciplinary place branding and corporate literatures to provide some foundations to develop this concept. Anholt (2010b:20) declares that 'brand is a word that captures the idea of reputation observed, reputation valued and reputation managed; and we live in a world which reputation counts for a great deal'. This research acknowledges that this viewpoint can add value to the study by proposing that place branding should only be part of the wider notion of place reputation. Also, Go and Govers (2011:xxx) state that 'the overall brand reputation of a particular territorial actor is a function of its reputation among various stakeholders in specific, multiple categories'. This is an embryonic definition and a rare attempt to apply reputation to geographical entities, however, this can be harnessed to further develop the idea of place reputation. Accordingly, this signifies that a reputation should be developed in a comprehensive manner with various audiences to improve a place's standing. From these, place reputation can be defined as *a broad concept underpinned by trust and greater communication which if demonstrated over time can translate into reputational capital in various domains, with several audiences and in different sectors to improve the standing of a geographical entity*. In addition, place reputation is a more holistic strategy which seeks to overcome the inadequacies uncovered in place branding with a particular focus on being more equipped to deal with the complicated geographical entity. Place reputation also includes the constituent elements of soft power, place shaping and a repositioned branding element designed to reflect the distinctive characteristics of that place whilst remaining grounded in the local community.

One of place reputation's key characteristics is that the concept is largely intangible. Consequently, shaping a place's reputation is not that easy as it is founded on long-term perceptions that are deeply embedded and difficult to

overcome. Doorley and Garcia (2006:8) argue that 'the reason most organisations do not have formal programmes to manage reputation is that they view it as something "soft" – intangible. Yet as nebulous as reputation can seem, it has real, tangible value'. Similarly Anholt (2006:6) emphasises that 'if a company, product or service acquires a positive, powerful and solid reputation, this becomes an asset of enormous value: probably more valuable, in fact than all of the tangible assets of the organisation itself'. The value of reputation is reiterated and although the concept is, to an extent, elusive, it still needs to be carefully protected by cities and regions to try and improve their standing.

2.6.2 Is place reputation more capable of dealing with the complicated geographical entity?

A failure to accommodate the intricacies of place in practices initially designed for corporations and products is the most profound weakness of the place branding concept. Place is viewed as being complicated for two reasons. First, geographical entities should communicate with a diverse range of audiences: residents, tourists, students and investors need to be catered for in an attempt to achieve greater investment and recognition (Anholt, 2010a). Place branding campaigns only tend to focus on one particular market and neglect others which produces a skewed representation of a specific place geared towards a selected audience. Second, the governance arrangements in cities and regions are quite complicated. In a typical place there are multiple stakeholders involved in planning any strategy designed to improve place reputation. As a result, these stakeholders, originating from a wide variety of public, private and civic sector backgrounds, can demonstrate conflicting agendas and trying to agree on the best method to improve a place's standing is not a straightforward task (Van Ham, 2008). It is proposed here that place reputation may be able to cope better with the complex city or region. Through adopting a clear human geography perspective and utilising work that aims to understand how the notion of place operates such as Cresswell (2004). This clarifies that the interdisciplinary and fragmented place branding literature and the corporate idea of reputation are being approached from a coherent conceptual position. Also, by grounding my viewpoint in some further fundamental

geographical work such as Massey (1997), this further reinforces the perspective adopted.

Moving more precisely into the economic geography sub-discipline and debates of whether to adopt a relational or territorial understanding of geographical entities, this project takes more of a relational viewpoint. Accordingly, this asserts that place is a fluid and dynamic entity, somewhat unrestricted by boundaries (Amin, 2004). Supposedly contrasting the relational perspective is a territorial approach which argues that cities and regions are more rigid and are defined by clear boundaries (Jonas, 2012). However, the position taken in this research does not completely overlook a territorial perspective and it suggests that while place is viewed as a flexible and active, relational concept, this still acknowledges that cities and regions can maintain a degree of structure, more associated with a territorial viewpoint. This understanding links in with Bulkeley (2005) and Hudson's (2007) progressive claims that both perspectives can be used in combination and they are not as divided as they may initially appear. Similarly, McCann and Ward (2010:175) recommend that 'while motion and 'relationality define contemporary policy-making this is only half of the picture. Policies and policy-making are also intensely and fundamentally local, grounded and territorial'. As such, by accepting that cities and regions are fluid and dynamic, but, to an extent, can remain bounded and may also demonstrate a degree of structure our understanding of place may be improved. Also, this ensures that a broader comprehension of place which does not overlook the territorial perspective is achieved that develops a more balanced understanding of how cities and regions operate.

Nonetheless, there is an argument that places do now find themselves in a similar position to corporations and also need to concentrate on building trustworthy relationships with various audiences to form greater reputational capital. It is asserted that cities and regions should now instead move towards developing more trustworthy relationships with various audiences as well, a trend that has started to become exhibited by corporations (Ind and Schultz, 2010). However, despite not having to relate to as diverse a range of audiences and not possessing as much of an embedded history compared to places, firms can also demonstrate complexity as well. Here, some examples from the corporate literature are positioned under greater scrutiny in the further development of a

place reputation framework and to address the complexity of cities and regions. First, Kuss' (2009) work could be useful to help to contend with the intricate place. His paper, from a corporate perspective, proposes the concept of "community reputation" and is a rare example of reputation being applied to cities and regions rather than countries. Kuss (2009:270) declares that 'the communicative task of creating a reputation for cities and regions in the 21st century has become increasingly important in recent years'. The understanding here demonstrates that corporate reputation can, in fact, be implemented by cities and regions and reiterates that this elusive notion does require management. This suggests that reputation is growing in prominence and is beginning to be transferred from organisations to certain scales of place, indicating that the practice may be translated to cities and regions. Also, Kuss (2009:270) claims that 'the strategy here is quite conventional: a long-term plan with consistent messages'. Thus, reputation is a more enduring strategy compared to place branding as marketing campaigns tend to only be short-lived. Nevertheless, a carefully planned and comprehensive strategy, place reputation could constitute a more effective alternative to place branding.

In addition, Heebels' (2013) work could be effective when trying to conceptualise place reputation. Heebels (2013:257) proposes that 'future research should further examine the idea of the social construction of symbolic place and how different places are employed in cultural meaning-making, and build on the various aspects of reputation and trust and how these are created and destroyed'. This is a rare attempt to connect corporate reputation with human geography work that looks to conceptualise place and therefore this is a valuable effort to draw on to better understand the reputations of cities and regions. Also, by referring to Massey (1997), who seeks to understand place in this paper, Heebels (2013) recommends that a relational and dynamic understanding should be adopted that could help to reduce place's complexity and supplies some evidence to build on during the study. Combined with the evidence from Bulkeley (2005) and Hudson (2007), this supplies foundations for the research and further strengthens the possibility of place reputation becoming a suitable alternative to place branding.

2.6.3 The importance of trust for place reputation

A fundamental principle of a positive reputation is consistent trustworthy behaviour demonstrated over a long-term period. Additionally, maintaining an honest and transparent relationship with various audiences can be essential when building reputational capital. The dominance of place branding saw cities and regions focus on producing glossy promotional campaigns instead of transmitting useful information and building a rapport with a wide range of audiences. Therefore, shifting the focus of stakeholders in place to developing trustworthy relationships with various audiences has become a key facet of building a more positive reputation. The importance of developing a trustworthy relationship is emphasised throughout the interdisciplinary place branding and corporate literatures. First, Eisenegger (2009:11) asserts that 'it is trust – not power, wealth or even love – that is the most important operational resource in our society'. Also, Heebels (2013:250) argues that 'trust/control is defined as an expectation that a subject will have the competencies and goodwill to perform future actions that are aimed at producing positive results for the truster in a specific social structure'. Moreover, it can be argued that it is not possible for a positive reputation to be developed without the basis of a trustworthy understanding that increases in strength over time and translates into reputational capital with several audiences, in different domains and various sectors.

   Furthermore, the amount of trust accumulated also links in with reputational capital, a key idea for the study. Constructing and forming reputational capital with several audiences, in various domains and in different sectors allows a city or region to target precisely how they can enhance their reputation over time (Jackson, 2004, Wreschniok and Klewes, 2009). Moreover, its elusive and intangible nature makes this delicate notion difficult to accumulate and once it has been built up it needs to be carefully protected to prevent the levels of reputational capital accumulated being threatened. This links in with the notion of reputational risk whereby reputation needs to be continually monitored by cities and regions, especially during a crisis situation (Go and Govers, 2011). This is especially pertinent during an era where social media (Aula, 2010) means that geographical entities alongside organisations and products find themselves under greater scrutiny than ever. Thus, retaining levels of reputational capital through exhibiting greater trust and communication has become increasingly significant for cities and

regions. However, despite the importance of reputational risk, I will proceed with the notion of reputational capital as the central conceptual theme for the study. This signifies that the reputations of geographical entities when combined with a human geography perspective on place (Cresswell, 2004) can be treated with greater rigour that may help to overcome the limitations of the disparate and chaotic conception (Sayer, 2010) of place branding.

Consequently, it is investigated whether place reputation is a more credible alternative to the established place brand and also if this constitutes a holistic strategy that is capable of dealing with the complicated place. The research asserts that stakeholders should focus on accumulating trust (Eisenegger, 2009) and increasing levels of communication (Thiβen, 2009) in any attempt to try and accrue greater reputational capital with several audiences, different domains and various sectors. The idea is further enhanced by the current economic climate where levels of confidence in corporations, products and decision-makers involved in place are low (Fisher-Buttinger and Vallaster, 2011). Human geography work (Cresswell, 2004) that aims to understand place is utilised to conceptually reinforce the proposed concept and clarifies that this interdisciplinary notion is being tackled from a specific academic viewpoint. In turn, this is assisted by the constituent elements of soft power, place shaping and a reduced, repositioned branding element. Soft power will be transferred from the nation state to cities and regions and it is argued that greater investment and recognition can be received purely by being an attractive proposition (Nye, 2004a). The research also recommends a greater emphasis on place shaping (Lyons, 2005), an underdeveloped notion which claims that power should be devolved to local decision-makers to stimulate economic growth. Additionally, a reduced place branding element can be retained as part of a comprehensive strategy, more distinctive and grounded in the local community in a repositioned initiative (Trueman et al. 2007).

3 Methodology

The aim of this chapter is to develop a methodological framework to investigate whether a reputation management strategy can be developed for cities and regions as an alternative to place branding. Moreover, place branding may not be withdrawn altogether and could be repositioned as part of the more comprehensive notion of place reputation, a concept designed to attract greater investment and recognition for geographical entities. The methodology is examined in four sections. It begins with the introduction that identifies research challenges and the requirements of the methodology. It explains how a qualitative approach, based around semi-structured interviews, meets these challenges and requirements. The second section evaluates the academic literature on semi-structured interviews by outlining, justifying and considering the limitations of the method. The third section illustrates the case-study selection process. This shows how prospective case-study cities compare with NewcastleGateshead across a range of variables. The fourth section outlines the research design. This proposes the research strategy adopted and introduces the three aspects of a place's reputation – culture-led regeneration, governance and inward investment which are the focus of the empirical analysis.

3.1 Introducing the challenges and the requirements of the methodology

Various challenges are posed by the overarching aim of the study, of trying to understand and explain the idea of place reputation and investigate whether this could become a credible alternative to the established place brand. The main challenge here is the uncertainty involved when introducing a new concept with local and regional stakeholders as they could take some convincing that this idea is worthwhile. Additionally, there is a possibility that some interviewees may not welcome place reputation as a suitable alternative to place branding, potentially impacting the quality of the interview. Another challenge is trying to decide how many cities should be compared with NewcastleGateshead, the type of cities to be chosen and which variables should support their inclusion. It is important for

myself to achieve a balance between quality and quantity when selecting case-studies. If too many are chosen, this could restrict the depth of analysis achieved; conversely, the researcher should ensure that enough case-studies are selected as this may limit the level of detail, increase the risk of anomalies and make comparing practices in different cities problematic. This connects with debates in the social sciences about intensive and extensive research; a more intensive approach is used by focusing on precise qualitative work (Sayer, 2010). There are also several requirements which the methods should fulfil. First, it is essential that this is a robust process backed-up with relevant literature. Second, the methodology chapter should clearly outline the research design; justify methods chosen alongside accounting for any ethical issues. This is needed to ensure that the method is a robust and comprehensive practice that is appropriate for undertaking the study. A largely qualitative approach, which focuses on three case studies in the form of English second-tier cities, will be adopted for this project. This consists of the method of semi-structured interviews with local and regional stakeholders based in these cities on the topic of place reputation.

3.1.1 Qualitative research

The research forgoes more quantitative practices due to the difficulty of measuring and mapping place branding and reputation. The suitability of taking a qualitative approach is summarised by Lazar (2004:14) who argues that 'qualitative researchers find that people's words provide greater access to their subjective meaning than do statistical trends'. This fits in with my understanding that determining, let alone comparing branding and reputational practices is a difficult task due to the intangible nature of these concepts (Van Ham, 2008). A qualitative approach is supported by several case-studies to achieve a detailed understanding of reputation management in cities. The benefits of using case-studies are outlined by Flyvbjerg (2006:241) who claims that 'the case study is a necessary and sufficient method for certain important research tasks in the social sciences, and it is a method that holds up well when compared to other methods in the gamut of social science research methodology'. Barnes et al. (2007:21) reiterate that 'case-study research, once the exception, is now standard. And a wide range of qualitative and intensive research methodologies – in-depth interviews,

ethnography, discourse analysis, oral histories ... all have a place'. Furthermore, this may provide flexibility, maintain the study's comparative element and is able to achieve a detailed understanding of reputational issues in particular cities.

3.2 Research methods: interviewing local and regional stakeholders

The types of stakeholders who will be interviewed are from various public and private sector organisations, which are involved in managing the reputations of particular cities. These participants, power-broking stakeholders were selected as they will provide an insight into the strategies and processes used to shape and change the reputations of places in a way that would be unlikely to be achieved by questioning residents, for instance. Some key features of this procedure are presented in the following three parts. The first part considers the semi-structured interviewing technique and explains how this type of questioning allows us to answer the overall aim. This focuses on the method's flexibility, introduces the issues of power and explains the in-depth understanding that it can provide. The second part considers the impact that power can have on semi-structured interviews. This part begins by debating how the possible elite status of some participants may affect the interview situation. Also, this is followed by outlining some actions that can be taken to reduce the dominance of the participant.

70 semi-structured interviews were undertaken with local and regional stakeholders between April and December 2014 on the topic of place reputation. Participants were first recruited through the NewcastleGateshead Initiative (NGI) and their database of partners which practically entirely covered the 23 interviews held in this urban area. As for Hull and Bristol, interviewees were drawn by identifying the equivalent counterpart of the participant questioned in NewcastleGateshead. For example, after speaking to a representative from Newcastle Airport, I arranged interviews with stakeholders from Humberside Airport and Bristol Airport as well. In addition, to this a snowball sampling technique was utilised, in that at the end of the discussion the participant would be asked if they could recommend anyone else that should be interviewed. Anyone's name who would appear frequently in discussions i.e. over two or three times

would be contacted with view to an interview. This was an effective technique as it allowed me to take advantage of networks established by stakeholders in Hull and Bristol. Also, interviews with those identified by the snowball sampling technique constituted some of the most productive interviews held during the project and is reflective of the level of trust between stakeholders that would result in their name being put forward by a participant.

In this project, a semi-structured interview constitutes a discussion between 45 minutes and 1 hour with a local or regional stakeholder on the topic of place reputation, in relation to their specific city. This is assisted by a loosely structured interview guide that allows for adaptation depending on the direction that the interview takes. The conversation is recorded using a digital voice recorder with the data later transcribed and analysed looking for certain patterns and themes. The analysis process began by developing a matrix based on the project's research questions that would help to identify key terms in relation to topics including place reputation, place branding, culture-led regeneration, governance and inward investment. The most relevant interview data was highlighted in red, bold and italics, whilst data also considered to be useful in relation to a specific theme remained in black but was also emboldened and italicised. This information was then transferred from individual interviews into word documents dedicated to specific themes. An iterative quality control process then occurred whereby recurrent subthemes were identified and the strongest possible interview data was gradually retained and information now considered irrelevant was excluded from the process. In addition, this also ensured that detailed and balanced evidence from across the three case-study cities was used to maintain the comparative element of the study and to illustrate the more conceptual points gathered for the research. The narrowed down information was then structured into different themes and sub-sections and synthesised with academic evidence and secondary sources that would go on to form the basis of the findings chapter

Semi-structured interviews have become an increasingly popular method both in human geography and across the social sciences as a whole over recent years. Some of the reasons for the rise to prominence of semi-structured interviews are summarised by Harvey (2010:193) who stated that as 'intensive forms of analysis such as interviewing are effective because they can generate responses that would be difficult to obtain through other more traditional

methods'. The approach is not easy to define as what precisely constitutes a semi-structured interview can be open to interpretation depending on the context of a particular situation. Longhurst (2010:102) provides a basic definition of a semi-structured interview as being 'a verbal interchange where one person, the interviewer attempts to elicit information from another person by asking questions'. Therefore, the method can be understood as a flexible discussion based on a loosely structured set of questions that can compensate from any unexpected directions that the meeting takes.

There are numerous benefits of using this technique. The first is the amount of freedom that the method gives the researcher. Located in between the rigid, structured interview, and the more informal, unstructured interview, the approach guarantees some form but simultaneously supplies the researcher with adequate freedom to improvise depending on the direction it takes. Dunn (2010:102) reaffirms that semi-structured interviews have 'some degree of pre-determined order but maintain flexibility in the way issues are addressed by the informant'. Also, Longhurst (2010:11) declares that 'semi-structured interviews … are about talking with people but in ways which are self-conscious, orderly and partially structured'. This allows the interview to be adapted as it happens, and shaped to the interviewee's own experiences. However these debates have uncovered issues of power in an interview situation. This opens up a weakness of the practice and highlights the risk that the interviewee could wield more power than the researcher. Valentine (1997:114) emphasises that interviewees 'often want to have some influence on the research process, refusing to allow interviews to be tape recorded [and] influencing the way that research findings are presented'. Accordingly, it is important that the interviewer does not become dominated by the participant; to prevent the interview from drifting away from the project's aims. However, there is a possibility that the more informal structure of the interview may leave the researcher exposed to the participant's dominance and potential elite status when conducting the interview.

Another benefit of using this approach to question local and regional stakeholders is its ability to achieve a detailed understanding of the interviewee's experiences. The method's effectiveness is summarised by Cloke et al. (2004:150) who argue that 'indeed, the strengths of using interviews lie in the very acknowledgement of intersubjectivity which permits a deeper understanding of

the who's, how's, where's and what's of many aspects of human geography research'. Similarly, Dunn (2010:135) declares that 'transcribed interviews are wholly unlike other forms of data, the informant's non-academic text reminds the researcher and the reader of the lived experience that has been divulged'. Thus, a semi-structured format may achieve a detailed understanding of significant issues that can be used across many aspects of geographical research. This underlines the method's versatility and shows that it has the potential to be an appropriate tool to investigate whether place reputation could become a credible alternative to the established place branding concept.

When conducting interviews with local and regional, power-broking stakeholders, there is a possibility that some interviewees could be part of an elite. The interviewee may attempt to manipulate the discussion as they feel themselves to be more powerful than the researcher, who lacks their connections with key decision-makers and opinion-formers. Schoenberger (1991:182) warns there is 'a risk that the respondent will impose his or her agenda on the interview, taking it in directions that are not directly relevant to the research or not worth lengthy elaboration'. However, identifying participants who are elites is a complicated task. Woods (1998:2101) explains that 'elite remains remarkably unproblematised, employed as a short-hand term for those actors who are in some way perceived to be more powerful and more privileged than some undefined group'. Harvey (2011:432) declares that 'there is no clear-cut definition of the term 'elite' and given its broad understanding across the social sciences, scholars have tended to adopt different approaches'. This uncertainty has caused difficulties in how to approach interviewing for the project. The participant will probably not always be part of an elite and even for those who could be, they may not see themselves as part of this. Woods (1998:2105) presents some difficulties associated with identifying elites by suggesting that 'most elite theorists have concentrated on the core of elites rather than their margins ... this focus may be sufficient for theoretical work, but the difficulty of delineating elites begins to provoke problems when elite theory is applied empirically'. For example, a typical interviewee would be an employee of a local council who has a role in changing the reputation of a place and may sit on cross-stakeholder groups designed to achieve this purpose. Although the stakeholder could be regarded as part of an elite, to an extent, (s)he is placed on the fringes of the term and it would be inappropriate to conduct the

interview in the same manner as with someone who is clearly part of an elite. Additionally, this underlines the difficulties involved when trying to judge particular situations appropriately in order to conduct an interview effectively.

However, there are some actions that can be taken within an interview to reduce the dominance of a local and regional stakeholder. First, the choice of a semi-structured format could compensate for the interviewee trying to dominate the situation. Dunn (2010:110) outlines that 'a semi-structured interview is organised around ordered but flexible questioning … the role of the researcher … is more interventionist than in unstructured interviews'. Also, Longhurst (2010:106) underlines this by explaining that semi-structured interviews 'are reasonably informal or conversational in nature'. A semi-structured interview when combined with a local and regional stakeholder could be a good match as this may better equip the researcher for the possibility of being overruled by the participant. Second, it is essential that sufficient research is conducted on the participant prior to the interview, in order to decide how to tackle a particular situation appropriately. Mikecz (2012:491) argues that 'intensive pre-interview preparation is essential because it enhances the researcher's knowledgeability of the interviewee's backgrounds and preferences'. Third, addressing the ethical issues, which the situation presents, could reduce an uneven power balance. Kelly (2004:137) recommends that 'ethical issues are not always clear cut but a key one is preservation in confidentiality and the privacy of the people involved'. If an interviewee's privacy was guaranteed prior to the discussion, this may help the participant feel more relaxed and potentially reduce the tension and gulf in power that can arise when researching upwards.

It can be decided that semi-structured interviews are a suitable method for questioning local and regional stakeholders on the topic of a place's reputation. In addition, the possibility of some interviewees carrying an elite status can be compensated by the informal structure of the approach. This method can supply the researcher with adequate freedom to improvise depending on the direction the interview takes and simultaneously reduce the gulf in power created when interviewing. Therefore, the method selected alongside the choice of interviewee could be a good match to allow for an investigation of whether place reputation can act as an effective alternative to the established place branding concept.

3.3 Case-study selection

For this project I will be selecting two English second-tier cities with a population of in between 250,000 and 450,000 people to compare with NewcastleGateshead, in this section, I shall expand on and explain this focus. This is reaffirmed by Centre for Cities (2014:6) who argue that 'the performance of cities is crucial to the performance of the UK economy. They account for 9 per cent of land use, but 54 per cent of population, 59 percent of jobs and 61 per cent of output'. More specifically, this study focuses on English second-tier cities that sit behind London, Birmingham and Manchester both in terms of population and economic capability. A second-tier city is defined by Parkinson et al. as (2012:3) 'those cities outside the capital whose economic and social performance is sufficiently important to affect the potential performance of the national economy. It certainly does not mean they are second class. And it does not mean they are the 'second' city as there is only one of these in each country'. Nonetheless, the cities are typically at the heart of a much larger conurbation. For example, Newcastle-upon-Tyne has a population of 279,092 which is the urban core of a wider population of 829,300 people (Centre for Cities, 2013a). In addition, this project seeks to place greater emphasis on second-tier cities as a geographical scale to be investigated in terms of their reputations. Second-tier cities have tended to be overlooked in favour of global cities such as New York (Greenberg et al. 2008) and capital cities including Berlin (Colomb, 2011) in the interdisciplinary place branding literature. Therefore, this study aims to focus on English second-tier cities as an attempt to explore a research subject that has been understudied, lacks theorisation and has yet to reach its full potential. Also, it has been decided to base this study in England rather than the UK as a whole to avoid the challenges presented by researching in the devolved administrations and contesting with the different institutional frameworks in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This provides a more precise focus for the research which can allow for an effective comparison of the challenges that the often subordinate, second-city can face in terms of their reputations.

The eligible cities can be compared with NewcastleGateshead across six key variables to examine how it performs nationally when measured against the two cities of a similar size, which most resemble it. There are seven cities that have a population of in between 250,000 and 450,000 people in England. I have excluded

Sunderland (population 275,330) from the selection process as it is part of the contiguous urban area of Tyne and Wear, located in the same region and also shares characteristics with NewcastleGateshead, it would arguably not constitute a distinctly different city. Also, to ensure that Gateshead is fully accounted for as part of this selection process, I have collected data for each variable on the town and have provided an average score for NewcastleGateshead as well, to analyse whether there is a significant impact on the standalone data for Newcastle. The cities will be contrasted against Newcastle, Gateshead and the average score across six variables, with the overall best and worst performing city respectively compared to Newcastle then being selected for the project. For each variable, I have detailed how far each city's result deviates from that of Newcastle's. I have then ranked each city from 1-7 with 1 being the worst performing city and 7 being the best performing. These scores will be totalled and the overall best and worst performing cities being taken forward for comparison with NewcastleGateshead. I have decided to use this approach to lend some rigor to the case-study selection process more associated with quantitative methods. Moreover, the data will reveal how the seven cities compare across different indicators and could act as a precursor to identifying reputational issues faced by each city.

Also, I have established three important requirements for English second-tier cities to be compared with NewcastleGateshead. First, the cities should have strong reputational characteristics. The first city should be perceived as having an excellent reputation that NewcastleGateshead can look up to. The second city should be considered as having a negative reputation and can look towards NewcastleGateshead as a good role-model. Second, the cities selected should be the core city of a wider conurbation, possess a large travel-to-work area and be the most economically powerful city within that particular region. Third, the cities selected should have some background in culture-led regeneration, possess contrasting governance structures and actively pursue different forms of inward investment.

The seven cities to be compared with NewcastleGateshead are -

- Brighton and Hove (population 273,369).
- Bristol (428,234).
- Coventry (316,960).
- Hull (256,406).
- Leicester (329,839).
- Nottingham (305,860).
- Plymouth (256,384).

Figure 3.1 – A bar chart displaying the populations of prospective English second-tier cities
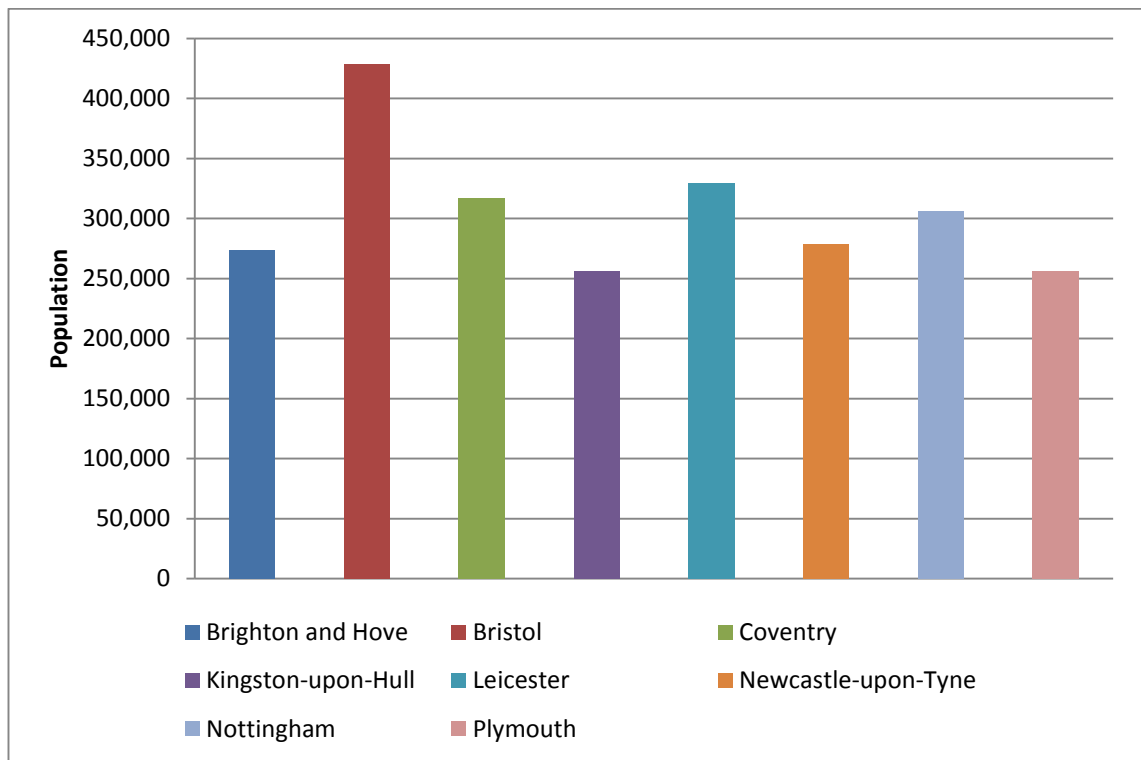
Source – Data from the 2011 Census (Office for National Statistics, 2011a)

The six variables, which will be used to select cities to compare with NewcastleGateshead, are as follows –

1. Percentage of overall population change 1981-2011.
2. Growth in Primary Urban Area population 2001-2011.
3. Percentage of population considered to be an ethnic minority.
4. Indices of multiple deprivation 2010.
5. Unemployment rate.
6. Percentage of working-age population who are degree educated.

3.3.1 Case-study selection process

Table 3.1 – Tables showing the population change in English second-tier cities between 1981-2011

Cities	% in population change 1981-1991	% in population change 1991-2001	% in population change 2001-2011	% average population change
Leicester	-0.57	0.46	16.56	5.48
Brighton and Hove	1.35	3.91	9.22	4.83
Nottingham	0.43	-3.76	13.01	3.23
Bristol	**-2.24**	**-0.56**	**9.76**	**2.32**
Plymouth	-0.83	-4.06	6.47	0.53
Coventry	-4.73	-0.36	4.66	-0.14
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	-3.24	-3.2	4.84	-0.53
NewcastleGateshead average	-4.36	-4.205	4.815	-1.25
(Gateshead)	-5.48	-5.21	4.79	-1.97
Hull	**-3.8**	**-5.09**	**2.49**	**-2.13**

Cities	% of deviation from Newcastle's score	Overall ranking
Leicester	6.01	7
Brighton and Hove	5.36	6
Nottingham	3.76	5
Bristol	**2.85**	**4**
Plymouth	1.06	3
Coventry	0.39	2
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	n/a	n/a
NewcastleGateshead average	-0.72	n/a
(Gateshead)	-1.44	n/a
Hull	**-1.6**	**1**

Data from the 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011 Census' (Office for National Statistics (1981, 1991, 2001, 2011a)

Figure 3.2 A line graph displaying the percentage of population change in English second-tier cities between 1981-2011
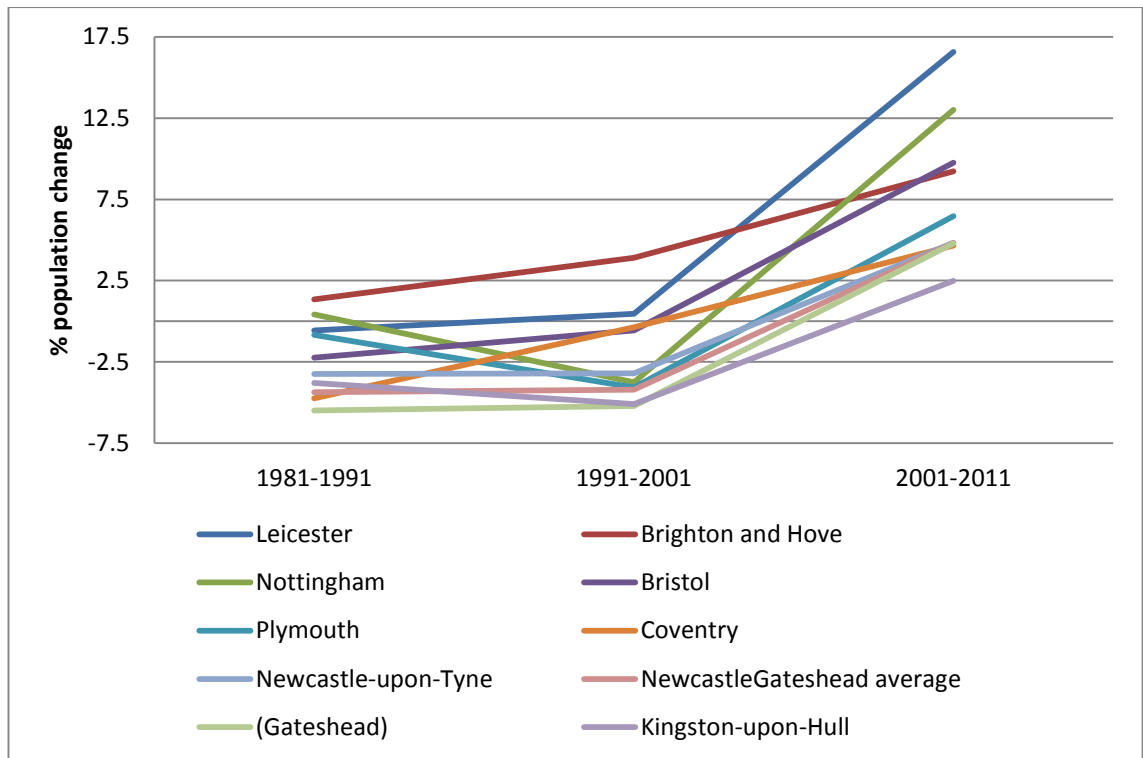
Data from the 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011 Census' (Office for National Statistics (1981, 1991, 2001, 2011a)

The first variable considers the percentage of population change in each city in between 1981 and 2011. Using data from the last four Censuses this identifies which city has experienced the most population growth overall, the most population decline overall and how particular cities have performed across each of the four periods. Moreover, this is an important variable for place reputation, as cities with a growing population are typically more prosperous, have low levels of unemployment, good schools and may have a good reputation (Anholt, 2010b). Conversely, cities with a shrinking population typically suffer from higher levels of poverty, crime and unemployment and tend to possess a negative reputation. Table 3.1 and figure 3.2 show that English cities generally saw a period of population decline or minimal growth in the period between 1981 and 1991 that remained to varying degrees between 1991 and 2001. However, in the period between 2001 and 2011, every city underwent population growth with some cities increasing by over 10% in size by that period. Leicester saw the largest growth overall with the city's population increasing by 5.48% on average during the thirty years. Newcastle saw a slight decline in population with the city losing 0.53% of its residents overall. Gateshead reported similar figures, losing 1.97% of its population. The worst performing city was Hull which saw the city's population shrink by 2.3% over the four Census periods.

Table 3.2 – A table presenting the local authorities included in and population of the respective primary urban areas of English second-tier cities

City	Local authorities included	PUA population
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Gateshead, N.Tyneside, S.Tyneside	829,300
Bristol	City of Bristol, S.Gloucestershire	691,000
Nottingham	Nottingham, Erewash, Broxtowe, Gedling	640,900
Leicester	Leicester, Blaby, Oadby and Wigston	480,000
Brighton and Hove	Brighton and Hove, Adur	334,600
Coventry	Coventry	318,600
Plymouth	Plymouth	256,400
Hull	City of Hull	256,400

Source – Centre for Cities (2013a)

Figure 3.3 – A bar chart displaying the populations of the respective primary urban areas of English second-tier cities
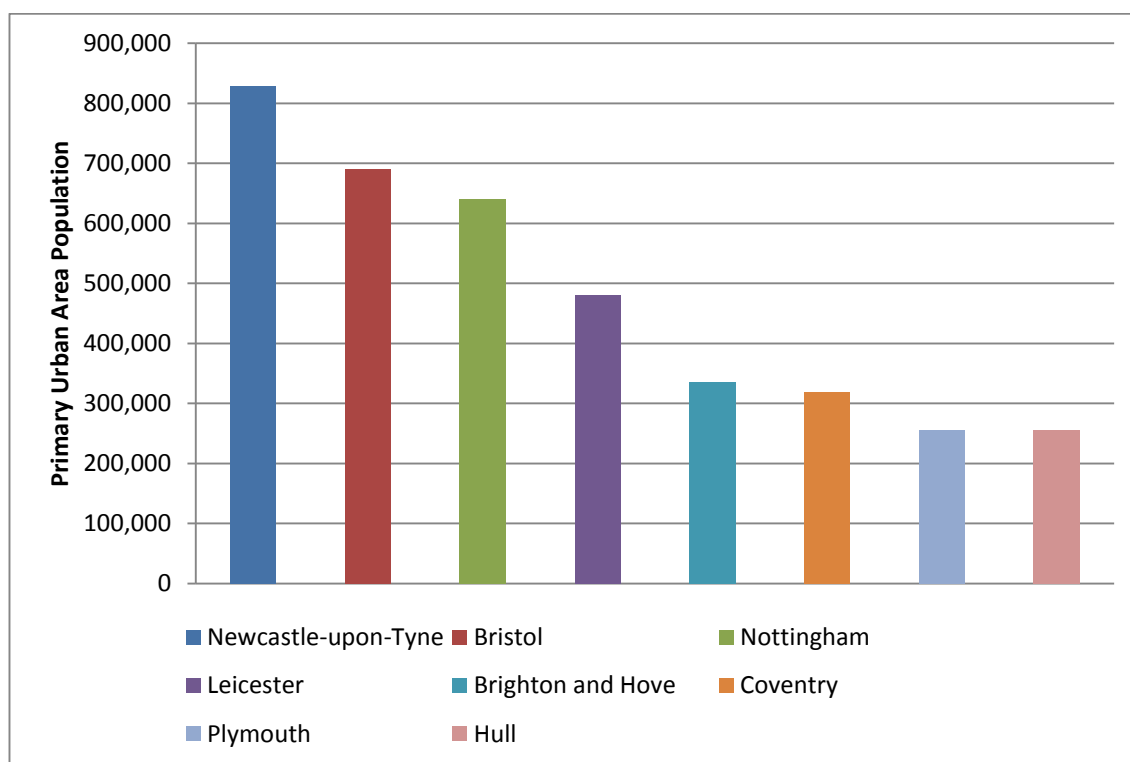
Source – Centre for Cities (2013a)

Table 3.3 – A table displaying the growth in the respective primary urban areas of English second-tier cities between 2001-2011

Cities	Population Growth (PUA 2001-2011)	Deviation from Newcastle's score	Overall ranking
Bristol	**55,000**	**27,900**	**7**
Leicester	51,000	23,900	6
Nottingham	42,600	15,500	5
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	27,100	n/a	n/a
Brighton and Hove	25,000	-2,100	4
Coventry	15,800	-11,300	3
Plymouth	15,400	-11,700	2
Hull	**6,500**	**-20,600**	**1**

Source – Centre for Cities (2013a)

Figure 3.4 – A bar chart displaying the population growth of the respective primary urban areas of English second-tier cities between 2001-2011
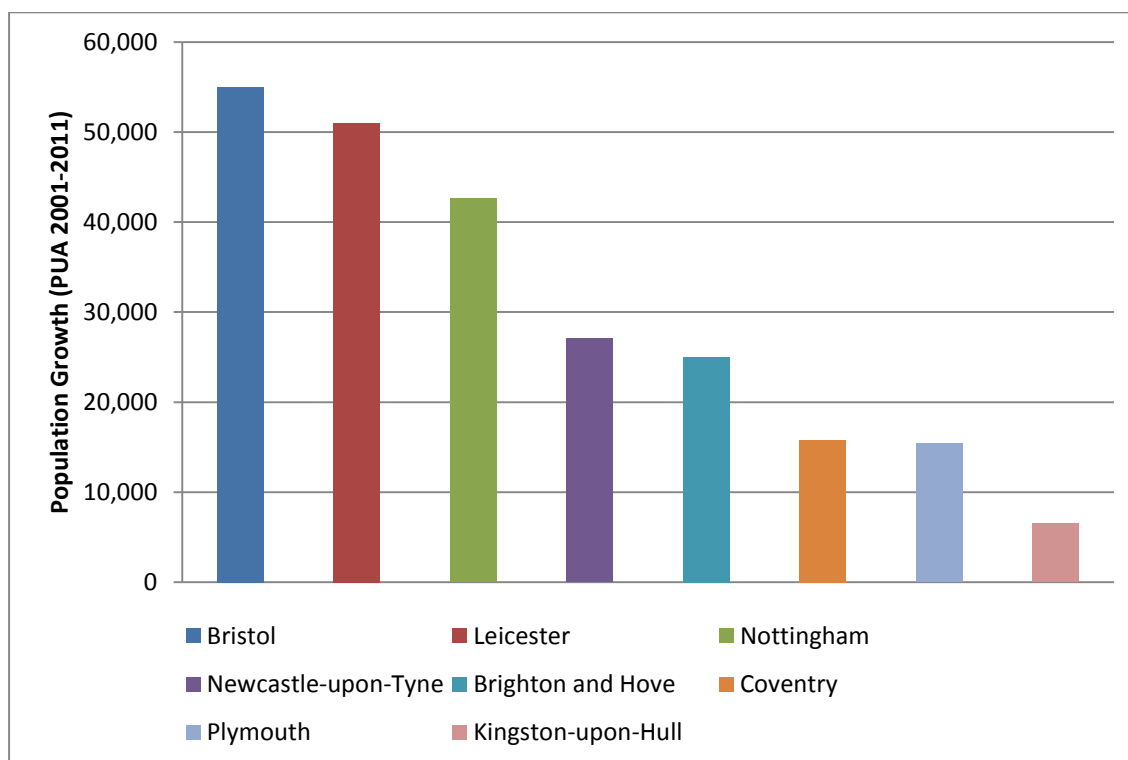
Source – Centre for Cities (2013a)

This variable analyses the growth in population in each city's respective Primary Urban Areas (PUAs) between the 2001 and 2011 Census periods. A Primary Urban Area is defined as a measure of the built-up area of a particular city, composed of the core city and surrounding districts to create one continuous urban area (Centre for Cities, 2013a). For example, the Newcastle PUA is inclusive of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Gateshead, North and South Tyneside to form an urban area of 829,300 people (Centre for Cities, 2013a). The growth of PUA population between 2001 and 2011 is a significant variable to use as this shows how much each place has either grown or declined over a recent period. It is different from the previous measure of population because it incorporates the city's suburban areas and so is a more comprehensive overview of that conurbation's fortunes over the last decade. Table 3.3 and figure 3.4 highlight that Bristol saw the most growth during the last Census period with 55,000 new residents arriving in the PUA between 2001 and 2011. Newcastle, the fourth largest-growing PUA gained 27,100 residents, some 15,500 less than the third largest-growing, Nottingham. The PUA that saw the least amount of growth was Hull with 6,500 additional residents, nationally, only one city underperformed Hull, with Sunderland losing 9,100 residents during this period (Centre for Cities, 2013a).

**Table 3.4 A table showing the percentage of English second-tier cities'
population who are considered to be an ethnic minority**

Cities	% of ethnic minority population (2011)	% of deviation from Newcastle's score	Overall ranking
Leicester	54.9	36.8	7
Nottingham	34.6	16.5	6
Coventry	33.4	15.3	5
Bristol	**22.1**	**4**	**4**
Brighton and Hove	19.5	1.4	3
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	18.1	n/a	n/a
NewcastleGateshead average	12	-6.1	n/a
Hull	**10.3**	**-7.8**	**2**
Plymouth	7.1	-11	1
(Gateshead)	5.9	-12.2	n/a

Source – Office for National Statistics (2011b)

**Figure 3.5 A bar chart displaying the percentage of English second-tier cities
population considered to be an ethnic minority**
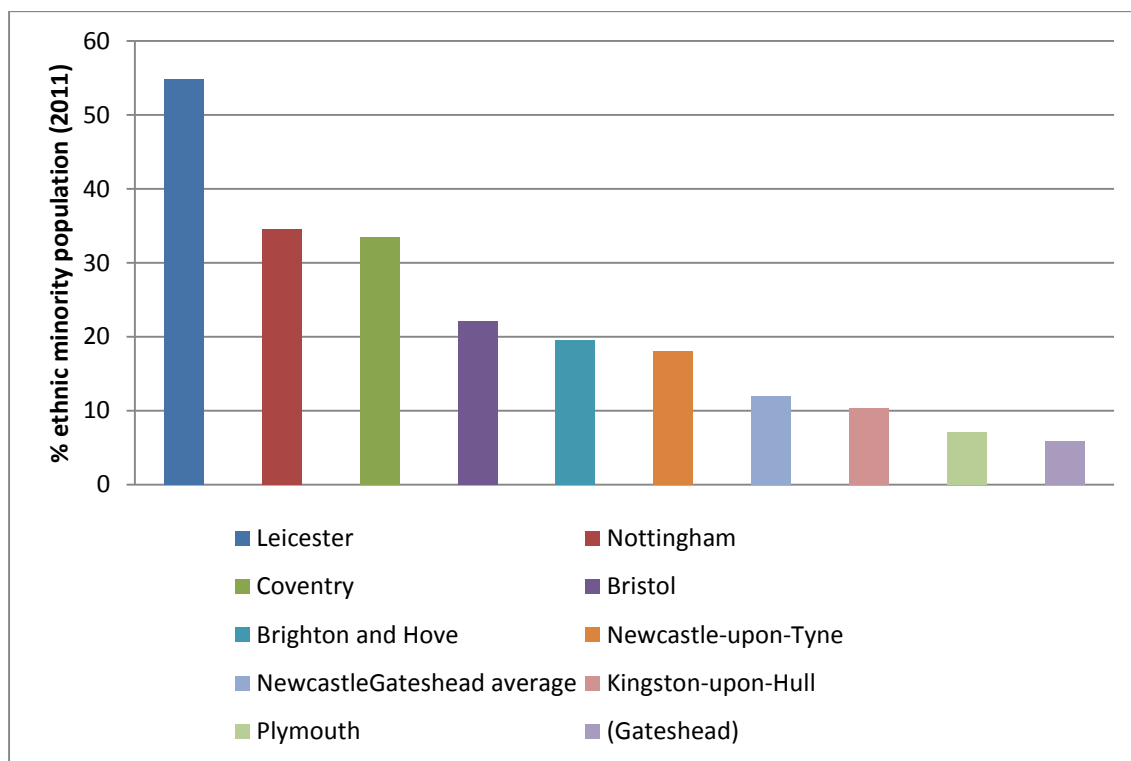
Source – Office for National Statistics (2011b)

The percentage of a city's population considered to be an ethnic minority is a useful variable to include as part of the selection process as this can reveal its ethnic diversity. The data originates from the 2011 Census with an ethnic minority being defined as any ethnic group apart from the 'White; English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British (Persons) category' (Office for National Statistics, 2011a). This is an important variable for place reputation as the percentage of a city's population classed as an ethnic minority can unveil the cultural diversity of that particular city. Table 3.4 and figure 3.5 showed that the city with the most ethnically diverse population was Leicester with 54.9% of the city classed in this way. 18.1% of Newcastle's population is classed an ethnic minority group with 5.9% of Gateshead classed as a minority, lower than any prospective case-study city. For what is essentially a continuous urban area, there is a contrast in the ethnic diversity between Newcastle and Gateshead. However, despite the large difference, this fails to change the standing of Newcastle for this particular variable as this produces an average of 12%. Gateshead aside, Plymouth is the least ethnically diverse city with 7.1% of the city's population reported to be an ethnic minority.

Table 3.5 A table displaying the indices of multiple deprivation ranking of English second-tier cities

City	IMD Rank (2010, average rank of area)	Deviation from Newcastle's IMD ranking	Overall ranking
Hull	**15**	**51**	**1**
Nottingham	17	49	2
Leicester	22	44	3
(Gateshead)	42	24	n/a
Coventry	53	13	4
NewcastleGateshead average	54	12	n/a
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	66	n/a	n/a
Brighton and Hove	67	-1	5
Plymouth	80	-14	6
Bristol	**93**	**-27**	**7**

Source – Office for National Statistics (2010a)

Figure 3.6 – A bar chart displaying the average Indices of Multiple Deprivation ranking of English second-tier cities
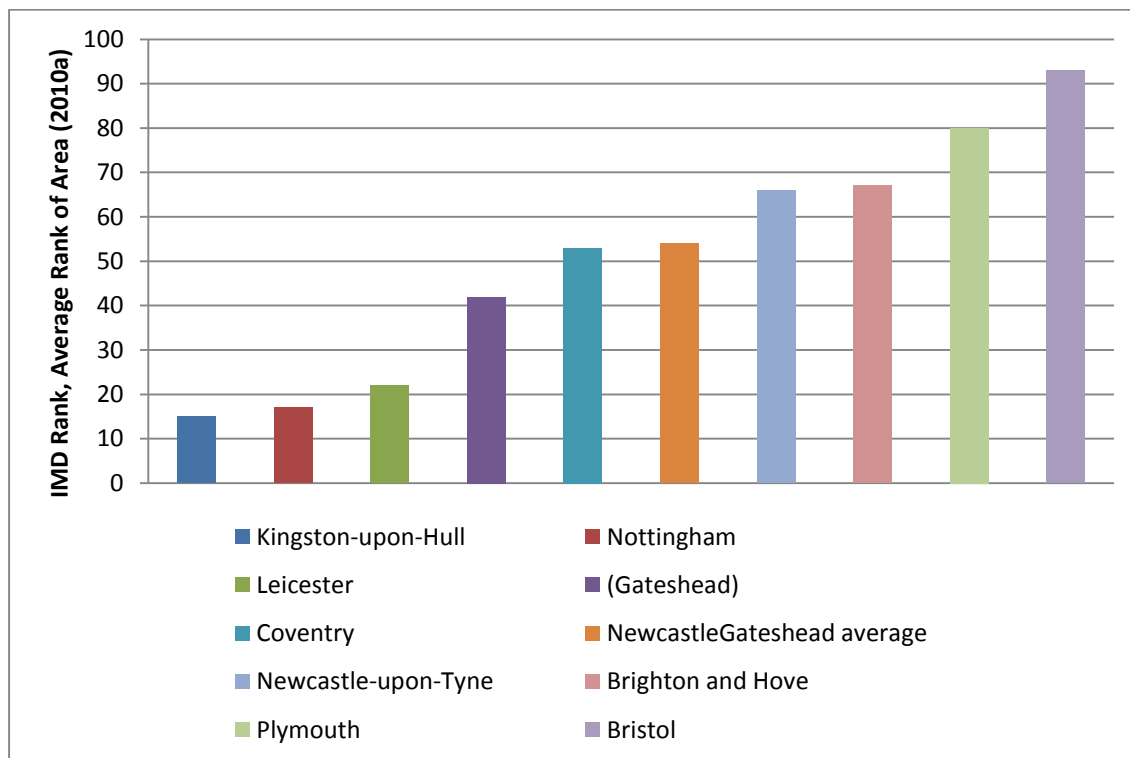
Source – Office for National Statistics (2010a)

The 2010 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) broadly measures levels of hardship across thirty-eight separate indicators for each Lower Layer Super Output Area (LLSOA) of a particular place (Oxford Consultants for Social Exclusion, 2010). The rank of each LLSOA included within each city's boundary has been combined to create an average IMD rank for the entire area. The lower the ranking of that particular locality, the more deprived it is considered to be. There are 326 local authority areas in England which are ranked in order of deprivation with 1 being the most deprived (Hackney, London) and 326 being the least deprived (Hart, Hampshire). Additionally, it is important to clarify that a local authority area ranked 40th is not twice as deprived as an area ranked 80th only that it is more deprived (Cornwall Council, 2010). IMD is therefore an essential variable for place reputation as it is a comprehensive measure of the levels of poverty experienced in English cities and typically the levels of deprivation in a particular area may be entwined with how its reputation is perceived. Table 3.5 and figure 3.6 shows that Hull suffers from the highest levels of deprivation out of the prospective case-study cities with a ranking of 15th overall. Newcastle is rated as the 66th most deprived area in England with Gateshead being the 42nd, providing a combined ranking of 54th. The results also indicate that Bristol was the least deprived out of the seven prospective cities with a ranking of 93rd, one of the least deprived cities in England.

Table 3.6 – A table which shows the unemployment rates in English second-tier cities

Cities	Unemployment rate % (2013)	% of deviation from Newcastle's unemployment rate	Overall ranking
Hull	**15.2**	**4.4**	**1**
Nottingham	13.6	2.8	2
Leicester	13.3	2.5	3
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	10.8	n/a	n/a
NewcastleGateshead average	10.65	-0.15	n/a
(Gateshead)	10.5	-0.3	n/a
Coventry	9.4	-1.4	4
Plymouth	8.9	-1.9	5
Brighton and Hove	8.3	-2.5	6
Bristol	**7.5**	**-3.3**	**7**

Source – Office for National Statistics (2013)

Figure 3.7 – A bar chart displaying the unemployment rates of English second-tier cities
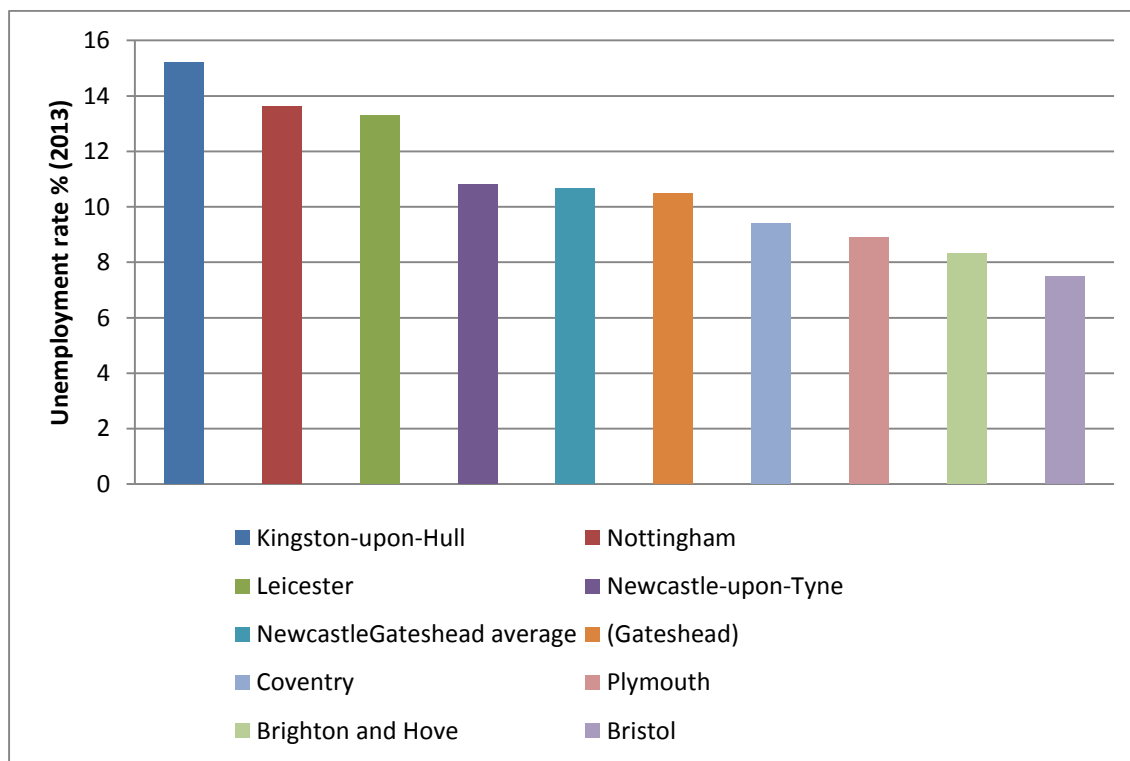
Source – Office for National Statistics (2013)

The 2013 unemployment rate is an important variable to use as it provides an up-to-date measurement of the proportion of a city's working age population who are seeking employment. In addition, there could be a relationship between high amounts of unemployment and the strength of that place's reputation. Whereas high levels of employment usually correlate with low levels of deprivation and typically constitute a prosperous area with a highly educated workforce. Table 3.6 and figure 3.7 show that Hull possesses the highest levels of unemployment out of the prospective case-study cities with 15.2% of the city's population out of work in 2013. Newcastle's unemployment rate stands at fourth place at 10.8% and when combined with Gateshead (10.5%), this provides an average of 10.65%. The city with the lowest levels of unemployment was Bristol with only 7.5% of the city's population searching for work.

Table 3.7 A table presenting the percentage of working-age population with degree-level qualifications in English second-tier cities

City	% of population with degree-level qualifications (2011)	% of deviation from Newcastle's score	Overall ranking
Brighton and Hove	36.9	9.7	7
Bristol	**32.8**	**5.6**	**6**
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	27.2	n/a	n/a
NewcastleGateshead average	24.35	-2.85	n/a
Coventry	23	-4.2	5
Nottingham	21.9	-5.3	4
Plymouth	21.5	-5.7	3
(Gateshead)	21.5	-5.7	n/a
Leicester	21.2	-6	2
Hull	**15.2**	**-12**	**1**

Source – Office for National Statistics (2011c)

Figure 3.8 A bar chart displaying the percentage of a working-age population in English second-tier cities' with degree level qualifications
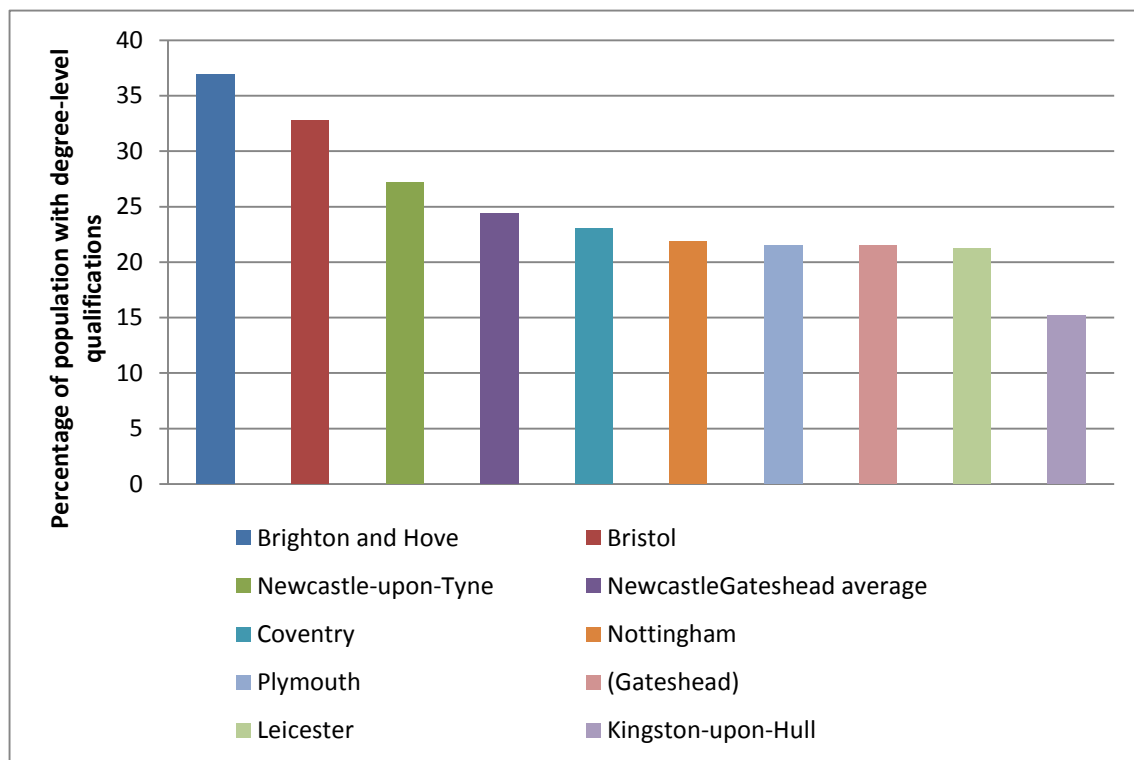
Source – Office for National Statistics (2011c)

The percentage of a working-age population with degree-level qualifications is a significant variable as this factor can increase the potential productivity of a city. Also, this is important for place reputation as the more educated the workforce, the greater the likelihood of the city experiencing economic success. Taken from the 2011 Census, this variable shows the percentage of each city's population who have acquired a level 4 qualifications such as (BA, BSc, MA, HND) or above. Table 3.7 and figure 3.8 indicate that Hull (15.2%) is the city with the lowest percentage of its population holding degree-level qualifications. In Newcastle 27.2% of the city's population hold degree-level qualifications, while in Gateshead the figure stands at 21.5%, generating an average of 24.35%. The city with the highest percentage of its population with degree-level qualifications is Brighton with 36.9%, the city therefore possesses almost two and a half the proportion of graduates that Hull does.

Table 3.8 A table revealing the overall results of the case-study selection process

Cities	Population change ranking	PUA ranking	Ethnicity ranking	IMD ranking	Unemployment ranking	Degree ranking	Overall score
Bristol	**4**	**7**	**4**	**7**	**7**	**6**	**35**
Brighton and Hove	6	4	3	5	6	7	31
Leicester	7	6	7	3	3	2	28
Nottingham	5	5	6	2	2	4	24
Coventry	2	3	5	4	4	5	23
Plymouth	3	2	1	6	5	3	20
Hull	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**7**

3.3.2 Justification and explanation

The overall results indicate that when compared to Newcastle's score, Bristol is the best performing English second-tier city across the six variables, while Hull is the worst performing. It is also clear that both Hull and Bristol meet the criteria outlined earlier in the chapter. First, both Hull and Bristol are perceived to have strong reputational characteristics. As shown, Bristol has received the most population growth and has the lowest levels of deprivation and unemployment out of the seven cities. This signifies that Bristol is a thriving city that continues to grow and may possess a more positive reputation and can attract greater investment and recognition without much difficulty. Whereas Hull is the lowest scoring city for all but one of the six variables, which means that, it could face different challenges from those of Bristol. The data shows that Hull has either lost residents or has experienced minor growth, suffers from the highest levels of deprivation and has the lowest percentage of degree-qualified residents out of all seven cities. Therefore, it is likely that Hull's reputation is more negative and may face greater challenges compared to Bristol when trying to attract greater investment and recognition.

Second, it is apparent that, similar to NewcastleGateshead, both Hull and Bristol are the core city of a wider urban area and could be classed as regional or sub-regional capitals. Bristol, with a core city of 428,074 people and an urban area of 691,000 people is the largest and most economically powerful city in South West England (Centre for Cities, 2013a). For Hull, this is not as clear-cut, with Leeds being by far the largest and most prosperous city in the Yorkshire and Humber region. However, I am proposing that as Hull is located over sixty miles away from Leeds, is the core city of a sub-region formerly known as Humberside that is presently covered by the Humber Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This recognises that Hull is a core city of an urban area of over 900,000 people (Office for National Statistics, 2011d) which includes Grimsby and Scunthorpe connected to the city via the Humber bridge. Despite this not being a clearly defined geographical area it is apparent that Hull is the most economically powerful city there and possesses a university and a large travel-to-work area drawn from neighbouring towns. NewcastleGateshead, with Newcastle-upon-Tyne's population of 279,092 being the urban core of a wider population of an area of 829,300 people (Centre for Cities, 2013b), this is similar to Hull and Bristol as they are the most

economically powerful cities in their region and sub-region respectively. Moreover, the urban area is the economic centre of North East England and like Hull and Bristol; it is also boosted by a large student population and travel-to-work area.

Third, similarly to NewcastleGateshead, it is clear that Hull and Bristol can be investigated using the three themes identified earlier in the methodology. Consequently, the three cities can be compared in terms of their culture-led regeneration strategies, governance structures and inward investment practices to develop a more precise understanding of the reputational issues faced. Moreover, all three cities have a history of applying for cultural accolades, possess different governance structures and try to channel inward investment into a diverse range of sectors. The contrasting strategies and reputational challenges faced by NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol allows for a useful comparative study that offers an insight into how place reputation is understood.

3.4 Research design: introducing the research strategy

Due to the multifaceted nature of a place's reputation, it is important to decide which domains shall be focused on in this study. I have chosen three aspects of place reputation in NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol. Each city is investigated in terms of their experiences of culture-led regeneration, governance and inward investment and how this relates to place reputation. The selection of these domains helps to narrow down the wide-ranging concept of place reputation and provides a more precise focus on practices utilised by English second-tier cities to improve their standing. This section explains in greater detail how each domain has shaped the reputation of the selected case-study cities.

3.4.1 Culture-led regeneration

All three cities have experience of using culture-led regeneration to try and enhance their respective reputations. Evans and Shaw (2004:968) state that 'cultural activity is seen as the catalyst and engine of regeneration'. Consequently,

culture-led regeneration has played a significant role in transforming the fortunes of cities and regions. The concept is understood as the process of hosting cultural events and developing infrastructure at the forefront of a strategy to change perceptions and transform reputations. The origins of NewcastleGateshead's use of culture-led regeneration stems from the late 1980s and early 1990s. Occasions such as the Gateshead Garden Festival followed by government investment in North East arts infrastructure supplied the foundations for a long-term strategy focusing on improving the area's reputation through culture. However, culture-led regeneration began to accelerate rapidly at the turn of the Millennium. The erection of the Angel of the North and the revitalisation of the city's Quayside based on the construction of the Gateshead Millennium Bridge and the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art began to transform a declining area. This was part of an overall £250 million investment (NewcastleGateshead Initiative, 2009) in cultural infrastructure designed to improve the city's chances of capturing the 2008 European Capital of Culture. Regardless of NewcastleGateshead losing out on this award to Liverpool, the area embarked on Culture[10], a strategy building on the positive work produced by the bid. This resulted in £60 million of additional funding and oversaw the opening of the Sage Gateshead music centre alongside the modernisation of existing cultural infrastructure including the Theatre Royal.

Bristol also enjoyed the benefits of culture-led regeneration at the turn of the Millennium and similarly to NewcastleGateshead, the city focused on placing a rejuvenated waterfront at the heart of attempts to improve its reputation. Like NewcastleGateshead's Quayside, the redevelopment of Bristol's Harbourside area saw a rundown former industrial area transformed into a desirable part of the city, albeit in a more drawn-out fashion (Bassett et al. 2002). However, the regeneration of Harbourside stretches back further than the transformation of the NewcastleGateshead Quayside. The arrival of the SS Great Britain and the Arnolfini art gallery in the 1970s and the Watershed media centre in the 1980s initiated over thirty years of more gradual culture-led regeneration. Harbourside also benefitted from the Millennium Commission with the opening of Pero's Bridge in 1999, At-Bristol in 2000 and has been prolonged with the opening of the M-Shed museum in 2011. Furthermore, the city was in the running for the 2008 European Capital of Culture title, however, like NewcastleGateshead, Bristol was overlooked in favour of Liverpool.

Third, the use of culture-led regeneration in Hull has been a more recent occurrence with the city looking to enhance its reputation based on strategies that have been successful elsewhere. Nonetheless, the city does have a background in cultural practices including the presence of Phillip Larkin at the city's university between the 1950s and 1980s and the establishment of Hull Truck Theatre in 1971. Also, like NewcastleGateshead and Bristol, there has been investment in the built environment to improve the city's cultural offering with the opening of The Deep in 2002, another Millennium Commission project. Also, Hull has been named UK City of Culture for 2017 and it is hoped that this will improve the city's reputation in a more intangible manner through a programme of cultural events. Hull City Council (2014) hopes that the title will bring 1,200 additional jobs, 7 million visitors in 2017 and contribute £184 million to the visitor economy over five years.

3.4.2 Governance

The governance structures of NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol will provide an interesting aspect of each city's reputation to focus on here. The manner that each city is governed at a local and regional level can significantly impact the strategies undertaken to influence place reputation. The governance of NewcastleGateshead is unconventional as it consists of two separate local authorities cooperating through a partnership and the NewcastleGateshead Initiative (NGI). This strategy was established in 2000 to accelerate the regeneration of a wider urban area through a collaborative partnership. The NewcastleGateshead Initiative (2009:32) explains that as 'the new agency was set up to promote the combined assets of Gateshead and Newcastle, thereby creating a single cultural destination'. For example, with the city and the adjacent town aligning their urban regeneration strategies, this enabled the successful redevelopment of the NewcastleGateshead quayside as the sides of the river belonging to the respective councils were redeveloped simultaneously. The area was previously under the jurisdiction of One North East, the Regional Development Agency for NewcastleGateshead and the North East of England. NewcastleGateshead is the urban core and most economically powerful city in this area supported by a wider combined authority. This encompasses the cities of Sunderland and Durham alongside a large rural

economy including the Tyne valley, several universities and prominent business parks supplementing the core NewcastleGateshead area.

Second, Bristol is an anomaly in the study as in 2012, the city voted in favour of selecting an elected Mayor, the only city out of the eleven who held a referendum to do so. This resulted in the independent candidate George Ferguson being elected, having previously been influential in the city's regeneration by protecting the city's Harbourside area from unpopular redevelopment. Conversely, like nine other cities, Newcastle decided against installing an elected mayor, opting to persevere with their current governance set-up. Bristol was previously part of the non-metropolitan county of Avon, which accounted for Bristol's approximate city-region area. However, the metropolitan county was imposed from above and much maligned by residents, this was abolished in 1996 and was split into four unitary authorities – Bristol, Bath and Northeast Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. Additionally, the city was under the jurisdiction of the South West Regional Development Agency which included Bristol alongside a much wider area including Cornwall. Bristol is the most economically powerful city in South West England, supported by a wider regional economy. This includes the city of Bath, its universities, aerospace manufacturing at Filton and a less urbanised and larger rural area when compared to NewcastleGateshead and the North East.

Third, Hull possesses more straightforward governance arrangements and is solely presided over by Hull City Council. Nonetheless, it is important to note that like Bristol, Hull was previously part of a non-metropolitan county, Humberside, that was also abolished in 1996 and was the core city of a wider urban area of nearly 900,000 people (Office for National Statistics, 2011d). Despite the abolition of Humberside, its legacy still exists in the form of the Humber Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). A similar legacy exists in Bristol through the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership, created at the same geographical scale as the former Avon County Council. The Humber LEP succeeded Yorkshire Forward as a tier of governance but for the city-region rather than the entire region. The wider Humber LEP includes the world's seventh longest suspension bridge, several major ports including Grimsby and Immingham alongside the more rural economy of East Yorkshire.

3.4.3 Inward Investment

Inward investment is an important part of place reputation as the way which this is managed can significantly impact an English second-tier city's capability to attract multinational corporations to locate there. Moreover, a city with a positive reputation may find it easier to draw inward investment than one with a more negative reputation that has to work harder to persuade firms to invest. This is often based on intangible, out-dated perceptions and regardless of how much investment has been made in the tangible, built environment, a city can still struggle to attract inward investment based on a deeply embedded reputation. Inward investment has become an increasingly significant focus for cities themselves following the abolition of the Regional Development Agencies that were previously charged with trying to stimulate greater economic growth in a much wider area. This has been part of a broader shift from a single pillar economy, for example, the dominance of the shipbuilding industry in NewcastleGateshead. However, more recently cities are beginning to diversify their economic base and in some instances have started to focus on industries that have been built entirely from scratch. First, NewcastleGateshead prioritises inward investment around three areas – creative and digital, science and health and offshore and marine. NewcastleGateshead has 8,000 employees in the creative and digital sectors with an annual turnover of £866 million (NewcastleGateshead Initiative, 2014). Whereas for science and health more than £200 million has been invested in the region and is fuelled by the presence of the city's Russell Group university. The facilities and expertise present in the area has seen the subsea sector post a £1 billion turnover (NewcastleGateshead Initiative, 2014).

Bristol divides its inward investment strategy into five sectors – creativity, environmental technologies, microelectronics, aerospace engineering and financial services. Bristol's expertise in creativity is underlined by the presence of Banksy and Aardman Animations in the city (Bristol + Bath, 2014). In microelectronics, Bristol is home to the largest semiconductor cluster outside Silicon Valley and over £1 billion has been invested in the sector (Bristol + Bath, 2014). Bristol also has a long history of aerospace engineering with the industry currently employing over 59,000 full-time engineers and generates a turnover of £5.7 billion (Bristol + Bath, 2014). Hull specialises in ports and logistics, renewable energy and chemicals. The ports in Hull and the wider Humber area employ 15,000 people and comprises

16% of the UK's overall maritime trade (Hull Bondholders, 2014). Hull's expertise in the renewable energy industry is underlined by Siemens £160 million investment in the city to manufacture offshore turbines (*BBC News*, 2014a). Also, the clustering of chemical companies here is demonstrated by the presence of 10,000 jobs and £1.4 billion investment over the last seven years (Hull Bondholders, 2014).

4 Reputation

4.1 Reputation and place

Place reputation is introduced here and four parts are explored in relation to NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol. First, I explore how reputations are based on perceptions and I examine the likelihood that a place's reputation may vary somewhat from reality (Zenker, 2011). Second, I examine the idea that reputations are deeply embedded, created over the long-term and can continue to shape the future, thus, rendering reputational change a demanding task (Martin and Sunley, 2006). Third, I investigate whether a place's personality can impact its reputation and argue that cities can express a character formed over a number of years that is instilled in its population (Molotch et al. 2000, Paulsen, 2004). Fourth, I debate whether a place's performance on socioeconomic indicators can influence reputation and this builds on the proposition that statistics can only go so far in representing a place's reputation (Zenker, 2011).

In relation to the first part, the reputations of places can be formulated from external perceptions that may differ variably from actually living there. Also, the general public's understanding of a certain place is influenced by their imagination and contributed to by the media and word-of-mouth. In place branding, Zenker (2011:42) declares that 'a brand is not the communicated expression or "place physics" but the perception of those expressions in the mind of those target groups'. Therefore, a reputation can be formed through perceptions and based on an understanding developed in an individual's mind is their honest assessment of that place and in their judgement it may be plausible. However, this contrasts if a person is external in relation to a place, if they are located far away they may not possess much knowledge of that geographical entity and their perspective could be somewhat stereotypical or out-dated. This is demonstrated by the General Manager, Intu Eldon Square, NewcastleGateshead (2014) who stated:

"I think it is all about perception, I think people build up through the media and through their own experiences a view of a place, they pass that view on to others and over time that forms reputation so the reputation is perception and may not necessarily be reality".

A representation of a place is believable if it derives from a source trusted by the beholder. However, participants including the former Chief Executive, One North East (2014) and the Director of Policy, Newcastle City Council (2014) expressed that some perceptions can lead to ignorance. Assumptions and stereotypes delivered by the media, when fuelled by word-of-mouth and gaining traction, could create a widespread consensus about a place's reputation. Additionally, despite how far the reputation differs from the reality, and how unthinkingly this reputation has been applied, it would be unlikely that the general public will be persuaded to change their judgement, particularly, when it has been moulded over the long-term.

The second part proposes that place's reputations are deeply embedded and crafted over centuries. This may be problematic for cities as the longer a reputation sticks; the more time it takes to change, particularly with external audiences. This idea links in with path dependence, a concept affirming that history can become strongly attached to a specific place that can guide future decision-making. Walker in Martin and Sunley (2006:398) claims that:

'Industrial history is literally embodied in the present. That is, choices made in the past – technologies embodied in machinery and product design, firm assets gained as patents or specific competencies, or labour skills acquired through learning - influence subsequent choices of method, designs and practices'.

Similar thinking can be applied to place reputation whereby decisions made many years ago can influence and, to an extent, continue to guide any future plans made with regard to building reputational capital, especially with inward investors. Subsequently, cities and regions may struggle to shake off out-dated perceptions that still remain regardless of multi-million pound physical transformation that has transpired. The Member of Parliament for Gateshead (2014) explained that when *"something bad happens in an area, it can have an impact on the overall reputation of a place which can sometimes take time to recover"*. This is evident across the three cities but particularly in Hull where a 17th Century poem has continued to affect its reputation. This is introduced by the Director, Culture, Creativity, Place, who has worked in both NewcastleGateshead and Hull (2014):

"Its reputation has been kind of tarred for about 400 years, there's a poem called, the beggars litany from Hull, Hell and Halifax, good lord deliver us and its sort of acted as a negative introduction to the city for many people for four centuries".

The Beggar's Litany's longevity begins to represent reputation's deeply embedded nature insofar as a poem produced centuries ago still appears to be manifest in Hull's modern day image.

NewcastleGateshead also displays this, possibly resulting from its position in a historically industrialised region. The Artistic Director, Northern Stage (2014) summarises that *"the North East is thought of as a region associated with heavy industry even though there is very little heavy industry here at this point"*. Against fears that out-dated perceptions still exist externally, there was a largely unanimous warm reception from stakeholders in Hull and Bristol on the topic of NewcastleGateshead which is displayed in table 4.1. This has been attributed to culture-led regeneration and greater collaboration between Newcastle and Gateshead that filters through to a national level as effective examples of building reputational capital in domains of culture and governance. Bristol's historical links with slavery and tobacco do remain, to an extent, as presented by the Chair, West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (2014):

"The history around slavery and all of those parts of its history and economy founded on slaves and tobacco and things people now think are pretty undesirable, more than pretty undesirable, very undesirable".

Regardless of the obvious negative connotations of Bristol's past industries, unlike NewcastleGateshead and Hull, Bristol's reputational capital for inward investment hasn't suffered the same effects of deindustrialisation. The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, University of Bristol (2014) claims that:

"Most of the northern cities have had an existential crisis at some point where the last person leaving Newcastle please turn out the lights, there has been industrial or social crises of massive proportions, Bristol has never had that".

Bristol did not experience the same scale of jobs losses as NewcastleGateshead and Hull during the decline of shipbuilding and fishing respectively and may have had less difficulty shaking off historical tags associated with slavery and tobacco. Subsequently, the city may have retained reputational capital with investors when other English second-tier cities were suffering from major job losses and struggling to demonstrate diversification and encourage further inward investment.

In relation to the third part, a place's personality can help to achieve a better understanding of its reputation. By personality I mean to capture the ways in which the emotional and aesthetic qualities of a place come to be associated with it. It is important here to distinguish the term place personality from notions of place branding and place reputation. A place's personality regards the interpretation of a place's reputation by various audiences and is therefore a more affective and embodied understanding that is difficult to shape and change. When compared to place marketing or place branding for instance, these practices are developed through more of a semantic representation of a specific location selected carefully by stakeholders for use as a promotional tool. Also viewed as a place's character, established through its deeply embedded nature; this can accumulate over centuries through residents and their way of life. Factors including historic industry can continually guide everyday habits despite having long since disappeared; giving rise to a personality that could impact reputational capital with inward investors. Molotch et al. (2000:791) state that 'geographic units like cities and regions … seem to exhibit overarching qualities, that, however difficult to measure, make them durably distinct'. Paulsen (2004:247) builds on this by explaining that a place's character is 'the ability of places to attract individuals and their talents can reinforce the reputations those places hold, as those attracted by facets of place character act in the ways that in turn reproduce that character'. Therefore, a city, which thrived during the Industrial Revolution with a growing population, may have had behaviours defined by working patterns in industry that contributed to its character and a reputation for possessing a skilled workforce. The Artistic Director, Northern Stage (2014) highlighted that:

"All kinds of cultural memes and behaviours about how much do people drink? When do they drink? How do people behave on the street? How do people dress? Is it a public place? Is it a private place? I think all of those are quite, quite personal".

This demonstrates that a place's personality may be defined by residents and their way of life, feeding back into the idea that reputations are deeply embedded and character can be instilled in reputation and passed on through generations. First, NewcastleGateshead's personality may derive from its nightlife creating a colourful atmosphere and a reputation with young adults for being a 'Party City'. A participant from the Port of Tyne (2014) claimed *"it's [a] lively cultural place, it's a lively place for drinking and parties and that is not necessarily bad".* The area can be interpreted as vibrant, tying in with the contemporary 'Party City' label which, despite being a modern moniker; has roots much further back and has long been instilled in its population (Hollands and Chatterton, 2002).

Some participants have described Hull's personality as being self-deprecating which appears to be an internal reputation, resultant of falling on harder times that have become engrained in generations of residents. First, a former public sector stakeholder in Hull (2014) stated:

"They are 'tell it as it is people', you are never in any doubt, what you see is what you get, they are honest people, they are hardworking people who want a chance, they sometimes feel a bit downtrodden, sometimes a bit overly criticised but genuine, honest, hardworking people and not afraid to laugh at themselves really".

Hull's personality and internal reputation may derive from several 20th century episodes including the Blitz in World War II that destroyed large amounts of the city and the Cod Wars that decimated the fishing industry in the 1970s, a major employer. Atkinson (2012:11) emphasises that:

'Burgess (1978) … identified a clear division between the self-confident and secure identity of Hull and its citizens before the Second World War and the more defensive and less certain sense of Hull's importance that arose after 1945, for Burgess this decline was condemned to the decline of some key local industries after 1945, such as distant-water fishing and the labour demands of the port'.

These episodes of Hull's history have possibly accumulated towards the character of its residents, described as "*downtrodden*" (a former public sector stakeholder in Hull; Chief Operating Officer, Spencer Group, both 2014) and *"self-deprecating"* (Chief Executive, Hull College Group; Director, Ensemble 52, both 2014). This possibly explains the impact that long-term decline can have on the confidence of a city's population. However, with UK City of Culture for 2017 on the horizon, there is some optimism regarding the potential accumulation of internal reputational capital in Hull. Third, participants in Bristol touched on an eccentric, nonpartisan personality that also contradicts itself. The Director, Watershed (2014) claimed that:

"Bristol was unorthodox so I have heard lots of people say its alternative, its independent, but actually it is unorthodox by which I mean smart, clever, independent, … but it is certainly distinctive".

The Director, Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (2014) added, "*There is a very paradoxical city, Bristol, so it is conservative and radical, its national, its parochial … and international".* Compared to NewcastleGateshead and Hull, Bristol's personality is possibly more contested and demonstrates a more inconsistent reputation, internally, that could be a product of diverse neighbourhoods that exhibit different traits. Subsequently, Bristol is composed of many distinct areas, some displaying contrasting characteristics for deprivation, ethnicity and politics. These conditions may be the reason that a reputation for independence has been developed. This was mentioned by the Director, Tobacco Factory Theatre; Head of Inward Investment, Bristol + Bath; and the Director of Creative Media, University of the West of England (UWE) (all 2014) and in six other interviews. Examples of this independence are the Mayor, George Ferguson who is not affiliated to any political party and Bristol's alternative currency which encourages independent retail.

As regards the fourth part, a place's performance can be viewed as part of its reputation, as a city's ranking on socioeconomic indicators can variably impact levels of reputational capital particularly externally. This differs from personality, focusing more on measurable indicators rather than intangible perceptions.

Zenker (2011:48) believes that 'measuring hard facts – like census data will only expose parts of the place identity (place physics), but cannot lead to a satisfactory understanding of the place brand (based on the definition of a brand as a mental representation in the individual persons' mind)'. While, performance indicators are valuable and relate to reputation, it needs to be asserted that, when used in isolation, they cannot provide a comprehensive reading of a place's image. In turn, a wider understanding based on intangible outcomes may be more fruitful. However, there is a possibility that the media can sway external reputational change by manipulating statistics that can create a stereotype that risks further distortion via word-of-mouth. The Assistant Head of Service, Hull City Council (2014) explains that *"performance stuff is very clearly one way which people judge, one way, whether or not a city in a sense has a strong reputation or goes both ways but it isn't the only way"*. As such, a place's performance and its reputation can connect somewhat, however, despite its uses, the bearing of performance on reputational capital is limited.

The performance of NewcastleGateshead has been described by certain participants as enjoying a resurgence following decline in the 1970s and 1980s. More recently, NewcastleGateshead has built cultural reputational capital that has been exemplified by the rejuvenation of both Newcastle and Gateshead banks of the River Tyne. Regardless of a turnaround, NewcastleGateshead is still located in a region that underperforms on some indicators; however whether this is significant enough to impact reputational capital with inward investors, for instance is debatable. This is explored by the Director, Northern Stage (2014):

"Unemployment, the lack of a large and dynamic private sector, overreliance on public sector employment which I think are not necessarily hugely public conscience things but are certainly consciences in the business community and something that has to be repeatedly addressed and driven at for the economic wellbeing and for the future of the region".

Consequently, there are some doubts about the balance of NewcastleGateshead's renaissance and the impact on reputational capital particularly regarding socioeconomic indicators and the public to private sector jobs ratio. Additionally, the percentage of public sector jobs in the area makes the economic stability

susceptible to change, particularly during austerity that could affect its reputation for attracting private sector investment. In Newcastle, public sector employment stands at 33.5%, in Gateshead its 26.8%, compared with 24% in Hull and 26.6% in Bristol (Office for National Statistics, 2010b). This presents challenges for NewcastleGateshead when trying to build reputational capital with inward investors as a reliance on the public sector has generated an uneven economic climate.

Hull regularly underperforms on league tables for indicators on employment; nonetheless, if the city possessed boundaries of a similar size to other cities it may improve its performance and lead towards a better external reputation. Moreover, Hull is under bounded in relation to its socioeconomic footprint and for census data is measured solely as an inner city area compared to other cities that incorporate more affluent suburbs but this may be a merely statistical effect. This is depicted in tables 4.2 and 4.3. The Director, Ensemble 52 (2014) proposed that *"in the city, certainly figures plummet on health and education and everything else and that starts to be what your reputation is based on and then the media will inevitably exploit that".* However, the poor likelihood of moving boundaries means that Hull faces a greater task than others to convince various audiences that statistics do not reflect reality. Bristol's performance is more complicated, despite having strengths; arguably, the city has to overcome stark weaknesses, perhaps not understood as part of its external reputation. This may be audience dependent, if investing from outside investors may have a positive perception of Bristol as an attractive city with a strong economy; while a resident in one of Bristol's most deprived wards may develop a somewhat contrasting perception, as it is a polarised city with extremely wealthy and poor areas. To illustrate this, the Editor, *Bristol 24-7* (2014) shared an anecdote about a train line that stops at Bristol's richest and poorest areas. This is portrayed with figure 4.1 and the line imposed on an Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) map. This depicts levels of deprivation when travelling through Bristol and as the participant explained the difference at Clifton Down station, located in a wealthy ward and Lawrence Hill in a poor ward reflects the contrasting quality of life, representative of its inconsistent reputation. Bristol's performance is summarised by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, University of Bristol (2014) as demonstrating:

"Disturbing levels of inequality within the city, probably not understood actually as part of our reputation but certainly locally understood but as to what is good about the city, well it is increasingly known to be a very dynamic city, it's a relatively prosperous city, it is one of few cities, the only city outside of London that has a GDP above the national average".

The characteristics listed start to underline the complexity of Bristol's performance, which is difficult to unpack and is audience dependent. Stakeholders also remarked that Bristol has a reputation for not getting things done and earning the label the *"Graveyard of Ambition"* (Planning and Environment Director, Bristol Airport; Director, Tobacco Factory Theatre; Director, Bristol Cultural Development Partnership; Editor, Bristol 24-7, 2014). This title stems from years of political malaise that compounded decision-making and prevented major projects including a tram system from development, affecting levels of reputational capital for governance. Also, some interviewees suggested that Bristol's complacency (Chair, West of England LEP; Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, University of Bristol, 2014) along with the *"Graveyard of Ambition"* and disparities, in wealth contrasted with more positive statistics on GDP and graduate retention. This created uneven results and a blurry reputation that is difficult to comprehend.

Table 4.1 – A table showing stakeholder perspectives on NewcastleGateshead from Hull and Bristol

Hull	Bristol
"Newcastle has got a really strong reputation for culture" Producer, Hull Truck Theatre (2014)	*"I really liked Newcastle an awful lot, I think that Newcastle shares reputationally with Bristol"* Director, Tobacco Factory Theatre (2014)
"It's energetic, it's a vibrant city" Deputy Editor, *Hull Daily Mall* (2014)	*"I think it's a win that Newcastle has sided with Gateshead and has created their scale"* Anonymous Council Officer (2014)
"NewcastleGateshead is an interesting one because they managed to effectively create place across a river" Director, Thinking Place, who has worked in Hull (2014)	*"I think Newcastle, has got the reputation of being an interesting town with a big history"* Executive Producer, BBC Natural History Unit (2014)
"I know Newcastle is good news but that shows that the branding has made infiltration on my consciousness without actually knowing the facts" Chair, Hull, UK City of Culture for 2017 (2014)	*"The Millennium Bridge across the Tyne … makes a really strong place now and NewcastleGateshead is a damn sight stronger as a result of Gateshead actually being the minor partner taking a huge leap"* Mayor of Bristol (2014)

Source – Interview quotes from stakeholder interviews in Hull and Bristol on the reputation of NewcastleGateshead (2014).

Table 4.2 – A table showing claimant count in primary urban areas, percentage change between 2013 and 2014

Rank	City	Claimant count November 2014 (%)	Claimant count November 2013 (%)	Percentage point change
55.	Liverpool	3.2	4.9	-1.7
56.	Sunderland	3.3	4.5	-1.2
57.	Dundee	3.4	4.4	-1
58.	Bradford	3.8	5.2	-1.4
59.	Birmingham	3.9	5.4	-1.5
60.	Grimsby	3.9	5.2	-1.3
61.	Newport	3.9	4.8	-0.8
62.	Middlesbrough	4.0	5.5	-1.5
63.	Belfast	4.4	5.1	-0.7
64.	**Hull**	**4.9**	**7.0**	**-2.1**

Source – Adapted from Centre for Cities (2014).

Table 4.3– A table displaying the percentage of residents with high-level qualifications in primary urban areas

Rank	City	Working age population with NVQ4 and above, 2013 (%)
55.	Chatham	23.7
56.	Stoke	23.5
57.	Rochdale	23.0
58.	Doncaster	22.9
59.	**Hull**	**22.3**
60.	Barnsley	22.3
61.	Southend	21.4
62.	Wakefield	20.6
63.	Grimsby	19.9
64.	Mansfield	17.8

Source – Adapted from Centre for Cities (2014).

Figure 4.1 – A map displaying the route of the Severn Beach Railway line and the levels of deprivation in Bristol
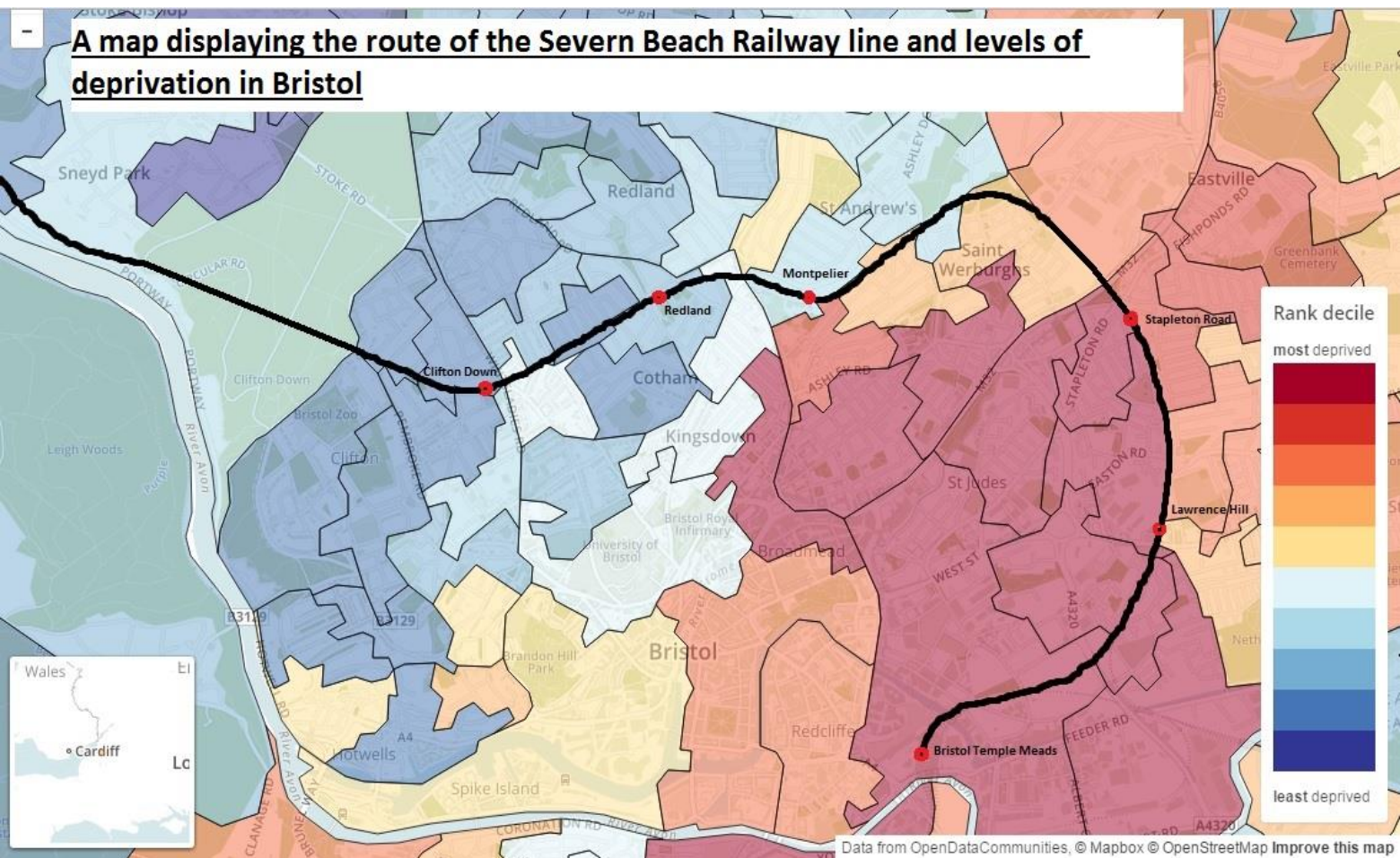
Source – Interview with Editor, Bristol 24-7 (2014) and Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) map from Open Data Communities (2010)

4.2 The elements of place reputation

Place reputation is a broad concept and is related to a wide-range of elements that are not straightforward to identify or unpack due to internal and external inconsistencies. This is explored across two separate parts. The first part focuses on the different elements of a place's reputation and explains how the complicated place makes the discovery of elements a problematic undertaking. This asserts that dividing a reputation into social, economic, political and cultural elements means that elements can only be understood to a limited extent (McCann, 2009, Kuss, 2009). The second part centres on the internal and external assessments of reputation. An internal dimension involving how those based inside, view a city's reputation is compared with the external aspect and argues that there may be more at stake for a place's reputation externally (Van Ham, 2008, Kuss, 2009).

Part one focuses on the multiple different aspects to a place's reputation that can be broadly categorised as being social, economic, political or cultural. Kuss (2009:266) explains that 'not only does it [place reputation] reflect political, economic and social relations – rather like an advertising message but it actively enters dialogue with the relevant protagonists'. As a result, place reputation contains many different elements that can, to an extent, be classified. However, this recognises that different social, economic, political and cultural elements can overlap and all four categories may be utilised to improve a place's reputation comprehensively. Participants gave manifold responses on this topic; nonetheless there is a consensus that the elements, roughly, can be split into the aforementioned categories. The South-West Chair, Arts Council England (2014) remarked *"it is probably a convergence of four things which is probably the political, the economic, the social and the cultural"*. Also the Artistic Director, Northern Stage (2014) explained that:

"Cultural, economic, social, political, aspirational, I think it is quite a big thing about whether a place perceives itself or it is perceived externally as a place which has aspiration or a place that lacks aspiration".

The accounts from stakeholders hint at how the elements of a place's reputation can be divided, nevertheless, the addition of an *"aspirational"* category from the second participant represents the wide-ranging answers supplied. Moreover, due

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to the diverse responses received and despite there being something of a consensus on the categories, it will be argued that this understanding is too simplistic as many elements overlap and cannot be confined to a particular category.

Some participants also alluded to the term quality of life as being a meaningful element of place reputation. This included, among others, the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Business and Engagement, Northumbria University; Communications and External Affairs Manager, BP Acetyls Europe; and the Chair, West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (all 2014). Quality of life encompasses the health and happiness of residents based inside a city and is associated with a high standard of living and a good reputation. However, while these feed into one another, they are not understood as being mutually exclusive (McCann, 2009). Though, the intangible, quality of life is arguably an element that straddles all four loosely defined categories and can affect a place both socially, economically, politically and culturally. An academic staff member, Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences (GEES), University of Hull (2014) suggests that:

"The different attributes of place reputation certainly relate to each other but it is dangerous to reduce one, collapse the one thing on the other, they interrelate in a variety of different ways".

This shows that the fluid nature of the elements and whilst acknowledging that they can be categorised to an extent, it is also accepted that these elements can overlap and may carry a presence across all of the four roughly established categories. To illustrate, an element such as theatres can conceivably only be placed into the cultural category as it has little relation to the economic, social and political categories. However, an organisation like Arts Council England can be described as both cultural and political as the levels of funding provided to cultural institutions is a political matter. Figure 4.2 illustrates that it is common for different elements to overlap and also harder to pinpoint those that sit solely inside one category. In turn, the most populated area of the Venn diagram is the middle section, accounting for elements classified as simultaneously being social, economic, political and cultural. Using the example of quality of life, this is social, as quality of life allows residents to enjoy better living conditions through factors

including access to healthcare. It is economic as the stronger the economy, the more likely that quality of life would increase. Politically, it is important, as councillors are keen to ensure they can create the best opportunities possible for residents. Also, it is cultural as the quality of life at a particular time in a place has historically, been known to be reflected in local artistic outputs including theatre productions.

Gathered from the interviews, the key elements of NewcastleGateshead's reputation are the 'Party City', the city's universities, culture and to a lesser extent, Newcastle United Football Club. The 'Party City' was frequently mentioned both internally and externally, although the city's cultural renaissance attracted external attention as well. The Chief Executive, Gateshead Council (2014) stated that NewcastleGateshead is *"the football club, the kind of party city thing which particularly Newcastle has … there is a recognition of … cultural regeneration and the change of place … the universities"*. The 'Party City' tag and the overall cultural offering were both mentioned frequently. The addition of the universities with the potential link between students and nightlife, suggests that reputational capital might be built through the attraction of exogenous resources. In Hull, stakeholders expressed that the key elements of its reputation are UK City of Culture for 2017, high levels of unemployment, alongside the city's isolation, renewable energy and admittedly out-dated perceptions of the fishing industry. The Director, BrandVista (2014) who has worked in NewcastleGateshead explained that:

"Hull it has always been said is at the end of the M62 and that is where it sits, its got the capital of culture which we know had an impact in Liverpool in the past, a big impact, a massive impact".

He reflects on the opportunity that UK City of Culture for 2017 may provide, yet simultaneously acknowledges the challenges presented by the city's isolation, another regularly mentioned element for Hull. Furthermore, the fact that this participant is external to Hull and alongside other stakeholders who expressed similar views, this could be indicative of the city establishing cultural reputational capital from outside.

The elements of Bristol's reputation are more wide-ranging and more diverse responses were produced compared to NewcastleGateshead and Hull. Bristol's

universities were put forward as the most prominent element of the city's reputation. However, unlike NewcastleGateshead and Hull, with the 'Party City' tag and UK City of Culture for 2017, this was the only commonly agreed element with others raised including the city's creativity, culture and the street artist Banksy. The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, University of Bristol (2014) claimed that:

"There are certain things which are of world class which are world leading that we would be mad not to have at the heart of our reputation. It is a wonderful place to live, work and study and all of the universities in the region benefit from that".

This touches on the reputational capital, both internally and externally, that universities can help to accumulate both with businesses in the city and with prospective students in both Bristol and English second-tier cities on the whole. This is shared in common with NewcastleGateshead and underlines the input that two universities can have in developing this in the domain of education.

Culture was a recurrent theme across the three cities; this highlights the opportunities that UK City of Culture for 2017 presents for Hull and the ways in which NewcastleGateshead and Bristol's respective cultural offerings all contribute towards developing cultural reputational capital. When compared to Bristol, Hull's elements are arguably more clearly defined with many different answers being provided by stakeholders when questioned on the different elements of Bristol's reputation. This possibly links in with the Director of Thinking Place's, (who has worked in Hull)(2014) assertion that he would *"struggle to describe Bristol's USP [Unique Selling Point]"*. NewcastleGatehsead's key elements are probably the clearest cut with three of the most frequently mentioned elements being the 'Party City', culture and the area's universities. Overall, this is representative of the wide-ranging elements associated with place reputation and begins to signify that the variance between elements in cities can contribute towards developing reputational capital in different domains and with various audiences.

A place's reputation can vary and is relational to internal and external audiences. It is possible for residents to feel comfortable and be happy and with the city and it appearing to be well run. However, this can be interpreted differently from outside, perhaps as being parochial and inward looking especially if there are stark political differences nationally. An internal reputation concerns

audiences already present and typically relates to residents, students and businesses based there. Residents are likely to be an important audience for a sound internal reputation as many have lived there for generations and have moulded its character. Van Ham (2008:131) argues that 'internally they [stakeholders] are making their citizens feel better and more confident about themselves and giving them a sense of belonging and a clear self-concept'. Accordingly, resident involvement can provide some foundations for internal reputation improvement whilst acting as a springboard to become more outward looking. This has already been reflected in the place branding literature that has chronicled the emergence of bottom-up place branding which has enjoyed a rise to prominence (Trueman et al. 2007). However, there is some debate about whether an internal or external reputation should take precedence. The divergence between an internal and external reputation is introduced by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, the University of Bristol (2014) as:

"Reputation: you might say that is obviously an external thing in a sense that [it] is what the name of that place [is] and the activities that, the achievements of that place, how are they perceived and understood by the rest of the world, all sorts of differences from close by through to very far away but I think there is also an internal dimension to it. I think that can and should be the way that people of the city region feel about themselves".

Consequently, it may be wise to begin by promoting a good internal reputation as if those inside a city can be harnessed and their support is encouraged, a place can steadily become more outward looking and external reputational capital may incrementally follow.

An external reputation involves anyone from outside of a city which may include prospective students, residents, tourists and investors. Kuss (2009:270) declares that 'experience, or a glance in any newspaper, teaches us that major changes in a city's self-perception result first and foremost from external effects'. Therefore, a good external reputation could be equally, if not, more, desirable as there is more at stake outside and it is being pitched towards a much larger audience. An external reputation can firstly be more precisely defined, focusing on attracting exogenous resources and demonstrating as being an attractive place to

locate. The potential of the external reputation is considered by the Editor, *Bristol 24-7* (2014):

"If you're within a city … you might be a bit blinkered to the reality, I think you can only really truly understand the reputation of a city if you leave … and talk to people from outside … and … see what they make of the city".

Therefore, highlighting that it may be more advisable to form a judgement of a place from an external viewpoint due to the possible bias of an internal perspective. Also, it is apparent that it could be worthwhile for cities to tend to their internal reputation and support audiences already present alongside being sufficiently outward looking to project a positive image externally. Attempting to achieve that balance is not straightforward and it is unclear whether a reputation is of greater significance internally or externally and if focusing on one holds back the other or whether striking a balance can limit levels of reputational capital.

In NewcastleGateshead it is implied by some stakeholders that the city's reputation could be more favourable internally. The Marketing Director, Clouston Group (2014) articulated that:

"Our brand and perception is weak externally, I think it is actually fairly good internally, I think we all know what we're good at and I think we all know that we're passionate about and I think we all know that we're warm and enterprising, we can be internally, I just think that message externally is not getting through".

Even though having a good internal reputation is positive for NewcastleGateshead, there is danger that having too strong an internal reputation could prevent the area from becoming sufficiently outward looking. This could be problematic when building reputational capital with inward investors as if the positive internal reputation is not translated outside the area then stakeholders may be unable to attract significant inward investment. Hull, according to some participants, has demonstrated a lukewarm internal reputation until recently being announced as UK City of Culture for 2017. As such, certain interviewees have claimed that residents, due to their self-deprecating personality explained in section 4.1, may have been quick to denigrate Hull in the past. Whereas the external reputation may

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not be as bad as feared internally with stakeholders explaining that it could be the case that the general public have no perception of Hull rather than a negative one. The Deputy Editor, *Hull Daily Mail* (2014) remarked that:

"So people from Hull think that other people think we're a terrible city and we're a laughing stock and in fact people's perception generally, I don't think outside a city like Hull is so polarised or so extreme".

Moreover, the Communications Business Partner, Hull City Council (2014) expressed that *"if it didn't have a negative reputation … nobody knew about it"*. Therefore, Hull's external reputation is unlikely to be as negative as expected by residents. Also, with the opportunity of UK City of Culture for 2017, this may be a catalyst that encourages a more positive internal reputation that is sufficiently outward looking as well. However, if this is carefully and gradually improved with adequate stakeholder engagement in the build-up, reputational capital may follow, however, possessing no external reputation can be tricky to change.

The health of Bristol's external reputation does not appear to be translated inside the city, with its external performance and attractiveness failing to be replicated. Nevertheless, internally, factors including a lack of private sector collaboration in the past and inequalities have generated a more contested reputation. This is reaffirmed by a Senior Lecturer in Urban Studies, University of Bristol (2014) who stated that *"I think you get a better view from the inside because Bristol … ground it in the area that I know most about; I think Bristol is often seen as doing better than it feels like"*. Despite being viewed as an attractive and prosperous place externally and generating more GDP than any other UK City except London, Bristol is somehow faced with internal negativity. This is possibly due to Bristol's internal economic disparities. The fact there is a difference in internal and external reputations again raises the question of which is more desirable for a city. The Bristol case, combined with NewcastleGateshead and Hull, indicates that the two may not be reciprocal when building reputational capital.

Figure 4.2 – A Venn diagram displaying the different elements of a place's reputation

Economic

Social

GVA/GDP

Start-ups

Major employers

Poverty

Friendliness

Premier League Football

Retail

Transport Jobs
Skills
Inward investment

History

Media

Housing Disparities

Built environment

Universities Infrastructure

Crime Council Health

Tourism Quality Of life

Health

Ethnic minorities

Schools

Art galleries

Museums

Independent cinemas

Theatres

Arts Council England

MPs

Mayor Councillors

MEPs

Cultural

Political

Source – Interviews with stakeholders (2014)

4.3 Understanding varying reputations

Ascertaining the effectiveness of a place's reputation can be a demanding task. This is made more difficult by the complexities of place and the audience involved which gives rise to reputations which are not simply 'good' or 'bad'. Two parts focusing on these issues are explored here in relation to NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol. The first part explains how a place's reputation is challenging to understand and may not be considered as straightforward as good or bad (Turok, 2009, Anholt, 2010a). The second part focuses on measuring the influence of place reputation and investigates whether comparing cities on this basis is a realistic probability (Zenker, 2011).

First, place reputation is an intricate concept and it is therefore inappropriate to attach dichotomous labels such as good or bad to English second-tier cities. Also, it is difficult to gauge the strength of what is largely a subjective notion which even at a basic level is audience dependent and representative of the complicated place. For example, the perception of a long-term resident would vary from that of a potential inward investor from a multinational corporation. In turn, judging a place's reputation is a relational task and is entirely dependent on who is making the judgement and what domain this judgement being made in and in relation to which sector. Turok (2009:26) reinforces the inadequacies of place branding by stating that 'the branding of cities is infinitely more difficult than for commercial products because of their complex and contradictory qualities'. Similarly, Anholt (2010b:5) explains that 'the tiniest village is infinitely more complex, more diverse and less unified than the largest corporation because of the different reasons why people are there'. Moreover, the elusive and somewhat intangible nature of reputation makes establishing the concept and its key elements problematic even before instigating comparison. Consequently, this could make it difficult to label a place's reputation as either good or bad due to subtle differences between cities. This is reiterated by the Editor, *Bristol Post* (2014) who opined that:

"I don't like good/bad versus positive/negative … I think there are many, many more shades of grey than that actually and I think one of the issues are that if you seek to do research that only makes things good or bad then I think you polarise, it is too binary and I think it leads to research, which is just not, it's not reflective of the complexity of place".

Also, the Director, Watershed (2014) explained that:

"It's always a very textured sort of thing and it is, it's rarely the case that the official headlines tell you very much about what you really want to know … certainly me if I am looking about learning about a place, I am not looking to see if it's good or bad, it's much more, what is the texture of that place".

Accordingly, deciding the effectiveness of a place's reputation is an ambitious undertaking, due to the complexity of cities and regions, subtleties and the unevenness produced. Moreover, looking for, what the second participant described as the *"texture"* of place and accepting their convoluted and sometimes contradictory nature would be more astute than developing stark good or bad labels.

Linking in with the relational idea of place reputation, it is also dependent on who is carrying out the judgement. Some interviewees (The Directors, Tobacco Factory Theatre and the Bristol Cultural Development Partnership, 2014) recognised this by implying that reputation relies on the *"eye of the beholder"*, proposing that there is no such thing as an all-encompassing reputation. Therefore, the creation of a judgement on a place's reputation depends entirely on the person that developed it, which makes reaching an overall consensus on a perception of a city improbable. Overall, reputation might be better understood in a nuanced manner whilst acknowledging the different features and quirks present in a place that can be drawn out to enhance its reputation.

NewcastleGateshead's reputation has various facets that differ depending on the audience. Notably through interviews the idea of the area having a 'Party City' reputation is not as simple as good or bad. First, it demonstrates some positives and builds reputational capital with students and tourists. However, associations with crime, the cost of cleaning and the emergence of the *Geordie Shore* television programme could threaten reputational capital with local residents, for instance. The Director of Policy, Newcastle City Council (2014) proposed that:

"The party city reputation, is it good or bad? It is of course good because it brings with it positive economic benefits, it helps vibrancy, it probably attracts students and

visitors so there is that good element of course, there is also quite a serious element, in terms of the social consequences of the costs incurred in managing ... the city and potentially the link is indirect to things like poor health outcomes".

Hull's reputation is presently dependent on the build-up to UK City of Culture for 2017 that is hoped will be the catalyst for a turnaround in the city's fortunes. Previously it had a more negative reputation with key features including its destruction during the Blitz in World War II and the fishing industry's decline during the Cod Wars with Iceland. As previously discussed, Hull has had a negative reputation built around its status as a 'Crap Town' (*BBC News*, 2003) but it is currently hoping to change that through UK City of Culture for 2017. This is reaffirmed by the Producer, Hull Truck Theatre (2014) who asserted that *"its historical reputation is for being a neglected city and a city in decline but I think that is starting to change now"*. Also, the Director, Ensemble 52 (2014) emphasised that *"of course there is bad but there is good and I think now the good is starting with more confidence, it is starting to shout a bit louder"*. These statements show that Hull may be on the cusp of reputational change with opportunities arising from UK City of Culture for 2017. Additionally, the event appears to be supplying residents with greater confidence that may over time gradually translate into greater internal and then external reputational capital. Notwithstanding, the impact of this event on Hull's reputation remains to be seen, as instigating reputational change is a long and drawn out task and it could be many years before this outcome is established.

The efficiency of Bristol's reputation is more difficult to unpack when compared to NewcastleGateshead and Hull due to its diverse neighbourhoods. Although all geographical entities demonstrate complexity, due to the polarised different parts of Bristol, it may be plausible to suggest that the city's reputation is more dependent on who is making the judgement here. For example, typically it would be assumed that street art may be viewed more positively by a young person residing in the Bohemian Stoke's Croft area than it would be by a wealthy retired couple in Clifton. Thus, due to Bristol's inconsistent reputation, the identity of the perceiver could make more of a difference here perhaps when compared to NewcastleGateshead and Hull. The Artistic Director, Bristol Old Vic Theatre (2014) introduces these attributes:

"Its reputation is as a place that can make things happen, ... where people can make things happen, a place where creativity lives alongside business, prosperous place, place, an environment, a place where physically, ... people say it's a nice place to live and I suppose that the negative aspect of its reputation is that its parochial, inward looking and a divided city".

The complex nature of Bristol's reputation underlines the challenges involved when trying to develop a coherent narrative of the city's image to build reputational capital as a somewhat contradictory understanding may exist. The city's difficult to unpack reputation could mean that the *"eye of the beholder"* features more prominently here due to its distinct neighbourhoods. Overall, it can be argued that a place's reputation is intricate, unbalanced and difficult to comprehend, to varying degrees, is dependent on the audience viewing it.

Trying to develop a comprehensive measurement system to rank the reputation of cities is a problematic undertaking due to their intricacy. It is possible to order cities based on a single measurement such as the unemployment rate. However, trying to find the essence of a place's reputation using multiple indicators, some of which are intangible and difficult to comprehend makes comparison unlikely. This is a similar problem to that seen by place branding but relates more to the elusive nature of reputation rather than the ambiguity of the former concept. Fitting in with Van Ham's (2008:133) understanding that 'measuring the success of place branding remains difficult, as does establishing a list of best practices'. Also, this relates to Zenker's (2011:40) viewpoint that the results of place brand measurement are 'too inaccurate and difficult to compare against other places'. Granting the difficulties, there is a desire among participants to measure reputation but little agreement on how. First, there is a more statistical approach allowing for specific aspects of a place's reputation to be compared, advocated by various stakeholders (Director of Corporate Affairs, Port of Tyne; Director, BrandVista, who has worked in NewcastleGateshead; Director of Creative Media, University of the West of England (UWE), all 2014). This can only capture certain parts of a place's reputation and, as the Director, BrandVista (2014) alluded to, this is achieved by identifying specific variables that contribute towards deciding, for example, a place's friendliness. Cities can be compared in terms of

isolated factors; but, this does not give a comprehensive reading of its reputation. Nonetheless, if hard statistics on a place were desired as a way of measuring reputation, identifying a sole aspect is probably the most effective, and to a degree, most accurate, if not, limited method. Another shortcoming of the approach was mentioned in relation to Hull by the Deputy Editor, *Hull Daily Mail* (2014) who argued that:

"I think it is dangerous though because it ignores local knowledge and understanding about for instance, Hull has got very narrow boundaries as a city which don't take in some of the more affluent suburbs".

Therefore, this represents why measuring the impact of a place's reputation can be tough as the uneven nature of cities makes developing a one-size-fits-all approach for comparison tricky particularly when using statistics. This is why previous schemes including the Anholt GFK-Roper Nations Brands Index have struggled to contend with the uneven and complicated place.

Second, some stakeholders recommended that place reputation is more of a subconscious understanding. To decide whether one place has a better reputation than another can conceivably be determined by your own knowledge or experience of that specific location. Such assessments are constructed over time, and can become strongly embedded and difficult to shift. Therefore, somebody may subconsciously decide whether one place is viewed more favourably than another due to an intangible understanding. The Executive Producer, BBC Natural History Unit (2014) commented that:

"How do you measure that? You have a sixth sense, don't you, about whether a place is thriving or not … the thing that you can't, is hard to measure is you come to an assessment that a city is flourishing because you subconsciously measure umpteen different things, everything from whether people look as if they are happy right through to whether cafes are full".

This mind-set takes a more hands-off approach to measuring reputation and is largely based on a long-term perception deriving from various sources including the media and word-of-mouth. Regardless of the lack of concrete outputs and

being difficult to identify, making a judgement based on your own knowledge is possibly the only way to holistically measure most aspects of a place's reputation in a single attempt. However, due to its somewhat indefinite nature and dependence on a person demonstrating a sufficient knowledge of that particular place, it can be based on ignorance or prejudice and may represent an inaccurate understanding. Hull, compared to NewcastleGateshead and Bristol, was the only city where stakeholders had a real desire to measure place reputation. Largely as a way of assessing the effectiveness of attempts to build reputational capital in the lead-up to the UK City of Culture for 2017 tenure, stakeholders (Communications Business Partner and Assistant Head of Service, both Hull City Council, 2014) are keen to establish a *"reputation tracker"* to determine its success. Overall, the convolution of trying to measure a place's reputation has been outlined and it is apparent that this is not yet a realistic option for UK second-tier cities.

4.4 Key institutions and their impact upon place reputation

The behaviour of key institutions has a sizeable influence on a place's reputation. Greater working together between stakeholders present in English second-tier cities means there is an increased responsibility for prominent organisations to contribute towards place reputation. Three of the most prominent organisations uncovered by the research in each city are investigated during this section. The first is the council; this concerns how changes in their role impacts upon place reputation (Bulkeley and Kern, 2006, Henderson et al. 2007). The second is the multifaceted role of the university, which can have numerous impacts on place reputation (Goddard and Vallance, 2013). The third part regards the significance of Premier League football in furthering place reputation, particularly focusing on the global platform that it provides (Giulanotti and Robertson, 2009).

Although the role of the local council in relation to a place's reputation is still a prominent one, its responsibilities have shifted somewhat during the past thirty years. Previously there was more of a tendency from some local authorities to focus on controlling a place's reputation and displaying a reluctance to engage with

both internal and external stakeholders and particularly the private sector. Typically associated with hard left, Labour affiliated local authorities; this tendency saw several cities become more inward looking. Despite developing reputational capital with residents, this negatively affected engagement with central government. An example of this is 1980s Liverpool that several participants (Arts and Culture Journalist, NCJ Media Ltd; Director of Policy, Newcastle City Council; Professor of Human Geography, University of Hull; and Deputy Editor, *Hull Daily Mail*, 2014) all referred to. Here, controlled by the so-called militant-tendency Labour administration, Liverpool City Council boldly fought against cuts imposed by Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government by investing heavily in public services through £100 million loans from foreign banks. Nonetheless, this soon failed, the confrontational and unpredictable nature of Deputy Council Leader Derek Hatton, numerous strikes and 31,000 fake redundancy notices delivered by taxi for public sector employees saw the city's reputation for local government tarred for many years later (Frost and North 2013, *Liverpool Echo*, 2013).

However, more recently, local authorities in both cities and regions have demonstrated more collaboration with stakeholders both internally and externally. An entrepreneurial spirit has ensued and place's have developed outward looking reputations. Bulkeley and Kern (2006:2242) explained that 'Perhaps most associated with reforms to local government in the UK, this mode refers to the role of local government in facilitating, co-ordinating and encouraging action through partnership and voluntary-sector agencies and to various forms of community engagement'. While, in relation to Salford, Greater Manchester, Henderson et al. (2007:1459) suggest that 'national government support for an example in northern England of what could be achieved if local authorities adopted a co-operative and entrepreneurial stance worked in Salford's favour'. This may promote an open and a participatory culture and help to accumulate greater reputational capital internally, externally and across boundaries. Potentially, this may subsequently result in a more positive reputation for the local authority and importantly help towards developing this for the entire city. This is introduced by the Inward Investment Director, Bristol + Bath (2014) who opined that:

"The reputation of a place is not driven by council and public sector, it is driven by the people that operate in it so it is driven by the people who live there, it is driven by the people who study there and driven by the people who work there or the organisations who employ these people".

Also, the Director, Thinking Place, who has worked in Hull (2014) shared that:

"Having gone through the recession, having gone through austerity, councils cannot act upon the place in the same way that they did before and they never will again, that will not change, no matter what the politics are, place leadership is now a shared responsibility of public and private sector".

Therefore, the local council's responsibility in trying to shape a place's reputation has changed more recently, becoming, to some degree, more akin to a facilitator that establishes networks with public, private and civic sector institutions rather than demonstrating absolute control over a city. As such, this may have further intensified the need for local authorities to become more entrepreneurial and to embrace the private sector during a testing economic period to build reputational capital, especially for inward investment. Consequently, although local authorities can still retain an important role, the latest cuts applied to local government have redefined the influence they can have on place reputation.

For NewcastleGateshead, figures 4.3 and 4.4 depict the political configuration of Newcastle City Council and Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council respectively. They show two local authorities largely dominated by Labour although there remains a Liberal Democrat presence after a period leading Newcastle City Council between 2004 and 2011. The two councils, to relative degrees, that have become more open and participatory over recent times. Additionally, the function of both local authorities in shaping the area's reputation was enhanced by deciding to work in partnership at the start of the 21st century. Complimented by the birth of the NewcastleGateshead Initiative, originally a destination marketing organisation, both authorities gained greater power to create cultural reputational capital on an international stage. The Mayor of Bristol (2014) praised the arrangement as being *"a great partnership of a couple of places*

that really used to shoot across the Tyne at each other and I think they enormously benefitted by working together".

In Hull, figure 4.5 portrays a city with a similar percentage of Labour councillors to Newcastle City Council alongside a Liberal Democrat presence who, too had overseen the council between 2007 and 2010. This period as in NewcastleGateshead, has helped to reduce the dominance of the Labour party and ensured a more open and participatory culture in the city. This has allowed the current administration to begin to turn around a negative reputation, having attracted private sector inward investment from Siemens and earning the UK City of Culture title for 2017. This is reflected by the Chair, NewcastleGateshead Initiative (2014) who declared that:

"It's partly to do with the smartness of the city council in changing but it is ... a good place to go and live and Hull have been very smart and Hull has been a good example of a city that has reinvented itself over the last twenty years".

Also, the Chief Operating Officer, Spencer Group (2014) stated that *"the running of Hull has embraced business more than I have ever seen it before"*. This hints that Hull City Council may have become more entrepreneurial and collaborative by engaging with private sector businesses to boost the city's reputational capital for inward investment.

For Bristol figure 4.6 shows that the city council is more spread out across four political parties. While, the city has 30 Labour councillors, there is also sizeable representation from the Conservatives, the Greens and the Liberal Democrats compared to NewcastleGateshead and Hull. This is the most diverse political representation of the case-study cities and is far removed from the city council's more negative reputation for governance, being controlled by the far left. Also, the city is overseen by an independent elected mayor, George Ferguson, on top of the council and a 'rainbow cabinet' composed of four assistant mayors from the aforementioned political parties. The only city to opt for an elected mayor at a 2012 referendum, it is believed that this shift has pared back the local authority's influence in reputation management. The Director, Tobacco Factory Theatre (2014) asserted that:

"I think you create the environment and then allow people to flower and so I think that I mentioned that ... the council is pretty good, the council's influence is probably waning but it seems ... that the council is quite good at letting people to get on with things".

Thus, Bristol is reflective of a wider shift from local authorities reducing their control of a place's reputation, becoming more open and participatory and creating the right conditions for public, private and civic sector stakeholders to accrue reputational capital in governance.

Universities can play a considerable and wide-ranging role in developing reputational capital, not only with students but also with inward investors, residents and tourists alike. Goddard and Vallance (2013:1) affirm that 'the relationship between the university and the city is a multi-faceted one of distinct but interrelating physical, social, economic and cultural dimensions'. The role of the university stretches from producing skilled graduates, to attracting academics and increasing inward investment. There are also more cultural outputs involving art and nightlife that are linked with universities and the overall student culture (Munro and Livingston, 2012, Hubbard, 2013). Alongside graduate retention, when combined with the aforementioned elements forming reputational capital, if a university can fill high quality jobs, helping to improve the area's economy and attracting better students, it becomes a continuous cycle. The importance of the connection between city and university is summarised by the Mayor of Bristol (2014) who claims that reputation is *"More likely to be defined by the quality of the university than the quality of the city council for instance"*. This also provides further evidence regarding the redefined responsibilities of the council from managing reputation on their own to more of a facilitator that begins to stimulate collaboration. The amount of students present during term time can swell a city's population and this is evident in all three locations. In both NewcastleGateshead and Bristol, students make up over 10% of the population. NewcastleGateshead and Bristol have the highest percentages of students out of the three cities. NewcastleGateshead has a combined population of 489,000 people (Office for National Statistics, 2011e) with 55,364 students (Newcastle University, 2014, Northumbria University, 2015), equating to 11.3% of the area's population. Bristol

demonstrates a similar proportion of students, out of a city of 432,000 (Office for National Statistics, 2011f), there are 48,110 students (University of Bristol, 2015, University of the West of England, 2015), therefore, 11.1% of the city's population are students. Whereas Hull, including Cottingham, a population of 273,264 (Office for National Statistics, 2011d) includes 16,300 students (University of Hull, 2015), meaning that 6% of the city's population are students. This begins to explain the extent of the relationship between university, city and region. With all three cities demonstrating quite significant population increases during term time, this could have internal and external reputational consequences with residents and prospective students alike.

In NewcastleGateshead, an area with two universities, Newcastle University and Northumbria University, the institutions are both stakeholders in reputation management. Newcastle University is more research based, whereas Northumbria University is a former polytechnic accounting for over 30,000 of the city's students. The Director of Public Relations, Newcastle University (2014) commented that:

"The marketing of the city is one of the main reasons that students come here and we are consistently voted number one student city and that has been for several years and so it is important that we work with NGI [NewcastleGateshead Initiative] and others to make sure we reflect a positive image of the city".

Greater collaboration in NewcastleGateshead may also encourage further communication and transparency between stakeholders in the area which could make decision-making easier and allow its universities to build reputational capital with prospective students. Hull has a university, the University of Hull, located on a suburban campus. Previously, the city had two universities but Humberside University, a former polytechnic, moved to become the University of Lincoln. The relationship between the university and the city's reputation is expressed by an academic staff member, Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences (GEES), University of Hull (2014) who claims:

"The city and the university have a pretty good relationship … I don't think we engage in actually branding the university or branding the department but we

certainly use reputational concepts to sell ourselves and university, definitely, and part of that is the image and identity of the city".

This reiterates how Hull's reputation connects to the university and how this can generate mutual benefits, with emphasis on utilising the city's reputational capital to attempt to make the university more enticing to prospective students and staff. Furthermore, if the city is performing well economically it can feed back into the university by drawing a higher calibre of students and potentially stimulating graduate retention and improving the city's reputation.

Bristol has two universities, the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England (UWE). The University of Bristol has similarities to Newcastle University and is also research intensive. While, UWE, formed in 1992, has links with Aardman and the BBC and provides jobs for graduates in Bristol through these collaborations. The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, University of Bristol (2014) explained that:

"We are the University of Bristol, so it matters tremendously what the reputation of the city region or of the city in particular is, we're absolutely in the heart of the city, very close to its geographic centre, we're a major institution, [although] we are not the only university in the city region by any stretch".

Therefore, the role of the University of Bristol and the relationship with the city's reputation is an important one, and although he endorses the significance of the institution's presence he also begins to move towards introducing the offer from other universities in the region. Also, in close proximity are the University of Bath, 15,937 students (University of Bath, 2014) and Bath Spa University 7,533 students (The Complete University Guide, 2014). As such, the number of students in the Bristol city-region totals 71,580, some of whom may take jobs in Bristol. Combined with Bristol's ability to draw students from elsewhere (section 8.2), this demonstrates the value of the relationship between university and city and the impact this has on external reputational capital. However, if NewcastleGateshead's city-region boundaries also accounted for the University of Sunderland this would rise to 76,251 (University of Sunderland, 2016) and stretched to include Durham University (Durham University, 2016), the city-region student population would be

93,756. The nearest institution to the University of Hull is the University of York, located over 35 miles away. This could put the city at a disadvantage compared to NewcastleGateshead and Bristol which have the capacity to attract twice as many students and can propose a more varied higher educational offer when compared to Hull. Furthermore, this shows the benefits associated with a city having more than one university within the area and the effect it can have on building reputational capital with prospective and current students.

A Premier League football club can be a significant institution in relation to the reputation of an English second-tier city. Due to the game's increased global profile, this gives the towns and cities in which they are based an opportunity to build international reputational capital. This illustrates the increasing forces of globalisation and links in with Giulianotti and Robertson's (2009) work on football's rising popularity worldwide. The relevance of a football team to a place's reputation is proposed by the Director, Culture, Creativity, Place, who has worked in both NewcastleGateshead and Hull (2014) who argues that:

"The reputation of the university can affect it, the football team actually, the performance of the football team, the kind of basket case delivery of a football team, when Newcastle were in serious trouble as a football team, the reputation of a city gets tarred by that".

The city's university and Premier League football team mentioned in the same sentence emphasises the stature of football clubs within English second-tier cities. NewcastleGateshead is home to Newcastle United, a Premier League club with a 52,000-seat stadium located in Newcastle city centre. The ground is currently the fourth largest in the Premier League; however, the club are viewed as underachieving having not won a trophy since 1969. Their owner and sponsor are both controversial, which has led to the club coming under criticism. The role of Newcastle United is mentioned by an Arts and Culture journalist, NCJ Media Ltd. (2014); the Director, JT Group, Bristol (2014); and is expressed by the Director of Policy, Newcastle City Council (2014) who stated that:

"If you typed Newcastle into a search engine the thing that would come up first is Newcastle United Football Club, so the fact we're a Premier League team brings with it, its own reputation, good or bad or mediocre as it may be".

This reflects the contribution that the football team makes towards NewcastleGateshead's international reputational capital as the league's global profile provides the area with a platform to project its image to a wide audience.

Hull is home to Hull City, a team relegated from the Premier League at the end of the 2014-15 season, who share a relatively new 25,000 seat stadium with rugby league team Hull F.C. Hull City have spent most of their existence in the lower leagues until promotion to the Premier League in 2008, enjoying two seasons in the top flight. They were relegated in 2010 before returning in 2013 and made the FA Cup final for the first time in 2014, before being relegated again in May 2015. Similarly to Newcastle United they have a controversial owner, local businessman, Assem Allam, who although has ploughed a lot of money into the club, he has pursued attempts to rebrand it as "Hull Tigers", raising questions about whether tradition and heritage should be sacrificed in quest of a global reputation. The usefulness of Hull City being promoted into the Premier League in 2013 is introduced by the Deputy Editor, *Hull Daily Mail* (2014) who explained that:

"Hull City's move into the Premier League has certainly helped to enhance the city's reputation, there were three things that … enhanced the city's reputation, one is … city of culture, two with Siemens coming here … and three, significantly was Hull City, … it places us amongst an elite group of football teams … think England's top cities, if you're not in the Premier League playing football are you really a first grade city in the UK?".

Highlighting the likely significance of Hull City's promotion to the Premier League in 2013 as it has been mentioned alongside the announcement of UK City of Culture for 2017 and Siemen's creating over 1000 jobs to manufacture wind turbines in the city in terms of importance. Additionally, it could have provided a rare opportunity for Hull to project its image and build reputational capital on the world stage, due to the global nature of the Premier League. In part, the recent relegation could affect Hull in the run up to 2017 as the momentum built up by

recent positive events could be restricted somewhat if the city can't build on the international reputation brought by Premier League football.

Bristol has never had a football team in the Premier League. The city is home to Bristol City, who have recently been promoted to the division below, the Championship, and play at Ashton Gate Stadium, shared with Bristol Rugby, rugby union team. Also, Bristol is home to Bristol Rovers who play at the Memorial Stadium and have just been promoted to League Two, three divisions below the Premier League. The city has had problems constructing modern stadia for their football clubs; however, this now appears to be progressing. Ashton Gate is undergoing a redevelopment, increasing its capacity to 27,000 and Bristol Rovers are moving to a 21,000 seat stadium at the University of the West of England. This is repeated by the Director, Tobacco Factory Theatre (2014), declaring that *"it has got a reputation of being enormously underachieving sportingly which is a very important thing for many cities in Britain, part of that is related to its not great facilities"*. The lack of suitable facilities in the city expressed appears to handicap Bristol in allowing their football clubs to progress sufficiently, also linking in with the *"Graveyard of Ambition"* reputation linked to the city not allowing major projects to progress. Moreover, whilst this cannot be directly to blame for Bristol never having a Premier League football team, it does add towards the city receiving less international reputational capital enjoyed by counterparts with a Premier League football club.

Figure 4.3 A pie chart displaying the political affiliation of Newcastle City Council's councillors
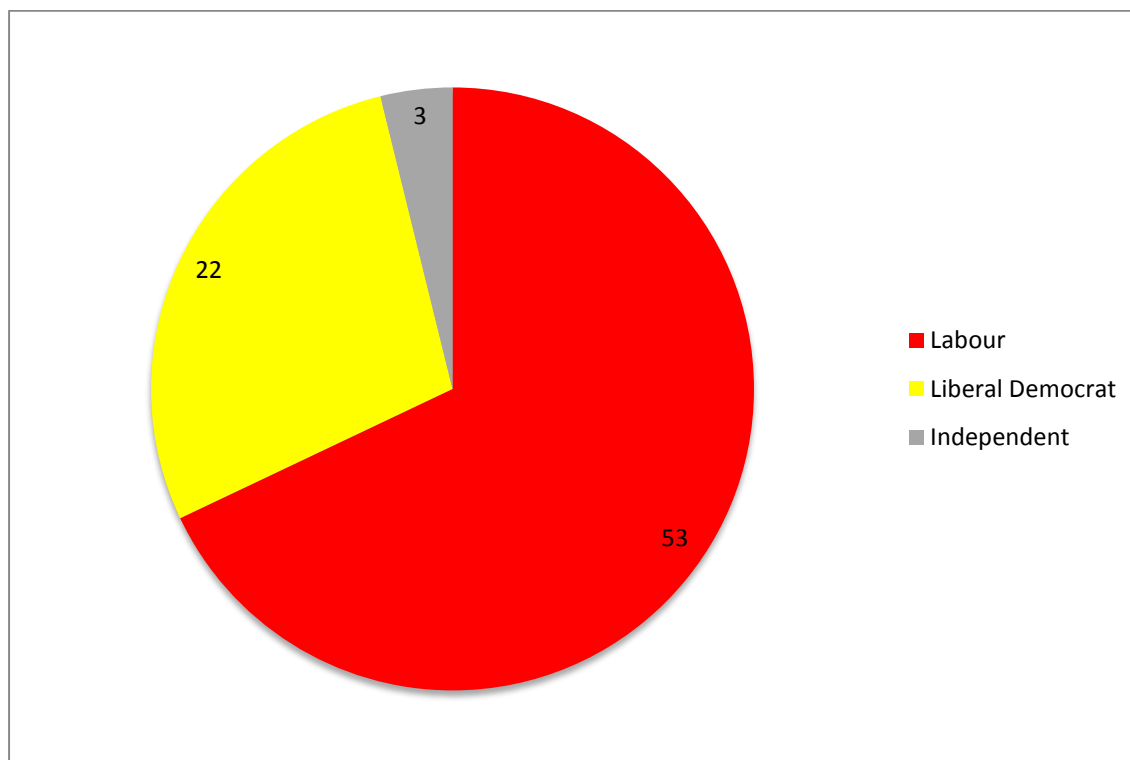
Source – Newcastle City Council (2015)

Figure 4.4 A pie chart displaying the political affiliation of Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council's councillors
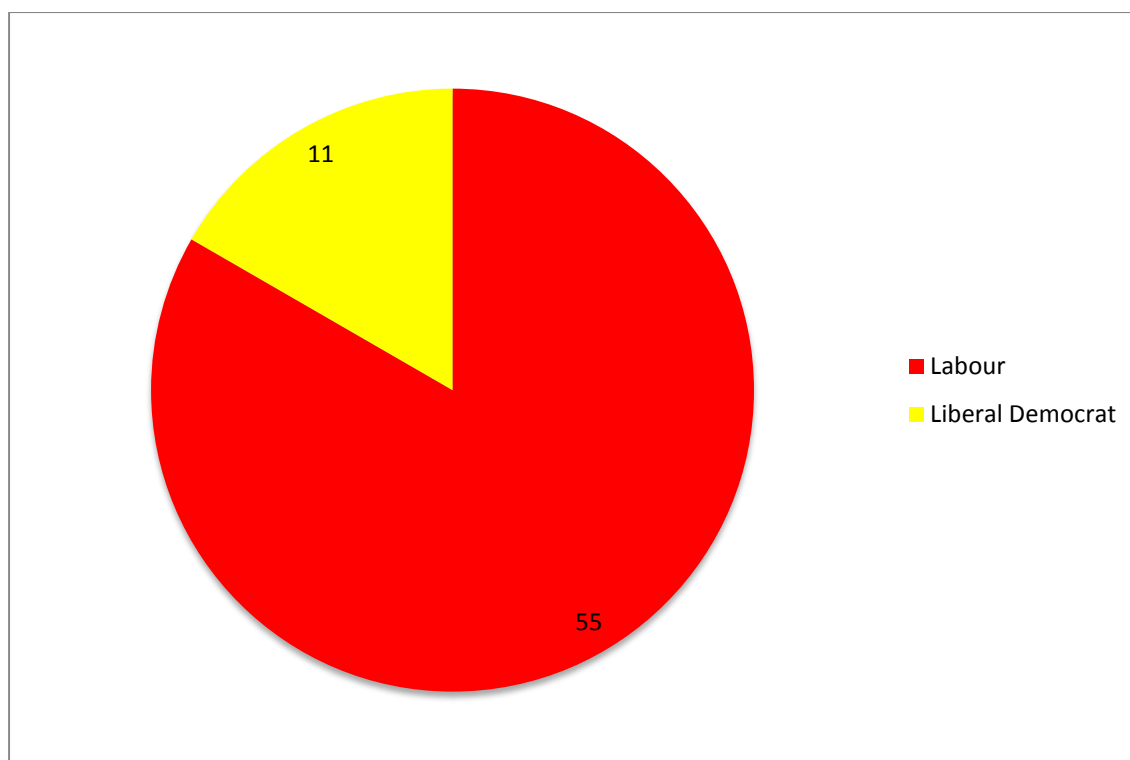
Source – Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council (2015)

Figure 4.5 A pie chart displaying the political affiliation of Hull City Council's councillors
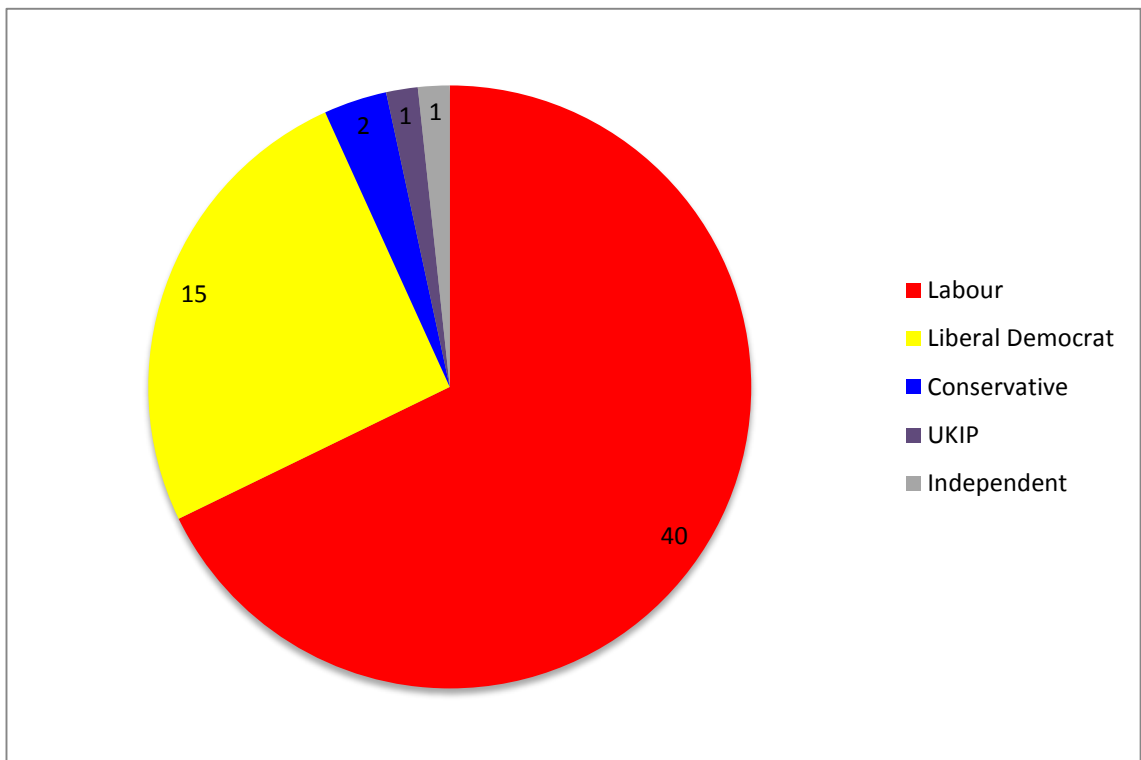
Source – Hull City Council (2015)

Figure 4.6 A pie chart displaying the political affiliation of Bristol City Council's councillors
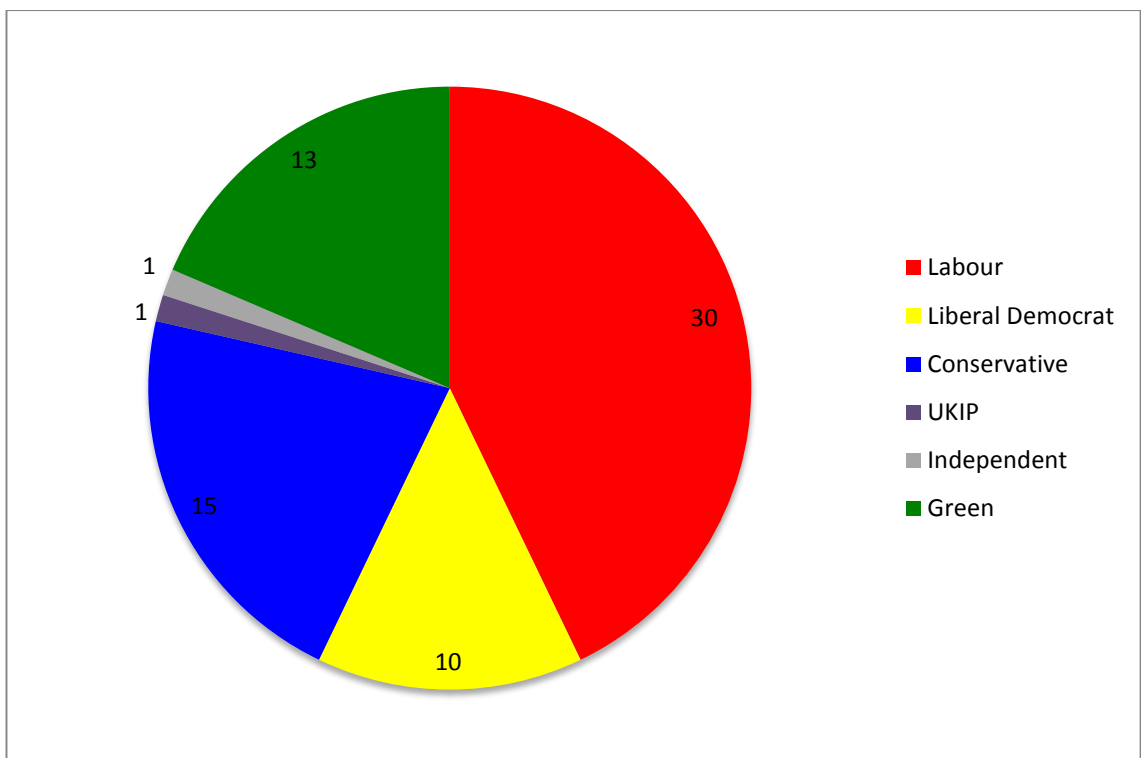
Source – Bristol City Council (2015)

4.5 Shaping place reputation

Trying to influence and change a place's reputation can present challenges for cities and regions alike. However, if carried out properly this can provide an opportunity for stakeholders to build a distinctive reputation that draws on key assets. This section is split into three parts. The first part argues how a strategy designed to build reputational capital may benefit from long-term planning (Kuss, 2009). The second part explores how a place's reputation is shaped; focusing on how this is achieved in both a tangible and intangible manner (Doorley and Garcia, 2006, Go and Govers, 2012). The third part concerns key individuals and how they can influence a place's reputation by demonstrating greater trust and ethical behaviour (Fisher-Buttinger and Vallaster, 2011).

Trying to change a place's reputation is a long-term strategy designed to improve its image over a sustained period to help any changes made to become enduring. Moreover, if undertaken steadily, more outdated perceptions that cities and regions find difficult to shake off may be overridden. The benefits of long-term planning are related to community reputation by Kuss (2009:270) who claims that 'the strategy here is quite conventional: a long term plan with consistent messages'. Because deeply embedded reputations can take a long time to transform, stability is required and a place's reputation may benefit from an equally as long-term strategy to potentially take effect. The Initiative Manager, Business West (2014) and the Chief Executive, Newcastle College Group (2014) suggest that changing reputations takes generations, with the former describing this as *"amorphous"*. An Anonymous Council Officer from Hull (2014) claimed *"reputation takes a while to change there's not a light switch you can flick"* and the Former Chief Executive, One North East (2014) declared that shaping a place's reputation would benefit from being conducted during a *"medium to long-term period"*. This is illustrative of the length of time required to build reputational capital and implies that this is not achievable in the short-term. This can be compared to place branding, which was initiated based on fashionable campaigns produced elsewhere that ultimately proved to be too short-lived (Turok, 2009, Clegg and Kornberger, 2010).

Alternatively, place reputation seems to draw on a place's distinct qualities and translates this into a comprehensive, lasting strategy with the eventual aim of revoking more intangible, outdated perceptions. For NewcastleGateshead there

has been an acknowledgement of the long-term vision and political stability of Gateshead from the 1970s that alongside greater collaboration with Newcastle has been fundamental to forming reputational capital particularly with national government. This is mentioned by the Chief Executive, Gateshead Council; Director of Corporate Affairs, Port of Tyne; and the Member of Parliament for Gateshead (All 2014). Also, the area's current stance is represented by the Chief Executive, NewcastleGateshead Initiative (2014) who stated that:*"the role of NGI has been to enhance and change people's image and perceptions to create a more positive and economic environment to support long-term economic growth"*. Thus, becoming indicative of a focus on a prolonged strategy aiming to uplift outdated perceptions of NewcastleGateshead. Combined with the tradition of long-term thinking exhibited by Gateshead Council, this may potentially create stability and continuity that may, in stages, enable reputational change.

In Hull, there is some caution about the long-term impact of UK City of Culture for 2017, regardless of the positive reception that it has received. The Manager, Humber LEP (2014) shared that:

"Hull will always be for the foreseeable future, will be towards the bottom of the league tables, it's not going to suddenly leap towards the top because we've won something or because we've rebranded the area".

Also, a Professor of Human Geography, University of Hull (2014) and an Anonymous Council Officer (2014) have expressed doubts about the possible impact of the event on the city's reputation both internally and externally. There is some scepticism about its impact but a recognition that it will be beyond 2017 before this is known. As a long-term plan; its effectiveness may be unclear until a legacy has been established and the effect of this event upon Hull's external reputational capital has been determined. In Bristol, any approach that has been developed is typically not the result of long-term thinking and tends to happen more organically. The Director, Watershed (2014) proposed that:

"We just haven't had the long-term powerful structures that have re enabled management to happen so there have been lots of attempts but things have tended to happen by consensus rather than by management".

Linking in with the city's bottom-up approach, the participant emphasises the more laissez-faire stance on reputation management that may have contributed to Bristol's inconsistent internal reputation, yet successful external reputation. This is perhaps linked to the *"Graveyard of Ambition"* tag preventing the city from delivering major projects over recent years. Although a bottom-up consensus could be efficient in some regards, it may be inappropriate for developing major projects such as a proposed arena that requires more top-down intervention.

Developing a strategy to change a place's reputation can be a demanding task, there are no set guidelines and this is achievable in various ways due to the context specificity of place. Additionally, there is a suggestion that deciding to manage and transform a place's reputation may be something that is implemented in a reactionary manner. For example, if a negative event occurs within its boundaries that produces unwanted media attention, stakeholders could look to counteract this to try and safeguard and then gradually improve reputational capital following a difficult situation. Enhancing a reputation in a tangible sense can include transforming the built environment by constructing new flagship projects including the Millennium Bridge in Gateshead. Alongside improving educational standards or developing a new public transport project, these elements are controllable and are easier to influence by stakeholders. These transformations, despite being costly can provide visible change to a place's reputation by raising aspirations and *"particularly young people, they want to see cranes on the skyline"* (Director, Thinking Place, who has worked in Hull). Therefore, delivering tangible and physical change in an English second-tier city may be a method of not only visually enhancing a place and could also gradually contribute to transforming perceptions.

The intangible aspects of a city's reputation are less straightforward to pin down and include more embedded and outdated perceptions. Viewed as more challenging to transform, these aspects can remain persistent for stakeholders when trying to further a place's reputation. Factors including a place's culture and attractiveness can be regarded as intangible with a more careful approach required that produces more steady reputational change over the long-term. The tangible and intangible differences are introduced by Doorley and Garcia (2006:8) who argue that 'the reason most organisations do not have formal programmes to

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manage reputation is that they view it as something "soft" – intangible. Yet as nebulous as reputation can seem, it has real, tangible value'. Additionally, Go and Govers (2012:6) reaffirm that 'some of the intrinsic characteristics of place make it difficult to control and manage place in a direct and straightforward sense as one might a commercial organisation'. Thus, although the intangible attributes of a place's reputation may be difficult to identify and can be interpreted as ambiguous by stakeholders, they can be of such influence; they may debatably invalidate more tangible, concrete developments. Consequently, it is plausible that millions of pounds can be spent on overhauling the built environment yet if this isn't supported by work to raise intangible aspirations then its impact could be restricted.

As such, a balanced approach could be necessary. By using more tangible visible changes alongside incremental and long-term transformations that harness residents' support which seek to transform deeply embedded stereotypes, this could help to build external reputational capital. The Chief Executive, Newcastle College Group (2014) advocated that *"the hardest thing to change was … things like skills and productivity because they take a lot of time and they are also a bit nebulous"*, he also added that *"you can open a bridge but it's much harder to change attitudes"*. Therefore, trying to change a place's reputation intangibly is a complicated task and is more reliant on how resources are best applied as part of a long-term and incremental strategy rather than the amount of resources available. Tangible and intangible aspects can be complimentary. If *"cranes are on the skyline"* and the transformed built environment can contribute towards changing perceptions when sustained long-term, backed up with a series of events that involves residents and increases visitor and student numbers, then over time, perceptions may slowly change.

In NewcastleGateshead, despite widespread tangible change of the built environment, there is a consensus that more intangibly, stereotypical perceptions may still be affecting the area's reputation externally. There is a desire, displayed especially by the Chief Executive, NewcastleGateshead Initiative (2014) that:

"The best way to change people's images and perceptions was to actually get them to visit which is why we obviously look to attract people … here for weekends, attract

major conferences, attract potential inward investors to ... visit, because its actually much easier when people are here to take away the negative aspects".

Arguably, enticing more people to NewcastleGateshead can be fundamental to dispelling any myths that remain regarding its reputation. A perception from outside could be somewhat outdated or stereotypical, developed around popular media representations, a situation that can be countered by visiting and actually experiencing NewcastleGateshead's offer. Therefore, working on attracting more exogenous resources may contribute towards transforming the area's reputation more tangibly and by gaining momentum it may have an intangible impact over time too.

Participants in Hull have nominated the private sector support given to the UK City of Culture for 2017 campaign as a contribution towards enhancing the city's reputation. This includes the formation of the Hull 2017 Business Angels that involves 22 private sector organisations. They contributed £374,000 in total to the initiative, which reflects the impact of collaboration, a more innovative use of the private sector and less reliance on public sector funding to improve the city's reputation (*Hull Daily Mail*, 2014a). Stakeholders who mentioned this include the Director of Marketing and Communications, University of Hull; Chief Executive, Hull College Group; and the Chief Operating Officer, Spencer Group (all 2014). The Communications and External Affairs Manager, BP Acetyls Europe (2014) described the private sector support as:

"Where we can influence is things such as the City of Culture bid so ... put our weight behind that, give that credibility, we are one of the sponsors, we were one of the Business Angels that pledged their support during the bid process and I would hope that having put BP's name there really helped us to win".

This illustrates the financial capability of the Business Angels, composed of reputed organisations that have combined private sector resources to make a tangible contribution to improving the city's reputation as part of Hull's bid to become UK City of Culture for 2017. This also highlights the potential of collaboration as if favourable conditions are created and governance is imbued with sufficient levels of communication and trust, this could begin to influence

reputational capital for both governance and culture-led regeneration. In Bristol, stakeholders demonstrate a more bottom-up method to influencing its reputation. This focuses on setting up the right conditions to allow prominent organisations and individuals sufficient autonomy to combine to shape the city's reputation in their own way. Supportive evidence is shown in table 4.4. However, this may produce more intangible results as the bottom-up process could make the delivery of major, tangible projects troublesome, particularly through a consensus. Therefore, sometimes top-down intervention may be required.

Key individuals can take an important role in trying to influence and change a place's reputation. Moreover, when combined, their accumulative power can gain prominence and, if suitably influential, they can steer a place's reputation in a particular direction. Connecting with corporate reputation, if key individuals and their supportive institutions display greater trust and ethical behaviour, this can help to build reputational capital. Fisher-Buttinger and Vallaster (2011:63) declare that:

'Numerous corporate scandals, the credit crisis, the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the war in Iraq, have all contributed to a general erosion of trust and increased general scrutiny of corporate actions. Against his backdrop of distrust, sustainability values and ethical behaviour enjoy newly won importance'.

Furthermore, if those who are powerful develop a network of trust throughout a city, this may increase the likelihood of transforming a place's reputation, particularly in an era where trust has taken on greater value. Additionally, it could be plausible that reputational capital built by the individual or with the support of their institution can be transferred to the city itself and if demonstrated throughout, it may accumulate towards a more positive reputation. The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, University of Bristol (2014) claimed that *"I would argue that the principal institutions of the city or region then be projected or managed in some way by building trust for example amongst the leading institutions"*. Constructing trustworthy relationships between key individuals and their institutions can be foundational to moving towards shaping a better reputation. Also, as argued by the corporate literature that states trust is essential for the formation of a reputation management strategy, it can conceivably contribute

towards the reputations of places too. In NewcastleGateshead there is a focus on enhancing the area's reputation through the persuasion of key individuals both internally and externally. The Chief Executive, NewcastleGateshead Initiative (2014) explains:

"Getting key influencers, key media to write about what's going on up here in a positive way, get that recognised, get key influencers in government … key influencers in business community to all be talking with a positive set of messages and that will in time obviously also help to change perceptions".

In Hull, although there is currently more positivity, there is still some caution demonstrated by stakeholders that some powerful individuals might still be reluctant to cooperate with the city. The Communications Business Partner, Hull City Council (2014) said that:

"There will always be people at the margins who take a different view but it feels we can have an opportunity to build on that now and keep together that is unified and that mitigates and help mitigate other things that come along that you can't manage".

Consequently, there may be stakeholders on the margins who hold power in transforming Hull's reputation that may still be difficult to build reputational capital with, underlining the engrained nature of perceptions. Also, hinting at possible boundary issues in Hull, in that, parts of the city's wealthier suburbs lie within the jurisdiction of a neighbouring authority that hinders the performance of Hull in league tables such as for education figures. For Bristol, the city's bottom-up approach to influencing its reputation supplies key individuals with greater autonomy and allows them to play a prominent role in guiding its future reputation. The Mayor of Bristol (2014) opined that:

"What shapes Bristol is the entrepreneurs, the people who take initiatives, it's not the people like me who run the place, my job should be to enable the individuals in the city to flourish and they are the people who are going to create the ideas and the changes that make Bristol a better place".

Those in charge in Bristol appear to take a step back when enhancing the city's reputation, almost acting as facilitators and ensuring the right conditions are implemented to allow key individuals to mould the city's reputation in their own way. Conducted in a bottom-up fashion, this is part of a well-established model and despite having flaws, can help to produce a distinctive image.

Table 4.4 – A table showing Bristol stakeholder views on how the city shapes its reputation using a bottom-up approach

Position, Organisation, Year	Evidence
Initiative Manager, Business West (2014)	*"I think Bristol's very good at a bottom-up sort of approach"*
Director, Watershed (2014)	*"We've struggled in any meaningful way to manage our brand or manage our reputation, I think it has just tended to happen, and I think to a degree that makes it stronger"*
Director, Tobacco Factory Theatre (2014)	*"The things that are not too carefully managed in Bristol tend to work quite well"*
South-West Chair, Arts Council England (2014)	*"That aggregation of small things that makes Bristol strong rather than … top down, it is definitely a bottom-up rather than a top down city"*
Mayor of Bristol (2014)	*"The fact that we can't shape individual actions is really positive because individual actions is what makes Bristol an interesting place"*

Source – Stakeholder interviews in Bristol (2014)

4.6 Place reputation and the media

Different forms of media can have various impacts upon a place's reputation, particularly with external audiences who may be less familiar with a particular place than those based inside. Moreover, this is heightened by the manner in which the media amplifies sometimes stereotypical and somewhat minor stories about a place that may leave deeply embedded consequences, taking a long time to change. As mentioned in section 4.1, the media can feed into general public perceptions about a place and can help to fuel some thinly developed impressions that can gain traction and impact levels of reputational capital if broadcast to a wide audience. This section looks at two different parts. The first part examines the evolving role of the media; this specifically focuses on the emergence of social media and the reputational consequences for cities and regions (Aula, 2010, Go and Govers, 2011). The second part analyses the relationship between the local newspaper and a place's reputation and investigates how the local newspaper's stance can help to develop a city's standing (Avraham and Ketter, 2008).

The media's evolving role has meant that cities and regions need to take greater care than ever before when shaping their reputations. Over the past two decades the way that we consume media has largely been transformed. Thanks to the emergence of rolling news coverage, digitised newspapers and social media, this is inevitably going to impact the way that English second-tier cities are portrayed and create greater reputational consequences. Focusing particularly on social media, this has heightened the need for places to protect reputational capital and has also required stakeholders to demonstrate greater caution with how they control their social media output. Although stakeholders demonstrating a degree of care is important, platforms including Twitter can provide a novel opportunity for cities and regions to promote themselves. Aula (2010:44) declares that 'social media content cannot be managed in the same way as … conventional media such as TV or newspapers'. Also, Go and Govers (2011:8) commented that 'the growth of social media in particular has rendered communities immersive and caused decision makers to redraw geographical, industrial and ethical boundaries'. This highlights the fragility of a place's reputation and also the caution used by stakeholders when using social media to engage with internal and external audiences.

Additionally, when compared to more traditional and conventional media platforms, this explains how social media is somewhat intangible and is difficult to shape. In this instance, stakeholders have little control of their reputation on platforms including Twitter, as the power lies with the consumer over what views are expressed abut a specific place. Therefore, trying to produce consistent output and engaging in tailored and measured dialogue with consumers alongside ensuring their account is not compromised by hackers or abusive to other users could have a positive effect on reputational capital. However, regardless of social media's potential negative consequences, if utilised properly it can be a valuable tool for cities and regions. An Anonymous Council Officer from Bristol (2014) summarised that:

"You can put a lot of effort into managing the media, you can be ... clear about shaping the information that they build their work from, because the media has changed, journalism has changed, there is less people doing it in the formal sense, there is an awful lot more people doing it in social media, so people build their own stories, so you have to be able to respond to it in many respects".

This emphasises the influence that social media currently possesses and illustrates the seriousness that it may need to be dealt with in English second-tier cities by stakeholders with regard to managing their outputs across various platforms.

Focusing on more negative media coverage, Hull was brought to the nation's attention back in 2003, when the city was voted the number one 'Crap Town' in Britain by readers of the arts and culture magazine *The Idler*. The feature, which contained accounts from residents tended to put the place down and reflected their self-deprecating personality (section 4.1). Hull winning the 'Crap Town' contest may have been more due to an internal reputation rather than external as nominations and anecdotes published were accredited to their own residents rather than audiences located outside. However, what were once internal issues came to prominence once circulated externally as they began to negatively impact Hull's external reputation too. The Director, Thinking Place, who has worked in Hull (2014) suggested that:

"Externally, it was viewed negatively because it was bottom of education league tables, the council are viewed as incompetent and then it started appearing in things like winning or losing, whichever way you view it, Crap Towns".

This could be interpreted as a turning point in Hull's modern history that may have instigated reputational change and initiated ten years of accumulating reputational capital which potential developed the confidence required to seriously challenge for UK City of Culture for 2017.

NewcastleGateshead has recently received some mixed coverage from the national media. In the age of Twitter, this has allowed stakeholder engagement with on one particular occasion what was believed to be an unfair representation of the area's reputation. Explained by The Editor, *The Journal* newspaper (2014) as:

"You're doing this within three weeks of the Guardian article about comparing the North East to Detroit so it's quite a topical thing at the moment but ... how they are portrayed in the media does make a big difference".

The Guardian article written by Andy Beckett (*The Guardian*, 2014a) compared the North East of England, including NewcastleGateshead, with the demise of Detroit which prompted stakeholders to take to Twitter and condemn the reputational implications. This produced some heartfelt responses to the Detroit article by the former Chief Executive, North East Local Enterprise Partnership Ed Twiddy (*The Journal*, 2014) and by the Director of accelerator programme, Ignite, Paul Smith (Smith, 2014). Contrastingly, only a few months later, the newspaper named NewcastleGateshead as the best UK tourist city at their 2014 travel awards (*The Guardian*, 2014b), closely followed by another negative piece that documented the severity of cuts at Newcastle City Council (*The Guardian*, 2014c). Through all of this, *The Guardian* has had quite an impact on NewcastleGateshead's external reputational capital lately which begins to underline the effect that social media can have in amplifying the reach of newspaper articles.

While Bristol has received some negative media attention externally, from national media, this hasn't been on the same scale as Hull or NewcastleGateshead. This could be due to, as mentioned earlier, the city never really suffering from an

existential crisis or from its closer proximity to the London-centric print media. However, Bristol hasn't been totally exempt from national press criticism. The Editor, *Bristol 24-7* (2014) highlighted the publication of an article from November 2014 from *The Spectator* magazine entitled 'When did ambition become a dirty word in Bristol?' (*The Spectator*, 2014). Despite being a relatively negative piece, it is unlikely to register on the radars of the majority of the general public and may not affect the city's external reputational capital. *The Spectator* only has a circulation figure of 54,070 hard copies (Audit Bureau of Circulations, 2013). Compared with this, *The Guardian* who wrote several pieces on NewcastleGateshead has a circulation figure of 207,958 (Audit Bureau of Circulations, 2014) and is likely to have a wider reach.

A local newspaper's stance may direct a place's reputation, especially internally by influencing the perceptions of local residents and beginning to change their outlook. However, the traditional role of local newspapers has started to transform with previously internal content available online and now of the place's reputation is being broadcast to wider external audiences. Additionally, when intensified further by social media, local news items can have a broader reach than ever before (Aula, 2010). A cautious approach from editors may be required, particularly regarding how stories are articulated, as they are not solely being pitched at local residents, meaning that local newspapers may have to be more outward looking. As a result of the North-South divide in England and the reputational consequences of this, certain local newspapers may be constantly on guard for criticism emanating from the national press more concentrated in the South East. Avraham and Ketter (2008:41) claim that:

'The image of northern Britain in the national press would be different from the existing image, had most of the journalists and editors been born in that area. Their familiarity with the north would be greater ... and they would most probably see things from the northern point of view'.

This argues for the affect that geography can have on the focus of local news output and with NewcastleGateshead and Hull being located further away from the national press in comparison to Bristol; arguably, this could have an uneven impact across English second-tier cities. As such, accounts developed of certain

cities may prove somewhat out dated or stereotypical, compounded by a lack of familiarity with specific areas of the country, causing frustration for more local journalists who have to repair the damage to reputational capital. Furthermore, it is indicative of how acknowledging a wider audience is important as a local newspaper can now be read by anyone, anywhere, online. Although a subtlety may be required whereby residents are still regarded as the key audience, in order for the newspaper to harness internal reputational capital. The Director of Culture, Creativity, Place, who has worked in both NewcastleGateshead and Hull (2014) explained that *"a newspaper can really set the tone for a city"*. Subsequently, reiterating the impact that a local newspaper can have on a place's reputation both internally and externally.

The local newspapers in NewcastleGateshead are *The Journal* and the *Evening Chronicle*, titles owned by Trinity Mirror and operated by NCJMedia Ltd. The two newspapers have weekly readerships of 209,957 (JICREG, 2012a) and 366,753 (JICREG, 2012b) hard copies respectively across the North East. An Arts and Culture Journalist at *The Journal* (2014) shared that:

"My organisation being a newspaper organisation, we, all of the stuff pretty much that has been done in the name of NewcastleGateshead, we've backed it … we certainly wouldn't do anything to knock it or criticise it, in fact, we find ourselves sticking up for it quite a lot when the national press are having a go, which they do".

This outlines the responsibility of the organisation in safeguarding reputational capital when under attack, externally, from the national media. In turn, with NewcastleGateshead being located 250 miles from London, it may find its reputation at risk more often than other English second-tier cities, hence the somewhat defensive stance operated by NCJMedia Ltd. Moreover, although appearing defensive towards national media, the publication can be understood as taking a positive stance internally, reflected by attempting to create an uplifting atmosphere in NewcastleGateshead to retain reputational capital. In Hull, the local newspaper is the *Hull Daily Mail* and is now also owned by Trinity Mirror after the newspapers parent company, Local World Ltd. was acquired by the organisation. It has a weekly readership of 266,000 hard copies (JICREG, 2014a) and is the only

publication in the city. The Deputy Editor, *Hull Daily Mail* (2014) described their role as:

"I suppose it's a two way thing … as I said before … who is our audience? Our audience are actually the people from Hull, so can we, we have to be commercially sensitive to how we perceive Hull and what we report about Hull, we can be very negative, we can be very positive, but generally the middle ground is the place where you are safest".

In turn, the stakeholder went on to explain the advantages of this approach and how they successfully unified the city's population behind the initiative for Hull to become UK City of Culture for 2017, to harness internal reputational capital. Also, he opined how taking a negative stance could have been an option and it may have appealed to a *"small but kind of noisy element"* (Deputy Editor, *Hull Daily Mail*, 2014) of its readers. However, they decided to back the event to contribute towards building reputational capital both internally and externally. This highlights the impact that a supportive local newspaper can have in trying to instigate reputational change in a city or region.

Bristol has two newspapers, the *Bristol Post* and the *Western Daily Press* who are also both owned by Trinity Mirror having also previously been the asset of Local World Ltd. The two titles have weekly readerships of 259,787 and 203,171 (JICREG, 2014b) hard copies respectively in the Bristol city-region. The Editor, *Bristol Post* (2014) explained their aims as being:

"What I don't want to do is present an image of the city which would be unrecognisable to somebody today, so I am trying to create a newspaper that really does reflect what it's like for most people to live here, like living here, so I don't want to portray the city as a place where you are going to be raped or shot".

One less positive way of reading this is that the more negative aspects of Bristol's reputation may be overlooked and an airbrushed, upbeat account of the city's reputation is produced, possibly choosing not to cover more negative events in deprived areas to accrue greater internal reputational capital. This differs quite markedly when compared to Local World Ltd.'s other title the *Hull Daily Mail* that

adopts a more neutral stance on the city's reputation and perhaps the *Bristol Post's* defensive approach has more in common with *The Journal* in NewcastleGateshead. Overall, the role of the local newspaper in directing reputation has been explained and there is evidence of largely positive and supportive media coverage, contributing to the reputations of all three English second-tier cities.

To summarise, chapter four focused on developing an understanding of place reputation and consisted of six different sections. The first section (section 4.1) aimed to introduce the idea of place reputation. This was achieved by concentrating on how reputations are based on perceptions, examining how reputations are deeply embedded, investigating how a place's personality can impact its reputation and analysing whether a place's performance on socioeconomic indicators can influence reputation. Section 4.2 looked into the elements of place reputation. This began by focusing on the different elements that combine to form a place's reputation before moving on to an exploration of the internal and external dimensions of a place's reputation. The third section entitled understanding varying reputations (section 4.3) began by explaining how a place's reputation is challenging to understand in terms of dichotomous labels such as good or bad. This moved on to review whether measuring cities in terms of their reputations is a realistic possibility. Section 4.4 concerned the impact that key institutions can have on a place's reputation and centred on the role that a city council, university and Premier League football club can all take in reputation management. The fifth section explored how a place's reputation can be shaped and changed (section 4.5). This started by explaining how reputational change is a long-term task, investigated how a place's reputation can be shaped in both a tangible and intangible manner and ended by focusing on the role of key individuals in reputation management. Section 4.6 examined the relationship between place reputation and the media and began by analysing the evolving role of the media, before moving on to look at the way that a local newspaper can contribute towards a place's reputation.

5 Place branding

5.1 Re-evaluating place branding

There are various advantages and disadvantages of place branding explored here that relate to NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol. Also, it will be maintained that the predominantly negative connotations proposed by stakeholders may reaffirm the argument that place branding should be reduced and repositioned as part of a more comprehensive reputation management strategy. This section, in two parts, explores some benefits and shortcomings of place branding respectively. The first part examines some of the benefits associated with place branding. This includes place branding is easily understood, place branding encourages collective thinking and place branding has the potential to be rewarding (Turok, 2009, Anholt, 2010a). The second part investigates some of the concept's shortcomings. They include that place branding is not usually grounded in reality, for what it is, place branding may be too expensive and that it has tended to only be a short-term exercise (Turok, 2009, Van Ham, 2010, Pasquinelli, 2013).

One of the benefits of place branding is that, when conducted effectively, it should be easily grasped by various audiences. Also, if a well-thought-out and clear brand is produced, this tends to be straightforward for target audiences to interpret, with a simple, yet eye catching visual campaign standing the best chance of success. Turok (2009:25) states that 'rebranding exercises aim to raise awareness of the substantive improvements made and to dispel outstanding myths and prejudices, they also aim to strengthen civic pride and to instil a common sense of local purpose through holding up an attractive vision'. Therefore, if a branding campaign is clearly laid out, in a uniform manner, this provides a greater chance of being understood by various audiences, especially if adopted by local residents, it can gain popularity. The Head of Member Relations, North East Chamber of Commerce (2014) explains that *"a very kind of clear and well-resourced brand, it does give you that, this sort of imagery and the logo it is very easy for people to understand"*. While it is conceivable that more basic and straightforward place branding can stand a greater chance of succeeding, stakeholders should take care not to underestimate the intelligence of residents, as if, the brand becomes too simplified, it may become belittling. Additionally, possessing a simple place brand does not excuse stakeholders from applying sufficient hard work and it needs to be well planned behind the scenes to take effect. This may resonate with the former

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Regional Development Agency brand for North East England, which NewcastleGateshead is part of and is displayed in figure 5.1. The Head of Member Relations, North East Chamber of Commerce (2014) continued by saying that:

"If you take the Passionate People, Passionate Places campaign of One North East, … companies I talk to … still use it on their business cards, if you're directly engaged and look to develop a brand or reputation of a place, it's very easy to understand what that is and use it and adapt it for yourself".

This is illustrative of the traction that a straightforward brand can gain; despite it being ten years since 'Passionate People, Passionate Places' was launched and the Regional Development Agency has since been wound up, it still retains a presence. Also, the user-friendly nature of the brand and the way it can be easily adapted by businesses in the area to promote their services also seems to have been an advantage of the campaign alongside its longevity.

A successful place brand can encourage collective thinking between a city and various audiences. Moreover, if a brand can be sufficiently broad and unites distinct audiences, it can contribute towards improving a place's reputation. Turok (2009:25) claims that place branding 'simplifies decision making by lending coherence to unrelated attributes, summing them up conveniently and adding a subjective quality that cannot be captured by others'. Subsequently, if implemented properly, place branding can encourage consistency and may promote a unified city. Exercising this is problematic and it is not a straightforward task to develop a brand capable of uniting various audiences (Anholt, 2010a). Thus, brands created are typically targeted at select audiences, generating a narrow image that does not usually demonstrate sufficient breadth. The Manager, Humber LEP (2014) argues that:

"I think the positive, you can all sign up to the same story, everyone can look like they are singing from the same hymn sheet and everybody has a sense of common purpose and direction".

Becoming representative of the unifying power of place branding, this illustrates how a campaign can bring various audiences behind a single initiative. Conversely,

this is ambitious for a standalone brand as they can sometimes lack the inclusivity required to unite different audiences, linking in with Trueman et al.'s (2007:21) description that a 'warts and all' approach may be required. In Bristol, many distinct audiences compound the difficulty of using place branding. The Director of Operations, Bristol European Green Capital for 2015 (2014) opined that:

"I think they have tried to replicate that edgy, non-conformist attitude into our brand, I don't know whether there is a … slight dilemma there though because I am not sure, I am someone trying to relocate a company, is edgy and non-conformist the sort of city I want to go to?".

This highlights the demands of developing an inclusive brand and provokes questions over the likelihood of a brand being developed that successfully encompasses diverse audiences.

Place branding can be rewarding to cities and regions if undertaken properly. If a brand is well planned, relates to various audiences and is sustained over the long-term, it may turn out to be a success. Accordingly, this could have a positive impact on factors including levels of inward investment and more students applying for university. Anholt (2010b:4) demonstrates that:

'Countries, cities and regions that are lucky or virtuous enough to have acquired a positive reputation find that everything they or their citizens wish to do on a global stage is easier; their brand goes before them, opening doors, creating trust and respect and raising the expectation of quality, competence and integrity'.

Thus, the benefits of an effective place brand can be extensive and if done properly a city or region can utilise this to plausibly improve their reputation. However, this could only be realistic in a city already of the stature of London or New York (Greenberg, 2008), with place branding's effectiveness at rewarding English second-tier cities too risky to envisage. The Chair, the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (2014) suggested that *"if you get it right it is a powerful tool as part of international selling"*. Whereas, the Director of Operations, Bristol European Green Capital for 2015 (2014) reiterated that *"the strengths are if you can get it right then financially you can reap the rewards"*. In part, this hints at the

caution required as the first participant mentions this on an *"international"* scale, linking in with previous claims of greater suitability for major cities with large budgets and well-established global reputations. Consequently, for English second-tier cities it may be too uncertain, particularly when plentiful resources are unavailable. Referring back to 'Passionate People, Passionate Places', although relatively expensive, this coincided with a period of renaissance for North East England and brought some benefits by occurring in tandem with NewcastleGateshead becoming a vibrant, cultural destination. The campaign helped to deliver positive results and debatably aided the facilitation of the revival of the heart of the largest conurbation in North East England.

Place branding's first shortcoming implies that some campaigns are not reflective of reality and an untruthful place brand might be developed. Also, there is a tendency amongst decision-makers to copy campaigns that have been successful elsewhere. As such, there is no one-size-fits-all solution to place branding and because a campaign has been successful in a certain place it will not necessarily be elsewhere. This is reflected by Turok (2009:15) who claims 'there is also a danger that the pursuit of distinctiveness becomes a recipe with similar ingredients everywhere'. Illustrating this point, a number of virtually identical place brands have been released some of which do not reflect reality. The views of participants who shared this mistrust of place branding are displayed in table 5.1.This demonstrates how the negative impact of an improperly executed place brand can potentially be detrimental to reputational capital, to the extent that its standing has worsened from the first instance. Therefore, care may be required not to over exaggerate the qualities of a particular city or region and ensuring this is grounded in reality as much as possible to project an accurate account of its reputation. In Hull, at the turn of the 21st century, a brand was used by Hull Citybuild, the city's urban regeneration company, produced by brand consultancy Wolff Olins. The logo as portrayed in figure 5.2 shows Hull, with a lower case h, positioned next to an image of a cog. This wasn't very popular in the city and is introduced by the Director, Ensemble 52 (2014):

"Just actually putting a cog and the name of Hull on an eraser and a pencil and then taking them down to MIPIM in France and saying well we're a great city, look at our rubbers! ... it doesn't do anything".

Also, reinforced by Atkinson (2012:13) who claimed:

'But the Hull cog it stirred debate. Some thought the three crowns on the traditional Hull Coat of Arms were fine already; others objected that the 'h' in 'hull' was not capitalised and therefore, to some irritated voices in the letters pages of the local media, thus reiterating the poor educational attainment of the city'.

Resultantly, the Hull Cog may have failed to resonate with many residents which illustrates how creating a place brand that doesn't clearly make sense can be detrimental to reputational capital. As such, this suggests at the importance of resident involvement in place branding as a campaign that hasn't received their support may not fulfil its potential.

For what it is, place branding may be considered too expensive to implement. When compared to other economic development interventions that can be significantly more expensive, the lack of tangible output from the concept could weaken its justification during periods of austerity such as which the UK is currently undergoing. Also, while the stakeholders initiating this are entrusted with a large budget to construct a place brand, they may lack the experience required to execute this effectively. Van Ham (2010:139) proposes that 'most policymakers still lack the mind set and the hands-on knowledge and experience to effectively construe and implement place branding strategies'. There is a possibility that unskilled decision-makers may be responsible for place branding and this is a scenario in which place branding may not have the desired effect. This is explained by the Manager, Humber LEP (2014) who considers that *"it is seen as expensive and frivolous and you come out with a logo at the end of it and a strapline rather than a story or a mission".* Therefore, for what it is, place branding may be viewed as expensive and somewhat trivial, especially when local authorities are trying to preserve vital services. This is echoed by the large budgets previously possessed by the now defunct Regional Development Agencies, such as One North East's "Passionate People, Passionate Place's" television advertising campaign directed by Ridley Scott. The Director of Public Relations, Newcastle University (2014) shares that:

"The money we had at our disposal was phenomenal, £7 million to spend on a marketing campaign, Passionate People, Passionate Places, that was significant and it brought together the region".

However, following the coalition government's arrival in 2010, the austerity measures imposed including the dissolution of the Regional Development Agencies, mean it is unlikely such sums will be available for place branding again. Although affordable compared relatively to other economic development interventions, the somewhat frivolous nature of the concept combined with the risks involved signifies that currently money may be better spent elsewhere.

Place brands tend to be short-term and can be based on fashionable logos and slogans that have been replicated from other places. Moreover, a lack of long-term planning potentially makes places brands short-lived and they can fall short of demonstrating longevity or a memorable campaign that can be achieved if implemented effectively. Pasquinelli (2013:15) claims that 'in the place branding literature, only long-lasting brands are deemed capable of earning a positive reputation'. As such, this may signify that using place branding to change a reputation is a gradual and drawn out task and the deeply embedded notion cannot be solved with an overly expensive sticking plaster. The Manager, Humber LEP (2014) announced that *"the negatives are that it is often seen as something you will do again in a few years, it ... isn't going to last the test of time"*. Furthermore, it is not helped by some place brands being developed that are based on fashionable logos and slogans from corporations and products that are adopted by stakeholders to aim for greater investment and recognition (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2005). In Bristol, there have been numerous discussions about attempting place branding. The Director, Watershed (2014) said that:

"Bristol, 25 years ago, came up with a campaign that was B R I S T O L 1st, Bristol and it had a first written in the centre, Bristol First, and it was created by an agency promoted by the local authority ... and everybody else went what the fuck is that? And it was just naff; it didn't say anything, just Bristol First, first at what? Why?".

Another stakeholder stated that he refused to attend meetings on Bristol's brand anymore due to unproductivity. The evidence from Bristol depicts the periodic

tendencies of place branding, in that the numerous campaigns emerging from the city have had questionable success in demonstrating the durability required to take effect. This also illustrates the unsuitability of branding for cities and regions and suggests that it would conceivably operate more effectively at accumulating reputational capital when supported by a comprehensive strategy.

Figure 5.1 – An image of the Passionate People, Passionate Places brand used by One North East

Source – Passionate Guidelines, One North East (2005)

Figure 5.2 – An image of the Hull Cog logo used by Hull Citybuild

Source – Hull Citybuild Brand Guidelines, Hull Citybuild (2007)

Table 5.1 – A table displaying stakeholder views on indistinctive examples of place branding

Position, Organisation, Year	Evidence
Chief Executive, NewcastleGateshead initiative (2014)	*"If you are telling a story or trying to create a story that isn't firmly based in reality or in truth, so, it can actually … cause greater negativity and it's not believable or if the reality doesn't live up to the message or the story and that would then further undermine rather than help to reposition"*
Pro Vice-Chancellor, University of Bristol (2014)	*"If it is artificial and doesn't actually speak to the city that we are rather than some advertising agency's view of what we could be then it will have, then it will get found out at some point and … it is just as likely to be destructive"*
Chair, West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (2014)	*"If you have got people coming and they are incredibly disappointed because it isn't like you portrayed and I think you also lead to incredible cynicism to the people who live there, you say you are portraying this as this wonderful green place … but it is not like that so it is why? It is fine if … founded in the reality*
Mayor, Bristol (2014)	*"But absolute negatives are when they try to pretend to be something else or overhyped"*

Source – Stakeholder interviews from NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol (2015)

5.2 Relating place branding to reputation management

The relationship between place branding and place reputation is a key point of debate for the study. Here, it will be explored how place branding can operate when reduced and repositioned as part of a broader reputation management strategy for cities and regions. This is divided into three parts. The first part introduces the idea that place branding should have a readjusted role as part of a broader initiative for UK second-tier cities (Van Ham, 2008, Anholt, 2010a). The second part suggests that any place branding developed as part of a wider reputation management strategy, should be based on reality (Kuss, 2009). The third part asserts that a reduced place branding element may be effective when founded on a common message between stakeholders (Mueller and Schade, 2012).

Place branding may function as part of a wider reputation management strategy providing its influence has been reduced, sitting alongside several other constituent elements. While place branding is not worth abandoning altogether, the concept may be able to overcome its shortcomings with greater support as part of a broader strategy. Subsequently, this may enable a reduced place brand to cope better with various audiences and the complicated place when repositioned as an element of place reputation. The relationship between place branding and reputation is introduced by Van Ham (2008:132) who maintains that 'place branding stands in a long tradition of reputation management'. This builds on Anholt's (2010a:20) assertion that 'brand is a word that captures the idea of reputation observed, reputation valued and reputation managed; and we live in a world which reputation counts for a great deal'. This illustrates that place branding may sit as part of place reputation and also implies that the two concepts are less effective when used in isolation. Furthermore, as a standalone concept, place branding may not possess the same clout as it would when repositioned as part of a broader reputation management strategy. Alternatively, place reputation may be ineffective if it possessed no branding whatsoever as there is conceivably still a need for a place to sell itself. However, it is recommended that achieving this with place branding as a standalone concept has become unproductive and it would have a greater impact when reduced and readjusted as part of the more holistic place reputation. Evidence reinforcing the interrelationship between place branding and reputation is displayed in table 5.2. This shows how place branding should operate when repositioned as part of a broader reputation management

strategy, explained in two points. First, that place branding does not have the impact desired by stakeholders when used in isolation, described by the former Chief Executive, One North East (2014) as being *"flimsy"* on its own. This begins to show that place branding may demonstrate greater conviction as a method of accumulating reputational capital, repositioned with greater support as part of a more comprehensive approach. Second, it is argued that place branding and reputation management are intertwined. As such, the two concepts may not be best understood in isolation and are complimentary to one another, with a place's reputation embodied in any branding activities and vice-versa. This indicates that any repositioned branding campaign could benefit from exhibiting qualities of a place's reputation while a reputation management strategy may benefit from some branding activity.

In NewcastleGateshead, more recently, place branding has been implemented more in the vein of reputation management rather than an outright place brand. The Planning and Corporate Affairs Director, Newcastle International Airport (2014) declared that:

"It isn't just a logo and in actual fact NGI [NewcastleGateshead Initiative] were quite resistant on there being a logo at all and it was … very much, organic and from the bottom-up".

This links in with the notion of bottom-up branding explained by Trueman et al. (2007). Conceivably, if a place branding element is grounded in the local community, is place-led and reduced in significance, it can remain as an effective tool to help to form internal reputational capital. In Hull, place branding didn't appear to play a key role as part of any reputation management undertaken for the UK City of Culture for 2017 bid. The Assistant Head of Service, Hull City Council (2014) introduced this as:

"It is probably the last thing and even with … the City of Culture, this thing here, it was our bid sort of brand, it was the last thing really I think we did, it was the least important of what we actually did".

Additionally, it was disclosed that any branding completed for the campaign was produced in-house and at a low cost. This is possibly indicative of its reduced prominence when implemented as part of place reputation and hinting at a shift of beginning with the place first, rather than being brand-led. Bristol, meanwhile, initiated a project entitled the 'Legible City' and, whilst not being a place brand per se, it is representative of a wider and more creative approach to reputation management. The Director, Thinking Place, who has worked in Hull (2014) explained that *"it has almost done a place brand through signage so it has had a legibility project which is very well renowned and was almost … a different way of branding a place"*. This is achieved by installing clearly labelled signage throughout the city in a uniform font, designed to make Bristol easily navigable, creating a better experience for visitors. As such, it constituted a more novel method of place branding, the 'Legible City', aimed to accrue external reputational capital with visitors by making Bristol more user friendly.

The second part proposes that, in relation to place reputation that any brand developed is based on reality. Additionally, as an element of a broader strategy, any place brand created will be strengthened when underpinned by fact to improve a place's reputation in an honest manner. However, as recently as September 2014, English cities are continuing to pursue inaccurate branding practices with Carlisle, located near the Scottish border, rebranding itself as "the City of the Lakes" (*ITV Border News*, 2014). However, Carlisle is located over 25 miles away from the nearest lake and the city council spent £60,000 (*In-Cumbria*, 2014) on a misleading campaign which contradicts Kuss' (2009:268) argument that 'every statement and every message used in reputation communication must be anchored in fact'. The Head of Government and Stakeholder Relations, Bristol Airport (2014) claims that *"place branding needs to be founded in reality; if real life experience goes against the brand then it loses all credibility"*. The Head of Area, Housing and Communities Agency, Bristol (2014) added *"there should be a … bit more sort of evidence based marketing of a place and less smoke and mirrors".* While, the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, University of Bristol (2014) opined that *"it's at its most potent when it reflects the truth about the city region"*. Although grounding any brand in reality is elementary for stakeholders, the recent evidence from Carlisle opposes this and puts external reputational capital with visitors and

investors at risk. Therefore, developing an authentic brand is a prerequisite to an effective reputation management strategy.

In NewcastleGateshead there is a cause to take a realistic view, particularly relating to the area's climate. With its location in North East England producing an average annual maximum temperature of 12.1 degrees Celsius compared to 14 and 14.2 degrees in Hull and Bristol respectively, NewcastleGateshead can experience colder temperatures compared to other parts of England (Met Office, 2015a,b,c). The Executive Director, Live Theatre (2014) claimed that:

"If we were branding the city and Newcastle as a warm, blue sky kind of city to visit and visitors come and it's pouring with rain and cold and you've got an arctic kind of wind, you're going to get into trouble so you've got to tell the truth".

Whereas the Artistic Director, Bristol Old Vic (2014) disclosed that *"say you were to market Newcastle on the basis of being the Costa del Sol, you wouldn't get very far".* Due to the relatively cool climate of NewcastleGateshead, trying to hide this in any branding developed as part of place reputation may not be advisable. This illustrates that effective branding is authentic and grounded in the real life experience of that place rather than a dubious elaboration of the truth.

In Hull, there is evidence of some stakeholders adopting a realistic approach, particularly in relation to other English cities. The Deputy Editor, *Hull Daily Mail* (2014) expressed that:

"Hull isn't the most amazing place you will ever come to in your life, it's got some interesting things about it ... but don't try and pretend that Hull is going to compete with Oxford, Cambridge or the West Country".

There appears to be awareness and a degree of modesty in Hull regarding their standing and where they compete. By playing down their chances of challenging the likes of Oxford or Cambridge, it begins to indicate that stakeholders in Hull seem to be grounded and are not getting carried away after being rewarded with UK City of Culture for 2017. However, whilst this demonstrates that any branding developed to form reputational capital can benefit from being grounded in reality for Hull a more assertive rather than modest form of branding may be more

effective. Developing a brand based on reality as part of place reputation in Bristol is debatable as the positive external reputation conflicts with a lack of internal reputational capital. The Mayor of Bristol (2014) articulated that:

"Bristol has … the reputation of being a good city but actually underneath it there is an awful lot of residuary and poverty and health challenges … so I think that reputation is where it is but reputation has got to be based on real stuff, the trouble with branding, the branding is often seen as something that is laid over the place rather than coming out of the place".

Compared to NewcastleGateshead and Hull, in Bristol, building a brand based on reality as part of its reputation may not be as successful as its external reputation is arguably stronger than actuality. Thus, even when supported by reputation, trying to develop a brand based on reality may be too risky in Bristol as trying to reflect real life here could be harmful to external reputational capital with investors, tourists and students.

Third, place branding can remain effective as part of place reputation providing it is founded on a common message between stakeholders. This asserts that an aligned stance between those based inside a city could help to reach a consensus on how a repositioned brand is communicated to various audiences. If an agreement is met and stakeholders are coordinated with the brand when engaging internally and externally, it can make a valuable contribution towards reputational capital. However, if a brand is being misused and happens to be off-message, this may negatively impact a place's reputation. Mueller and Schade (2012:82) advocated that 'due to the number of mostly independent organized internal target groups of places with often diverging goals, the problems of finding, communicating and keeping the brand promise is accepted to be a far more complex task compared to the branding of products'. Notwithstanding, places are complicated and whilst suggesting that branding practices are reduced in importance, this maintains there is still a requirement that a city sells itself, regardless of the problems associated with uniting stakeholders behind a single goal. The Head of Member Relations, North East Chamber of Commerce (2014) proposed that *"what it needs to be is that common message about what we want to achieve"*. The Assistant Head of Service, Hull City Council (2014) claimed that

"there has got to be some consistency in those key messages". Similarly the Head of Area, Housing and Communities Agency, Bristol (2014) explained that *"they would have a much more powerful partnership if they took the best bits of each locality and shouted about those collectively"*. This is reflective of a shift from developing a brand around a visual advertising campaign, more towards implementing a common message between stakeholders that might allow decision-making to occur more easily. Additionally, it underlines the potential of uniting stakeholders behind a single purpose and aligning their activities through a reduced place brand that is repositioned as part of a wider reputation management strategy.

In NewcastleGateshead, there is a desire to unite stakeholders behind a single brand, more in the vein of reputation management. The Head of Member Relations, North East Chamber of Commerce (2014) adds further:

"What role is NewcastleGatesheaed going to play in the future economy of the area and how are we going to get there? And I think you then draw your common messages from that and ensure people are armed with it".

This hints at the work of the NewcastleGateshead Initiative's place brand steering group that encouraged stakeholders to speak with a single voice as part of a brand more designed to improve the area's reputation. Also, it argues for the traction that a common message can gain, in that if a wide range of stakeholders are all on-message this could help to compensate for the complicated place. In Hull, it is implied that developing a common message between stakeholders has played a role in their campaign to become UK City of Culture for 2017. The Communications Business Partner, Hull City Council (2014) maintained that:

"No branding exercise that we have ever done here has made the impact of just having that huge conversation about what makes our city tick, what are we good at? What are we proud of? And that had nothing to do with branding but it resulted in us getting this huge prize".

Starting to underline the importance of increased dialogue in contributing towards Hull winning UK City of Culture for 2017, this links in with academic work implying that communication is foundational to corporate reputation (Fisher-

Buttinger and Vallaster, 2011). Therefore, this adds weight to the stance that branding built on consistent communication can help to form reputational capital both internally and externally. Whereas in Bristol, developing a common message, particularly in the wider city-region is compromised somewhat. Similarly to Hull, Bristol is under bounded and some of its suburban areas are under the jurisdiction of other local authorities. The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, the University of Bristol (2014) claims that:

"It is quite a helpful dialogue or a way of thinking in a city region and I think it can be to build something which has resonance within the city region … it's definitely not without its challenges and … there are lots of sub-sections of the region that … for example, they don't want to be part of Greater Bristol".

Resultantly, attempting to develop a common message in certain areas can be a demanding exercise and in Bristol, in particular having previously been part of the county of Avon, longstanding rivalry can make it difficult to engage in dialogue to initiate branding. Furthermore, a common message is foundational for a place brand to form reputational capital, internally, externally and with different audiences as part of a broader strategy. Nonetheless, conditions need to be implemented that allow this and while this may be achievable for the city of Bristol itself, it may not be possible for its wider economic footprint.

Chapter 5 focused on place branding and consisted of two different sections. Section 5.1 evaluated the benefits and shortcomings of the concept in two separate parts. The first part, concentrating on the benefits, this included that it can be easily understood, encourages collective thinking and has the potential to be rewarding. The second part investigated some of place branding's shortcomings, beginning with an assertion that the concept is not usually grounded in reality, for what it is it may be too expensive and it tends to be only a short-term exercise. Section 5.2 looked into the relationship between place branding and place reputation and was divided into three parts. This began by introducing place branding's repositioned role in relation to place reputation. Before moving on to claiming that any place branding retained should be based on reality. This section ended by explaining that place branding, as part of a wider reputation

management strategy may be more effective when its founded on a common message between stakeholders.

Table 5.2 – A table presenting stakeholder perspectives on the relationship between place branding and place reputation

Position, Organisation, Year	Evidence
An academic staff member, Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences (GEES), University of Hull (2014)	*"I don't think you can really brand a place that doesn't have some kind of reputation … but I don't think you could reduce the reputation of a place to its branding either"*
Former Chief Executive, One North East (2014)	*"In isolation it doesn't really cut the mustard so its seen as a quite flimsy, not really of any great substance if it's just a standalone, on its own … its much richer when its tied in with a much wider strategy"*
Director, BrandVista, who has worked in NewcastleGateshead (2014)	*"I don't think there is any difference between the two in many sense … so brand equals reputation"*
Editor, *Bristol Post* (2014)	*"It has got to be a really integral part of it. You couldn't really have a reputation management strategy without a brand could you?"*

Source – Stakeholder interviews in NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol (2014)

6 Culture-led regeneration

6.1 Culture-led regeneration and reputation

Culture-led regeneration has been embraced by many English second-tier cities as a method to accumulate reputational capital since approximately the turn of the Millennium and has been especially manifest in NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol. Defined as 'arts and cultural activities as the driver or catalyst for urban transformation' (Cox and O'Brien 2012:94), successful examples of places achieving culture-led regeneration has given hope to other cities that they too can utilise culture to improve their reputations. Here, this is explored across two strands. The first looks at the varied experience of culture-led regeneration, investigating whether there is a danger that cultural practices are being overused, their impact is becoming diluted and the possible effect this has on reputation (Wilks-Heeg and North, 2004, Turok, 2009). The second strand examines the weight of culture-led regeneration as part of a wider regeneration strategy, considering its role in trying to improve place reputation (Miles, 2005).

Although culture-led regeneration is a useful tool, it may not be appropriate everywhere as a method of improving a city's reputation as it is dependent on the context of that specific place, its characteristics and quirks and may have an uneven effect in different locations. Also, it is possible that the breadth of places looking to develop cultural reputational capital to regenerate and improve their reputation could reduce the concept's impact and may generate homogeneity. Wilks-Heeg and North (2004:308) ask 'to what extent are the lessons of cultural policy transferrable from one context to another? Is it not disingenuous to talk of Liverpool 'doing a Glasgow' or to assume that British cities can learn meaningfully from the experience of Barcelona or Lille?'. Turok (2009:16) adds 'despite setting out to be different, cities can also end up emulating other places through risk aversion or lack of imagination. They may commission the same popular architects to design landmark buildings'. Subsequently, there is a possibility that the quest of culture-led regeneration may result in several places pursuing similar practices insofar as they start to display similar reputations. Additionally, while it is beneficial to utilise culture-led regeneration to enhance a city's reputation, does the desire to emulate plans that have already been successful elsewhere and the risk involved make culture-led regeneration worthwhile? Although utilising culture is desirable particularly when improving a place's reputation. It is argued

that nurturing local distinctions and independent-minded qualities to build cultural reputational capital may be more fruitful than initiating this through commercial developments led by multinational corporations. The former Chief Executive, One North East (2014) revealed that:

"I don't think there would have been any doubt even going back ten years ago that culture-led regeneration … it was sort of the trojan horse that drove a lot of other things, … there was a credibility but it's not appropriate everywhere, there is a danger that everyone thinks they can just do culture-led regeneration".

Also, the Member of Parliament for Gateshead (2014) emphasised that *"you couldn't use culture-led regeneration as a blueprint for every town and city in the country because it would just be overkill"*. Accordingly, culture-led regeneration is very much context dependent, in that, it may only have an impact on certain cities at a particular time, capitalising on favourable conditions to take effect. Furthermore, for an ex-industrial city that does have a rich cultural history but may have fallen on harder times, accumulating cultural reputational capital to attract more visitors could be justifiable. However, if a place already has a more positive reputation and does not require regeneration or cannot draw on many cultural assets, it may not be as worthwhile to focus on developing cultural reputational capital. Any practices developed are more effective when they remain sympathetic to the intricacies of that specific city and utilise intrinsic, grassroots strengths already present rather than a largely top-down approach.

NewcastleGateshead is regularly cited as a standout example of an English second-tier city that has managed to improve its reputation by using culture-led regeneration across theory and policy alike (Hollands and Chatterton, 2002, Bailey et al. 2004, Miles, 2005). In the early 2000s under the banner of NewcastleGateshead the area sought to improve its reputation by working together to transform the built environment on both sides of the previously derelict Quayside. This included the arrival of the pedestrian Millennium Bridge which crosses the River Tyne, next to a former flour mill, now the BALTIC centre for contemporary art, adjacent to the Sage Gateshead, the regional music centre. Alongside other major projects including Anthony Gormley's Angel of the North

next to the A1 in Gateshead, the area is perceived to have accrued a lot of cultural reputational capital over the last fifteen years. Miles (2005:924) proposes that:

'Culture-led regeneration on the scale of NewcastleGateshead Quayside may indeed not work elsewhere, but at this time and in this place it offers a symbolic representation of a region that can succeed and a region that can begin to fight back from a period of industrial decline and neglect'.

Additionally, the timing of NewcastleGateshead's revitalisation during the years of the New Labour government, Millennium project funding, and the bold use of lottery money by Gateshead Council had a significant effect in collecting cultural reputational capital in the area which may not be possible in other contexts. Supportive evidence of the impact that culture-led regeneration has had on NewcastleGateshead's reputation is displayed in table 6.1. The evidence is indicative of the impact of culture-led regeneration in the development of NewcastleGateshead's cultural reputation with audiences including students and tourists. This shows the effect of culture-led regeneration in assembling reputational capital internally and externally, providing there are encouraging conditions such as available resources and visionary leadership. He reinforces the benefits of the partnership between Newcastle and Gateshead meaning that greater funds could help an area to construct a reputation for culture.

Hull is the UK City of Culture for 2017, and, like NewcastleGateshead prior to the reputation changing impact of culture-led regeneration, the city may still be suffering from the longstanding after-effects of deindustrialisation. However, this does provide a debate about whether culture-led regeneration can work everywhere and if the practices are suitable for Hull (Wilks-Heeg and North, 2004). Nonetheless, the city does have a cultural offering with several museums and art galleries, festivals attracting over 100,000 visitors, Hull Truck Theatre and famously being the home of poet, Philip Larkin. Participants heralded the strength and leadership of Hull's campaign in securing the title of UK City of Culture for 2017. The Director, Culture, Creativity, Place, who has worked in both NewcastleGateshead and Hull (2014) shared that:

"The feedback from the judges was we had strong leadership, we had a great story, a visionary programme that was locally rooted but was global in ambition, the media got behind it, the public got behind it and we delivered something that was going to make a difference".

This is illustrative of the role of leadership and the effectiveness of strong governance arrangements and transparency in executing a culture-led regeneration strategy to compile cultural reputational capital. Also, Hull recruited Andrew Dixon in their campaign as an advisor, who had already helped to deliver reputational change through culture-led regeneration in NewcastleGateshead. Although, arising in a different context, his know-how and past experience aided Hull's bid, a fact widely emphasised by former colleagues in the North East. Overall, with the basis of a cultural offer already present and reinforced by a well-organised bid with strong leadership, arguably, Hull can develop reputational capital by utilising culture over time.

Unlike NewcastleGateshead and Hull, Bristol may have had less urgency to undertake culture-led regeneration during the past two decades. Possibly due to not experiencing the same scale of job losses in the latter 20th century or its proximity to London, a desire to improve Bristol's reputation through widespread cultural change has not been as apparent. The city conceivably already had a strong cultural offer having built cultural reputational capital over previous years. This, combined with problematic decision-making that hindered large-scale infrastructure projects included the drawn-out process to regenerate the city's Harbourside area at the turn of the 21st Century (Bassett et al. 2002). Resultantly, Bristol may have undertaken culture-led regeneration on a smaller scale. This occurred in a more bottom-up fashion rather than widespread change of the physical environment; such was the stock of the city's reputational capital in the 1990s. The Artistic Director, Northern Stage (2014) explained that:

"For a relatively small spend, massive impact is possible, I think Bristol is a very interesting example to look at, the very clever and relatively small investments that have been made within the city and the large impact it had not only for cultural regeneration but for the perception of Bristol".

In Bristol the Harbourside aside, there has been the absence of the widespread change of the built environment and signature buildings constructed to develop cultural reputational capital in NewcastleGateshead. Conversely, the conditions have allowed a cultural offer to be built organically, enabling the qualities of creative individuals to flourish as part of its reputation. This is epitomised by the presence of the 'People's Republic of Stokes Croft', cultural quarter where riots occurred following the arrival of a Tesco Express, alongside associations with internationally-renowned graffiti artist Banksy. Whereas, previously the City Council would have removed the artist's work it is now viewed as a sought after and valued asset that is either framed or protected by the local authority (Director, Bristol Cultural Development Partnership; Editor, *Bristol 24-7*, 2014). Culture-led regeneration and the reputational capital accumulated with audiences including students and tourists have occurred in a more grassroots fashion (table 4.4). Despite a history of bids for European Capital of Culture for 2008, competing with NewcastleGateshead, the city's cultural offer and reputation for this appears to be more effective being developed at a community level.

The amount of culture to be included in an overall regeneration strategy designed to improve a place's reputation varies depending on the place itself, the current strength of its reputation and the cultural offering already present. Additionally, culture-led regeneration might be viewed as more effective in places that have fallen on harder times but have the basis of a cultural offering and can deploy and then improve levels of reputational capital such as Liverpool. Alternatively, enhancing the cultural reputation of a place that is either not long established, such as a new town, or somewhere that already has a positive reputation and is perceived to be culturally rich might not be as worthwhile. Therefore, the amount of culture-led regeneration pursued as part of an overall reputation management strategy is dependent on various factors including a place's history and diversity. Miles (2005:917) recognises that culture-led regeneration 'can be difficult to sustain unless it is part of a wider regeneration and unless it is formally rooted in the community'. This suggests that culture-led regeneration may benefit from being grounded in the community too, connecting with work in Bristol where its cultural reputational capital tends to grow in a more bottom-up manner. The weight of culture-led regeneration as part of a wider strategy is expressed by the Marketing Director, Clouston Group (2014):

"I don't think it should be a bolt-on or something you should do as a developer at the last minute, "ooh, yes, quickly, we had better put in some culture and some art, ... it's got to have real value, if it does have real value ... its got to be part of that make up and one of the ingredients of a successful city".

While, the Director, Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (2014) adds *"it is absolutely central because ... culture is central"*. This hints at the value of culture-led regeneration, in that it could be a key part of a wider reputation management strategy. Nonetheless, whilst using culture-led regeneration everywhere may be inappropriate, where suitable, a particular place may benefit from embracing culture to accrue greater levels of reputational capital. In turn, when implemented properly and reinforced by strong leadership and the financial backing required and in the right location, culture has the potential to build an attractive offer, possibly to attract exogenous resources and enhance a city's reputation.

In NewcastleGateshead culture-led regeneration played a major role as part of an overall regeneration at around the turn of the 21st Century. An area with the basis of a cultural offering that, at the time, was struggling to recover from industrial decline. NewcastleGateshead utilised vast amounts of funding made available by the New Labour government and culture was the catalyst of a regeneration strategy designed to improve the area's reputation. £250 million was invested in cultural infrastructure in NewcastleGateshead between 1999 and 2009 for this purpose. Accordingly, it is plausible that cultural reputational capital has been built in NewcastleGateshead because favourable conditions allowed the area to do so at a particular time. Central to this was bold leadership from Gateshead Council who used lottery funding to create imposing signature buildings such as the BALTIC and the Sage. The Director, Watershed (2014) expressed that:

"Gateshead has got more confident and it has got huge problems, we all know, but it has got more confident and it has allowed Newcastle to flourish so I think when they tried to pick it all up it was NewcastleGateshead, we all know that it is Newcastle but externally we all know that Gateshead exists".

A mutually beneficial relationship between Newcastle and Gateshead allowed both sides of the River Tyne to improve their reputations with a joint focus on culture-led regeneration from respective local authorities. It is debatable whether the same striking impact is achievable to assemble cultural reputational capital with students and tourists, without the inventiveness of Gateshead and their use of lottery funding as opposed to Newcastle whose regeneration was led by the Tyne and Wear Development Corporation.

In Hull, despite a large emphasis on UK City of Culture for 2017, there is not an overdependence on the title to improve the city's overall reputation. Another major project includes attempts to reposition Hull and the wider Humber area as a centre for renewable energy, most recently emphasised by Siemens' investment to manufacture wind turbines (*BBC News*, 2014a). This is occurring alongside other key plans including electrifying the railway line into Hull and the international reputation generated by possessing a Premier League football team. This is introduced by the Deputy Editor, *Hull Daily Mail* (2014):

"When 2017 comes … together with other things like Siemens plant will be underway, the city council will be regenerating, the electrification, the road and infrastructure improvements will be underway … that combined with City of Culture will when its broadcast out to an external audience … yes. … many people will be surprised by the city".

This starts to show that UK City of Culture for 2017 is part of a broader approach to regenerate Hull and improve its reputation, amplifying the effect of using culture as it can help to attract greater exogenous resources. Moreover, this illustrates the weight of culture as part of a more comprehensive approach highlighting that stakeholders in Hull are trying to enhance reputational capital by increasing inward investment and improving infrastructure in tandem with this. This potentially ensures that the culture which could entice people into the city, has a long lasting impact when combined with more tangible outputs and creates a reputation for increasing job opportunities and making the city more accessible.

In Bristol, culture-led regeneration enjoys less prominence compared to NewcastleGateshead and Hull, with stakeholders playing down the significance of the mechanism in compiling reputational capital. Bristol hasn't suffered the same

after effects of deindustrialisation which could indicate that culture-led regeneration has not been as much of a priority. Additionally, the city had already built up cultural reputational capital exemplified by the presence of the Bristol Sound, trip-hop music genre and the prestige of Bristol Old Vic theatre. The Head of Investment, Bristol + Bath (2014) described culture-led regeneration as:

"It's a starting point, it can only go so far, you can't over egg it to the detriment of other things so it needs to be part of a mixed, part of the overall package of regeneration and ... infrastructure and regeneration and jobs and regeneration in business and to be honest Bristol isn't a place that is in need of regeneration anyway so regeneration is probably not a good word for the city, it is culture-led, I don't know what the word is".

Therefore, culture-led regeneration may be better viewed when positioned in a broader spectrum of regeneration strategies to improve a city's reputation comprehensively. As such, it is implied that Bristol does not require culture-led regeneration as it had already established more cultural reputational capital than NewcastleGateshead and Hull who may have possessed a greater need to embrace culture. This is reflective of wider patterns in England as a whole with culture-led regeneration largely confined to northern cities under the New Labour government at the turn of the 21st century. Understandably, the percentage of a wider regeneration strategy dedicated to culture depends on socioeconomic conditions and the context of that specific place at a certain time. Therefore, it may not be a realistic aim for the majority of English second-tier cities to adopt similar cultural practices in order to develop cultural reputational capital.

Table 6.1 – A table showing stakeholder views on the importance of culture-led regeneration in NewcastleGateshead

Position, Organisation, Year	Evidence
Chief Executive, NewcastleGateshead Initiative (2014)	*"NewcastleGateshead is cited as being a prime example internationally of culture-led regeneration"*
Head of Member Relations, North East Chamber of Commerce (2014)	*"The city is inextricably linked to culture-led regeneration"*
Director, Culture, Creativity, Place, who has worked in both NewcastleGateshead and Hull (2014)	*"NewcastleGateshead is the absolute classic on that"*
Executive Director, Live Theatre (2014)	*"In cultural terms the NewcastleGateshead story is an incredible story, £300 million of cultural regeneration"*
Assistant Head of Service, Hull City Council (2014)	*"NewcastleGateshead, I think about culture straight away"*

Source – Stakeholder interviews from NewcastleGateshead and Hull (2014).

6.2 Culture-led regeneration, policy change and reputation

The global financial crisis in 2008 led to radical cuts in public sector funding leaving significantly less resources available for cities and regions to use culture-led regeneration to build reputational capital. This section explores two issues relating to the changing face of culture-led regeneration and their implications for NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol's reputations. The first issue explores the impact of austerity on the cultural offering of English second-tier cities and how this may relate to their respective reputations (Indergaard et al. 2013, Pratt, 2012, Pratt and Hutton, 2013). The second issue looks into the changing face of culture-led regeneration and examines how the concept's purpose has transformed and the reputational consequences of this (Florida, 2002a, Lees and Melhuish, 2015, Pratt, 2012).

The change in government at the 2010 general election has largely decreased the levels of funding available for English second-tier cities to undertake culture-led regeneration to accumulate reputational capital with internal and external audiences (Indegaard et al. 2013). As a result of local authorities having to shave tens of millions of pounds from their budgets and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport now facing cuts of 40%, the cultural landscape has been redefined during the previous five years (*The Stage*, 2015). This stands in stark contrast to the vast quantities of public money made available through sources including the Millennium Commission that saw numerous cities develop flagship projects for culture-led regeneration. Consequently, local authorities are now having to make tough decisions on what, if any, cultural budget is retained in a vastly different economic climate. Pratt (2012:6) suggests that 'the political sensitivity of cultural investment in austerity tends to see politicians wanting to make cultural budget cuts as exemplary of straightened times'. Evident of the damage caused to cultural reputational capital by Newcastle City Council's attempts to remove the city's cultural budget altogether. Moreover, Pratt and Hutton (2013:93) echo that 'those that are public funding dependent are going to find things very hard indeed as governments slash arts funding and arts and cultural projects as part of austerity measures'.

However, culture-led regeneration has contributed to the transformation of the reputations of several English second-tier cities over the past two decades such

as the 2008 European Capital of Culture, Liverpool. The Head of Member Relations, North East Chamber of Commerce (2014) articulated that:

"Unfortunately, that sometimes comes second or third down a list of priorities so I think that intelligent use of public money to support culture is good but I understand it is a very difficult thing to do at the moment when the money isn't available and people have to support essential services, it is understandable that culture is going to go".

Although possessing a cultural offer is important, local authorities face great challenges in the current economic climate in that they have to prioritise essential services during austerity and with the concept being non-statutory and it becomes an easy target. This links in in with Pratt's (2009:495) understanding that 'education, health and the military will be way ahead of culture with their begging bowls'. Alternatively, following a period where many cities have developed a reputation by utilising culture, to have local authorities not allocate any money towards cultural activities has been difficult to comprehend by stakeholders. The three case-study cities have taken contrasting approaches in trying to fund cultural projects and protect and retain cultural reputational capital in a more testing economic climate.

In NewcastleGateshead, in March 2013, Newcastle City Council controversially proposed to cut arts funding to organisations in the city by 100% from the £2.5 million previously donated. This has negatively impacted cultural reputational capital in the area. Although this proposal was eventually adjusted to leave a £600,000 fund managed outside of the council's budget by the Community Foundation, this sharp reduction in resources had a negative effect on cultural reputational capital in the area (*The Guardian*, 2013). For a location that built vast cultural reputational capital over the past two decades, the announcement from Newcastle City Council was perceived as a blow, particularly as other English second-tier cities had managed to retain most of their cultural budget (*BBC News*, 2013b). Those organisations dependent on city council support including Northern Stage would have to try and compensate for the shortfall in funding. The Artistic Director, Northern Stage (2014) explained that:

"The way that the cuts to the cultural sector from the city council was handled and publicised did pretty sizeable damage to the reputation for a city which has between Newcastle and Gateshead has a genuinely world class cultural offer to manage to make culture in the city into a bad news story was a pretty spectacular fuck up".

Whereas the Executive Director, Live Theatre (2014) shared that:

"I would find myself in meetings with ministers in London ... and using Newcastle as an example "doing a Newcastle" ... what was £6-7,000 in that reputational damage has done us a lot of harm ... when it takes 15 years to build".

The level of feeling among cultural stakeholders in NewcastleGateshead in response to the severity of cuts to Newcastle City Council's arts budget and the area's cultural reputation is evident. This argues that the cultural reputational capital accumulated, both internally and externally over the past two decades may be undermined by not adequately protecting resources and consequently the future of the city's key institutions. Also, its impact on an area that has developed a reputation through culture and the creation of institutions including The Sage poses some risks. In addition, to cut funding completely in NewcastleGateshead where the creation of institutions including The Sage has been in tandem with a transformation in its fortunes is difficult to comprehend especially when other cities are reporting cuts of no more than 10% (*BBC News*, 2013b).

Despite Hull City Council experiencing a £28 million funding deficit from central government, the city has chosen to continue to support culture in the run up to UK City of Culture for 2017 to ensure that the city's cultural reputation continues to grow (*Hull Daily Mail*, 2015). Instead Hull City Council's cuts focus more on a rise in council tax and reducing support to adult services rather than attempting to reduce the amount pledged by the council to the event. The city council made a £3.5 million contribution to UK City of Culture for 2017, protected regardless of any austerity measures as part of an overall £18 million package, broken down into private sponsorship, philanthropic grants and trust donations (*Hull Daily Mail*, 2014b). The Producer, Hull Truck Theatre (2014) praised the council:

"I think their commitment throughout the process to it is quite an enlightened approach to actually maintain their support for culture and for cultural activity within the city and to continue driving that forward as part of the city plan when so many other city councils are cutting all cultural provisions".

This hints at the determination of Hull City Council to ensure that UK City of Culture for 2017 has the full desired effect despite the cuts imposed by central government and trying to guarantee that the event gives the city the best chance possible to develop a cultural reputation. It is arguable; however that Hull may have had little choice other than to retain its cultural budget, as the possible damage to reputational capital, particularly externally, to a city that has supposedly invested in culture would be a dangerous approach.

In Bristol, similarly to Hull, there have been no changes to the cultural budget with the local authority's role continuing to be a facilitator to allow the city's cultural offer to develop a reputation in a more bottom-up fashion. The council announced at the end of 2011 that they would maintain a relatively small £850,000 a year for three years' funding for 24 arts organisations in the city including Bristol Old Vic and the Tobacco Factory Theatre (*BBC News*, 2013b). Bristol's cuts instead focus on subsidies to leisure facilities and funding to children's services to compensate. The Director, Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (2014) explained that:

"Bristol was a city where culture wasn't regarded highly before, it is now, it has been a remarkable transformation and so the extent recently where the budget cutbacks didn't touch the arts budget at all, we saved the arts budget".

Therefore, Bristol's small cultural provision appears to have remained untouched which may help retain and build further cultural reputational capital in a bottom-up manner. When compared to Hull and Bristol, Newcastle City Council's cuts appear drastic, particularly for an area that has assembled vast reputational capital in the two decades previously. Also, the negative media coverage generated and the potential impact of the cuts upon the area's cultural reputation is quite risky (*The Guardian*, 2013). Despite receiving disproportionate cuts compared to other local authorities, a less drastic impact on culture as seen in Hull and Bristol has

been possible and may have helped to preserve NewcastleGateshead's internal and external cultural reputational capital.

Culture-led regeneration has experienced an overhaul in terms of its application that could have possible consequences for a place's reputation. Recently, culture-led regeneration has shown signs of changing in theory and policy alike from being more tangible and focusing on flagship buildings and infrastructural change into a concept still entrusted with reputational change albeit functioning with much less resources (Pratt, 2012). Consequently, more intangible practices are now used by stakeholders that centre on utilising the facilities already developed and promoting their use through events including festivals to try and improve their standing. Also, the previous New Labour government (1997-2010) focused more on transforming the built environment, particularly former industrial sites with an example being using lottery funds to construct the BALTIC in Gateshead. However, it is now more about achieving the best use out of these assets to create a vibrant cultural scene and retain cultural reputational capital developed during the recent past. Compounded by the dissolution of the regional tier of governance following the arrival of the coalition government who set about dismantling the work of the previous administration this shift has had a profound impact on how culture-led regeneration operates.

As such, improving a place's reputation through culture-led regeneration by transforming the built environment of English second-tier cities, backed by vast public resources is not as achievable now as it was under New Labour. Linking in with Florida's (2002a) work, it is asserted that culture-led regeneration has moved towards creating the right atmosphere in an intangible fashion through a sustained programme of events to potentially attract exogenous resources and the creative classes both within and outside of cities and regions. While, Lees and Melhuish (2015:256) express that we have now moved on from 'a prolonged period in which the arts enjoyed relatively generous funding and became the object of widespread policy interest as a tool for urban regeneration and social inclusion'. Therefore, the era of culture-led regeneration being defined by wholesale change of the built environment and the construction of flagship buildings in English second-tier cities to form cultural reputational capital has now ended.

This has arguably resulted in an overhaul of practices associated with the concept and now it may not possess the same clout to influence place reputation

and draw exogenous resources in the same way as before. The Chief Executive, Gateshead Council (2014) proposed that:

"It's likely to be less to do with big shiny buildings, … we're in a different time now but … maybe the last decade or the last twenty years has been about building the infrastructure, … the next decade is about how you animate the place and make it feel like a sort of 21st Century creative and vibrant environment".

Similarly an Arts and Culture Journalist, NCJ Media Ltd. (2014) reiterated that *"I don't think there is going to be anymore big capital projects … there is a recognition that the money for that has gone now"*. This implies that culture-led regeneration is presently more about creating a positive atmosphere by bringing to life facilities that have already been developed. An example would be events such as the BBC 6Music festival held at the Sage Gateshead in early 2015, in favour of further cultural transformation of the built environment to accumulate reputational capital. Following a focus on regenerating brownfield sites through culture towards the end of the 20th Century, this particular method may have reached saturation point with many English second-tier cities having adopted this approach to develop a cultural reputation (Evans and Shaw, 2004). Whilst the physical environment has been improved, the focus has shifted onto how these spaces are utilised best, to operate as cultural attractions and to protect cultural reputational capital. This may require more innovative uses of funding, potentially with the private sector, helped by influential creative individuals to find the best method for cultural assets to continually improve English second-tier cities reputations.

In NewcastleGateshead, this entails retaining what has already been developed during a period of renaissance, where the area built a reputation for culture-led regeneration at the turn of the 21st Century. Following the success of culture-led regeneration and the acclaim received by facilities including the BALTIC art gallery and the Sage music centre, there is a desire amongst stakeholders to optimise their use following the concept's redefinition. The Marketing Director, Clouston Group (2014) advocated that:

"Look at the Sage, look at the BALTIC centre for contemporary art, ... look at what Live Theatre are doing now in terms of their wish to thrive, not just survive and how do they bring in, how do they look at a more holistic approach of bringing in cash to sustain their main delivery of which is theatre".

While, the Head of Member Relations, North East Chamber of Commerce (2014) expressed that:

"We're fortunate that we've got three or four really big, really important cultural institutions that are of international importance and therefore they are not going to go anywhere anytime soon".

Thus, the strength of the cultural critical mass established in NewcastleGateshead could well sustain the area's cultural reputational capital in a turbulent economic period during which culture-led regeneration has been somewhat redefined. Additionally, the area's resilience in overcoming various crises in the past including suffering job losses through the disappearance of shipbuilding, may be embedded as part of its reputation and could stand the area in good stead during a testing period (Pike et al. 2010). Furthermore, this hints at the importance of ensuring that present institutions are operating effectively through possible more innovative uses and diverse sources of funding to safeguard NewcastleGateshead's cultural reputational capital in tough times.

Hull is using culture-led regeneration to improve its reputation in what has become a completely different context to that of NewcastleGateshead when they embraced culture at the beginning of the 21st Century. While NewcastleGateshead had managed to assemble vast resources from bodies including the National Lottery, Hull didn't receive any prize money directly from central government in reward for being named UK City of Culture for 2017. Therefore, the city has relied on developing private-sector funding mechanisms, ensuring sound leadership and governance arrangements are implemented, embracing social media and developing a world-class programme of events to build cultural reputational capital. The Director, Thinking Place, who has worked in Hull (2014) said that:

"Hull was off the scale on [social media] awareness, if you are on trends, for Twitter, for Facebook … that was very powerful and it already had the business community behind the city, the city had a story, the city knew where it was going, the city had successes and it had businesses behind that story".

The foundations behind Hull's successful bid to become UK City of Culture for 2017 seem to have contributed to the effectiveness of the city's campaign particularly in an era without large budgets, possibly giving Hull a better chance of transforming its reputation using culture. This reflects the benefits of utilising a city's business community and drawing on social media to gain awareness for the campaign, reflecting the bid's contemporary nature and developing reputational capital at a small cost. This, used in tandem with changes to enhance the city's built environment by improving the public realm and building a new conference centre, shows that culture-led regeneration can further a place's reputation in both a tangible and intangible sense.

In Bristol, there is a consensus that maintaining a bottom-up approach to culture-led regeneration can help to protect the city's reputational capital during a period in which the concept has been redefined in terms of its application. Historically, there has been a difficulty implementing major projects in the past including attempts to regenerate the Harbourside area that became a long and drawn out ordeal (Bassett et al. 2002). This has meant that the city's best results are typically produced from the community level upward, while, many of its northern counterparts have overhauled their infrastructure. Here, this has worked more through developing a consensus and creating the right conditions for culture-led regeneration to occur organically and contribute to the city's reputational capital. The Director, Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (2014) announced:

"We have got to make sure that we now strengthen what we have here, our core aim in all of our work has always been not to create a huge infrastructure … so all of our work and all of our projects works through other organisations and makes sure they benefit what they do, so if we raise a load of money it goes to those organisations".

This is reflected in Bristol's cultural scene, and explains that the emphasis is on providing grassroots organisations with the resources to allow them to flourish and to aggregate to form cultural reputational capital particularly with audiences including tourists. Also, there is less onus here on developing infrastructure and a greater reliance on the qualities of small community-based organisations to help to develop culture from the ground-up, overseen by bodies including the Cultural Development Partnership. This has produced different reputations for culture-led regeneration compared to NewcastleGateshead and Hull with a possible factor being its proximity to London and greater ability to attract talented, creative human capital.

Chapter 6 focused on culture-led regeneration and was split into two sections. Section 6.1 looked into the relationship between culture-led regeneration and place reputation and was divided into two strands of analysis. This began by concentrating on the varied experience of culture-led regeneration and investigated the possibility of cultural practices becoming overused and the implications this could have on place reputation. The second strand considered what proportion of a wider regeneration strategy should be dedicated to culture-led regeneration in attempts to improve a place's reputation. Section 6.2 explored the effect of cuts in public sector funding for culture-led regeneration and subsequently a place's reputation. This explored two issues and began by examining the impact of austerity on the cultural offering and reputations of English second-tier cities. The second issue centred on the changing face of culture-led regeneration and looked into how the concept's purpose has transformed and any reputational consequences that could arise.

7 Governance

7.1 Governance and reputation

This section examines whether governance can affect the reputation of a city or region and is split into three parts. The first part introduces and considers the relationship between governance and a place's reputation. This explores whether governance arrangements in NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol can be the precursor to a more positive reputation (Jessop, 1997, Deas, 2014, Hildreth and Bailey, 2014). The second part investigates the importance of leadership when looking to accumulate greater reputational capital (Collinge and Gibney, 2010, Nelles, 2013). The third part looks at how increased collaboration in English second-tier cities may impact upon their respective reputations (Harrison and Hoyler, 2014).

Although governance is a factor that can influence a place's reputation, it does not necessarily enable a city or region to achieve a more positive reputation. Jessop (1997: 575) defines governance as 'the complex art of steering multiple agencies, institutions, and systems which are both operationally autonomous from one another and structurally coupled through various forms of reciprocal interdependence'. Also, Deas (2014:2311) explains that 'it is important not to lose sight of the continuing potential for city-regional policy and governance to provide an effective means of promoting social and environmental justice, as well as economic advancement'. Therefore, the stance developed here views governance as the level of compatibility and partnership between different organisations and individuals within a city and its wider hinterland, that, when accumulated over time, may begin to translate into reputational capital. Additionally, the impact of demonstrating good governance can be wide-ranging; however, it is a subjective matter depending on the internal, external or marginal context of the person making the judgement. For example, the opinion of someone external or located on the margins to NewcastleGateshead can be equally as important as a judgement developed from within the area's boundaries. Thus, although implementing good governance can be beneficial for an English second-tier city, how this begins to impact on reputation has yet to be explored. The Director of Policy, Newcastle City Council (2014) articulated that *"whether good governance buys you much I am not sure, … it is important, necessary but not sufficient conditions'.* Also, the Director, BrandVista, who has worked in NewcastleGateshead (2014) proposed that:

"If they run a place down eventually, eventually, it will impact on the reputation, of course it will but the politics of place have ... a much lesser impact on the place than reputation and probably more than the politicians would like to think".

Subsequently, it may take a catastrophic failure of governance for the concept to have a serious, detrimental effect on a place's reputation. Such is the impact that a militant tendency Labour administration had on Liverpool's governance in the 1980s that arguably tarred the city's reputation for years later (Frost and North, 2013). Conversely, all that may be required to allow reputational capital for governance to build is that solid governance arrangements are simply kept under control.

The relationship between governance and reputation may be stronger in Hull and Bristol when compared to NewcastleGateshead, possibly due to the first two cities being under-bounded in relation to their wider economic footprint. Hull and Bristol both used to be part of non-metropolitan counties, Humberside and Avon. Although they fitted with the natural economic geography of their areas, these counties were imposed from the top down and were much maligned, leading to their abolition in 1996 and their replacements being four unitary authorities. Hull, was divided into North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire, Kingston-upon Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire. While, Bristol was split into Bristol, South Gloucestershire, North Somerset and Bath and North East Somerset. In Hull, the city's tight boundaries are perceived to have impacted its performance in league tables on variables including levels of employment. This could have some impact on levels of reputational capital, particularly for being well governed and externally with central government.

Shown in figure 7.1, towns and villages located in the more affluent East Riding, particularly Kirk Ella and Cottingham are not included in Hull's boundaries. This leaves the city with 257,000 people within 71km^2 in Hull producing a population density of 3,486 people per km^2. This is emphasised by Centre for Cities (2009:11) who explained that 'Hull City Council is hampered by tight bounding, which concentrates large pockets of deprivation and low skills within the city, but excludes a sizeable higher-skilled workforce that commutes into the city'. Also, the Chief Executive, Hull and Humber Chamber of Commerce (2014) opined that:

"It is a very tightly conscripted boundary really around the inner city areas rather than the full sort of what most people would regard the urban and normal geographic boundaries of the urban city which would cover in most cases the travel to work area".

Moreover, whilst effective governance arrangements are not a prerequisite to a good reputation, Hull being under bounded may still affect the number of exogenous resources attracted to the city such as new residents. Hildreth and Bailey (2014:369) assert that:

'A city is seriously under-bounded in relation to its economic area, particularly if there is an absence of trust between neighbouring authorities. A few English city local authorities are so well bounded to capture part of their economic area, beyond the physical footprint of the city'.

This is resonant in the Hull and Humber region through rivalries between the more Labour dominated city and the Conservative East Riding of Yorkshire but also through competition between the north and south banks of the vast Humber estuary. Furthermore, although a boundary commission met in 2014 to look at possible solutions, including expanding Hull's city limits, this was met with near-complete rejection from East Riding residents (*Hull Daily Mail*, 2014c). This raises questions about the perception of Hull from those external to the city, especially on its fringes, as there is a particular desire not to be associated with Hull's reputation. Therefore, Hull's narrow boundaries may impede its ability to attract human capital, particularly new residents, if league tables for education are viewed for instance. Accordingly, Hull's narrow boundaries could restrict levels of reputational capital in the city from fulfilling potential, especially with the difficulty involved in attempting to alter the scale and jurisdiction of place.

In Bristol, the city's tight boundaries are the by-product of the dissolution of Avon County Council. Shown in figure 7.2, specifically, the city's northern and eastern suburbs including Filton and Kingswood are not included in Bristol's boundaries. Within the city limits there is a population of 432,500 people across 110km^2, generating a population density similar to Hull of 3,982 people per km^2.

Compared to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, which has 289,835 people in 114km² with a density of 2,542 people per km² (figure 7.3), this produces contrasting reputational challenges between the cities. This is proposed by the Director, Tobacco Factory Theatre (2014):

"Avon was split up and fragmented very badly so Bristol's boundaries are far too short and less than half a mile away there is North Somerset, which is silly. Half way up the M32, Bristol ends".

It is clear that Bristol's boundaries are insufficient in capturing an adequate amount of the city's economic footprint, this makes implementing effective governance complicated and could restrict its external reputational capital, as is evident in the problems the city has in attracting high-quality teachers. Also, similarly to Hull, but not as detrimental in terms of league tables, there is a longstanding animosity between the four local authorities surrounding Bristol. This animosity is sufficiently pronounced that during a television debate on devolution, a representative from South Gloucestershire Council remarked that if he was asked when abroad, where he was from, he would say South Gloucestershire and wouldn't even mention it was near Bristol (BBC Points West, 2014). Thus, becoming indicative of the impact that insufficient governance, particularly under bounded cities can have on a place's external perceptions, especially with those located on the fringes, when trying to build levels of reputational capital for governance. This does not appear to be a problem in NewcastleGateshead which as shown in figure 7.3, is an adequately bounded city that does not face the same reputational challenges or concerns over its jurisdiction as Hull and Bristol.

The benefits of having strong leadership to compliment effective governance arrangements can potentially benefit reputational capital for being a city or region that is well-run. Additionally, if there is a figurehead leading a place that is well respected, enthusiastic and has good external contacts, this could steer reputational change in the right direction, for instance by creating the right conditions for inward investment. However, a lack of leadership or a mayor that is constantly embroiled in controversy can become detrimental to levels of reputational capital externally. Collinge and Gibney (2010:387) stated that

'leadership begins to matter in terms of how some places appear better able than others to exploit the messy and uncertain processes of economic transition and change'. Similarly Nelles (2013:1361) declares that 'actively or passively leaders can engage and harness the assets, support and solidarity of members of civic networks and translate collective interest into collective action'. Especially during an unstable economic climate, leadership may benefit a place's reputation as a strong leader could have the foresight for more innovative solutions to scenarios including austerity which could have a positive effect on internal reputational capital.

Additionally, if a leader unites stakeholders and encourages further collaboration, this can be useful as a more open and participatory culture can assist governance arrangements and may become reflective of its reputation. The Director of Public Affairs, Port of Tyne (2014) suggested that *"leadership, I suppose is what I am thinking of there, a strong leader, strongly governed with a really clear plan with some milestones"*. Further, the Director, Culture, Creativity, Place, who has worked in both NewcastleGateshead and Hull (2014) opined that *"you have got to be able to trust the people that are in political power in a city and that's not just local authority politicians, it's just kind of having really strong leaders"*. Therefore, leadership could be manifest across many aspects of a city's reputation and, while it may be as obvious as a mayor, it can also emerge from more unexpected sources such as the voluntary sector. In turn, whilst leadership is important, it may not be foundational to a positive reputation, however, when working alongside sound governance arrangements, they could combine to accrue internal and external reputational capital. Consequently, demonstrating strong leadership could become significant for a city or region's reputation, particularly when implementing cuts more effectively.

In NewcastleGateshead, certain stakeholders have bemoaned a lack of leadership in the area. There is a consensus that with effective leadership that the region may develop greater reputational capital, particularly when attracting exogenous resources. The Marketing Director, Clouston Group (2014) expressed that *"we have to look at ourselves for not telling that story well enough and reaching the right people but again that's because … we've lacked leadership across the region"*. Similarly the Managing Director, Ryder Architecture (2014) asserted that NewcastleGateshead may have lost out on inward investment to Manchester, who

have developed sound governance arrangements and demonstrated effective leadership. This implies that the leadership of NewcastleGateshead and the wider region may have been insufficient and there is concern of the effect on external reputational capital. Also, this is reaffirmed by the time consumed by the stalemate between the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Combined Authority over appointing a new Chief Executive for the LEP, further setting back the area's leadership (*The Journal*, 2015). This is emphatic of the challenges faced by NewcastleGateshead in trying to display leadership alongside robust governance procedures and how this could influence the area's reputation.

In Hull, where there is a single authority, there is greater positivity surrounding leadership and the city's reputation, especially in light of being awarded UK City of Culture for 2017. The Chair, UK City of Culture for 2017 (2014) remarked on the *"old school Labour paternalism"* of Hull City Council, also describing them as being *"sufficiently farsighted enough to get into bed with private industry"* and labelling the Leader of the Council, Stephen Brady as an *"extraordinary person"*. Furthermore, it appears that the effect of leadership on Hull's reputation is more positive, not only underlined by UK City of Culture for 2017 but also by securing major inward investment from Siemens. These represent a sustained period of hard work to change attitudes here in which it has created reputational capital for becoming more entrepreneurial, outward looking and developing greater levels of leadership. This is a far cry from 2003 when Hull City Council's reputation was tarred by events including wasting part of £263 million received from the sale of its municipally owned telecommunications company on double glazing for council houses due for demolition (*The Guardian*, 2003). To move from the perception of an incompetent city leadership to the more positive perceptions mentioned by interviewees has taken Hull a decade, which shows the embedded nature of place reputation.

For Bristol, the decision to appoint a mayor from a 2012 referendum (the only English city to do so) and the subsequent victory of independent candidate George Ferguson has provided the city with greater focus and clearer direction in terms of its reputation (Hambleton and Sweeting, 2014). Previously, leadership and decision-making was complicated by the fact that the city's councillors were up for re-election for three out of every four years. Combined with the fragmented political nature of Bristol, after local elections, the city council was under no

overall control, resulting in a political malaise which frustrated decision-making and meant that the city's reputation lacked coherence. The Director, Watershed (2014) shared that:

"We have been through long periods of Labour domination, brief periods of Tory leadership, a period of Lib Dem leadership, minority leadership, and we have now got a mayor but a complete independent who is a bit of a maverick".

Likewise, the Director, Tobacco Factory Theatre (2014) described the previous arrangements as resulting in a *"desperate stasis"*, and the Chair, the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (2014) claimed it was *"dreadful"* and *"nobody was capable of taking a decision"*. Thus, the move by Bristol to overhaul its governance arrangements and to establish an elected mayor appears to be a step in the right direction as it brings clear leadership and could build reputational capital, particularly internally. Also, the Mayor, George Ferguson's election as an independent gave the city a breakaway from the political wrangling that held back the city's reputation previously, linking in with an independent personality as mentioned in section 4.1. As such, clear leadership can provide consistency for a city or region when demonstrated alongside sound governance arrangements. Although it is not a necessity per se, it can be regarded as a factor for developing greater levels of reputational capital both internally and externally.

More recently, greater collaboration between stakeholders has become prevalent across English second-tier cities, producing a more open and participatory culture that could be reflected in their reputations both internally and externally. Additionally, the previous dominance of local authorities has waned somewhat and, although they are still prominent, this has allowed for bold local institutions to take a key role in trying to change a place's reputation. As a result, this has encouraged greater cooperation and communication between stakeholders to ensure that their activities are aligned to try and enhance internal levels of reputational capital. Harrison and Hoyler (2014:2259) claim that 'constructing regional spaces for collective provision of transportation infrastructure, housing and shared services reflects the new demands for collaboration across metropolitan regions'. Subsequently, it is asserted that greater cohesiveness between stakeholders can affect reputation too as the efficiency of

joint action by decision-makers in a city or region may help to attract greater levels of human capital. This links in with Florida's (2002b) claims that there is possibly a greater focus now on attracting people rather than firms and clusters to a city or region; such is the impact of reputation on enticing new residents.

Therefore, there is a consensus that a bottom-up approach underpinned by greater cooperation could be more productive for places rather than strong governance arrangements dictated from above. Particularly when trying to build reputational capital with prospective residents. The Director, Watershed (2014) expressed that:

"If you have got really strong governance that it tends to impose something that is … more dangerous than not doing anything, laissez-faire is better than doing too much and … the idea that anyone can govern these days … increasingly by consent … so good governance is creating strong partnerships and strong consensus".

The Director, Culture, Creativity, Place, who has worked in both NewcastleGateshead and Hull (2014) articulated that *"reputation is defined by the kind of collective team delivery of a city, that the public sector, private sector, the population, the cultural sector, help define the reputation".* There seems to be greater value now in developing inclusive and collaborative governance more organically rather than through robust and controlling arrangements from above as this may have a more positive impact on reputational capital in governance. This gives sufficient autonomy to stakeholders and allows for organisations or individuals to have a greater voice in how their city's governance should relate to its reputation. However, despite representing a diverse cross-section of a city's population, it is debatable whether a more bottom-up collaboration can guide reputational change especially major, tangible projects that require top-down intervention.

In NewcastleGateshead, the partnership between the respective councils alongside the work of the NewcastleGateshead Initiative in bringing together stakeholders from the area to change its reputation has been praised by participants. Setting longstanding rivalries aside, this has seen Newcastle City Council work with Gateshead Council for over fifteen years, starting with the area's bid for European Capital of Culture 2008 at the turn of the Millennium. The

Member of Parliament for Gateshead (2014) and the Director of Culture, Creativity, Place, who has worked in both NewcastleGateshead and Hull (2014) explained this, while the Director, BrandVista, who has worked in NewcastleGateshead (2014) proposed that governance:

"Needs to be something like an NGI [NewcastleGateshead Initiative] … where they can pull together those different stakeholders focused on what they are trying to build and what reputation they are trying to build".

The effectiveness of greater collaboration developed throughout the area over the past fifteen years is held up as a model of partnership that has helped to reduce tensions between stakeholders and to assemble reputational capital between both authorities. Moreover, the cooperation of NewcastleGateshead has supplied more clout in the pursuit of reputational change through culture as this may not have been as striking if undertaken by a sole local authority.

For Hull, there is an acceptance that longstanding rivalries, particularly between the north and south bank of the Humber may be restricting levels of collaboration in the region and external reputational capital. The Manager, Humber Local Enterprise Partnership (2014) claims previously they may have struggled at *"speaking with the same voice"* and an academic staff member, Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences (GEES), University of Hull (2014) suggested there isn't a *"coherent sense of how the Humber region is governed".* Similarly, the Commercial Director, Humberside Airport (2014) explained the challenges involved with trying to bring the *"Humber area together"*. These comments are representative of the region previously lacking collaboration and longstanding territorial rivalries between local authorities and the possible effect this may have on external reputational capital with audiences including Whitehall. Despite being aided by the development of the Humber LEP, fitting the natural economic area previously known as Humberside, there still appears to be some way to go before collaboration is prevalent across the Humber and a more consistent reputation is produced. Bristol, granting some tension between the four local authorities that used to be Avon, there is recognition of a culture of collaboration. The Mayor of Bristol (2014) insisted that "*reputation is something that will never be defined by a city council for instance".* Whereas the Director,

Watershed (2014) stated that *"we are developing a reputation for being quite a collaborative city which I think again is very good"*. This becomes symbolic of the conditions created by Bristol City Council, in stepping back and allowing the city's reputation to develop organically. Therefore, allowing stakeholders sufficient autonomy to govern the city collectively and creating reputational capital by allowing independent voices to rise to prominence. The differing experiences of collaboration uncovered across English second-tier cities and their regions arguably could begin to allow greater joined-up thinking that may gradually become a factor in reputational change.

Figure 7.1 – A map of Hull's boundaries

Source – Travelpod (2015a)

Figure 7.2 – A map of Bristol's boundaries
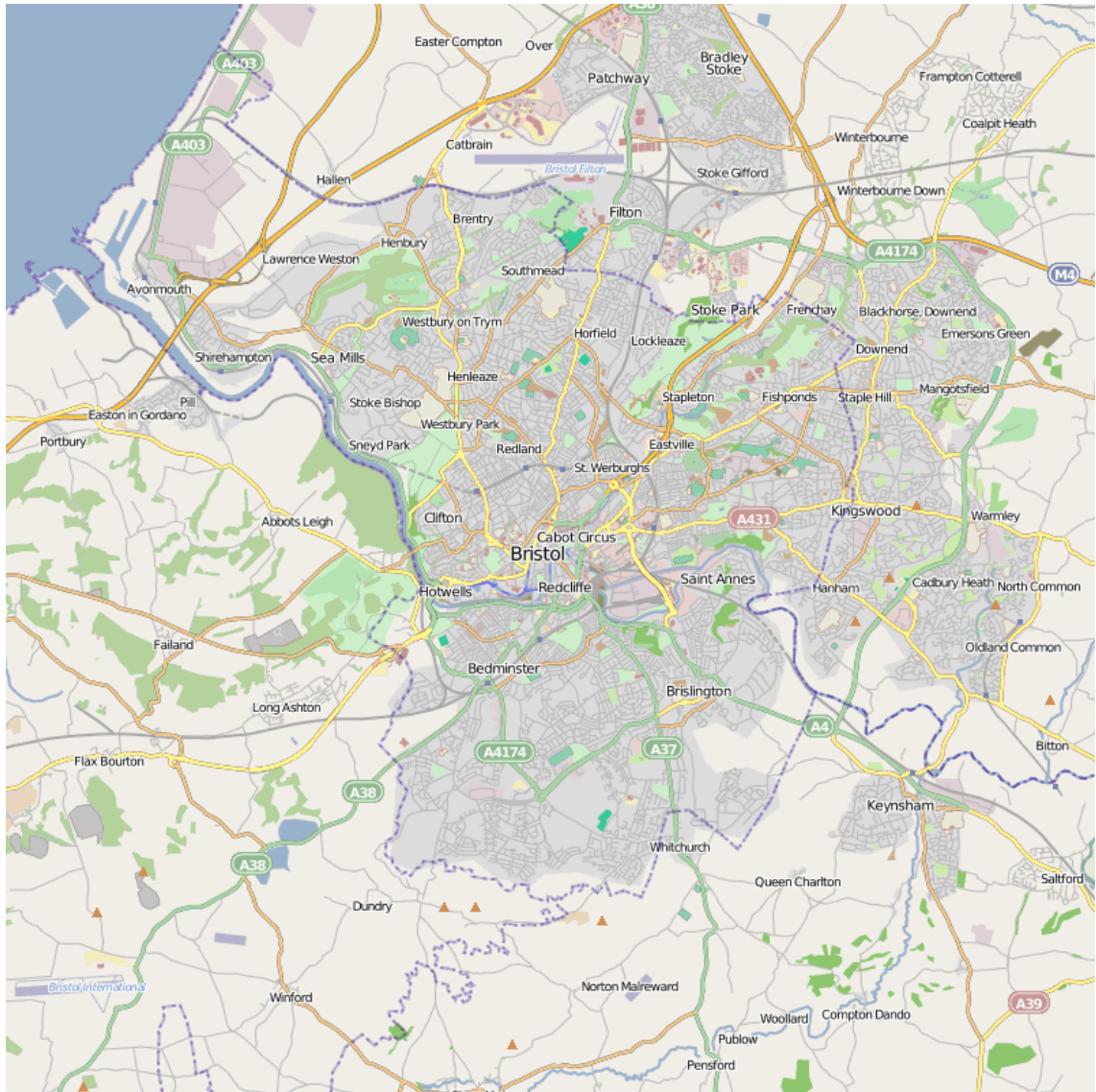
Source- Travelpod (2015b)

Figure 7.3 – A map of NewcastleGateshead's boundaries
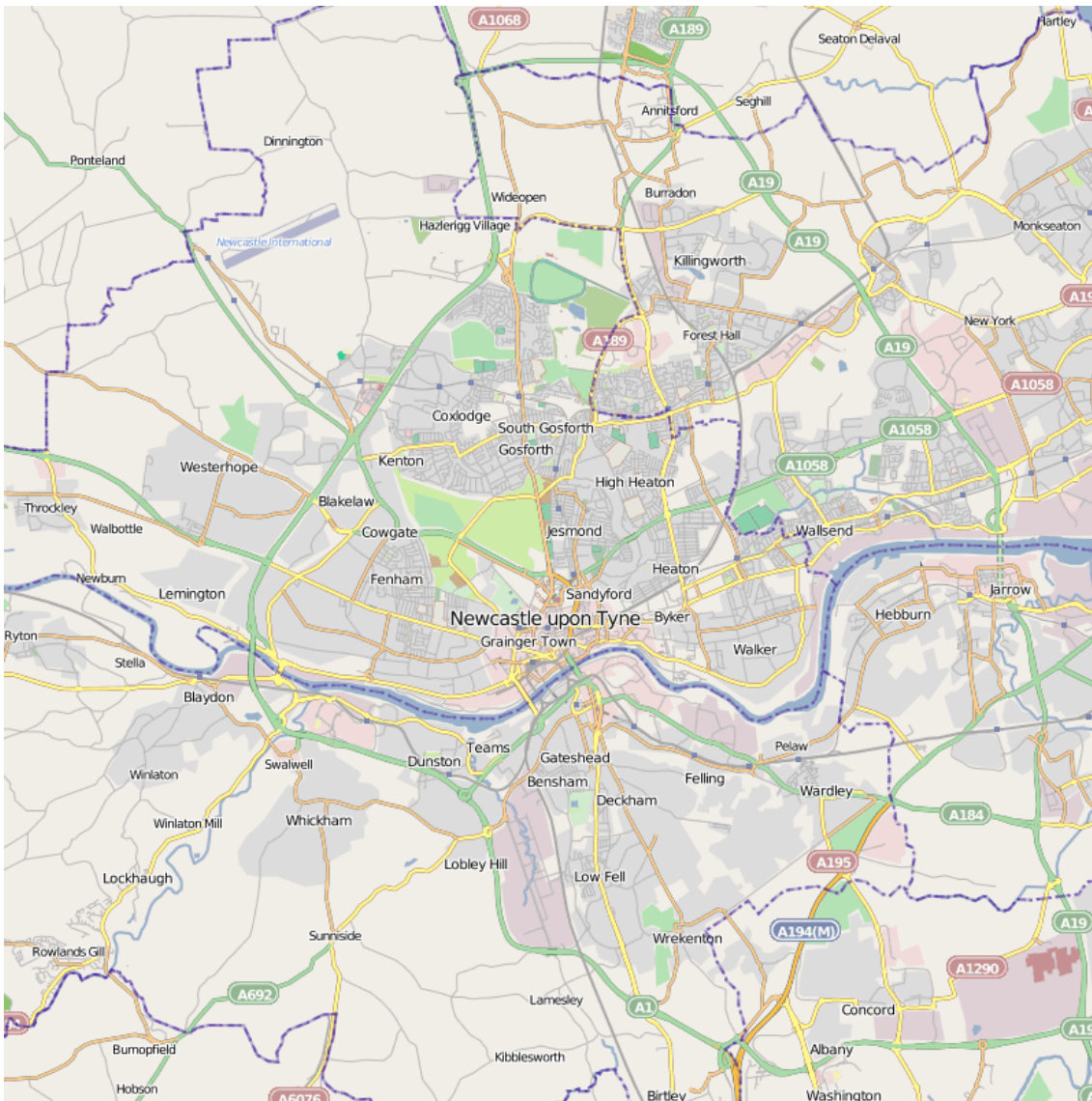
Source – Travelpod (2015c)

7.2 Local, regional, national upheaval and reputational challenges

Since 2010, English second-tier cities and their regions have been presented with challenges that have redefined how local, regional and national development is approached. Moreover, the transformation in regional structures, lack of money available for local authorities and a shift towards greater autonomy is having an uneven impact on levels of reputational capital in places. This section is presented in three parts. The first part concerns the reputational implications of the shift from Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) (Bentley et al. 2010, Pike et al. 2013). The second part examines the effect of local government austerity on English second-tier cities reputations since 2010 (Kitson et al. 2011, Meegan et al. 2014). The third part looks at the increasing emphasis at a national level on devolution and how this could affect cities and regions reputations in England (Waite et al. 2013, Clifford and Morphet, 2015).

The dissolution of RDAs following the arrival of the coalition government in 2010 produced uneven results across the country and could have reputational consequences. Whereas certain RDAs accounted for well-defined economic areas including One North East, others such as the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) were not as logical. Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) replaced the RDAs, a policy implemented by the coalition government that moved towards localism perhaps associated with some reluctance to engage with regions historically by the Conservative party (Bentley et al. 2010). The LEPs were instigated in a more bottom-up fashion and can be geographically ambiguous. Whilst they have been welcome in certain areas, in others they have been less effective and, overall, may be too underequipped to influence levels of reputational capital, externally and particularly with investors and government. Bentley et al. (2010:552) explain that 'above all, the establishment of LEPs is profoundly anti-regionalist. In the move to streamline government, LEPs come in wake of the abolition of the RDAs and the dismantling of the machinery and institutions of regional economic governance'. Pike et al. (2013:37) claim that 'the LEPs in England look relatively small and under-powered for the task in an international context of competition for the resources critical to economic growth including investment, jobs and innovation'. Therefore, the upheaval from RDAs to LEPs is indicative of a broader shift towards concentrating economic growth at a smaller scale with greater emphasis on localism which could have implications for

reputational capital, such as for inward investment. Combined with fewer resources to instigate reputational change, the removal of the regional tier of governance where RDAs were the most effective has resulted in these areas being the hardest hit. The Director, Culture, Creativity, Place, who has worked in both NewcastleGateshead and Hull (2014) described that:

"The loss of Regional Development Agencies was a blow and actually although they weren't politically accountable bodies, the Regional Development Agencies did a huge amount in terms of moving cities forward. The LEPs are not accountable bodies either and still have so many strings to central government that may not really be regional powers".

The inadequacy of the LEPs compared with the RDAs might be evident in the doubts displayed about their unclear role, relation to central government and regarding their ability to steer reputational change. Moreover, the RDAs resulted in many English second-tier cities such as Manchester and Leeds building international reputational capital and benefitting from greater emphasis on the north and English regions as a whole. Despite this, the shift to LEPs may bring some good to English second-tier cities, depending on the context, although they do seem to lack the capacity that RDAs possessed to create a reputation for attracting exogenous resources.

NewcastleGateshead was part of One North East, an RDA, accounting for an area from Scotland to Teesside, displayed in figure 7.4. Currently, the conurbation is part of the North East LEP, covering the same area apart from Teesside, who formed their own Tees Valley LEP. Generally, it is viewed that the dissolution of One North East may have been detrimental to NewcastleGateshead's reputation as the disappearance of the cohesive thinking produced by the body may negatively impact the region's ability to build reputational capital for exogenous resources. Also, with the RDA fitting a well-defined region and its existence coinciding with a period of renaissance for the area's reputation, the decision to replace this with a LEP with less capability was largely met with negativity. Table 7.1 shows the views of stakeholders on this matter. However, the RDAs disappearance may not have the same impact as feared on NewcastleGateshead's external reputation because

the area had built sufficient levels of reputational capital through culture in previous years to potentially safeguard this.

However, the emergence of LEPs has helped to concentrate reputational change at a smaller scale in Hull and Bristol. Hull was previously part of Yorkshire Forward, an RDA covering the entire Yorkshire and Humber region depicted in figure 7.4. Compared to One North East, Yorkshire Forward covered an area of 15,420km^2 and over 5 million residents compared to 8,592km^2 in the North East and just over 2.5 million residents (ONS, 2011d). Therefore, Yorkshire Forward's much wider jurisdiction did not capture the natural economic area as effectively as One North East and with Hull being located on its periphery; this was detrimental to amassing external reputational capital. In contrast, the Humber LEP, comprising local authorities previously constituting Humberside, is understood to be a more suitable level of governance to aid reputational change. A Professor in Human Geography, University of Hull (2014) argued that *"Hull got neglected within Yorkshire Forward and I do think that Yorkshire Forward was operating in Hull maybe less so then it was in say Leeds or Sheffield"*. An Anonymous Council Officer from Hull (2014) reinforced this: *"the move to the … LEP has been positive to this city, when Yorkshire Forward existed there was a very West Yorkshire/South Yorkshire bias in … their decision-making"*. The transition from RDA to LEP may have been more welcome in Hull as its governance fits a more concentrated economic area rather than being a subordinate part of a much larger region. This reduced focus may be advantageous for building reputational capital especially with investors. However, initiating the LEP was not without problems with reports that it proceeded with business support rather than that of reluctant local authorities, reflective of a perception of a lack of cooperation in the region (*The Business Desk*, 2010).

In Bristol, moving from RDAs to LEPs has been welcomed more positively in terms of reputation than in NewcastleGateshead with the West of England LEP becoming more representative of the area's travel-to-work catchment. Previously, Bristol was part of the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) that covered the entire South West region as displayed in figure 7.4. The SWRDA had the largest RDA area in England with 23,829km^2 and a population of over 5 million residents (Office for National Statistics, 2011f). Akin to Yorkshire Forward, the governance imposed on a vast area was incapable of matching Bristol's natural

economic geography or capturing the essence of the city's reputation. The Chief Executive, West of England LEP (2014) declared *"the government abolished the RDA's across the country and established LEP's instead, our LEP is a fully functioning economic area so we believe it works very well and has been very successful"*. While the Chair, Business West (2014) reiterated that:

"What the Tories did is create the Local Enterprise Partnerships, and for Bristol and the West as we call it, that has actually been a real positive because before we had a Regional Development Agency that stretched from Swindon to Penzance of which Bristol was part of and it was nonsensical really".

These quotes suggest the benefits of transferring to LEPs as Bristol, previously part of a poorly defined RDA, accounting for a huge geographical area that was unlikely to succeed in concentrating reputational change within the city. With a smaller area based around the four local authorities that used to be Avon, albeit with fewer resources, the new arrangements provide a tighter focus to develop reputational capital for governance from the city-region scale that is more representative of Bristol's qualities.

Another outcome of the 2010 general election was the implementation of austerity and the subsequent drastic cuts experienced by local authorities across England. When the coalition government came into power they set about reducing the amount of public money spent by local authorities across the country in an attempt to reduce the national-level deficit. However, this has been unevenly distributed, with local authorities in the north of the country including Knowsley losing over £400 per head, whereas more affluent areas in the south including Wokingham in Berkshire only experienced cuts of £2.29 per head between 2010/11 and 2015/16 (*The Independent*, 2015). As a result, many local authorities have been left with tough decisions about which services to prioritise and retain, what needs to be reduced or scrapped altogether and how this could affect internal and external reputational capital. Kitson et al. (2011:292) suggest that 'governments almost everywhere have embarked, or are embarking on, programmes of major cuts and reductions in public spending on a scale not seen for decades'. Meegan et al. (2014:140) reveal that 'the aim of the coalition government is to reduce public sector spending as a proportion of gross domestic product, from its recession peak in 2009 of just under 48 to 39% by 2016'. A by-

product of the global financial crisis and the recession setting in towards the end of the 21st century's opening decade, coalition government-imposed austerity is reflective of more global trends that impact local reputations. Additionally, alongside the shrinking public sector, tying in with the RDAs demise, the cuts imposed on local authorities has jeopardised some of the services provided and made those already vulnerable, significantly worse off. This could decrease local authorities' levels of internal and possibly external reputational capital in ways that may be difficult to reverse. The Director, Thinking Place, who has worked in Hull (2014) explains that:

"In terms of austerity etc. it is not a total negative, what has happened, in fact, it is a positive that places are now having to widen their view of leadership and governance so that for me is a big thing. It is not a good thing that there is not enough money, it is a good thing that other people are having to play their part".

For reputation, there could be positives as if more inclusive governance structures and greater co-operation can be demonstrated, it may compensate for the lack of money available and help to build internal and external reputational capital for governance.

NewcastleGateshead has been particularly hit by local government cuts since the arrival of the coalition government in 2010. Both Newcastle City Council and Gateshead Council have had to shed over £100 million off their budgets and have been in receipt of 4.9% and 3.8% cuts in 2015-16 respectively (*BBC News*, 2014c, *The Chronicle*, 2014). In Newcastle, the city's arts budget has been reduced by 50%, £5million has been removed from SureStart children's services and its tourist information centre has closed, which is bound to affect reputational capital (*The Chronicle*, 2015a). Meanwhile Gateshead has proposed one of the highest council tax raises in the country and has reduced opening hours of leisure centres and libraries (*The Chronicle*, 2015b). The Chief Executive, Gateshead Council (2015) articulated that:

"It has been a real challenge for both Newcastle and Gateshead, but for Newcastle obviously this was much higher profile for Newcastle but both of us had to make difficult decisions about the amount of funding available".

Also, the Head of Member Relations, North East Chamber of Commerce (2014) suggested that *"Newcastle got more of the headlines when it has come to pointing out the unfairness in government cuts"*. Therefore, the demanding nature of local authority cuts in NewcastleGateshead may indicate that, in some places, they may have been harsh compared to more southern Conservative strongholds. With no presence in Newcastle or Gateshead, the desire to protect funding to either local authority may be somewhat less urgent compared to a Conservative council in an affluent area. Thus, producing varied impacts on levels of reputational capital that local authorities possess across the country.

While, austerity in Hull may not be as high profile as NewcastleGateshead, the city has still experienced hefty cuts since 2010. Hull City Council has suffered a 25% drop in its budget (over £100 million) between 2010 and 2015 and during 2015 and 2016 has been in receipt of a 5.7% cut, more than Newcastle or Gateshead (*BBC News*, 2014c, *Hull Daily Mail*, 2014d). This has seen council tax rise by nearly 2%, reduced opening hours for libraries and decreased support for vulnerable adults and children. The Deputy Editor, *Hull Daily Mail* (2014) revealed fears of how an *"already struggling"* city was going to cope with additional cuts. However, through what he described as *"clever governing and governance"* by leadership, Hull's internal reputational capital, particularly with residents, has become enhanced. So, despite concerns surrounding how English second-tier cities may cope with cuts, it may provide a fresh opportunity to improve reputational capital both internally with residents and externally with central government. Although Bristol has suffered from budget cuts, this hasn't been as extreme as NewcastleGateshead and Hull with £83 million cuts planned between 2014 and 2017 and a 2.6% cut between 2015 and 2016, significantly less than NewcastleGateshead or Hull (*BBC News*, 2014c, 2014d). This includes a 2% increase of council tax alongside cutting subsidies for leisure and children centres (*BBC News*, 2013c). The Editor, *Bristol Post* (2014) claims that:

"We are in a different position … and this is the disconnect really and while the city comes out of recession which it … undoubtedly is doing, the council has probably got another three years in recession before it gets its act in order, it is going to continue

to cut for three years in a city that is going to be thriving … that is bound to affect its reputation".

This unearths some of the reputational challenges that Bristol may face, in that although a recovered and a buoyant city may emerge from recession, if the council is still in austerity mode and does not possess the resources to sustain its population, the city may be left underequipped. Additionally, a growing population and increased exogenous services without sufficient council services deployed to cope with this could threaten Bristol's levels of internal reputational capital for governance.

Following the Scottish Independence Referendum in September 2014, greater emphasis was placed on not only providing more autonomy to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland but to English city-regions as well. Different areas now have the opportunity to control policies on transport and housing independently from central government which provides a novel opportunity to assemble reputational capital more locally. The standout example is the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), composed of ten councils, who negotiated a deal with the Chancellor in November 2014 to have powers devolved, conditional on having an elected mayor (*BBC News*, 2014e). This is a part of what has been branded the "Northern Powerhouse" by the now Conservative majority government. In order to gain devolutionary powers city-regions must adhere to having an elected mayor, a factor that could prove to be a stumbling block for many areas alongside amassing reputational capital with central government. While, Waite et al. (2013:782) explained that 'in seeking to unleash the growth potential of cities in England, a process of decentralisation, wrapped up in a policy discourse that seeks to hand power to local communities, is being embarked on'. Clifford and Morphet (2015:58) proposed that 'much attention is now focused on devolution to city regions instead ('Devo Met')'. This highlights the shifting agenda from central government in moving towards greater decentralisation and equipping city-regions with greater powers and the possible reputational ramifications.

Subsequently, it may provide a rare opportunity to supply stakeholders with the chance to build reputational capital in their own tailored way, to stimulate economic growth free from the constraints of Whitehall. A Professor in Human Geography, University of Hull (2014) shared that:

"All of the structures that are in place like combined authorities, like the LEP, … giving power to the cities … and if they are going down that route then you need to get your act together, in very crude terms, just to get the money, if you don't and you're sitting there squabbling you aren't getting anything".

Similarly, the Director, Culture, Creativity, Place, who has worked in both NewcastleGateshead and Hull (2014) expressed that *"there is a need for greater decentralisation of decision-making to local authority level and to regions and to combined authorities and that has got to happen"*. Arguably, there is a desire from stakeholders to see greater power devolved to city-regions, specifically in respect of accruing reputational capital for governance, externally. Moreover, if greater autonomy is supplied to combined authorities, providing there is coherent governance, this could constitute a rare and novel opportunity for stakeholders to shape their reputation in a particular manner. For example, if transport decision-making becomes collaborative and if projects do come to fruition that leave a lasting legacy like the Tyne and Wear Metro, which made a region easier to navigate, this could have a positive effect on external reputational capital.

In NewcastleGateshead, the establishment of the North East Combined Authority (NECA) is viewed as a step in the right direction, particularly as it moves towards greater powers being devolved to English city-regions to accumulate greater reputational capital internally and externally. The NECA is composed of Newcastle and Gateshead councils alongside Durham, North and South Tyneside, Northumberland and Sunderland. The organisation's role is to work 'closely with the Local Enterprise Partnership in creating the conditions for economic growth and new investment' (North East Combined Authority, 2015). Located on the fringe of the "Northern Powerhouse", greater emphasis is being placed on cities such as Manchester and Leeds that are appearing to demonstrate greater collaboration, the aims of NECA are to stimulate further cohesion between the seven local authorities. This aims to overcome entrenched rivalries and ensure that inward investment is directed to the best possible location to form reputational capital inside and outside. The Chief Executive, Gateshead Council; the Chair and Head of Inward Investment, NewcastleGateshead Initiative; and the Marketing Director, Clouston Group (2014) all mentioned the idea of a combined

authority with some optimism. This indicates that in the creation of NECA, a progressive reputational decision has been made, particularly when moving towards a devolution agenda. Furthermore, if a unified image is projected, this could begin to build external reputational capital for the North East to become a more collaborative region. In Hull, devolution did not appear to be a priority in interviews, possibly due to timing. Interviews here were conducted in July 2014 compared to November 2014 in Bristol, after both the Scottish Referendum and Manchester's devolution announcement. While NewcastleGateshead interviews were conducted predominantly in May 2014 before debates of devolution came to prominence. Alongside a greater focus on UK City of Culture for 2017 and, like NewcastleGateshead, being on the periphery of the "Northern Powerhouse" and High speed rail discussions (HS2), devolution may not have been a priority for Hull. However, there has been some pressure from local businesses to move towards devolution, reluctance from the south bank of the Humber to commit has resulted in Hull looking back towards Yorkshire for greater powers to build external reputational capital (Yorkshire Post, 2015).

For Bristol, there have been calls to extend the responsibilities of the mayoral positon not only to cover the jurisdiction of the city but the city-region, LEP area as a whole. Additionally, there has been a shift on building a cross-border partnership with Cardiff and a devolved administration in Wales to achieve greater external reputational capital (Initiative Manager, Business West; Director, Tobacco Factory Theatre; Editor, *Bristol 24-7*, 2014). However, focusing more on the city itself, it is thought that extending the Mayor's jurisdiction may overcome the challenges presented by Bristol's tight boundaries. Therefore, when combined with demonstrating more joined-up thinking between the four local authorities it is believed this could have a positive effect on levels of reputational capital for governance. The Chair, West of England LEP (2014) commented that:

"There is a debate going on at the moment about Metro Mayors or not Metro Mayors and if you are starting with a clean sheet of paper you would have a mayor and overarching body for what used to be Avon but nobody wants to recreate Avon".

Similarly the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, University of Bristol (2014) stated *"we would be much better off if we had a Metro Mayor who is responsible for the*

bigger region, not simply for the city but there is quite a long way to go before we can settle that". These quotes are indicative of the desire in Bristol to see the mayoral position given more powers as part of greater devolution that may benefit levels of reputational capital with investors for the entire city-region. By overcoming boundary issues, this could help to demonstrate unity in Bristol and when enhanced by greater links with Cardiff, this could provide a powerful offer for attracting greater exogenous resources in a cross-boundary area.

Chapter 7 concerned governance and was separated into two different sections. Section 7.1 focused on governance and a place's reputation and was split into three parts. The first part explored the relationship between governance and a place's reputation. The second part examined the importance of leadership when looking to accumulate reputational capital in a city or region. The third part focused on how increased collaboration in English second-tier cities can impact place reputation. Section 7.2 considered the effect that local, regional and national upheaval in governance has had on place reputation and was also divided into three separate parts. This began by reviewing the reputational implications of the shift from Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPS). Before moving on to analyse the impact that local government austerity has had on the reputations of English second-tier cities since 2010. While, the third part concerned how an increased emphasis on devolution could affect the reputations of cities and regions in England.

Table 7.1 – A table showing stakeholder perspectives on the disappearance of One North East (RDA)

Position, Organisation, Year	Evidence
Director of Public Relations, Newcastle Univeristy (2014)	*"It was absolutely devastating to have lost the RDA"*
Anonymous Inward Investor from NewcastleGateshead (2014)	*"The demise of the RDA and the reduction in funding for local authorities has certainly had an impact on the regional economy"*
Pro Vice-Chancellor for Business and Engagement, Northumbria University (2014)	*"My overall impression is that it has been damaging, so One North East was a bit of a monster but boy could it deliver"*
Marketing Director, Clouston Group (2014)	*"The demise of the Regional Development Agencies, I think probably did give us a fairly fatal blow"*

Source – Stakeholder interviews from NewcastleGateshead (2014)

Figure 7.4 – A map of England's Regional Development Agencies (RDAs)

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES: ENGLAND

Source – CountryGuardian (2005)

8 Inward investment

8.1 Inward investment and reputation

The ability of a city or region to attract high levels of inward investment and the quality of a place's reputation go hand-in-hand. Examined across two parts, this section investigates how reputation has impacted experiences of inward investment in NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol. The first part evaluates the relationship between inward investment and the external reputation held with multinational corporations (Bristow, 2005, 2010, Gordon, 2010, Giblin and Ryan, 2012, Peck 2015). Whereas, the second examines how reputation relates to other factors associated with inward investment including transport and skills (Florida, 2002b, 2002c, Boschma, 2004, Trueman et al. 2007).

It is argued here that while reputation does impact the levels of inward investment received, it is not as straightforward as implying a good reputation will guarantee greater levels of inward investment for a city or region. However, if an area is successful at attracting significant amounts of inward investment such as Silicon Roundabout in London or is unable to, such as steelmaking on Teesside, levels of reputational capital with multinational corporations are likely to be dictated either somewhat positively or negatively. Moreover, with greater territorial competition in a high stakes and increasingly global environment (Bristow, 2005, 2010, Gordon, 2010), developing international reputational capital for inward investment is an outcome desired by many English second-tier cities. As a result, it is important to ensure that investment activities in a particular region are aligned and coordinated to produce the best possible outcome for both city and multinational corporation which could contribute towards levels of external reputational capital for investment. Referring to Galway, Ireland, Giblin and Ryan (2012:256) propose that 'the presence of the world-leading MNCs [multinational corporations] in the region attracts international attention and builds a regional reputation that produces positive effects for the neighbouring firms'. However, Peck (2015:163) argues 'as cities jockeyed for position in often zero-sum competitions for investment, media attention, talent workers, even in league tables themselves, the explanatory imperative was also to *position* cities globally'. The international scale of inward investment is introduced and this highlights the breadth that a positive reputation can achieve for being a good place for blue-chip firms to invest in. Therefore, building a reputation through the development of

clusters and the creation of hundreds or thousands of jobs, for a particular industry, such as renewable energy may build global reputational capital for talent attraction. However, this is also constructed through a much wider reputation of skills, availability of land and natural resources that, to varying degrees, may affect deciding to locate in one specific location over another.

Participant views on the relationship between inward investment and a place's reputation can be broadly split into two opinions. The first group of stakeholders, shown in table 8.1, expressed that a place's reputation and the levels of inward investment received are strongly linked. The consensus here suggests that inward investment cannot be achieved without a positive reputation, and vice-versa, therefore, they are interdependent on one another. This is encapsulated by one interviewee's assertion that *"inward investment won't come because you say that you are good, inward investment will come because they know you are good"*. In addition, this illustrates that reputational capital for inward investment is built on deeply embedded perceptions and this cannot be created overnight. Regions that have a long-established reputation for a particular type of industry may stand a better chance of attracting a certain type of inward investment compared to another, which may not possess the same rich history. Consequently, accumulating reputational capital for inward investment is a long-term task, made increasingly difficult without losing the support and momentum accumulated by institutions including the RDAs.

The second group of participants, shown in table 8.2, admitted that reputation does impact inward investment, although, the link between the two is not an especially strong one. Their view is best captured by one stakeholder who describes their relationship as a *"lagging indicator"*, in that, reputational capital is gradually accumulated following greater amounts of inward investment. This understanding interprets a place's reputation as a factor that is unlikely to be decisive. If a reputation does prevent a city or region from even receiving initial enquiries for inward investment, the complementarity between reputation and inward investment has been reinforced. Overall, while a place's reputation and inward investment are linked to a degree, it needs to be emphasised that this reputation is also an amalgamation of harder business decisions including a nearby skills base alongside image and perception.

NewcastleGateshead's inward investment activities are now divided between two organisations, with the NewcastleGateshead Initiative's Business Winning Team overseeing inward investment in Newcastle itself, whereas Gateshead Council have now assumed complete control of their own projects. The city's inward investment activities are generally focused around three sectors – creative and digital; offshore and marine; and science and health. The Inward Investment Director, NewcastleGateshead Initiative (2014) articulated that inward investment:

"Drives what people associated that the place to be … shipbuilding in the day, now it's life sciences, its digital, its offshore, so in terms of that it's really important, … not only does it bring new businesses in, it brings investment, financial and capital investment in which has to be a priority for any location".

This explains some of the area's key strengths for inward investment alongside highlighting the importance of industry in shaping external perceptions that may gradually influence reputational capital with multinational corporations. Furthermore, this goes back to the deeply embedded nature of reputation, in that some regions are still renowned for industries that have long since disappeared but are still engrained on the sub-conscience of the general public such as shipbuilding in NewcastleGateshead. Thus, although one of the more recent sectors are unlikely to dominate in the same manner as shipbuilding due to greater diversity, there is potential for the current sectors to become embedded as part of the area's modern day reputation, yet still reflecting a tradition of longstanding innovation.

In Hull and the wider Humber region, inward investment is centred around three different sectors, ports and logistics; renewable energy; and chemicals. The area's key strength is the Humber estuary, a vast natural asset, of which inward investment is channelled around. An academic staff member, Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences (GEES), University of Hull (2014) felt there is *"in the Hull region an opportunity around things like renewables, simply by virtue of its location"* and that *"there are some local capacity but I wouldn't say there are fully fledged clusters of that activity"*. Also, the Marketing Manager, Hull and Humber Bondholders (2014) expressed that its location is a real asset, underpinned by its

"strong maritime history", that has produced numerous industries over the years. She also added:

"The estuary is a big wealth generator so some of the big industries around here at the moment, chemicals are huge here, caravans are still pretty big but energy is probably ... the big opportunity to us".

This emphasises how the current focus on renewable energy could become a major opportunity for the region to create jobs and gradually influence levels of reputational capital especially externally with multinational corporations. Also, this underlines the reputation of Hull and Humber's sectoral strengths as this is on the back of an announcement from Siemens to invest £160 million and generate nearly 1,000 jobs through its wind turbine manufacturing facility, entitled Green Port Hull, located in the city's Alexandra Dock (*BBC News*, 2014a). Shortly following the UK City of Culture for 2017 announcement, this was viewed as a big boost to the city's external reputational capital, not just through this investment but the possibility of a supply chain and other renewable projects emerging on the Humber.

For Bristol and the wider city-region, its inward investment activities are overseen by Bristol + Bath, an organisation part of the West of England LEP that aims to attract greater investment into the area surrounding the two cities. Their strengths are based around five sectors aerospace and advanced engineering; high-tech; creative and digital; low carbon; business and professional financial services. The Director, Watershed (2014) said that:

"Bristol's real deep strengths, established strengths are all around niche specialisms so animation, natural history, filmmaking, silicon chip design, research into radio frequencies, that sort of thing, robots, ... they are all ... allied ... but they are quite niche specialisms and ... it is that tech and engineering that is really going to drive things".

The Editor, *Bristol Post* (2014) added:

"Those two sectors, particularly aerospace and media, Bristol has got a good reputation and the other one that is coming up on the rails is the environment, there are a lot of environment led companies".

Bristol's reputation for inward investment is reflected by the presence of several diverse blue-chip organisations, in different engineering, aerospace and the creative industry sectors, which includes Airbus UK, Rolls Royce, Aardman Animations and the BBC Natural History Unit. Also, with Bristol having been the European Green Capital for 2015, this begins to reinforce the area's green credentials, even including a bus powered by human waste, the city is therefore perceived to be building reputational capital for a more sustainable method of living. Furthermore, having not suffered the same downturn in fortunes as NewcastleGateshead and Hull, despite losing its tobacco industry, Bristol's more diversified economy has not been as reliant as the other cities were on shipbuilding and fishing respectively. Resultantly, Bristol may have had less difficulty in attracting inward investment and developing reputational capital for this, compared to NewcastleGateshead and Hull.

A place's reputation for inward investment is composed of a wide pattern of different factors, not just image and perception, but also skills, transport and quality of life too as determinants that entice talent to cities and regions through the prospect of a new job. Although reputation and inward investment are intertwined, it is perhaps more likely to prevent initial enquiries from being received rather than operating as a pivotal factor persuading multinational corporations from locating in one place over another. As such, reputational capital for inward investment is composed of harder factors that are likely to take on greater importance than softer perceptions when ruthless business decisions need to be made when selecting a location. For example, a specific place's proximity to a skilled pool of labour may be of greater priority when compared to somewhere being named the best or worst place to live in a survey published in a national newspaper. However, there is also an argument that creating the right conditions to encourage human capital to a region should take precedence instead of enticing vast amounts of inward investment and facilitating the development of industrial

clusters (Florida 2002b, 2002c). This perspective asserts that places that are home to large numbers of Bohemians are closely associated with and can develop more external reputational capital for high technology industry to potentially thrive in that city or region.

Some prominent factors for developing a reputation for inward investment for an English second-tier city include the availability of land and the attraction of talent from outside. Boschma (2004:1003) suggests that 'regional competitiveness is a multidimensional phenomenon because many factors operating simultaneously at various spatial levels, affect the performance of regions'. Similarly Trueman et al. (2007:20) claim that 'most post-industrial cities have a complex web of business and community needs, a diverse architectural heritage and aspirations that may conflict as they compete for trade, inward investment and reputation'. These illustrate not only the complexity of place, but also transport links and business rates that contribute towards reputational capital for inward investment that builds an overall picture when investors are deciding to locate in one place over another.

Furthermore, how this overall offer is communicated to a city or region by stakeholders could enhance the perception held by multinational corporations in terms of inward investment. In this instance it is more difficult for stakeholders to shape important hard factors including the availability of natural resources and proximity of a skilled workforce. However, developing an overall package that is well communicated shows that joined-up thinking between stakeholders alongside promoting the quality of life for new residents could contribute towards developing reputational capital for inward investment. The Head of Member Relations, North East Chamber of Commerce (2014) explained that:

"Fundamentally, you can have the best reputation in the world as a good place to live and a really strong cultural offer but if you don't have the right kind of property available and if you don't have the right skills available or a labour force … then you are never going to win the argument when it comes to inward investment".

Also, an Anonymous Inward Investor from Newcastle (2014) added that: *"if you have a reputation for a great skilled workforce, quality of life, all of those wonderful opportunities for human beings, well in theory it's an enabler for inward investment"*.

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Accordingly, recognising that reputational capital for inward investment is built on various hard and soft factors may be a useful understanding to take forward. For harder factors, if it is communicated that a particular city or region possesses available land or good transport links while a softer approach is also pitched at incoming residents through quality of life, this could develop a comprehensive reputation for attracting investors and incoming residents alike.

In NewcastleGateshead a lack of collective thinking exhibited by stakeholders and how this is communicated, may have had an impact on its reputation with external inward investors. Due to deeply entrenched rivalries between different parts of the North East, this is deemed to have prevented the region from building reputational capital with inward investors. The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Engagement, Northumbria University (2014) declared that:

"It is not helped by sniping from the sidelines from others who feel it should be done in a different way, … it is less of a snipe at NGI [NewcastleGateshead Initiative] and more of a snipe at the local authorities … so this business coming to the North East, I want it in South Shields, no it should be in Durham, no it should obviously be in Gateshead, that kind of issue is very damaging".

Similarly, The Editor, *The Journal (2014)* opined that:

"If Sunderland has its own inward investment team and certainly if someone decided if Sunderland … wasn't the right place for them, someone in Sunderland would probably rather direct them to Dublin rather than Newcastle and that happens so you've got seven councils here, too many little petty squabbles and jealousies".

As a result, there may be a problem with infighting in the North East, in that; local authorities are reluctant to take a unified stance on inward investment to bring evenly distributed benefits to the region as it may be feared as detrimental to their own authority's reputational capital. Therefore, rather than recommend locating in and benefitting a potentially more suitable neighbouring authority, the region may lose out on inward investment altogether due to longstanding animosity, not helped by the disappearance of the RDAs. Gradually, this may impact the North East's external reputational capital through portraying the region as being difficult

to invest in, particularly if this keeps occurring and the area is losing out to other regions globally.

In Hull, there is a consensus among stakeholders that a reputation for inward investment rather than its perception with the general public may have positively influenced Siemen's decision to invest here. More tangible and harder business decisions such as being located on the Humber Estuary, the proximity to a skilled workforce or the persuasiveness and communication demonstrated by Hull City Council may override any perceptions of the city. An academic staff member, Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences (GEES), University of Hull (2014) expressed that:

"A lot of investment would have happened irrespective of reputation so unless you think that this is a region known for having available land and things like that as part of its reputation, then it has had an impact, otherwise, … I wouldn't say it has had a huge impact".

Also, the Marketing Manager, Hull Bondholders (2014) suggested that:

"If you take the Siemens decision, that is based on the location and we have got a port in the right place if you like and the right amount of space so there are some quite hard edged business reasons … there are opportunities for them to invest more and more so it may well be they invest in a skills centre here, they invest in opportunities, but all of that is connected to the place and the place's reputation".

The general public and popular media version of Hull's reputation probably did not deter Siemens locating here. Instead it is more about Hull and Humber's growing external reputational capital for being an area welcoming for renewable energy on both the north and south banks of the estuary combined with the hard work of the local authority (*Hull Daily Mail*, 2014e). But, as alluded to by stakeholders, perhaps it is an understanding of Hull's reputational capital for inward investment, inclusive of factors such as the availability of land and how this is communicated to multinational corporations such as Siemens that comes before stereotypical perceptions when deciding where to locate.

For Bristol, its close proximity to London could be a factor of the city's inward investment reputation that might have dictated the levels of exogenous resources received. With only 120 miles and less than a two hour train journey (that will be speeded up by electrification) on Brunel's Great Western Railway, this potentially makes Bristol a more attractive proposition to certain types of inward investment compared to NewcastleGateshead and Hull. The Chief Executive, West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (2014) stated that:

"This is an area we know that businesses are keen to locate in, we are near to London, we have got high quality transport connections, we're an hour and a half from London, it is going to be speeded up by electrification".

Likewise, the Editor, *Bristol Post* (2014) reaffirmed that:

"There are a lot of environment-led companies and a lot of them are moving here because as I say it is too expensive to be in London, they are growing, they are getting too big, they can't afford the real estate, they come here and they thrive".

Alongside other factors including the University of Bristol's ability to pull students in from other regions, explored in the next section, Bristol's location, being easily accessible from London could create reputational capital for inward investment. Improved further by electrification, that will reportedly reduce the journey time between London and Bristol to 1 hour 18 minutes; this may increase demand for inward investment and enhance its reputation for this. Therefore, when compared to NewcastleGateshead and Hull, a combination of the aforementioned hard and soft factors can contribute towards developing reputational capital for inward investment. However, in Bristol more positive perceptions and a greater proximity to London may help to receive more initial enquiries.

Table 8.1 – A table that displays stakeholder perspectives of the belief that there is a strong relationship between inward investment and a place's reputation

Position, Organisation, Year	Evidence
Director of Policy, Newcastle City Council (2014)	*"It's never good to have a bad reputation as a place to invest"*
Director of Corporate Affairs, Port of Tyne (2014)	*"If your perception is it's rubbish up there, I'll not even bother having a look, then you have lost the plot even before you start"*
Director, Thinking Place, who has worked in Hull (2014)	*"You are not going to attract any inward investment unless you have a good reputation"*
Anonymous Council Officer, Bristol (2014)	*"Inward investment won't just come because you say you are good, inward investment will come because they know you are good"*
Lord Mayor of Bristol (2014)	*"Inward investment flows to cities and regions that have a good reputation"*

Source – Stakeholder interviews in NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol (2014)

Table 8.2 – A table that displays stakeholder perspectives of the belief that the relationship between inward investment and a place's reputation is more subtle

Position, Organisation, Year	Evidence
Chief Executive, Newcastle College Group (2014)	*"To what extent inward investment drives reputation, I think it's a lagging indicator"*
Anonymous Inward Investor, Newcastle (2014)	*"There may be occasions where reputation, reputation does impact, however, would that stand in the way of a commercial decision, possibly not"*
Manager, Humber LEP (2014)	*"Reputation is only one factor, reputation could stop you getting enquired but reputation is unlikely I would have thought ... that is unlikely to be the deciding factor"*

Source – Stakeholder interviews in NewcastleGateshead and Hull (2014)

8.2 Reputation: attracting and retaining workers and students

Positioning a city or region as being attractive for various audiences to locate in can relate to how its reputation is perceived. Additionally, if a place is successful in experiencing greater levels of inward investment this may increase its potential to attract new residents including workers and students that can become embedded as part of its reputation. This section focuses on two separate audiences that could be attracted to NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol. The first audience is workers and this concerns how reputation can influence levels of human capital and amounts of prospective residents drawn to a particular city or region for its quality of life (McCann 2007, Florida et al. 2008). The second audience is students and this centres on how perceptions can shape a university's graduate retention patterns in a particular city or region (Faggian and McCann, 2009, Munro et al. 2009).

Not only can a place's reputation affect the levels of inward investment received but it can also impact its ability to attract new workers and create competition for jobs throughout its jurisdiction. Moreover, trying to present opportunities and draw vast amounts of new residents to demonstrate a growing population is an outcome desired by many English second-tier cities as it can positively benefit levels of external reputational capital. Also, it should be acknowledged that factors including the quality of life, the standard of local schools and the availability of good housing stock can be as significant as the attraction of the job offer itself. Therefore, it could be important for places to ensure that the right conditions are developed to attract both prospective workers, as well as their families which can improve reputational capital with both investors and new residents alike. This links with the idea of human capital, in that a plethora of variables are involved in attracting new workers to a particular place to generate urban growth, or in this case, developing reputational capital to attract and retain skilled individuals and their families (Rodriguez-Pose and Vilalta-Bufi 2005, Storper and Scott, 2009, Storper, 2010). However, a more intangible understanding of the perceived quality of life will be factored in here, more in the vein of Florida (2002b, 2002c) and it will be asserted that despite the importance of job creation, that demonstrating a culturally diverse city region can be equally as significant. McCann (2009:119) claims that 'potential residents, who in many but not all cases would be workers in the city, are enticed with the promise of jobs and abundant career opportunities, a low cost of living and high quality of life,

encompassing everything from proximity to natural environments'. Also, Florida et al. (2008:615) argue that:

'According to current thinking and research in economics, geography and social science broadly, the underlying driver of economic development is highly skilled and educated people – what some call talent and what economists frequently refer to as human capital. Places that have more of it thrive, while those with less stagnate or decline'.

Thus, developing an offer inclusive of the quality of life alongside opportunities for career advancement to attract both those with skills and degrees has become an important task for stakeholders to build reputational capital in an increasingly competitive environment. In turn, developing a reputation for bringing in high numbers of human capital can benefit a particular place as this can help to generate further rounds of inward investment and greater job opportunities.

This is key for English second-tier cities, where many live in the shadow of deindustrialisation and the more prosperous London and South East, in trying to attract greater amounts of talent (Champion et al. 2014). Emphasising the importance of quality of life, participants including the Chief Executive, Gateshead Council (2014) noted that:

"In terms of the factors that might influence someone's view of the reputation of the place, if they actually live here, and actually bring up their family here, but generally speaking there are some I suppose what you might call the kind of hygiene factors so the general things about good schools, good houses, decent transport links'.

Also, the Chief Executive, Newcastle College Group (2014) added:

"If somebody from Japan, to exaggerate my point … does happen to come to your area, their first question is "do I want to have my kids live here?", "what are the schools like?" … before they have even made a decision they are thinking personally about "do I want to live there?", so reputation feeds directly into that and is a factor in decisions whether to go there".

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As such, maintaining a combination of hard and soft factors to a high standard could determine whether a city or region exhibits a growing population and this could have possible implications on reputational capital with investors. Hard factors may encompass good transport links, high quality hospitals and a good educational offer to develop an attractive reputation to potential new residents. Additionally, there should be a focus on softer elements that animate the place and create a good atmosphere such as a cultural programme of events. Although softer factors aren't as straightforward to change, if they are sustained over the long-term and enhanced alongside harder factors, this could be foundational to transforming perceptions as being a suitable place to live. Furthermore, promoting yourself as an attractive location for incoming residents but simultaneously being sufficiently grounded to encourage retention through a combination of hard and soft practices could gradually begin to effect reputational capital.

For human capital, in Hull and Bristol, there have been challenges attracting sufficient numbers of teachers due to both cities lacking reputational capital in education. In Hull, enticing teachers has been a challenge for the city's Local Education Authority (LEA), particularly for maths and science; Hull has struggled to entice a sufficient amount of job applications which hints at the reputational impact when deciding to locate in a specific place. An Anonymous Council Officer (2014) articulated that:

"An advert went out for a maths teacher and this was just a normal maths teacher and paying almost £54,000 which is almost double what the normal maths teacher salary would be and we just couldn't get anyone".

This is illustrative of the challenges that Hull faces when attracting teachers to work within the city's boundaries as there has been little competition for jobs, even when incentivised. Also, this is reflective of the reputational capital of the city's educational offer with families, whereby they may decide to locate in surrounding LEAs rather than send their children to school in Hull. Out of 151 LEAs Hull is ranked 145th and has a GCSE A* - C pass rate of 50% (*The Telegraph*, 2014). In comparison to the neighbouring East Riding which includes Hull's suburbs, who are ranked 71st with a pass rate of 61%, the city's educational results are poor. Consequently the educational standards rise once outside of the city's

boundaries. Accordingly, Hull's underperforming education system has potentially impacted reputational capital with both teachers and parents alike, underlining the demanding task of trying to raise educational standards here and attract greater human capital.

Bristol's reputation for possessing a somewhat inadequate state education offer is more surprising compared to Hull, as Bristol does not appear to have the same problems attracting human capital for other professions. This is perhaps reflective of its internal inequalities where if based in a wealthier area a family might be able to afford to send their child to a private school. However, state schools particularly in south and east Bristol may be unable to offer a child a good education. Therefore, there is little middle ground between the standard of education received in the private schools compared to that received in the underperforming state schools. The Director, Watershed (2014) explained that:

"When Hull was having very bad ratings for its education and so were we, I think us and Hull were bottom of the league table and there were plenty of people in Bristol saying hang on a minute we're a successful city, we have got one of the highest proportions of people with a degree and we have got an educational system that is failing our kids, there is something wrong".

Despite stakeholders also recognising that improvements are underway, due to the engrained nature of reputation, it may take some time for Bristol to transform perceptions regarding education with parents and teachers alike, conflicting with the city's economic success and the strength of its universities. Bristol is the 141st best performing LEA in England with a GCSE A* - C pass rate of 52.3% (*The Telegraph*, 2014). Nonetheless, unlike Hull, this reputational capital isn't confined to the city's tight boundaries with schools controlled by neighbouring authorities also exhibiting educational underperformance. For example, South Gloucestershire LEA is ranked 120th out of 151 LEAs with seven schools located near the city's boundaries demonstrating a GCSE A* - C average pass rate of 55.6% (*The Telegraph*, 2014, Department for Education, 2015). Therefore, this reputation is not confined to the city and the supposed inability to attract human capital for teaching purposes encompasses suburbs controlled by other authorities as well.

On the other hand, in NewcastleGateshead, for human capital, attracting and retaining teachers isn't as much of a reputational challenge. Newcastle-upon-Tyne is placed 116th out of 151 LEAs and Gateshead is ranked 63rd with pass rates of 57.3% and 61.7% respectively, generating an average of 90th place nationally (*The Telegraph*, 2014). Instead, NewcastleGateshead's challenges in attracting human capital lie in trying to persuade workers to move to the region from other parts of the country. The Inward Investment Director, NewcastleGateshead Initiative (2014) explains that:

"It's easier to get somebody to relocate from France, for example, or from America than it is to get somebody to relocate from London and that's all to do with … the sort of national and international perceptions, they're different".

This hints at the possible existence of deeply embedded perceptions and the reputation of NewcastleGateshead as discussed in section 4.1. As such, somewhat outdated views on the area's reputation when combined with fewer opportunities in the region have made it difficult to entice human capital on a national scale, particularly from London and the South East.

Trying to retain high numbers of students is an ambition for English second-tier cities as a method of improving levels of reputational capital, especially in relation to prospective, new students. If a university is drawing in a lot of students who are likely to gain employment in the region afterwards, it could bring a range of positive effects including further inward investment, greater competition for jobs and increased human capital over time. Additionally, possessing high numbers of students can translate into reputational capital, highlight a good cultural offer alongside a high quality of life that could also attract new residents from outside. Faggian and McCann (2009:212) propose that 'the ability of a region to maintain its competitiveness relies heavily on its capability not only to retain its own university graduates but also to attract graduates from other regions'. Also, Munro et al. (2009:1818) declare that 'the expansion of student numbers may also stimulate an increase in visitor spending and tourism through improvements to the quality of place – better amenities, vibrant 24/7 services and an appealing social milieu with a strong external reputation'. This demonstrates some benefits of attracting and retaining high numbers of students to develop reputational

capital as a university city. It argues for the widespread benefits of possessing high numbers of students with these tied in with other desirable outcomes that may contribute towards attracting greater human capital and reputational capital. Therefore, developing an offer that persuades students to stay beyond university combined with the overall quality of life could reposition an English second-tier city's reputation as being attractive to both prospective students and residents alike.

To measure the impact of student attraction and graduate retention upon a place's reputation, the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2013, 2014, 2015) survey data is reviewed. I use data collected from between the 2011 and 2012; 2012 and 2013; and 2013 and 2014 academic years as opposed to just the most recent data as this decreases the likelihood of anomalies. Additionally, I did hope to go further back to obtain a greater understanding of retention patterns but this was not possible as the data only became regionalised from 2011 and 2012 onwards and prior to that focused on the national scale. However, while the information used captures data for each institution, this focuses on the numbers in the region rather than at the city scale who are domiciled or have gained employment. Thus, it was important to note how many students were domiciled in that particular region i.e., how many were already based in that region prior to university. Subsequently, the rate of retention derives from the percentage of students from that institution who remain employed within its region after graduation. This is then added or taken away from the percentage of students who were already domiciled in that region to establish what percentage of students are on average either gained or lost by that institution to other regions between 2011 and 2014.

In NewcastleGateshead, we look at data for Newcastle University and Northumbria University respectively, focusing on the percentage of students that remain in the North East in employment after university compared to the amount already domiciled in the region beforehand. Table 8.3 shows that on average 33.07% of Newcastle University's students and table 8.4 shows that 55.18% of Northumbria University's students surveyed remained employed in the region following university (Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2014). However, the key piece of data I am looking for is how this compares with the percentage of students domiciled in the North East from each institution. The average percentage

remaining employed in that region, the 33.07% (Newcastle) and the 55.18% (Northumbria) are then subtracted from the 31.42% (Newcastle) and 62.42% (Northumbria) respectively domicile in the North East, in that it becomes comparable for results from other institutions and regions. This stands at a +1.67% average for the Russell Group, Newcastle University, that is retaining students in the region and a -7.24% average for former Polytechnic Northumbria University, that is losing students to other regions. This shows the vastly different graduate retention patterns that can be demonstrated by institutions in the same city and how the different functions of each institution can combine to build reputational capital to retain students. For NewcastleGateshead overall, this generates an average 2.8% loss for the area between 2011 and 2014. However, the presence of two universities and the diverse range of options this presents to prospective students is likely to increase reputational capital and the likelihood of those graduates being retained post-university.

For Hull, data taken solely from the University of Hull is used, this looks at what percentage of the institution's students remain in the Yorkshire and Humber region in employment once graduated (Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2014). Table 8.5 shows that the University of Hull lost on average 12.09% of its graduates to regions other than Yorkshire and Humber between 2011 and 2014, the worst performing institution out of the five analysed, and the worst of the three regions. The institution on average retains 47.76% of its students in jobs within the region, however, with an average of 59.85%, domiciled in the city itself, comparable with Northumbria University, it posts significant losses to other regions, over 10% on average. Therefore, the losses in percentages of graduates to other regions may be significant enough to begin to impact the city's reputational capital, both with attracting new and retaining current students. Furthermore, this may tie in with other economic indicators including the percentage of residents with a degree level qualification that stands at 15.2% (Office for National Statistics, 2011g) and the inability to attract human capital, especially teachers and poor educational outcomes highlighted earlier. Consequently, this may be a factor in convincing graduates to stay in the city post-university. Although graduate retention is only a part of a city's reputation, Hull's inability to bring graduates into the Yorkshire and Humber region and the amount of losses it is posting could be reflective of greater reputational and human capital challenges faced.

For Bristol, data from the University of Bristol and the University of West of England is used (Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2014), this centres on the percentage of students that remain in the South West for employment after university compared to the amount domicile in the region beforehand. Table 8.6 shows that the South West gained on average 1.52% of the University of Bristol's graduates between 2011 and 2014, similar to another Russell Group institution Newcastle University. However, for all three years the university managed a gradual year-on-year increase of students being retained in the region and had the lowest average domiciled percentage out of any institution with just 24.02% of students originating from the South West. This links in with the Lord Mayor of Bristol's (2014) claims that:

"They always talk about Bristol being a sticky city, in that people who come here for their degrees or they come for a short period and they never actually leave so we have an awful lot of graduates … who stay on, probably some of the highest percentages from other parts of the country that then make their home in Bristol".

For Bristol's reputation, this reflects the Higher Education Statistics Agency data, that specifically, the University of Bristol's student intake may be spread more evenly across the English regions when compared to other institutions. Whereas table 8.7 highlights that the University of the West of England lost on average 4.46% of its graduates from the South West between 2011 and 2014. This is similar to differences between Newcastle University and Northumbria University in NewcastleGateshead. For Bristol, overall, between the two institutions this produces an average loss of -1.47% for the South West region between 2011 and 2014, slightly better than NewcastleGateshead's average of -2.8% (figure 8.1). Therefore, Bristol's levels of reputational capital with both students and investors, alongside the city's proximity to London may contribute to and encourage students who have arrived for university to remain employed afterwards.

For reputation, the presence of two universities in a city is potentially a boost for both institutions to help to retain graduates and subsequently attract greater numbers of students. This is underlined by the data from Hull, a city with one university that posted an average loss of -12.09% of its graduates between 2011 and 2014 which shows that many of its graduates are employed in regions outside

of Yorkshire and Humber. Despite the former polytechnic institutions in NewcastleGateshead and Bristol losing percentages of graduates to other regions as well, they still retain high percentages of those already domiciled in the region. This links in with Chatterton's (2010:511) assertion that 'large core cities continue to benefit from high numbers of students, often containing both an old red brick and new post-1992 institution'. Therefore, possessing a diverse higher education offer through the differing but complimentary profiles of universities can contribute positively to a reputational capital that can combine not only to bring in students from elsewhere but can also retain high numbers of students domiciled within that region.

Chapter 8 regarded inward investment and this was presented in two different sections. Section 8.1 focused on the relationship between inward investment and place reputation and was divided into two parts. The first part analysed whether an external reputation held with multinational corporations could impact levels of inward investment in that particular place. While, the second part investigated how reputation relates to other factors associated with inward investment including transport and skills. Section 8.2 centred on how reputation could influence attracting various audiences to a specific city or region and was presented in terms of two separate audiences. The first audience were workers and this part focused on how reputation can influence levels of human capital, based on the quality of life in that specific location. The second audience were students and this centred on how perceptions can shape a university's graduate retention patterns in a particular city or region.

Table 8.3 – A table showing the Newcastle University graduate retention between 2011 and 2014

	Number of UK students at institution overall	Number of students domicile in North East	% of students domicile in North East	Number of students employed in North East	% of students employed in North East	Difference in % between domicile students and those employed in North East
Newcastle University 2011-12	3,760	1,140	30.32%	1,190	31.65%	+1.33%
Newcastle University 2012-13	3,860	1,270	32.9%	1,350	34.97%	+2.07%
Newcastle University 2013-14	3,850	1,195	31.04%	1,255	32.6%	+1.56%
Average total 2011-2014	3,823	2,808	31.42%	1,265	33.07%	**+1.65%**

Source – Higher Education Statistics Agency (2013,2014,2015)

Table 8.4 – A table showing the Northumbria University graduate retention between 2011 and 2014

	Number of UK students at institution overall	Number of students domicile in North East	% of students domicile in North East	Number of students employed in North East	% of students employed in North East	Difference in % between domicile students and those employed in North East
Northumbria University 2011-12	5,300	3,515	66.32%	3,115	58.77%	-7.55%
Northumbria University 2012-13	5,205	3,225	61.96%	2,845	54.66^%	-7.3%
Northumbria University 2013-14	5,315	3,135	58.98%	2,770	52.12%	-6.86%
Average total 2011-2014	5,273	3,292	62.42%	2,914	55.18%	**-7.24%**

Source – Higher Education Statistics Agency (2013,2014,2015)

Table 8.5 – A table showing the University of Hull graduate retention between 2011 and 2014

	Number of UK students at institution overall	Number of students domicile in Yorkshire and Humber	% of students domicile in Yorkshire and Humber	Number of students employed in Yorkshire and Humber	% of students employed in Yorkshire and Humber	Difference in % between domicile students and those employed in Yorkshire and Humber
University of Hull 2011-12	3,255	2,030	62.37%	1,610	49.46%	-12.91%
University of Hull 2012-13	3,245	1,910	58.86%	1,490	45.92%	-12.94%
University of Hull 2013-14	3,215	1,875	58.32%	1,540	47.9%	-10.42%
Average total 2011-2014	3,238	1,938	59.85%	1,547	47.76%	**-12.09%**

Source – Higher Education Statistics Agency (2013,2014,2015)

Table 8.6 – A table showing the University of Bristol graduate retention between 2011 and 2014

	Number of UK students at institution overall	Number of students domicile in South-West	% of students domicile in South-West	Number of students employed in South-West	% of students employed in South-West	Difference in % between domicile students and those employed in South-West
University of Bristol 2011-12	3,325	800	24.06%	840	25.26%	+1.2%
University of Bristol 2012-13	3,200	810	25.31%	855	26.72%	+1.41%
University of Bristol 2013-14	3,310	830	25.08%	895	27.04%	+1.96%
Average total 2011-2014	3,278	813	24.02%	863	26.34%	**+1.52%**

Source – Higher Education Statistics Agency (2013,2014,2015)

Table 8.7 – A table showing the University of the West of England (UWE) graduate retention between 2011 and 2014

	Number of UK students at institution overall	Number of students domicile in South-West	% of students domicile in South-West	Number of students employed in South-West	% of students employed in South-West	Difference in % between domicile students and those employed in South-West
UWE 2011-12	5,630	3,425	60.83%	3,045	54.09%	-6.74%
UWE 2012-13	5,710	3,275	57.36%	3,275	52.71%	-4.65%
UWE 2013-14	5,555	3,110	55.99%	3,000	54.01%	-1.98%
Average total 2011-2014	5,632	3,270	58.66%	3,107	53.6%	**-4.46%**

Source – Higher Education Statistics Agency (2013,2014,2015)

Figure 8.1 – A bar chart displaying the percentage of graduates either gained or lost in the regions of universities in NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol between 2011 and 2014
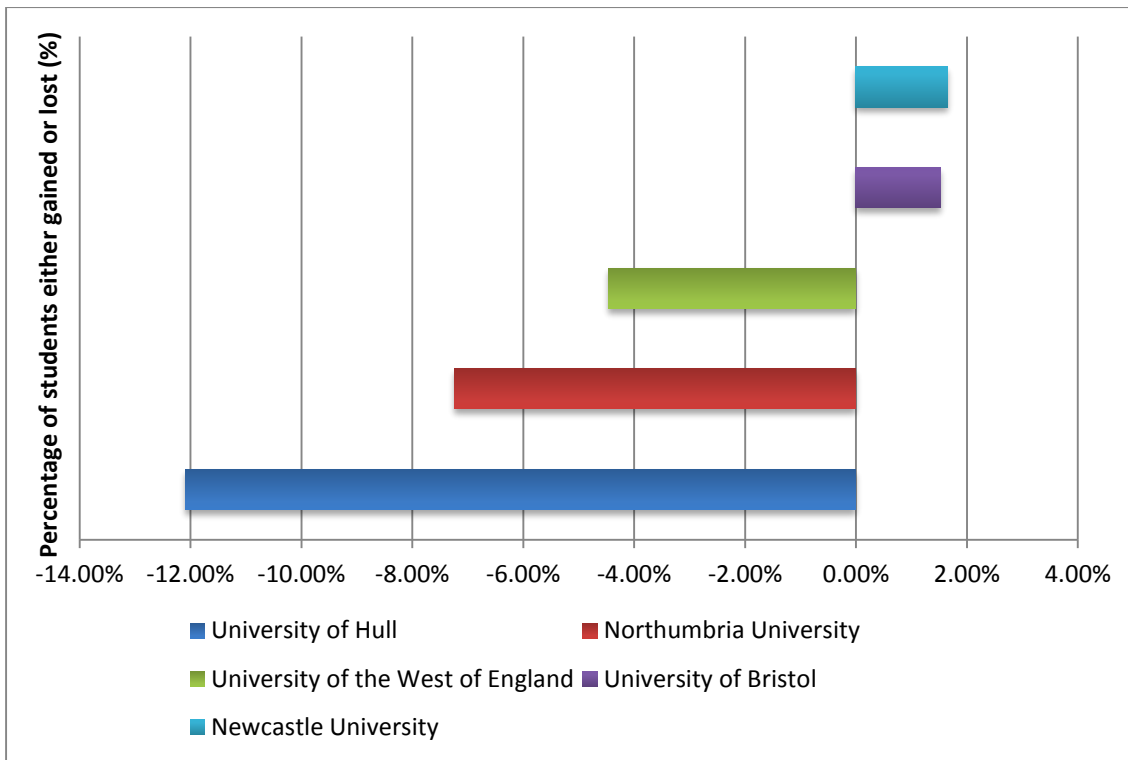
Source – Higher Education Statistics Agency (2013, 2014, 2015)

9 Conclusion

9.1 The 'Northern Powerhouse' and continuing place brand cynicism

The 'Northern Powerhouse' continues to be championed by the Conservative government as an umbrella term for any projects being conducted in northern England. This provides some intriguing consequences for the reputations of NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol due to their location, perceived to be outside of the area where central government attention is being devoted to the most. Additionally, an increased emphasis from Whitehall on Manchester and its hinterland, built around a devolution agreement suggests that this notion may be unsuccessful in attempts to create balanced economic growth and an improved international reputation for northern England as a whole. In turn, accusations of the 'Northern Powerhouse' being nothing more than a branding exercise could result in some thought-provoking questions of where this leaves the reputations of second-tier cities on the peripheries of these discussions. Lee (2016:11) claims that 'the Northern Powerhouse also serves a second, important function as a brand: a political tool which can be used to show a suspicious electorate that the Conservatives care about the north'. Consequently, this adds further weight to scepticism about brands, in that they can often be used as a façade and in a political sense, to placate and then deceive voters that the fortunes of their home town or city may change under their administration. Also, there are potential ramifications for NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol with greater focus on the M62 corridor area, it is debatable whether NewcastleGateshead and Hull will receive any reputational benefits from the perceived 'Northern Powerhouse'. In addition, there may be implications for Bristol that despite starting to demonstrate cross-border collaboration with Cardiff, greater rhetoric from central government on regenerating the north could see the city overlooked during devolution debates. The increasing prominence of the 'Northern Powerhouse' is a reminder of why understanding the reputations of geographical entities is an important matter for theory and policy alike. Furthermore, this underlines the project's contributions, in that there may be greater scope for place reputation to continue to be researched in the future. As such, the alternative concept, place reputation's contemporary and underexplored nature, particularly in relation to English second-tier cities can provide some compelling insights that may be applicable worldwide.

The study's overall aim was to *understand and explain the idea of place reputation and investigate whether this could become a credible alternative to the established place brand.* Additionally, while this project asserts that we should move on from place branding, it maintains that rather than discarding branding activities altogether that cities and regions should reduce their emphasis on branding, instead repositioning it as part of the more comprehensive place reputation. A significant conceptual contribution used here was reputational capital and it was upheld throughout the thesis that this can be constructed and then accumulated with various domains, several audiences and in different sectors by stakeholders involved in geographical entities (Jackson, 2004, Wreschniok and Klewes, 2009). The overall aim was also supported by three research questions:

1. *How can a critical understanding of place branding help us to develop a new conceptual and theoretical basis for the emergent idea of place reputation?*

2. *How can we map and explain the different stakeholder and institutional involvement and the way in which this helps to shape and change the reputations of places?*

3. *How and why do the case-study cities attempt to form, manage and shape the notion of place reputation?*

These questions, outlined in the introduction, were answered through both conceptual work in the literature review and an empirical study using semi-structured interviews with local and regional stakeholders in NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol as detailed in the findings chapters. In turn, this has established that engineering reputational change can be a possibility for English second-tier cities, reiterated by the evidence of Hull receiving critical acclaim from the Rough Guides who named the city as one of their top ten global cities to visit in 2016 (*The Independent*, 2016). Furthermore, the literature review identified a disparate and fragmented body of literature with regards to applying reputation to place. However, the study found that by establishing a greater geographical rationale (Cresswell, 2004) assisted by the idea of reputational capital (Jackson, 2004, Wreschniok and Klewes, 2009) that developing an alternative in the shape of place

reputation was a realistic ambition. This chapter is divided into three remaining sections, a summary (9.2), conceptual and theoretical contributions (9.3) and ending with a section dedicated to limitations and future research (9.4).

9.2 Summary

The summary concentrates on the outcomes from the previous four findings chapters and examines what each chapter and their respective sections brought to the study overall. Looking at chapters 4 – 8, this began by investigating place reputation itself and how this notion can be conceptualised and better understood (Chapter 4). Chapter 5 focuses on place branding before proceeding to document the findings of the three domains of place reputation – culture-led regeneration (Chapter 6), governance (Chapter 7) and inward investment (chapter 8). Section 4.1 detailed that a place's reputation can be formed from external perceptions that may differ quite markedly from reality and showed the importance of personal relationships in establishing reputations. Also a place's reputation is deeply embedded and an event that occurred within its boundaries a long time ago may still effect its current reputation regardless of any multimillion pound physical transformation, such as the impact of the Beggar's Litany in Hull. These contribute to establishing a personality or character of that place, shaped by residents and their way of life which is developed over the long-term (Paulsen, 2004) with factors including former industry continuing to influence modern life alongside impacting reputational capital with inward investors. However, whilst performance indicators are valued, it is asserted that used in isolation they may not produce a comprehensive reading of a place's reputation. For example, Hull and Bristol's tight boundaries can affect performance on economic indicators (Zenker, 2011).

Section 4.2 found there are wide-ranging elements associated with place reputation and broadly they can be split into social, economic, political and cultural categories (Kuss, 2009). However, acknowledging that these categories are not dichotomous and that they connect and relate to one another in various ways could be a fruitful understanding to pursue. For instance, a prominent element is

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quality of life that spans all four of the aforementioned categories (figure 4.2). NewcastleGateshead's most common element was the 'Party City', whereas Hull's was UK City of Culture for 2017 and Bristol's was the city's universities. The internal and external differences of place reputation provide a key debate about place reputation (Van Ham, 2008). Internally, a city can be well-run, residents can be happy and comfortable but externally this can be viewed as parochial and inward looking particularly if there are stark differences with national government. Nonetheless, externally, there is arguably more at stake as a place's reputation is being pitched at a much larger audience. As a result, it is proposed that if a good internal reputation can be promoted and resident support is harnessed, a place may steadily become more outward looking and external reputational capital may follow (Kuss, 2009).

For section 4.3, due to the complicated place, the numerous audiences and stakeholders involved, it is problematic to suggest that a geographical entity can possess either a good or bad reputation (Turok, 2009). The relational place reputation entirely depends on who is making the judgement and in what domain and which sector this judgement is being made. For example, a long-term resident's perception would vary from that of a potential inward investor. Therefore, a place's reputation is composed through its relation to audiences as agents in perceiving and formulating a view on the reputation of a place. Consequently, measuring the outcomes and impacts of place reputation is a problematic activity (Zenker, 2011). While it is possible to rank cities for single variables such as employment, attempting to comprehensively measure several indicators to develop a full picture of its reputation is not a straightforward task. This is similar to place branding, but is more concerned with the elusive way that reputations are developed rather than the ambiguity of the former concept. In Hull, stakeholders revealed an enthusiasm to develop a *reputation tracker* mechanism to attempt to determine the success of UK City of Culture for 2017.

Section 4.4 begins by focusing on the council's role in reputation management. Their remit has changed somewhat during the last thirty years with local authorities now becoming more entrepreneurial and engaging with the private sector to help to form reputational capital with inward investors (Bulkeley and Kern, 2006). The role of universities is multifaceted and can concern numerous domains, audiences and sectors (Goddard and Vallance, 2013). Additionally, its

remit and how this relates to place reputation can vary from producing skilled graduates, attracting top academics and increasing inward investment. A Premier League football club's role in reputation management has become clear in the study. Specifically, the international reputational capital that a Premier League football club can generate is difficult to surpass for an English second-tier city (Giulanotti and Robertson, 2009). NewcastleGateshead and Hull have both housed Premier League football clubs whereas Bristol has never had a team in the division and may not have enjoyed the same global profile.

To change a place's reputation (section 4.5) a long-term strategy (Kuss, 2009) is required that can enhance its image over a sustained period to help any changes to become equally as abiding. For example, the long-term vision and political stability of Gateshead was foundational to NewcastleGateshead forming cultural reputational capital with national government in the 1990s and early 2000s. Adopting an approach to reputational change that combines more tangible, visible transformations alongside more intangible, long-term changes that utilise resident support and seeks to transform deeply embedded stereotypes may help to create external reputational capital. Also, it is plausible that if millions of pounds spent on overhauling the built environment is not supported by raising aspirations then its impact on place reputation could be limited (Go and Govers, 2012). The cumulative power of key individuals in a city or region can combine to influence and shape a place's reputation in a particular way. Levels of reputational capital built by an individual or an institution can be transferred to the city itself and if demonstrated throughout may positively influence reputation (Fisher-Buttinger and Vallaster, 2011).

The transformation of media operations (particularly the emergence of rolling news coverage and of social media) during the past two decades has had profound implications for external reputational capital (section 4.6). Specifically, social media's arrival has meant that reputation management has to be taken more seriously in an increasingly delicate, global climate (Aula, 2010). However, there are positives of social media as well; in NewcastleGateshead when *The Guardian* (2014a) newspaper wrote a negative piece on the city; stakeholders took to Twitter to broadcast their dismay. A local newspaper can take a significant role in internal reputation management as it can influence local resident perceptions and form reputational capital inside its boundaries (Avraham and Ketter 2008).

However, now many local newspaper articles are available online and are broadcast to external audiences, greater caution is required with how stories are articulated. The *Bristol Post* admitted to promoting a somewhat airbrushed account of the city's reputation, that may overlook negative news stories such as crime in order to preserve internal reputational capital.

Section 5.1 starts by outlining some of the advantages of place branding to consider whether the concept could continue to operate successfully when supported by place reputation. When place branding is conducted effectively it should be easily understood by various audiences, with a basic and visually eye-catching display likely to be more successful such as the 'Passionate People, Passionate Places' campaign of One North East (Turok, 2009). Furthermore, a well-executed place brand can encourage collaboration between a city and various audiences, potentially uniting distinct groups behind one coherent initiative. Additionally, place branding is rewarding when undertaken properly and could benefit a global city with an international reputation, a large budget and a well-established image (Anholt, 2010a). However, this may not be as advisable for an English second-tier city. Place branding's first shortcoming is the concept's failure to reflect reality, as demonstrated by the Hull Cog brand. In turn, there are tendencies to mimic campaigns that have been successful elsewhere which generate remarkably similar brands with a lack of a one-size-fits-all solution (Turok, 2009). Also, for what it is, and compared to other economic development interventions, place branding may be too expensive to implement especially when stakeholders lack skills and at times when local authorities need to protect statutory services (Van Ham, 2010). Moreover, a lack of long-term planning has meant that many place brands have been short-lived and are based on fashionable logos and slogans from elsewhere which fail to nullify deeply embedded reputational issues.

Although place branding should not be abandoned altogether, it may function better as part of a wider reputation management strategy supported by several constituent elements (section 5.2). This could better enable place branding to cope with the intricate place, various stakeholders audiences and sectors. Place branding is understood here as *the application of branding practices usually associated with corporations and products to different scales of place in order to attract increased investment and recognition*. Section 5.2 also argues that both

place branding and reputation management can remain interrelated. Their complimentary relationships means they are better off with one another, with place branding not possessing the same impact without a reputation management strategy and vice-versa (Van Ham, 2008). Moreover, if remaining as part of place reputation, any branding practices should be based on reality. Also, when formed on a common message between stakeholders, place branding can remain an effective part of a reputation management strategy (Mueller and Schade, 2012). An on-message brand can mobilise internal and external reputational capital through promoting stakeholder engagement and being well-communicated. The place brand steering group in NewcastleGateshead was detailed as an effective mechanism that allowed stakeholders to speak with a single voice to accumulate both internal and external reputational capital.

The findings then move towards considering how the reputations of geographical entities can be manifest across different domains. For the purposes of this study, this includes culture-led regeneration (chapter 6), governance (chapter 7) and inward investment (chapter 8). Culture-led regeneration has had and may continue to have an uneven effect in different locations, despite being a useful tool; it might not be as impactful everywhere as a means of developing reputational capital (section 6.1). As such, culture-led regeneration and reputational change are context-dependent, in that it may be possible in a certain place and at a specific time (Wilks-Heeg and North, 2004). For example, NewcastleGateshead took advantage of favourable conditions in the late 1990s and early 2000s to amass vast cultural reputational capital. Moreover, the proportion of an overall regeneration strategy to devote to culture depends on the place itself, the current strength of its reputation and the cultural offering already present (Miles, 2005). Accordingly, it may be more effective in places experiencing hardship, however, these must possess the basis of a cultural offering to utilise tourism. For example, Bristol exhibits less of an appetite for culture-led regeneration compared to NewcastleGateshead and Hull, as arguably; it has already demonstrated a more established cultural reputation.

Funding for English second-tier cities to conduct cultural reputational change has decreased significantly since the installation of a new government in 2010 (section 6.2). Compared to vast resources available under New Labour, local authorities now face tough decisions regarding the retention of a cultural budget

(Pratt and Hutton, 2013). However, following a period where places assembled vast cultural reputational capital, deciding to cut funding and the potential impact on place reputation has been difficult for stakeholders to understand. This is most prevalent in NewcastleGateshead, where the council proposed to remove the city's cultural budget altogether, having developed an influential cultural reputation previously (Miles, 2005). The overhaul of culture-led regeneration could produce consequences for place reputation. More recently the idea of culture-led regeneration has shifted from the wholesale change of the built environment to a concept built around operating with less resources, more focused around festivals and events, and better utilising infrastructure already present. Moreover, this has resulted in a more innovative deployment of funds, increased private sector support and harnessing the abilities of influential creative individuals to try and sustain culture-led regeneration and recover reputational capital (Pratt, 2012). In Hull, the UK City of Culture for 2017, this occurred in a vastly different climate compared to when NewcastleGateshead was bidding for European Capital of Culture for 2008 and is likely to possess fewer resources.

Governance is a factor that can influence place reputation (section 7.1); however, it does not necessarily enable a place to achieve a more positive reputation and it may take a significant failure to have a serious and detrimental effect, particularly externally with central government (Deas, 2014). Therefore, maintaining stable governance arrangements may be sufficient to preserve reputational capital. The relationship between governance and reputation is potentially stronger in Hull and Bristol as they are both under bounded in relation to their economic footprint. Strong leadership alongside effective governance arrangements can help to accrue reputational capital for governance (Collinge and Gibney, 2010). Particularly, during the current economic climate, if a mayor finds more innovative solutions to austerity then it could positively impact internal reputational capital. Bristol's elected mayor has provided the city with a clearer direction following years of wrangling that negatively affected its ability to accumulate reputational capital in governance. Greater collaboration between stakeholders has become common across English second-tier cites that are now promoting a more open and participatory culture to be reflected in internal and external reputations (Harrison and Hoyler, 2014). In Hull, a lack of region-wide

collaboration in the past is representative of longstanding rivalries both in the city and across the Humber estuary.

Section 7.2 begins by examining the reputational consequences of the dissolution of the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) which varied depending on the region involved. RDAs, replaced by the more geographically uncertain LEPs, have been welcome in certain areas (Hull, Bristol), however, in others they have been ineffective (NewcastleGateshead) and too underequipped to construct adequate external reputational capital (Pike et al. 2013). Both internal and external reputational capital has been affected by austerity, producing an inconsistent impact across English second-tier cities (Kitson et al. 2011). This leaves those already vulnerable much worse off and potentially decreases internal reputational capital in a way that may be difficult to reverse. Alternatively, this could result in more creativity and innovativeness that may help to build internal and external reputational capital for governance, as seen in Hull. More recently, a shift towards devolving greater responsibilities as an opportunity to accrue more reputational capital has occurred in English second-tier cities (Clifford and Morphet, 2015). In addition, stakeholders have expressed a desire to see greater power devolved to city-regions, especially in relation to assembling reputational capital for governance externally linking in with the development of a proposed "Northern Powerhouse". In Bristol, stakeholders are clamouring to see the mayor's jurisdiction expanded as part of any devolution agreement to enhance the city-region's reputation as a whole.

Although it is a significant factor, a more positive reputation does not always guarantee greater levels of inward investment for a city or region (section 8.1). In a globalised and increasingly competitive environment, it is fundamental that investment activities are underpinned by sound governance arrangements and a level of cohesiveness developed between stakeholders. This helps to produce the best possible offer for multinational corporations and also aids the construction of reputational capital externally with private-sector inward investors (Giblin and Ryan, 2012). This section also found that while a popular media representation might be more likely to prevent an initial enquiry for inward investment from being received; it is not believed to be a decisive factor for multinational corporations. Additionally, image and perception only account for two of the factors that influence the decisions of multinational corporations when choosing to

locate in one city over another (Trueman et al. 2007). A proximity to skilled labour or the quality of transport links are examples of other factors that may contribute towards the formulation of uneven levels of reputational capital for inward investment in cities and regions. In turn, trying to identify factors, which persuade multinational corporations where to locate is not a straightforward task and it is difficult to pin these complicated decisions on to the reputation of that specific place. It is argued that the work ethic of Hull City Council, the available land and the proximity to an adequately skilled labour force attracted Siemens to Hull. This indicates that a place's reputation may be superseded by harder factors when inward investment decisions are being made.

Alongside inward investment, cities and regions are also becoming increasingly competitive in developing an offer based on quality of life (McCann, 2009) to entice workers and their families to relocate within their boundaries (section 8.2). Also, by creating substantial job opportunities and by undergoing a growth in population, this could positively influence levels of human capital, translating into external reputational capital. Hull and Bristol have both experienced issues here, specifically, in attracting adequately skilled teachers, in part due to their tight boundaries. This is a reputation that has been difficult to shake off. Furthermore, an ambition for English second-tier cities is to attract and retain high percentages of students. This, too, may help to form increased levels of reputational capital, particularly externally and with prospective students. As such, this could generate further spin-offs including inward investment, increased job competition and ultimately greater human capital over time through a high quality of life (Munro et al. 2009). It is argued here that possessing two universities can be a significant boost for levels of external reputational capital, evident in NewcastleGateshead and Bristol which are home to two universities that retain more graduates than Hull that is home to one university.

9.3 Conceptual and theoretical contributions

This section of the conclusion reflects on the study's conceptual and theoretical contributions for place branding and place reputation. Overall, in terms of place

branding approaches, a fourfold critique has been established. The major criticism was that geographical entities are too complicated to be reflected in practices originally designed for corporations and products (Anholt, 2010a). The remaining criticisms were the concept's lack of breadth (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2007), a homogenous and indistinctive nature (Turok, 2009) alongside a difficulty in measuring its outcomes and impacts (Zenker, 2011). The doubts raised about the 'Northern Powerhouse' at the outset of this chapter provide a more contemporary and a continuing reason to be sceptical about branding and geographical entities (Lee, 2016). This also tackled the disparate, interdisciplinary and chaotic conception (Sayer, 2010) of place branding alongside corporate reputation, an idea that is founded on greater trust (Ind and Schultz, 2010) and communication (Thißen, 2009). Building on some fragmented evidence from both the interdisciplinary place branding (Anholt, 2006) and corporate literatures (Kuss 2009), this has pushed for a geographic rationale and a shift in emphasis towards focusing on the reputations of cities and regions. Assisted by the idea of reputational capital (Jackson, 2004, Wreschniok and Klewes, 2009), this has asserted that places can improve their standing by constructing and forming reputation in different domains; culture-led regeneration, governance and inward investment. In addition, this needs to be understood in relation to several audiences typically associated with geographical entities, both internally and externally, encompassing residents, students, tourists and investors. Also, viewing this in terms of sectors - public, private and civic - helps to achieve a more precise understanding of place reputation.

In relation to empirical work from NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol, this section presents three overriding conceptual and theoretical contributions that the project has made. The first contribution argues that place reputation and place branding are interrelated; with it becoming apparent that place reputation is not as striking without a place branding element. In addition, place branding is not as substantial without the support of a reputation management strategy either (Van Ham, 2008). The two concepts are interrelated and there is a degree of complementarity between branding practices and place reputation. For example, more recent branding practices in NewcastleGateshead and Hull have been executed more in the vein of reputation management. The second contribution claims that place reputation is a relational perspective, in that the reputations of

geographical entities can only be understood in relation to different domains; several audiences; and various sectors. The final contribution made by the thesis explains how the effectiveness of leadership in a city or region can be fundamental to the quality of the reputation of that specific place. Moreover, in difficult times the way that institutional and individual leadership responds to challenges including austerity and devolution can help to accumulate or lose internal and external reputational capital (Collinge and Gibney, 2010). For example, the way that Hull City Council have responded to central government cuts has endeared themselves to local residents and helped to preserve internal reputational capital for governance.

9.3.1 Place reputation and place branding are interrelated

The first contribution asserts that place branding and place reputation can be viewed as being interrelated; this concerns the complementarity of the two concepts that has been established and is reflected in a remodelled relationship proposed during this project. It has become apparent that place branding is unable to properly function without the support of a reputation management strategy for geographical entities. However, there is still a requirement that to remain competitive, cities and regions should still try to sell themselves in some form. In addition, place reputation would not achieve the same striking impact without a place branding element. Thus, although this suggests that we should begin to move away from place branding, it is maintained that this should not be abandoned altogether and can operate in a reduced capacity as a part of the wider notion of place reputation. This is reflected in Van Ham's (2008:7) claims that 'place branding stands in a long tradition of reputation management'. Nonetheless, there is still a requirement for less emphasis on place branding as numerous shortcomings that have been reinforced by the empirical work reiterate a desire to proceed and further develop this in the vein of place reputation. Central to these criticisms is the questioning of place branding's capacity to cope with the complicated geographical entity (Kavaratzis, 2009, Turok, 2009). In light of this, the more comprehensive notion of place reputation and the idea of reputational capital can help to enhance a place's reputation by targeting an improvement

across domains, audiences and sectors (Jackson, 2004, Wreschniok and Klewes, 2009).

This section, divided into three parts begins by arguing how a development of a stronger geographical perspective of place reputation can help to better understand its current relationship with place branding (Anholt, 2006, Kuss, 2009). The second part considers how the notion of reputational capital when understood in relation to various domains, audiences and sectors may help to counteract the limitations of place branding (Jackson, 2004, Wreschniok and Klewes, 2009). The third part considers how bottom-up place branding has become a more promising development. (Trueman et al. 2007). When combined with the benefits of creating a more distinctive branding campaign, place branding may remain if reduced in importance and repositioned as part of a broader reputation management strategy (Turok, 2009).

Developing a greater geographical conceptualisation of the reputations of cities and regions as an alternative to the established place branding concept has been one of the project's major ambitions. Through attempting to analyse contemporary efforts from this field alongside the interdisciplinary place branding and corporate literatures, it has become apparent that the literature has struggled when trying to apply reputation to geographical entities and numerous gaps were identified. Also, the fragmented place brand, which has been approached from a wide range of academic disciplines and is unsuitable to be tackled from a specific theoretical viewpoint due to being a 'chaotic conception' (Sayer, 2010), is reaching a crossroads in its evolution. Additionally, criticisms are not only being levelled at the literature but at the concept itself with the idea that places are too complicated to be reflected in branding practices intended for corporations and products being foundational to this (Kavaratzis, 2009). Furthermore, place branding's lack of breadth (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2007), its often homogenous and indistinctive nature (Turok, 2009) and a difficulty in measuring outcomes and impacts (Zenker, 2011) adds weight to a rationale to advance from this understanding.

Utilising work from a human geography perspective (Cresswell, 2004), this project has tried to create a framework suitable to interpret disparate place branding and corporate fields that have struggled to apply the notion of reputation to geographical entities. By developing a conceptual framework for place in section 2.1, this lends further rigour to the study and reinforces how building on a

geographical understanding can be beneficial for the formation of place reputation. Therefore, following an exploration of the corporate notion of reputation, it has been established that while there are some valuable efforts on how this idea relates to individuals and organisations (Klewes and Wreschniok, 2009, Ind and Schultz, 2010), there is insufficient evidence of how this relates to cities and regions. While efforts such as Kuss (2009) and Heebels (2013) tentatively explore the relationship between reputation and place, a field dominated by various practitioners and consultants alongside some academics lacks conceptual foundations. When combined with attempts from the human geography fields (Glückler, 2007) and the interdisciplinary place branding literature (Van Ham, 2008, Go and Govers, 2011), this does not go far enough and reputation often remains subordinate to the established place brand. Although it is asserted that the two ideas are entwined and are closely linked, this project has proclaimed that there is still a requirement for a greater emphasis on reputations. Instead, it is suggested here that the concept can still retain an influence when reduced and repositioned as part of the more comprehensive place reputation where it has the potential to operate more effectively with greater support.

Place reputation is defined as a *broad concept underpinned by trust and greater communication which if demonstrated over time can translate into reputational capital in various domains, with several audiences and in different sectors to improve the standing of a geographical entity*. Key to this is the idea of reputational capital, an important hook for the project that helps to conceptualise corporate notions of reputation efficiently in relation to cities and regions (Jackson, 2004, Wreschniok and Klewes, 2009). Looking through the lens of Bourdieu's (1986) *The Forms of Capital* and how at reputational capital is closely linked to cultural and symbolic capital, this lends further rigour to the study by proposing that places can accrue reputational capital as well. This adopts Wreschniok and Klewes (2009:364) definition of reputational capital, in that 'this trust builds the informal framework of a company. This framework provides "return in cooperation" and produces Reputational Capital, the higher the Reputational Capital, the less the costs for supervising and exercising control'. Therefore, the elusive and intangible notion of reputational capital, an idea that was transferred to geographical entities from corporations and a key idea during the study is entwined with the amount of trust that is exhibited in that specific city

or region. Although reputational capital is an asset that can be harnessed by places, a degree of caution is necessary and should a crisis situation occur, it is important that reputational risk practices (Go and Govers, 2012) are implemented to protect accumulated resources. Thus, here it was suggested that cities and regions can form and construct reputational capital with several audiences (residents/students/tourists/investors); various domains (culture/governance/inward investment); and different sectors (public/private/civic) either internally or externally. Moreover, reputational capital can help to address place branding's shortcomings and can add greater weight to argue for a further conceptualisation of the reputations of places. Here, it is conveyed that the intangible asset can be transferred to geographical entities and harnessed by stakeholders as a way of attracting greater investment and recognition.

For the place branding literature, the idea of reputational capital and its links to Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) *The Forms of Capital* provides some theoretical insight to the thesis. A pronounced shortcoming of the field of place branding is that, due to its interdisciplinary nature, the notion is unsuitable to be tackled from a specific theoretical viewpoint and is understandably a 'chaotic conception' (Sayer, 2010). As a result, due to being approached from a plethora of academic perspectives including sociology and planning, place branding has no coherent theoretical viewpoint. This is reiterated by Kavaratzis' (2009:27) claims that 'place branding is certainly a complex issue and what seems to be missing is a 'common language' that would facilitate interaction and further theoretical clarification of the issues involved'. Thus, reiterating the complexity of the literature and the concept itself, this identifies some of the challenges faced when analysing the branding practices of cities and regions. Accordingly, it is proposed that by adopting primarily a human geography perspective (Cresswell, 2004) and more precisely an urban and economic geography viewpoint within this by explaining relational and territorial debates (Bulkeley, 2005, Hudson, 2007), that a clear understanding can be gained of notions of branding and reputation. This facilitates the development of a coherent and rigorous social scientific, geographic understanding of place that helps to advance from current place branding discussions and instead views reputations and branding practices as being interrelated and complimentary.

Second, in relation to the concept itself, by understanding the reputations of geographical entities in terms of domains, audiences and sectors, this helps to overcome a criticism of place branding, such as it has neglected certain audiences such as residents. Place branding's uneven success in meeting the needs of various audiences and often constituting a more external practice for attracting tourists and investors (Turok, 2009) can be addressed by utilising reputational capital. Understanding place reputation in relation to a pinpointed composition of domains, audiences and sectors attempts to address place branding's flaws by targeting precisely how and where reputational change should occur. For example, a possible combination could involve an internal, public sector campaign to construct reputational capital for governance with residents or an external initiative to build reputational capital for inward investment, with investors, in the private sector. Moreover, by utilising reputational capital, a concept that can be understood in terms of selected domains, audiences and sectors, this demonstrates potential to overcome the difficulty involved in creating a place brand that relates to various audiences. Through the development of a strategy that helps to target reputational change to a certain sequence of factors, this may help to achieve greater precision in terms of where investment and recognition occurs for cities and regions.

The research recommends that place branding operates most effectively in relation to place reputation on the condition of it being grounded in the local community of a specific geographical entity. When repositioned and reduced with the assistance of a broader and more credible strategy, a place brand that harnesses resident support has the potential to be more sustainable in the long-term. Moreover, by drawing on the help of inhabitants this may strengthen internal reputational capital for governance and with residents in that particular place (Van Ham, 2008). In turn, an effective grassroots branding campaign may reciprocally benefit external reputational capital, as if a place's more positive internal reputation can be nurtured over time, a city or region may gradually become more outward looking (Kuss, 2009). The requirement for bottom-up place branding has been heightened by efforts from English second-tier cities including Leeds that have backfired and subject to ridicule from local residents (Braun et al. 2010). Accordingly, by overlooking the cooperation of residents in the development of place brands, their valuable input has often been sacrificed in favour of attracting

students, tourists or investors. As such, more recent developments have seen this reversed and greater resident involvement has materialised at the outset of place branding. Nevertheless, this is underdeveloped in terms of academia and especially in relation to the reputations of cities and regions. This builds on Trueman et al.'s (2007:21) initial claims that 'to market city brands effectively there is a need to take an integrated 'warts and all' approach since local communities, the built environment, heritage and infrastructure, form a constituent part of image and identity'. Furthermore, grounding place branding in the local community may help to overcome previous shortcomings and also ensures that places can still promote themselves in some form.

Additionally, any revamped place brand would benefit from reflecting on the unique characteristics of a particular city or region (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2007). However, some caution is still required when attempting this due to the difficulty in constructing a distinctive campaign and the dangers of generating homogeneity (Turok, 2009). Nonetheless, if this harnesses resident support and captures the personality and unique essence of that specific location, and when repositioned as part of a broader strategy, place branding may operate more effectively as part of place reputation. The diluted role of place branding was evident in empirical work, especially in Hull where the campaign to become UK City of Culture for 2017 was more based around reputation management. This consisted of working towards developing a better reputation for Hull rather than starting with a branding campaign first, revealing that any marketing for the bid had been produced as a low priority, in-house at low cost. While, it has been acknowledged that some place branding will be completed for 2017, there is a greater focus on embedding this in community practices more than previous attempts. Overall, this reaffirms how place branding and reputation are interrelated and can remain closely linked when supported by a more grassroots approach to branding that embraces resident involvement.

9.3.2 Place reputation is a relational perspective

Another key contribution that the research makes is the idea that place reputation is a relational object. This insists that a perception developed of a particular geographical entity is entirely dependent on who is making the judgement; what

domain this is being made in, and if applicable; in which sector. Key to this is the idea of reputational capital, in that a place can only form reputational capital when it is constructed in a specific domain (such as culture-led regeneration) and in relation to a certain audience (such as central government) and sector (such as public, private and civic); (Jackson, 2004, Wreschniok and Klewes, 2009). In terms of who is making the judgement, this concerns the several audiences associated with a place and can be split into residents, students, tourists and investors. For instance, a long-term resident's view on their home town would clearly differ quite markedly from that of an inward investor who works for a multinational corporation. The domains associated with a specific place's reputation in the study were identified as culture-led regeneration, governance and inward investment that were important to NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol respectively. As argued previously, there is a relationship between a place's reputation and inward investment; however, the former may not have a decisive impact relating to decisions made with regards to the latter. The particular sector that a perspective on a place's reputation is being made from could influence how this is perceived. For instance, continuing with inward investment, a perception on this domain would differ quite markedly if it was developed from the public sector compared to the private or civic sectors.

This section is split into three parts and begins by unpacking the relational understanding of the reputations of geographical entities. Trying to discern how internal and external factors, several audiences, different domains and various sectors can influence place reputation, this seeks to establish how the concept operates and how these different aspects affect it (Van Ham, 2008). The second part evaluates the different elements of a place's reputation and considers how this helps to pursue a relational understanding of the proposed concept (Kuss, 2009). The third part argues how a relational understanding of place reputation ensures that the concept cannot be understood in terms of dichotomous labels such as good or bad before examining how this impacts the concept's measurability (Turok, 2009).

The relational understanding presented here asserts that developing a perspective on a place's reputation is a highly specified conceptualisation and is dependent on the role of audiences as agents in perceiving and formulating a view on this particular matter. There are multiple potential audiences; both internal and

external which encompasses residents, students, tourists and investors. For this study, interpreted in terms of domains, place reputation has centred on culture-led regeneration, governance and inward investment due to their relevance to the selected case-study cities. This differs from the standpoint of different sectors and depends on whether the judgement is being made in relation to a public, private or civic sector individual or institution. Also, this focuses more specifically on the various audiences that are involved in developing a place's reputation. It begins by examining internal and external differences and the subtleties of harnessing reputational capital both with audiences inside and outside of their boundaries (Van Ham, 2008). Nonetheless, to harbour ambitions to become more outward looking, it is necessary for cities and regions to create reputational capital with their internal audiences, particularly residents, as a starting point (Kuss, 2009). If stakeholders in place are unable to harness the qualities of their own residents it is unlikely that their reputation would be able to withstand external pressures in a global marketplace. However, the opposite has occurred in Bristol whereby the strength of the city's external reputational capital with audiences including investors and students is not reflected internally particularly in the domain of governance and with the audience of residents. The internal and external discrepancy in Bristol is a result of political malaise and lack of consistent leadership that often resulted in the city receiving the label *The Graveyard of Ambition* (*The Spectator*, 2014) due to an inability to execute major projects (Bassett et al. 2002).

In turn, a place's reputation can only be understood in relation to a certain domain. This could encompass anything from a city's retail offer to its ability to host major sporting events. However, here, this regards culture-led regeneration (Lees and Melhuish, 2015), governance (Deas, 2014) and inward investment (Peck, 2015). Moreover, this centres on a place's ability to construct and form cultural reputational capital, reputational capital for governance and reputational capital for inward investment. The way that a place constructs reputational capital in these domains contributes to the overall quality of its reputation and the way it is perceived. Accordingly, this has helped to narrow down the broad notion of reputation into more precise sub-categories, in terms of their relevance to NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol. Also, for sectors it is possible for places to assemble reputational capital in public, private and civic sectors. Over the past

thirty years the demonstration of greater private sector engagement by local authorities has seen English second-tier cities become more entrepreneurial and open with prominent organisations both in and outside of their boundaries (Bulkeley and Kern, 2006). Discovering the benefits of embracing influential private-sector stakeholders, this has seen cities and regions build reputational capital internally with businesses already there which also helps to attract external firms and new exogenous resources. Despite suggesting that we should now move on from place branding, some encouraging evidence of joined-up thinking from NewcastleGateshead's place brand steering group shows that sectors can combine for the overall benefit of a place's reputation. A composition of various public, private and civic sector individuals, this attempted to align the thinking of stakeholders across Newcastle and Gateshead that place branding should now be conducted more in the vein of reputation management. Also, this underlines the relational nature of a place's reputation, in that it can only be fully understood when a judgement has been made by someone, from somewhere. This emphasises that place reputation can be viewed as a product of the *domain* and *sector* that it is developed in and the *audience* which it concerns.

The manifold elements of a place's reputation can broadly be categorised as social, economic, political or cultural (Kuss, 2009). Figure 4.2 presents a Venn diagram illustrating how the different elements, composed of various institutions and stakeholders can connect and relate to one another. Moreover, as part of the relational understanding adopted here, it is asserted that it is more fruitful to view the elements of a place's reputation as being porous and can connect and relate to one another in various ways (Amin, 2004). Although these categories can prove a useful starting point, they are by no means distinct and a fluid understanding of how they entwine is adopted here. This reinforces that elements can be solely social (or economic, political or cultural), socioeconomic (or socio-political or economic-cultural) or encompass all four categories – social, economic, political and cultural. As depicted in the Venn diagram the middle section is the most populated which shows it is more common for elements to bridge all four categories such as universities and quality of life. As such, this is where the relational understanding takes effect, in that this is entirely dependent on who is making the judgement, and what domain is this judgement being made in, and in which sector. These could influence the prominence of elements in particular

locations with this depending on who is forming the judgement and from where this judgement is being made. Accordingly, this reinforces that the elements of a place's reputation are context dependent and although separating them into broad social, economic, political and cultural categories is helpful to understand, this perspective is somewhat limited when presenting the key parts of the reputations of geographical entities. This can also vary from place to place with elements that are of greater prominence in NewcastleGateshead unlikely to be reflected the same in Hull and Bristol. Although many of these elements can be found in cities across the world, their prominence in terms of place reputation is uneven depending on the long and deeply embedded history of that specific location (Martin and Sunley, 2006). For instance, Premier League football and the global reputations this can generate have a greater presence in NewcastleGateshead than it presently does in Hull and Bristol. Similarly, the existence of a mayor in Bristol indicates that this specific element may only apply to that city itself, as NewcastleGateshead and Hull are both led by their respective leaders of the councils. Therefore, this illustrates how place reputation may be viewed relationally, in that the various elements that have composed the reputations of cities and regions and their prominence depend on a specific place and who is making the judgement.

The strength of a place's reputation and an inability to be viewed as straightforwardly as being either good or bad is an important theme to draw from within this contribution. In line with a relational understanding, the numerous factors that can influence a perception developed of a certain place render these labels inaccurate and too dichotomous. Thus, interpreting a reputation as being a relational judgement is an effective perspective to proceed with when ascertaining the quality of a place's reputation. A highly specified construct, the condition of a place's reputation is the product of a perception that is unique to the person that creates it (Zenker, 2011). This derives from various sources both internally and externally which are shaped by major influencers such as family or the media that can sometimes lead to ignorance. For example, if someone external to Hull was questioned on their thoughts of culture-led regeneration (domain) in the city, they may be unable to form an accurate perception. However, if the same external person was questioned regarding culture-led regeneration (domain) in NewcastleGateshead they may be able to form a better judgement. Due to the NewcastleGateshead's reputation for culture-led regeneration being more well-

established as was echoed in table 6.1. Thus, the quality of a place's reputation is a product of the strength of the domains of a certain place's reputation, here this includes culture-led regeneration, governance and inward investment. Furthermore, how a place performs in these domains helps to construct and form reputational capital in these specific categories which generates uneven and inconsistent reputations across England. Subsequently, this is evident in the effectiveness of cultural practices that may have had a greater impact in certain places at a particular time because conditions allowed this to happen, such as NewcastleGateshead in the 1990s and 2000s. However, it is now questionable whether the cultural domain achieves the same striking effect elsewhere due to the often homogenous nature of these practices and the fact that developing cultural reputational capital may be inappropriate for every city or region (Wilks-Heeg and North, 2004).

It is debatable whether measuring the reputations of places is a realistic aim. While it is possible to rank cities for single variables such as employment, attempting to comprehensively measure several indicators to develop a full picture of its reputation is not a straightforward task (Van Ham, 2008, Zenker, 2011). This is similar to the incumbent place brand where various mechanisms established in an attempt to measure the quality of branding initiatives were deployed but not to much success. Consequently, it may have to be accepted that the intricate nature of geographical entities prevents the development of an effective mechanism that comprehensively measures the strength of the reputations of places (Kavaratzis, 2009, Turok, 2009). Achieved through a selection of these specific domains, the elusive nature of reputational capital has in part contributed to the construction of uneven and contested reputations of places which like place branding are still difficult to compare in terms of their effectiveness.

9.3.3 Leadership and reputation

A significant contribution emerging from the project asserts there is a relationship between the leadership of geographical entities and how a place's reputation is perceived by both internal and external audiences. In turn, the effectiveness of how a city or region is led, especially during more demanding times, is entwined with the strength of its reputation. Whilst place leadership may be as obvious as an

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individual such as a city's mayor, it can also be manifest in institutions, alongside a collective accumulation of leadership in that specific place. This has seen leadership emerge from more unexpected sources including the voluntary sector and thus identifying leadership has become less clear-cut as places have exhibited more joined-up thinking. The importance of leadership is outlined by Collinge and Gibney (2010:387) who claim that 'leadership begins to matter in terms of how some places appear better able than others to exploit the messy and uncertain processes of economic transition and change'. While, representative of the upheaval that city leadership can often be presented with, however, if this is handled well by those in charge, the reputational benefits can be wide-ranging both internally and externally.

This section is split into three parts and begins by exploring the effectiveness of leadership in times of austerity. This also analyses how demonstrating more innovative solutions to the challenges presented by this situation can help to build reputational capital both internally and externally (Deas, 2014). The second part debates how the current devolution agenda being pushed by the Conservative government is linked with the reputations of cities and regions. As such, the need for city leaders to display credibility with central government at a time where they may gain increased responsibilities has much in common with place reputation (Clifford and Morphet, 2015). The third part looks at the prevalence of collaboration in geographical entities and how this can help to facilitate a better reputation across English second-tier cities (Bulkeley and Kern, 2006).

The leadership of a geographical entity can boost a specific place's reputation both internally and externally through finding more innovative solutions to problems presented by austerity. Deas (2014) claims that demonstrating sound governance arrangements can help to further levels of social and environmental justice in a city or region. Further benefits could accrue, if the leadership, which could be a city's mayor or present in more unexpected sources, are more pragmatic about the current lack of resources available to local authorities (Pratt, 2009). This could benefit that particular city or region's levels of reputational capital both internally with residents and externally with central government, especially in response to any conditions imposed on them. Internally, this can be advantageous for the leadership's reputation with residents as if vital statutory services are preserved; this is likely to increase levels of reputational capital with

that specific audience (Van Ham, 2008). Such as ensuring that a council retains children's services and resources for vulnerable adults regardless of the severity of the cuts imposed. Furthermore, it is likely that because residents carry a greater responsibility to elect councillors or a Member of Parliament, there could be more at stake internally as external pressures do not influence the electability of local leadership as much. This may even encourage residents to back certain figureheads even further, particularly when their stance is at odds with central government, there is potential for this to enhance internal reputational capital for governance.

Whereas, externally, if the leadership of a particular place reacts to cuts imposed in a creative manner and develops some original solutions, it could increase levels of reputational capital with central government and win favour during a challenging period (Kuss, 2009). Also, depending on the political alignment between central and the local government, if this can be dealt with in a way that chimes with Whitehall policy such as moving towards devolution and appointing a metro mayor, this could also benefit external reputational capital. However, this could be unrealistic in places with deeply embedded political affiliations and those which are subject to sharp reductions in their income from central government. In such places, ensuring that internal reputational capital with local residents is maintained and their welfare is secured is of greater priority for city leadership rather than trying to placate central government, such is the engrained nature of reputation, particularly in a political sense. This is especially pertinent in NewcastleGateshead, more specifically in Newcastle, where the Labour-controlled Newcastle City Council reacted to cuts from the Conservative central government by proposing to completely erase their provision for cultural activities (*The Guardian*, 2013). However, in an area that had rejuvenated its reputation over the previous two decades and had accumulated vast cultural reputational capital, this was hard to accept by stakeholders. Eventually the proposed cuts were scaled back to a 50%, £600,000 fund to be managed by the Community Foundation, however, the damage to internal and external cultural reputational capital had already occurred. Additionally, the fact that several other English second-tier cities managed to retain their provision for culture raised questions of Newcastle City Council's leadership. It was debated whether this was

dealt with in an appropriate manner and also in terms of how it reflected on the city's reputation internally and externally (*BBC News*, 2013b).

The devolution agenda set by the present Conservative government has meant there is a greater need for leadership in English second-tier cities to develop external reputational capital for governance with central government. Key to this is a requirement for leaders to display greater credibility to achieve a better devolution deal with Whitehall, linking in with the notion of trust from the corporate literature (Eisenegger, 2009). The idea, proposing that corporations should build more honest relationships with various audiences to improve their reputations and create greater reputational capital reflects the current emphasis for leaders in city-regions to build credibility to gain greater power for their city or region (Ind and Schultz, 2010). Hence, there is a need for leadership, in some cases, to set aside differences with central government for the benefit of their city-regions to achieve a favourable outcome in terms of devolution and their reputations. Central to any agreement being met with the Conservative government is a requirement from city-regions to develop a "metro mayor" position. This is viewed as a prerequisite to any devolution of powers taking place linking in with their idea of developing a "Northern Powerhouse". Moreover, regardless of many cities rejecting the opportunity to appoint an elected mayor in a 2012 referendum. This may now be imposed on English second-tier cities and regardless of opposition from residents, a figurehead appointed may be entrusted in trying to instigate reputational change (*BBC News*, 2012).

A need for greater leadership is a consequence of the Scottish independence referendum of September 2014, after which a shift in focus occurred towards delegating greater responsibility to large urban areas (Clifford and Morphet, 2015). Following this was the announcement of devolution of powers to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) in November 2014 which would see leadership here take on greater responsibilities including transport and housing from central government. The devolution was seen as the flagship example for George Osborne's perceived "Northern Powerhouse" (*BBC News*, 2014e). Consequently, there is now an increased urgency from stakeholders across English cities to demonstrate credibility with central government and build external reputational capital with Whitehall to achieve the best devolution outcome possible. Trying to identify sources of leadership that can accumulate

towards a strong offer to be made to central government may help to gain further powers and greater control of affairs which are more sympathetic to the reputation of the location in question. In the 2012 referendums held across English cities, Bristol was the only city to adopt the mayoral system. Independent candidate George Ferguson was subsequently installed as Bristol's mayor which has resulted in improved leadership and an identifiable figurehead in the city. There have been calls to extend his jurisdiction to encompass the Bristol and Bath city region as a whole, more akin to the metro mayor model being developed in Greater Manchester. In part, due to the city's tight boundaries, the mayor struggles with trying to influence the reputation of Bristol's suburbs which are under control of different local authorities. Regardless, it is recognised that the introduction of a mayor here is a start in overcoming years of political malaise where the city's leadership was unable to accumulate reputational capital both internally and externally. The evidence from Bristol, despite possessing a restricted jurisdiction, points towards how increased leadership can link in with reputational change for English second-tier cities (Hambleton and Sweeting, 2014). Also, a greater emphasis on building credibility through leadership to construct and form reputational capital in governance as part of a devolution agreement underlines its current importance which could influence the reputations of cities and regions for the foreseeable future.

Leadership supported by greater collaboration both within and outside of geographical entities has become an important part of attempts to instigate reputational change in English second-tier cities (Harrison and Hoyler, 2014). This reflects the idea that leadership can be discovered in less likely locations and may not be as straightforward as an actual leader itself such as a mayor or a Member of Parliament. The increasingly collaborative nature of cities and regions has presented opportunities for responsibility to be taken from elsewhere and has paved the way for various institutions and individuals to contribute (Collinge and Gibney, 2010). Despite the city council having always been a key institution in helping to shape a place's reputation, the way it operates, in this regard, has been redefined somewhat more recently. Instead of looking to control a city, local authorities now act more like facilitators and seek to promote greater cohesiveness between stakeholders and institutions in the way that they operate (Bulkeley and Kern, 2006). Despite councils retaining an important leadership

mandate, more of an entrepreneurial spirit and a greater demonstration of transparency have seen local authorities embrace private sector support to enhance their reputation as a location for activities such as inward investment. In English second-tier cities, there has been a more collaborative approach and a display of greater engagement with firms already present that resultantly builds greater internal reputational capital for inward investment. Consequently, this can help to form external reputational capital for inward investment too as if a positive relationship between a local authority and key private sector firms is demonstrated, this may encourage other firms to relocate and result in clustering (Giblin and Ryan, 2012). Therefore, the benefits of displaying greater collaboration can generate reputational benefits both inside and outside of the boundaries of an English second-tier city, in that a coherent image is portrayed both internally and externally. Moreover, by the local authority stepping back as part of a more unified arrangement with public, private and civic sectors, it can combine to create a much stronger offer in terms of leadership and increases weight behind any attempts to shape and change a place's reputation.

In Hull, a more open and participatory approach to leadership whereby Hull City Council now exhibits greater engagement and communication with both public and private sector organisations has started to yield positive results for the city. Pivotal to this is the establishment of the Hull Business Angels campaign where 22 private sector organisations contributed a total of £374,000 to the city's bid to become UK City of Culture for 2017 (*Hull Daily Mail*, 2014a). The cumulative strength of the Business Angels and the way it was coordinated by Hull City Council subsequently securing the title of UK City of Culture for 2017 represents how a collaborative approach to leadership has the potential to enhance a place's reputation. Also, by accruing reputational capital for governance internally by working together and externally for culture by raising the profile of the city, the relationship between leadership and a place's reputation is reinforced. Thus, this highlights how the more collaborative governance arrangements present in geographical entities have paved the way for leadership responsibilities to be taken up by numerous individuals and institutions. Furthermore, this more grassroots and participatory culture could help cities and regions build greater reputational capital, internally and externally with several audiences, in different

domains and in various sectors in order to attract greater investment and recognition.

9.4 Limitations and future research

The final section of the thesis considers some of the project's limitations and how they can be translated into future avenues to be explored that build on the research undertaken here and the contributions produced. Three limitations and future research directions are outlined here. First, how and why the context of the empirical work may have restricted the breadth of the project's findings is examined and this looks into how future research may take in different geographical entities. Second, the choice of methods and additional approaches that could be utilised in future research are analysed. Third, the prospective conceptual and theoretical evolution of place reputation is investigated; this proposes how a geographical perspective can be advanced alongside the further theoretical development of reputational capital.

The choice of English second-tier cities as an object of study may have hindered the quality of the contributions that the thesis has made. My decision to focus solely on an English context and choosing to concentrate on second-tier cities here may have restricted the impact of the empirical work conducted. A desire to avoid the nuances of the devolved entities of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales resulted in cities located within their boundaries not being considered for selection. Although, there could be potential to include these devolved entities in future research in order to achieve a greater insight into and compare how reputational capital can be manifest throughout UK cities as a whole. Moreover, advancing this into an international comparison may add an extra dimension to any future research and could broaden our understanding of techniques used to build reputational capital globally. In addition, focusing solely on second-tier cities within the English context may be a drawback of the study. Despite being significant geographical entities and making national and international contributions in terms of their reputations (Parkinson et al. 2012), this overlooked the likes of Birmingham and Manchester in favour of a smaller geographical scale.

However, this lent precision to the study and a rigorous case-study selection process ensured that a suitable comparison was undertaken. Nonetheless, there could be potential to investigate the reputations of larger cities both in England, the UK as a whole and in an international context, providing it is conducted with a thorough case-study selection process, with certain criteria adhered to.

Second, the choice of semi-structured interviews as the project's only method could have impacted the way that empirical work was conducted. Nonetheless, by holding almost 70 semi-structured interviews and the richness of the data produced, this may, to some degree, reduce the likelihood of anomalies. Therefore, by arranging a large number of interviews and gathering a lot of data, this may reduce any risk involved with only selecting one method. Thus, further research could benefit from triangulation and a mixed-methods approach to compliment any semi-structured interviews. For example, a focus group with residents may provide a greater insight into how their city or region is perceived, internally rather than using data purely delivered by stakeholders. There were also plans to use secondary methods during this study, concerning a discourse analysis of media representations depicting NewcastleGateshead, Hull and Bristol. However, the data generated by interviews was detailed enough and secondary sources were not required. There is a possibility that future research could embrace quantitative approaches to compliment more qualitative methods when investigating the reputations of geographical entities. However, this could present several challenges. In turn, the difficulties associated with the intangible nature of reputations could make this an unrealistic aim. This was asserted throughout the literature review, methodology and findings chapters as it was established that measuring both place branding and place reputation is not a straightforward task.

Third, there are further avenues to be explored regarding the future conceptual and theoretical development of place reputation. There is the possibility of advancing a geographic rationale of place reputation. In addition, there could be an expanded theoretical understanding between reputational capital, the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1986) and place reputation. In future research, potential to further progress a geographical understanding of place reputation does exist. This could build on Cresswell's (2004) work. Also, from a more urban and economic geographical perspective, Bulkeley (2005) and Hudson (2007) on the relational and territorial debate could provide more evidence to be

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harnessed, advancing a geographical basis for investigating the reputations of places. Through utilising more contemporary geographical literature and by positioning place reputation within these debates, this may subsequently help to further conceptualise the proposed notion. By working more towards a geographical understanding this may add increased weight to arguments that place reputation is a credible alternative to the established place brand. Simultaneously, this may reinforce any further investigation of the interrelationship between place branding and place reputation and how this develops over time. Also, by undertaking a more detailed examination of the relationship between reputational capital and Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) *The Forms of Capital* alongside other work may help to solidify the theoretical viewpoint adopted. In turn, this could improve our understanding of how places construct and form reputational capital and in which domains this has been manifest in. Therefore, by embedding any future research in Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical understanding, this may help to overcome the 'chaotic conception' of place branding (Sayer, 2010). A concept tackled from a plethora of academic backgrounds which has lacked a common language would now have conceptual and theoretical weight behind it. Moreover, this would support an alternative idea, better equipped to cope with the complicated geographical entity with the aim of trying to attract greater investment and recognition for cities and regions alike.

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