Institution: University of Westminster		
Unit of Assessment: 13 Architecture, Built Environment and Planning		
Title of case study: Making urban events work for the public		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: April 2003 – Dec 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Andrew Smith	**Role(s) (e.g. job title):** Reader	**Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:** 2004+
Period when the claimed impact occurred: Aug 2013 – July 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? ~~Y~~/N		

1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)

Dr Andrew Smith has created impact from two key areas of his research into major events and urban change. Smith's work on the use of major events in urban policy influenced the legacy strategy of the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, which resulted in major economic, cultural, and socio-economic impacts across 4 cities in Australia. His work on the proliferation of commercial events in urban parks has informed UK government park strategies, local council-level policy, and the redesign of Grosvenor Square, London. The respective impacts relate to the retention of public accessibility to such spaces, the empowering of local community groups, and the enhancement of well-being within the city.

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)

Major events and the regeneration of post-industrial areas

Smith, in partnership with Tim Fox of international research and consultancy company ECOTEC (now Ecorys), conducted research on behalf of Manchester City Council on the impacts of the Legacy Programme of the 2002 Manchester Commonwealth Games [1]. By conceptualising the programme as a pioneering example of event-themed regeneration – projects were Games-themed, rather than being directly linked to the event – the authors outlined valuable lessons that other cities can learn about using events to achieve social and economic, rather than merely physical, regeneration. Rather than relying on the "trickle-down" effects of this mega event, the authors found that Manchester's Legacy Programme encompassed an effective compromise between a "top–down" event strategy and a "bottom–up" approach. This event-themed, rather than event-led, approach facilitated socio-economic regeneration, whilst capitalising on event links to generate interest and participation.

Smith – assisted by Westminster colleagues Dr Nancy Stevenson and Tim Edmundson – undertook a research project on the regeneration programmes associated with the London 2012 Olympic Games (funded by RICS Research). Drawing on the findings of their report, Smith produced a definitive record of how the governance and planning arrangements associated with the event evolved from 2000 to 2012. Smith critically analysed how these interventions were designed to achieve regeneration effects at different scales, identifying the key issues, challenges, and dilemmas involved. He argued that London 2012 regeneration planning should be regarded positively because, despite the turbulent political and economic context, the integration of the Olympic project with wider regeneration objectives provided the foundations for long term success [2]. As with his previous work in Manchester, the outputs from this research provide a socially responsible model of regeneration involving major events.

Smith's 2012 monograph *Events and Urban Regeneration*: *The Strategic Use of Events to Revitalise Cities* built on his decade of research in this area [3]. By analysing a range of international cities and the sporting and cultural events projects they hosted, Smith identified challenges associated with regeneration linked to major events and made recommendations as to how such practices could be improved in the future. Adopting a multi-disciplinary perspective, drawing together ideas from geography, urban planning, and tourism literatures as well as from the emergent events and regeneration fields, this was the first book dedicated to the use of events in regeneration and one that "significantly contributed […] to the development of events as a field of study given its critical and interdisciplinary approach" (as attested to by Routledge in their request to publish a 2nd edition).

Major events and the provision of accessible public spaces

Inspired by ways in which several London parks were repurposed as venues during the 2012 Olympic Games, the second, related, strand of Smith's work explores how public spaces are affected by their use as venues for major events.

Smith was involved in a series of research exercises (observation work and discourse analysis) that focused on Greenwich Park's controversial use as the venue for equestrian events during the Olympics. His article in *Urban Studies* draws on this research and finds that the exceptionality of events creates hegemonic blocs – here the Olympic "machine" driven by relentless delivery/management agencies – and discourse coalitions that can push inappropriate projects through the planning process [4].

The scope and scale of this work was extended to produce a dedicated monograph. *Events in the City: Using Public Spaces as Event Venues* is a ground-breaking text that examines the ways in which events staged in a city's streets, squares, and parks, rather than purpose-built venues, affect these public spaces [5]. The work covers a range of examples from across the developed world, but particularly focuses on several prominent London parks to analyse the role of events in the animation and commercialisation of public space. Smith finds that local councils are increasingly using publicly accessible space for ticketed events to raise funds to compensate for local government budgets cuts, without enough consideration of the social consequences of such a strategy. Smith argues that commercial events can denigrate public spaces by introducing physical, financial, and symbolic barriers that restrict their accessibility.

Smith continues to pursue research on this theme, publishing empirically based studies on the ways that London parks have been used as event venues to generate income at a time when local authority budgets have been cut. This work is based on detailed observations of parks pre-, during and post-events, alongside in-depth interviews with key stakeholders. For instance, Smith's study of the use of Battersea Park as a venue for Formula E motor races in 2015 and 2016 explored how this was justified by the council and other stakeholders, and the extent to which public access to the park was restricted. Significantly, his work found that restrictions stretch well beyond the relatively short time period in which such events run, due to aspects such as event assembly, and that the public become more engaged with the running of their local spaces as a result of such incursions [6].

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

[1] Smith, A. and Fox, T. (2007) From 'Event-led' to 'Event-themed' Regeneration: The 2002 Commonwealth Games Legacy Scheme. *Urban Studies*, 44 (5/6), pp. 1125-1143. *200+ Google Scholar [GS] citations. Output of a Manchester City Council funded research project (£35,000) carried out in conjunction with ECOTEC.*

[2] Smith, A. (2014) De-Risking East London. Olympic Regeneration Planning 2000-2012. *European Planning Studies* 22(9), pp. 1919-1939. *Output of a RICS Research Trust funded research project (£13,000) carried out in the build up to the London 2012 Olympic Games.*

[3] Smith, A. (2012) *Events and Urban Regeneration. The Strategic Use of Events to Revitalise Cities.* Abingdon: Routledge. *1300+ copies sold [inc. in Asia and US]; 400+ GS citations.*

[4] Smith, A. (2014) Borrowing Public Space to Stage Major Events. The Greenwich Park Controversy. *Urban Studies* 51(2), pp. 247–263.

[5] Smith, A. (2016) *Events in the City: Using Public Spaces as Event Venues*. Abingdon: Routledge

[6] Smith, A. (2019) Justifying and resisting public park commercialisation: The battle for Battersea Park. *Urban and Regional Studies*, Vol. 26(2) 171 –185

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Major events and the regeneration of post-industrial areas

Dr Smith's conception of "event-themed regeneration" shaped policymaking for the 2018 Commonwealth Games hosted by Gold Coast, Australia, resulting in a range of economic, social, and cultural impacts that demonstrate the value of this approach.

The influence of Smith's research came via sports specialist and consultant Dr Nick Pye, who was commissioned by the Gold Coast Legacy Advisory Committee to provide a knowledge base and direct advice that would inform their policymaking [a-i]. Pye's best practice review utilised and

referenced Smith & Fox's research multiple times in its assessment of international legacy strategies and specified the event-themed approach conceptualised by Smith [a-ii, p.46]. This review enabled Smith's research to inform Legacy Principle 6 – "Implement an 'event themed' legacy program that encourages the inclusion of non-sporting and cultural initiatives" – of Pye's further policy document *Statement of Principles for Generating Legacy from the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games*, which states: "A relatively recent legacy event concept is the idea of 'event-themed' rather than 'event-led' legacy, proposed by Andrew Smith in 2007. If legacy programs are too 'event-led', they may falter when the event ends. 'Event-themed' legacy allows a series of ground-level legacy initiatives which may be run independently of the event itself. […] We recommend that this approach is considered during the legacy planning process" [a-iii, p.10].

The above recommendation was adopted and **the events-themed legacy approach of the Gold Coast Games took the form of Festival 2018** – "the largest arts and culture event ever hosted in Queensland with 550 events and more than 1.1 million attendees" [a-iv, p.5], whose role was to "complemen[t] the Commonwealth Games sporting program" [a-v, p.7].

Drawing on Smith and Fox's analysis of the Manchester Commonwealth Games and its "programme of processional and celebratory arts (e.g. carnivals) which was aimed at building the capacity of South Asian, African and African-Caribbean communities in the city, and taking advantage of the cultural diversity that the city offered" [a-ii, p.38-39], the organisers of Festival 2018 devised its events in collaboration with local organisations and communities across 4 cities in the State of Queensland: Gold Coast, Cairns, Brisbane, and Townsville. For instance, "the Festival 2018 Cairns program was developed almost entirely around Indigenous arts - local and national music, dance and visual artists" [a-v, p.39]. This expansion of focus from the host city to the broader region also reflects Smith's strategy of using major events as a uniting theme for a range of socio-economic initiatives aimed at addressing wider objectives and beneficiaries, as per the "reduction of anti-social behaviour" and the "fostering [of] a sense of regional pride across the North-West of England" he identified as outcomes in Manchester [a-ii, p.39].

Smith and Fox's analysis of the London 2012 Olympics was also used in the best practice review to highlight how event-themed projects ensure that socio-economic impacts are "not reliant on the event projects" and can continue after the Games [a-ii, p.46]. These elements informed Legacy Principle 1, which "encourages stakeholder involvement" to ensure "a 'Games-afterlife", and Principle 3, which seeks to "address social exclusion and provide meaningful public engagement with those who are hardest to reach" through "widespread community representation and consultation through all phases of legacy planning and implementation" [a-iii, p.9]. Such principles were enacted and achieved a range of impacts.

The *economic impact* of Festival 2018 relates to its contribution to the generation of a "$2.5 billion economic boost to the State, including a $1.8 billion boost to the Gold Coast" [a-iv, p.5]. As the evaluation report states, specific economic impacts created by Festival 2018 included attracting visitors who did not attend any sporting events: "As well as the strong cultural and social outcomes generated by Festival 2018, visitors contributed additional expenditure to the event city economies that would not have occurred without the Festival 2018 cultural program. There were approximately 120,000 visitors to Festival 2018 events who did not attend GC2018 sporting events. These **visitors contributed an estimated $10 million in additional expenditure to the event city economies**" [a-v, p.83].

A number of *social and cultural impacts* were achieved by devising Festival 2018 activities in a manner that "**supported the development of the local cultural and creative sector**" and ensured that "broad cross-sections of the community were engaged" [a-v, p.7]. In the post-Games review of the Arts and Culture programme, analysis of the feedback from 5,300 attendees across the 4 cities in which it took place found that 88% of respondents agreed that that the Festival "reflected a broad and inclusive range of voices", with 79% agreeing that the Festival gave them "a greater respect for different people and culture" and 90% agreeing that it made them "feel positive about the community's future" [a-v, p.12].

Of the 4505 artists who participated in the Festival and responded to the survey, 87% agreed the events raised their profile, 89% agreed that it opened up new opportunities for them, 77% agreed it helped them to learn new skills, and 80% agreed it enabled them to collaborate with others [a-v, p.20]. **Heightening inclusivity**, 947 Indigenous and First Nation artists took part in the activities and 78 Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities partnered with the programme [a-v, p.17-18]. A resultant impact is that 80% of the 5300 attendees surveyed agreed

that they "learned something new about Indigenous heritage/culture" and 83% agreed that the Festival "raised my awareness of concerns about fake Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and art products", providing a foundation for a longer-term socio-economic legacy for these communities [a-v, p.13].

Major events and the provision of accessible public spaces

Smith's research and proactive interventions in the area of public spaces has resulted in a range of impacts in the UK, examples of which are below.

Ensuring public accessibility to urban green spaces: Drawing on arguments and evidence included in his 2016 monograph Events in the City [5] and his work on Battersea Park [6], Smith made a key submission to the National Inquiry into Public Parks, which "asked three key questions: why parks matter, what challenges are facing the parks sector, and how we can secure a sustainable future for parks" [b-i, p.3]. When the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee reported its findings in the autumn of 2017, Smith's contribution [b-ii] was directly quoted in regard to "the impact on community access to parks, disruption or nuisance to local communities, and damage to the park during or after the event. The University of Westminster told us that the negative impacts of events, for example noise, disruption and damage, are 'usually temporary and can be managed, but the symbolic effects of exclusive events are more significant and enduring'" [b-i, p.25].

The government's response to this report was to form the Parks Action Group (PAG), with £500,000 of funding support, in Sept 2017. As the then Minister for Local Government, Rishi Sunak, reports in an April 2019 progress statement, the PAG "is comprised of a Cross-Government group of senior officials and a sectoral group" and "have been key in driving forward the recommendations of the Select Committee" [b-iii]. In regard to the 2017 report's recommendation regarding "the relationship between local communities, local authorities and the free use of parks", Sunak states that "[w]hilst we recognise the right of local authorities to quite legitimately charge for specific events in parks as a means of income, our position is that public parks should remain free for members of the public for reasonable everyday use" [b-iii]. As such, **the Parks Action Group is keen to ensure that public parks are not overly exploited for ticketed events, in line with Smith's research-based recommendation** "that commercial activities do not impinge on the essential qualities of parks: their environmental integrity and their public availability" [b-ii].

Current outcomes from the PAG's work with government include the awarding of 352 grants to support community groups in the creation of 146 new parks, with a focus on "provid[ing] new areas for children to play, outdoor fitness facilities for residents, and places for families and friends to come together, helping encourage community integration and tackling loneliness" [b-iv].

Empowering local community groups in their efforts to protect their green spaces: Since 2016 Smith has been working with Parks for London as part of their "Action Group on Major Events". As an appointed member of this Group, Smith formulated 12 key recommendations for the effective, community-engaged, management of park events [c-i], and has contributed to the production of a London-wide park events policy template [c-ii]. The latter, published in 2018, is a generic Outdoor Events Policy (OEP) template that takes the form of a detailed 30-page policy document that local parks community groups can amend as appropriate and provide to relevant authorities for adoption. An example of an organisation taking advantage of this work is **Lambeth council, which adopted recommendations made via an Outdoor Events Policy produced by Brockwell Park Community Partners** using this template. This OEP was provided to Sonia Winifred, a Lambeth Councillor and Cabinet Member for Equalities and Culture, as part of a consultation on the Council's Events Strategy [c-iii §6; c-iv, p.5]. Launched in April 2020, the revised *Lambeth Events Strategy 2020-2025* confirms Lambeth Council is "[a]ligning policy with Parks for London to improve events understanding with parks friends' groups and MACs [Management Advisory Committees]. […] In line with the Parks for London recommendations, we are proposing that community engagement happens earlier in the event application process in the new Lambeth Events Policy", with the aim of enabling "[c]learer and transparent engagement with stakeholders and event organisers" [c-v, p.9]. Practical steps to ensure accessibility to parks by the public include: "All major events will have an impact statement (including environmental and

community impact) published within four months after the event, to review actions and reduce negative implications for future events" [c-v, p.15].

Enhancing well-being within central London: Grosvenor Square is a large garden square in central London and is considered to be the centrepiece of the Mayfair property of Grosvenor Britain & Ireland. The Square is being redesigned in consultation with the public and as part of this endeavour Smith was invited by the design team to speak at two online events, each of which attracted around 100 attendees and featured contributions from Public Health England, the Design Council, the City of Westminster, London National Park City and prominent architects. These events were: The Big Topic Talk event of 9th June 2020 on urban spaces and wellbeing, in which Smith highlighted the negative impact of large-scale commercial events on such public spaces, and a 28th July panel discussion about whether the pandemic had changed what the public wants from green spaces [d-i].

As a result of this intervention, the decision has been made to lessen the emphasis on events in the design, for instance by not including a dedicated venue space. This is confirmed by the Senior Development Manager of Grosvenor Square: "Andrew's expertise around the programming of public spaces was really insightful for us. Prompted by points he raised, and the conversations that flowed from them with the community and within our business, we have **decided to deprioritise designing specifically for events within our proposals**. We have reached the conclusion that we should be seeking to deliver the best possible public space, and what sorts of programming are appropriate for that kind of space will emerge later down the line" [d-ii]. As such, the Square will function as a "[g]reen oasis not an event space"; "the primary experience of the square should be calm and peaceful, offering respite from the city surrounding it" [d-iii].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

[a] (i) City of Gold Coast. "Adopted Report for the Commonwealth Games and Major Projects Committee Meeting" 21/08/2013 (ii) Nick Pye Teamz International Pty Ltd [NPT]. 2013. *Assessing Legacy. A Best Practice Review. The Gold Coast Legacy Advisory Committee Report, City of Gold Coast 2013* (iii) NPT. 2013. *Statement of Principles for Generating Legacy. The Gold Coast Legacy Advisory Committee Report, City of Gold Coast 2013* (iv) Office of the Commonwealth Games. 2019. *Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games: Post Games Report* (v) Queensland Government. 2018. *Festival 2018; Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Arts and Culture Program Evaluation Report.* Prepared by Culture Counts™.

[b] (i) House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee. 2017. *Public Parks: Seventh Report of Session 2016–17* (ii) Dr Andrew Smith written submission [PKS 257] (iii) Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth. "Parks & Green Spaces update" [HLWS1455]. 4/4/2019 (iv) Gov.uk. "68 new parks to inject green space into urban areas" 3/3/2020

[c] (i) Parks for London. "Draft Recommendations for Large Scale Events in London Borough Parks" (ii) Parks for London. "Outdoor event policy template (November 2018)" (iii) Brockwell Park Community Partners, Minutes of General Meeting 23/9/2018 (iv) Lambeth Council Minutes, 16/10/2019 (v) *Lambeth Events Strategy 2020-2025;* Appendix 1 file on: [link]

[d] (i) Redesigning Grosvenor Square, "How can urban spaces support our wellbeing?" (9/5/2020) [video], "Has the pandemic changed what we want from our green spaces?" (28/6/2020) [video] (ii) Testimony: Senior Development Manager of Grosvenor Square (iii) Grosvenor Square. "Initial design ideas". July 2020.