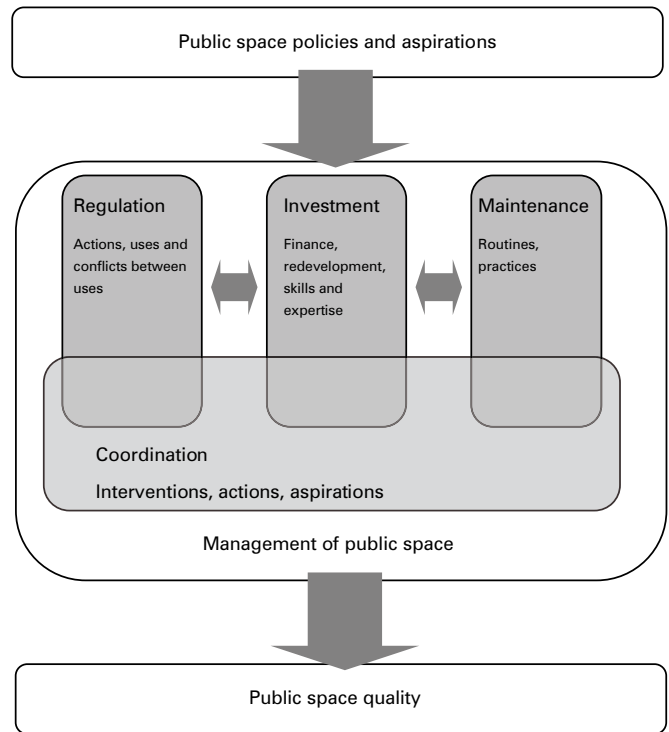


to removing anything that might deface or offend the symbolism invested in civic spaces; to occasional capital intensive replacement of parts of the public realm.

- 3 The new investments into and ongoing resourcing of public space: regulating uses and conflicts and physically maintaining public spaces requires resources, financial and material. The degree to which regulatory instruments and maintenance routines can be effective is linked to the amount of resources devoted to those activities. Moreover, resources can come from several sources, each of them with a different combination of limitations and possibilities. This involves both ongoing revenue funding, for day-to-day management tasks, but also significant capital funding from time to time as and when significant re-design and re-development is required.
- 4 The coordination of interventions in public space: because regulation, maintenance and resourcing are likely to involve directly or indirectly a wide array of people and organisations, there is a necessity for coordinating mechanisms to ensure that the agents in charge of those activities pull in the same direction. This need for coordination applies equally to units within an organisation, such as departments of a local authority, as it does to different organisations. As some of the case studies in Part Two will show, the need for coordination has been made all the more pressing by the fragmentation of the 'command and control' state and the emergence of 'enabling' forms of urban governance (Leach and Percy-Smith 2001: 29).

These four dimensions apply whether public space management activities are undertaken primarily by public-sector agencies, by voluntary bodies or community organisations, or by private-sector companies (Figure 4.1). However, as the historical overview of public spaces in Chapter 2 has shown, even if the key dimensions of management are broadly constant, management responsibilities change and there is no final of definitive state for them. Therefore, it is not possible to refer to an ideal pattern of responsibilities over public space as these are invariably the result of messy governance arrangements resulting from the historical evolution of social practices and urban governments. What might intuitively appear as the normal or 'natural' form of public space management, defined by direct state ownership and management, captures only one moment in the history of that set of practices, freezing in time what is essentially a dynamic process.

Discussion moves on now to explore these issues, taking the example of the history of public space management in the UK in order to identify the current changes shaping the new practices and approaches.



4.1 Public space management and its key dimensions

Public space management, a public good?

The idea of public space and public space management are normally associated with the public sector, and more specifically with local government. There are strong reasons for this coming from history and also from the economic dynamics of modern societies.

In a capitalist economy, goods and services tend to incorporate the character of commodity; something with value and a price, traded in the marketplace. It follows that provision is determined to a large extent by demand and supply relationships between buyers and sellers competing in the market. Some argue that the history of capitalism is the history of an ever increasing part of social life being subsumed under the category of commodity (Watts 1999, Thrift 2000).

However, not all goods and services are equally suited to the commodity character and to market relationships, even if they are vital to the functioning of the economy and society. The provision of such goods cannot therefore depend entirely on markets, and relies instead, at least partly, on alternative forms of provision, often involving the state. Public