



BITTER SWEET REPRESENTATIONS: VILLAGE SHOPS - A CASE STUDY OF HELPRINGHAM

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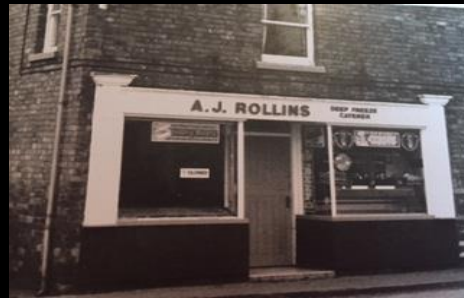
METHODOLOGY

Presentation informed by two data sets

- i) 5 interviews conducted with village residents and service providers in the village of Helpringham to explore the 'mileage' in exploring the village shop in the rural community
- ii) 66 in-depth semi structured interviews (2010-2013) conducted as part of a grounded theory study on the 'public house in the rural community'

VILLAGE STORES OVER THE DECADES, IN HELPRINGHAM

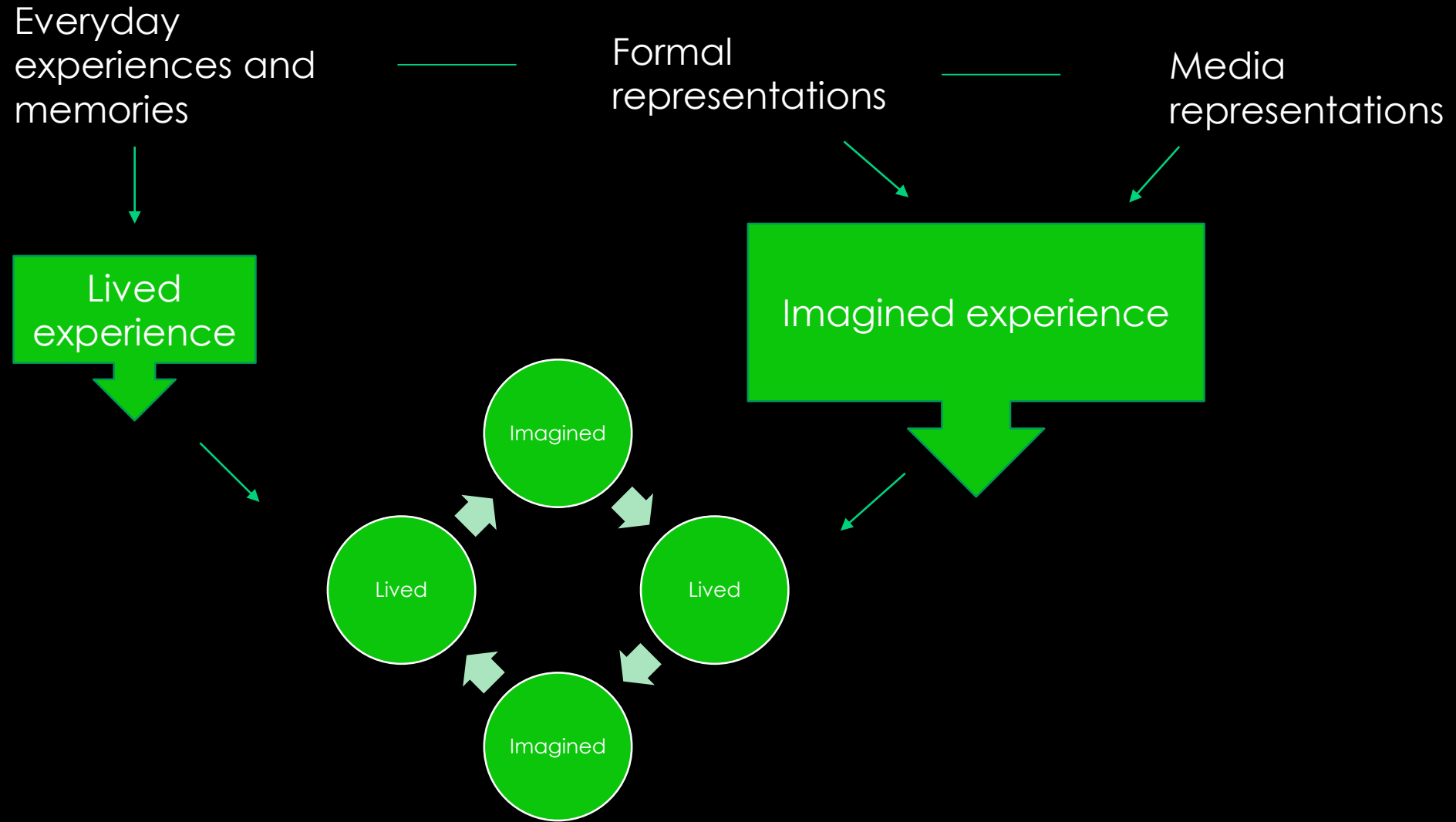
Permanently closed village stores in Helpringham



Helpringhams remaining village store throughout history



REPRESENTATIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF VILLAGE SERVICES IN HELPRINGHAM





LIVED EXPERIENCE

“The village and come to think of it the [remaining] shop has changed so much since I was a nipper, some changes I like others I'm not so fond of, I just try to ignore [the changes] I don't like and remember the village as it was before the services shut”

IMAGINED EXPERIENCE

“Don’t get me wrong Helpringham is a lovely village, its very picturesque but its not how I thought country living would be.... Maybe I was naïve to assume the shop and pub would be the hubs of the village”

Why did you assume the shop would be a hub of the village?

“erm I’m not sure, I suppose every time I’ve seen villages on the TV and in the news the shop has always been shown as a place of high community enagement so I just assumed that would be the case here but its not”

VILLAGE SERVICES AND THE RURAL IDYLL

- Imagined experience located in the wider context of the rural idyll
- Village services such as the shop and pub continue to offer customers representations of the rural and reinforce these in a number of ways
- Village services are an ingredient in cementing perceptions of what a village should look like
- Declining shop and pub numbers, damaging to society's image of villages rather than villages per se



LONG TERM VIABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF VILLAGE SERVICES

Different types of diversification for the viability and sustainability of village services:

- i. Economic
- ii. Social
- iii. Cultural

- Developing a local 'currency' and the multiplier effect?

CONCLUSION

Future research

- How, why and for whom does the village shop remain important ?
- What types of diversification are working and why?
- Local currency idea, could it really work in practice????