

The contribution of events to destination revitalisation and competitiveness

The contribution of events to destination revitalisation and competitiveness is an area of research that needs more attention, especially as events can have either lasting or contesting legacies (García, 2005). Building on the fact that place management and place branding are issues of increasing international importance, we need to further conceptualise and critically understand how places change or adapt to meet the needs of their residents and visitors against a back-drop of economic uncertainty, demographic change and technological innovation.

If we consult the tourism literature, destination competitiveness is a well-researched area, with a number of accepted models and approaches that have been used and adopted over the past few decades (Crouch and Ritchie, 1999; Crouch, 2011; Dwyer and Kim, 2003; Hassan, 2000). Building on this foundation of research, there is a need for research that focuses on more niche forms of destination development to build on competitiveness, and this is where it is important to link competitiveness with destination revitalisation (Clark and Wise, 2018; Wise and Clark, 2017). Moreover, there is an increasing need to look at the role of events in enhancing competitiveness, also building on recent literature addressing the impact of events to development, regeneration and revitalisation (Smith, 2012; Richards and Palmer, 2010; Wise and Harris, 2017, 2019a, 2019b). Therefore, this special issue will focus specifically on how events contribute to destination revitalisation and competitiveness.

The guest editors of this special issue have published on the topics of destination competitiveness and destination revitalisation, independently and interdependently, with colleagues from our own networks and in collaboration with each other (Aquilino *et al.*, 2019; Armenski *et al.*, 2018, 2011; Dwyer *et al.*, 2016; Mulec and Wise, 2013; Wise, 2016). Seeking to extend the impact of this work aligned with the area of events and place management, urban change and development, this special issue includes six papers addressing critical/conceptual issues pertinent to the role of events in shaping competitiveness and revitalisation. These papers each contribute theoretical knowledge positioning the role of events in the host destination, and how they play a vital role in urban/regional revitalisation and competitiveness, and the cases across the papers are internationally dispersed. We now offer an overview of each paper and the case(s) each paper has discussed and addressed.

The paper by C. Michael Hall and Alberto Amore, titled, “The 2015 Cricket World Cup in Christchurch: using an event for post-disaster reimagine and regeneration” considers the development/upgrading in the area around Christchurch’s Hagley Park (cricket oval). Christchurch and New Zealand were devastated by recent earthquakes in the past decade and this paper considers how the 2015 Cricket World Cup (as a hallmark event) helped to rebrand Christchurch following the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes. They present findings from research conducted between 2012 and 2016, with the analysis consisting of data from mainstream media, sport organisations websites and government archives, in addition to a two-round series of semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders following the 2015 Cricket World Cup. The event and development planning for the event were an attempt to rebrand Christchurch to international tourists and sport enthusiasts.

Building on this focus on branding, Julie Clark and Gareth Rice focus on “Revitalising rural Scotland: Loch Fyne, branding and belonging”. They examine the role of events in destination revitalisation and competitiveness by looking at the relationships that exist between place branding in rural areas and the notion community building. Their paper is based on ethnographic fieldwork that involved collecting field notes, taking photographs and holding



conversations with event organisers and social interactions with community members and event attendees. They argue that The Loch Fyne Food Fair in Argyll and Bute helps reinforce place marketing and place branding (whilst utilising local authenticity as a brand) to show how cities and their surrounding hinterlands can strive to remain competitive.

Carlos Balsas looks at “The role of public markets in urban habitability and competitiveness” looking at public market functions in three different continents (with cases in Europe, North America and Asia). The paper aims to identify a set of planning implications for their use in contexts of urban regeneration based on the LABiMAAM framework, which includes: [L]ocation, [A]ccessibility, [B]uilding, [i]nternal structure, [M]ain trading area, [A]menities and services, [A]nimation programme and [M]anagement structure. Lessons from the paper suggest that social functions are aimed at guaranteeing food security; urban development goals are needed to prevent leap-frog suburbanisation; walkability is needed to reduce automobile dependence; and welfare goals are required to support disenfranchised, usually minority, populations. Each of these impacts social regeneration and place/destination competitiveness for the benefit of local residents who use public markets.

In the next paper “An evidence informed approach to planning for event management in Ireland An examination of the European tourism indicator system”, Kelly Maguire and Emmet McLoughlin focus on how events are and have a significant impact on Ireland’s tourism offering as they are important for driving social change and socio-economic development. This paper addresses some practical gaps facing sustainable event management and sustainable event planning in Ireland that offers some useful recommendations to industry managers and practitioners. The points highlighted and noted are important to address now so that Ireland can increase their event-led competitiveness as the industry expands. The study uses the European tourism indicator system (ETIS) to consider the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of the national event industry in Ireland, focussing on how the industry can be secured.

The final two papers in this special issue look at different complexities concerning place revitalisation and competitiveness. “Business Improvement Districts in the UK: A Review and Synthesis” by Gary Warnaby reviews the development and current position of such districts in the UK. Business Improvement Districts are a strategic way to target revitalisation in urban areas, and while these are planning agendas that have wider policy and practical impacts, such redevelopment can give cities a strategic advantage as then bid to host events and seek ways to increase tourism and leisure opportunities. Introduced 15 years ago, Business Improvement Districts, this paper offers a comprehensive overview of developments and performance in the UK. The final paper in this collection by Nicholas Wise addresses some conceptual points and directions in “Eventful futures and triple bottom line impacts: BRICS, image regeneration and competitiveness” This paper offers a brief context and history of BRICS before framing some conceptual considerations around image regeneration and place/destination competitiveness. The paper then offers some insight and directions linked to the triple bottom line framework, noting the need to focus on eventful futures aligned with social, economic and environmental sustainability.

The papers included in this special issue each have wider benefits. For teaching, this special issue intends to strengthen event management students understanding of place development and competitiveness in an increasingly competitive events environment. The work also has useful practical and policy recommendations for destination planners and event managers. These articles provide planners with insight on best policies and good practice for successful event management, as well as bringing to attention the importance of the long-term event legacy planning. The research is also useful for tourism destination managers who are looking at the increasing role of event and the theoretical focus explored

in each paper is useful for academic researchers going into or expanding research that links and aligns events, competitiveness and revitalisation. Looking at the contribution of this special issue to the journal *Place Management and Development*, this special issue builds on previous collections, notably *Participatory Placemaking* (Issue 2, 2018) and *Place in Practice* (Issue 1, 2014) by putting a more defined focus on events and events management.

Nicholas Wise
Liverpool John Moores University, Liverpool, UK, and
Tanja Armenski
Albany, New York USA

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