

SPORT DEVELOPMENT IN CHALLENGING TIMES: LEVERAGE OF SPORT EVENTS FOR LEGACY IN DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

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Building on the emerging literature on leverage this paper attempts to address the topical emphasis in the ongoing 'austerity climate' for sport development by looking at a case study in Manchester and the development of BMX legacy around the National Cycling Centre (Manchester) and the World SuperCross event. Although the literature on legacy has clearly expanded since 2012, in the current social, political and economic climate, the consideration of wider impacts of mega events have come under increasing scrutiny. The assumption of positive economics and a 'legacy' in sport participation also depends on a fair distribution of scarce resources particularly into disadvantaged communities. There is also some emerging concern regarding the lack of clear evidence of community benefits in activity and subsequent health outcomes through an investment in large events aimed at passive consumption of sport (Weed et al, 2012). There has also been an increasing critical debate about social justice, social benefits and the assumed sporting and community impacts such events might stimulate (Misener and Mason, 2009). The impacts on those taking part in sport or the development of people *through* sport might be described as 'soft legacy'. This paper considers the impacts on people, processes and practice, as part of the rationale for planning and leverage efforts around events since 2012 (Bell, and Gallimore, 2015; Bell, 2016). However, the extent to which events can stimulate engagement in sport depends on a range of environmental and contextual factors, as does sports participation more generally (Widdop and Cutts, 2013). This paper examines the approach to sporting events as part of leverage of social, regenerative and sport specific developments. It also considers the problems inherent in this process, as exemplified by projects of Manchester City Council and Eastland Leisure Trust around BMX in 2016.

Word count (293)

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