Belonging and Place-Making in a Neoliberal Waterfront Area

Belonging and Place-Making in a Neoliberal Waterfront Area:

The Case of Ocean Village, Southampton

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BSAS – British Social Attitudes Survey

BTL – Buy to Let

DCLG – Department for Communities and Local Government

HCA – Homes and Communities Agency

HTB – Help to Buy

ISAs – Individual Saving Accounts

ONS – Office for National Statistics

SEH – Survey of English Housing

SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

RTB – Right to Buy

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Homeownership has been increasing globally since the end of the Second World War (Ronald, 2008). Official statistics reported by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), show that in the UK in 2015 the percentage of owner-occupiers (63.6%) was higher than of tenants, both private and social rented (36.4%), in the UK in 2015. Nevertheless, since the financial crisis in 2008, the percentage of owner occupiers is decreasing and the percentage of renters is rising (see Figure 2.1. below) This graph shows very clearly that in 1981 owner occupiers (57.2%) exceed renters (42.8 percent, of which 31.7% are in social housing and 11.1% rent privately) in the UK. The graph also shows that the percentage of owner occupiers drops in 2008 and is decreasing further in the following years whereas the proportion of renters, especially private renters is increasing (from 11.1% in 1981 to 19% in 2014-2015). The drop in social housing renters has been increasing since 1979 due to privatisation with the Right to Buy (RTB) housing policy in the UK. Here is a similar trend in terms of the percentage of homeowners in the USA (63%) and in other European countries including France (64.9%), the Netherlands (69%), and particularly Spain (77.8%) (The Statistical Portal, 2016). However, there are other countries such as Germany (51.7% in 2015) and Switzerland (43.4% in 2015), with lower rates of homeowners/higher rates of renters. Thus, in some countries, like the UK, homeownership matters more than in others due to local economic and cultural circumstances.

Existing studies of tenure groups (Saunders, 1990 and 2016, Ronald, 2008, Mallett, 2004) have examined the differences and similarities of tenure groups. These well-known studies focussed particularly on the meaning and role of becoming a homeowner. They have argued that becoming a homeowner is interconnected with social status and political views (Saunders, 1990 and 2016), as well as social class and financial power. Homeownership not only defines social status but also contributes to personal security and happiness, and influences relationships with non-

owners (Ronald, 2008). In contrast to Saunders (1990), Ronald (2008) noted that the meaning and distribution of homeownership varies across different countries and cultures, which can be explained by cultural and economic factors. Similarly, neoliberalism is emerging in different countries in different forms (e.g. USA, UK, China or Japan) (Harvey 1989 and 2005), and it is therefore difficult to generalise in terms of one type of neoliberalism in practice (Brenner, Peck and Theodore, 2010). The existing literature (Saunders, 1990 and 2016, Ronald, 2008, Mallett, 2004) suggests that such attitudes are influenced by homeowners' ownership status, interest, feelings, experience, and attachment that other people can change. These studies focus on different places in England, such as Manchester (Savage, et al. 2005), London Watt (2009), Derby, Slough and Burnley (Saunders, 1990) and they mainly focus on people's tenure status to explain the similarities or the differences observed when examining their choices of participation in daily life. According to Saunders (1990) the home plays a crucial role in creating a sense of self and identity and social class through consumption rather than through employment. Additionally, Savage *et al.* (2005:207) noted that, "…residential space is a key arena in which people define their social position." Furthermore, Savage et al. (2005) highlighted locals and outsiders as a reason for building up people's connection. While Savage and his co-authors focussed on existing residents' and newcomers' connections in terms of social class differences, Watt (2009) compared how existing residents (coming from the private market and social housing and also belonging to white and non-white backgrounds) were connecting with their living areas. According to Watt (2009), middle-class inhabitants subscribed to a discourse of selective belonging, particularly once they perceived their houses in a positive manner in a specific place as opposed to the wider area and other middle or lower-class people. In other words, there are different approaches in the literature to explaining people's choices and feelings about a specific place and other people with their tenure status, length of stay, or social class. This study considers both tenure status and location to examine people's belonging, feelings and attachment to a particular place.

The following factors influence renters' and buyers' choice of a specific location: proximity to work, availability of leisure facilities, schools, health care, the security of the location and its affordability (Saunders, 1990 and 2016, Ronald, 2008, Watt, 2009), Depending on residential status and location, should these interests be met residents can maintain their connection with a particular place and engage in place-making and place-maintenance activities (Ronald, 2008). However, for example, what

if they lose their job and are no longer able to afford to live in a specific place? There might be a number of reasons why people stay (even if they would like to leave) or leave (even if they would like to stay). Tenure groups are interested in, and affected by the associated built environment, the socio-economic environment, accessibility of the area, and personal points of interest regarding a specific location (Sautkina, Bond and Kearns, 2012). Tenure status is a result of being able and willing to buy or to rent, where the choice of a specific location is determined by these four general reasons (built environment, socio-economic environment, accessibility of the area, and personal points of interest). Therefore, it is important to compare the satisfaction and attachment to a particular location of renters and homeowners because younger generations are less likely to become homeowners in the UK according to official statistics (ONS, 2017). Moreover, the case study (Ocean Village, Southampton) suggests that people seem to prefer to rent in specific locations even though they might be able to buy in others. Thus, both tenure status and location need to be examined simultaneously to properly determine the impact of these factors on people's feelings about and attachment to a particular place.

Saunders' (1990) study "A Nation of Home Owners is a key resource in the field of housing studies. He investigated the reasons for buying or renting in three English towns in the 1980s after the introduction of the Right to Buy (RTB) housing policy. According to Saunders (1990), tenure status rather than place influenced people's decisions, feelings and interactions. I argue that he overlooks the importance of location. Therefore, this book is structured in terms of identifying and addressing two key factors, which limit the 'resource model' posited by Saunders (1990): a lack of recognition of the importance of location in terms of tenure groups, and an overemphasis on the role of tenure status itself. Because of this, but without ignoring either of these two aspects, this book will focus on both tenure status and location on the basis of belonging and place making and place maintenance. I ask the following research questions to increase our understanding, and to examine the role of tenure status (e.g. owner-occupiers, tenants, landlords and second homeowners) and location within a neoliberal urban (waterfront) environment:

- *What are the significant differences and similarities between tenure groups regarding the decision to move into or buy within, and the experience of, a waterfront area?*

-   *How do tenure status and location intersect and how are they*
    different with regard to the decision to move into or buy within, and
    the experience of, a waterfront area?

1.1 Theoretical and conceptual approach

Both tenure status and location are shaped by and influenced by the urban environment and urban policies. Privatisation, housing policies, and developments change the urban environment and can affect the distribution of owners and renters, and indeed the meaning of home ownership and the locations (e.g. convenience, profit, accessibility). To better understand these processes, this study first describes neoliberal urbanism.

Firstly, classic urbanism (Keynesian era) regulated the development of and public investment in infrastructure and the public (social) housing provided. However, neoliberalism, which in the free market is enabled by minimal state control with regard to social, political and economic life, has been policy since the 1970s as a response to the Keynesian era. Neoliberalism has become the dominant political and ideological form of capitalist globalisation since the 1970s (Brenner and Theodore, 2002), and has taken an active role in effectively governing society. In other words, neoliberalism offers 'political economic practices that propose that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterised by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade' (Harvey, 2005: 2).

Cities have become crucial arenas which one can see as an expression of neoliberalism, such as in place-marketing, urban development corporations, public-private partnerships, property redevelopment schemes, etc. (Brenner and Theodore, 2002). Market-based economy and elite consumption are the main purposes of neoliberal cities. Therefore, as a result of these policies, neoliberal urbanism was born and, specifically, the different aspects of neoliberal urbanism can be better understood by tracing the changes in built environments in terms of urban economy and urban planning. As Brenner and Theodore (2002) summarised, how neoliberal policies (re)shape the urban environment is a result of neoliberalism and neoliberal policies, the privatisation of urban public spaces for elite/corporate consumption and the restructuring of traditional neighbourhoods established in cities in favour of megaprojects for the purposes of investment have increased inequality between the members of society through gentrification. In other words, neoliberal urban policies have affected both the physical

appearance of cities through new developments, and social structure through inequality and competition.

As a result of urban development schemes, neoliberal urbanism has led to the conversion of urban places to global competition arenas and elite consumption spaces. At the same time, while globalisation is increasing, the mobility of capital and investments are being drawn towards favouring the establishment of large-scale property development projects (e.g. entertainment and leisure centres, residential apartment complexes) rather than small-scale developments. The main aim of these kinds of project is to gain increased profit and rent income within the neoliberal urban environment. To the ends of addressing this same aim, historical and archaeological sites, green areas and public places are being changed and transformed into housing and leisure areas (e.g. hotels, restaurants, shopping malls) by private companies (Zukin, 1995 and 2009, Kratke, 2014). While this situation illustrates entrepreneurialism within the neoliberal urban environment (Harvey, 1989), urban places have ultimately become a means for people who want to live or invest due to neoliberal urbanism. As noted above, because of privatisation and minimal state control, the competition in urban life has been increasing since the 1970s due to both state and private companies both in the UK and globally. The same relationship can be seen between neoliberalism and housing policies as an expression of neoliberalism in the English urban context. More specifically, after 1979, with the Thatcher era, the privatisation of social housing and subsidisation of new owners started with the Right to Buy (RTB) policy (Disney and Luo, 2017), which is still in place in the UK. Since 1996, with the further introduction of Buy to Let (BTL), small investors and landlords have been encouraged to buy their new home(s) in the UK. More recently, a further policy, referred to as Help to Buy (HTB), was introduced in 2013 to support new homeowners in terms of a deposit or mortgage in the UK (Homes and Communities Agency, 2015). Local and national government in the UK supported these policies; however, they ultimately lost future income despite creating new housing policies since 1979 in the attempt to solve accommodation problems. However, with these housing policies, while privatisation and elite consumption is on the increase, private tenants, especially young private tenants who are aged between 25 and 34, are struggling to buy properties within the current competitive, free market context (ONS: Labour Force Survey: 2015 and Saunders, 2016).

Due to these housing policies, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of housing that is privately owned (by fewer owners) in the UK (from 50% in the 1970s to over 70% at the beginning of the 2000s).

Within this context, not only privatisation but also over developments have increased considerably in urban areas in the UK. However, while local and national governors support these housing policies, as a result of which the percentage of homeownership remains at over 60%, the younger generation are struggling to buy properties since 1980s in the UK. The percentage of private tenants has doubled from 10% to approximately 20% since the beginning of the 2000s (ONS: Labour Force Survey: 2015). Due to the costs and increasing proportion of second homeownership and debt because of student fees and the prevalence of lower incomes than in previous generations, generational differences have emerged whereby the younger generation are not able to buy their own properties. In particular, as noted above, people aged between 25 and 34 are struggling to afford to do so, however, and are mostly forced to rent (ONS: Labour Force Survey: 2015 and Saunders, 2016). While Harvey (2005:2) pointed out that neoliberalism offers "strong private property rights", based on the above statistical information, the current situation or recent trend is clearly different to Harvey's expectations. Current housing policies have not offered a solution to the inequalities in the housing market, and the gap between owners and renters is increasing each year in the UK. Both the housing policies and existing community studies of urban life (Saunders, 1990 and 2016, Ronald, 2008, Mallett, 2004) focus on financial differences between owners and tenants through the adoption of a neoliberal perspective, whereby same literature argue that existing owners and middle- or upper-class people are the main beneficiaries of housing policies. The official statistics (ONS and DCLG) indicate that while the proportion of homeowners is decreasing gradually, it is still greater than 60%, and also that the proportion of private renters is increasing and social renters decreasing in the UK.

I examine neoliberalism in this book by focussing on two main aspects that influence the decision to move to a specific place as either a buyer or renter, and further the process of connecting to it. The two aspects are tenure status and location, and I examine their impact on people's feelings and attachment. This is important because tenure status is not enough in itself to explain people's feelings and attachment, as existing studies have discussed (Saunders, 1990 and 2016, Ronald, 2008, Watt, 2009 and Savage et al. 2005). Urry (1995) and Massey (2005) indicated changes both in people's feelings about and attachment to a specific place and meaning of same place for them in different time periods. Existing long-term residents and newcomers have different connections to and feelings about a given place, and these feelings will of course change over time (Savage *et al.*, 2005). However, as discussed by both Urry (1995) and

Massey (2005), a specific time-period (e.g. pre- or post-Second World War era) affects people's choices and feelings about a particular place (Lake District) due to changes (e.g. activities and lifestyle) in the same area. The above two scholars emphasised the importance of location when comparing different groups of people and time periods. At the same time, Saunders (1990) noted that people feel a sense of belonging, regardless of the place, due to the social status derived from their tenure status rather than their occupation. Thus, there are two different perspectives that explain belonging, one of which is connected to tenure status whilst the other is connected to location. I argue that it is important to simultaneously focus on both tenure status and location to better understand belonging, place making, place maintenance, attachment and participation in activities in the neighbourhood where one lives.

Savage's et al. (2005) concept of elective belonging and Watt's (2009) concept of selective belonging provide certain distinct clues about people's choices and feelings. These concepts are important to examine people's reasons for buying or renting and their feelings about a particular place. While elective belonging is shaped by the stage in the life-course and ability to choose a specific place to live (Savage *et al*. 2005 and 2010), selective belonging involves creating barriers between people's selection and others (e.g. people or place) (Watt, 2009). Depending on personal aims and interests, people choose a specific place and then justify this choice, and they will look upon their selection more positively than they assess other issues, such as other places or people; in other words, choosing a place and distancing oneself from other people and places both physically and emotionally. Place is used as a means to illustrate both elective and selective belonging at the same time. These two approaches are essential to the examination of tenure status both before and after connecting with a specific place. In this book, I examine these two different senses of belonging to ensure that factors that are important to people's attachment, such as tenure status or location, are properly considered.

Then, in order to examine how people experience a particular place in terms of their tenure status and location, this research focuses on place making and place maintenance to explore tenure groups' experiences of a particular place. In exploring urban life in terms of daily life and social relationships, the meanings of place and belonging have become more complicated than ever, and are clearly not connected to a single place (Savage *et al*., 2005). Place, in this context, has generally been described as local, particular and unique in terms of social and physical aspects

(Pierce, Martin and Murphy, 2010). It cannot be thought of as separate from its physical and social context, such as buildings, apartments, and their residents (*ibid.*, 55). As Zukin (1995) noted, new commercial environments are not only different physically, they also create new social environments, such as shopping environments or entertainment facilities that have their own cultures. Therefore, it is necessary to consider each location and specific circumstances on an individual basis. In other words, according to existing studies, people create their connection with a specific place through the surrounding physical context. However, the use of the internet and social media is embedded in everyday life. As existing studies (Wellman, 2005, Hampton, 2007 and Gruzd *et al.* 2016) discuss, online and offline life affect each other, and cannot be considered in isolation. Thus, it is necessary to focus on both online and offline life to create a holistic approach that allows for a more complete understanding of people's choices, feelings and experiences within a particular place and the contemporary urban context.

Lastly, it is essential to note the importance of the relationship between place and belonging. Benson (2014: 3101) stated, "…the relationships that people have with their places of residence are often framed through the language of belonging". Similarly, in the same study, Benson also noted that belonging emerges within a specific kind of residential environment and place. Place is important as a reflection of personal belonging in a particular area (Savage *et al.*, 2005). In addition, attachment to a physical place represents a sense of belonging with regard to people's traditions, cultures, needs, aspirations and futures (Torabi and Sima, 2013). In other words, different places, such as slums, ghettos and suburbs, represent different types of belonging (Relph, 1976). Belonging is a product of the emotional attachments formed due to the physical context, and the intensity and type of belonging changes from one place to another (Rodger and Herbert, 2007). Hence, it is difficult to analyse belonging without addressing different aspects of the location of interest. While the above studies highlight the importance of location as an influencing factor in explaining types of belonging, it is undeniable that location can explain tenure groups' choices and practices in daily life after accounting for certain assumptions about the differences between the financial power of owners and renters. While different places result in different attachments and feelings, people will have different types of belonging throughout their life (Relph, 1976 and Savage *et al.,* 2005). For instance, elective belonging depends on the personal stage of the individual's life course and their views before connecting with a specific place. This book brings together both tenure groups' attachment/feelings (elective and selective

belonging) and activities (place making and place maintenance) to explain the role of tenure status and location (waterfront environment).

The research questions in this book will be addressed using quantitative and qualitative research methods. There were 177 participants in my online questionnaire and 42 participants in my semi-structured interviews, the participants in which belonged to different age groups, genders/sexualities, nationalities and tenure groups (e.g. second homeowners, landlords, tenants, and owner-occupiers).

1.2 Introduction to Ocean Village, Southampton

The rise of neoliberalism not only restructured the economy and economic relationships, but also affected urban policies and urban places. As discussed in the previous section (section 1.1), cities are, in effect, 'arenas' that illustrate neoliberalism in practice through the example of property and land development (Brenner and Theodore, 2002 and Sager, 2011). Redeveloped waterfront areas are one of the most important 'expressions' of neoliberalism which include missing public spaces, privatisation, property and developments intended for elite consumption (Brenner and Theodore, 2002 and Rubin, 2011). The waterfront area of Ocean Village, Southampton, therefore allows me in this instance to pursue research questions in terms of different tenure groups, location and neoliberal urban developments. This vibrant waterfront area has not yet been studied and includes different tenure groups (e.g. student tenants or professional tenants, professional owner-occupiers, retired owner-occupiers, landlords, second homeowners, etc.) and different types of developments (e.g. residential, leisure and work). As a redeveloping waterfront area, Ocean Village provides the opportunity to examine the different reasons and feelings (elective or selective belonging) and attachment (place making/maintenance) of different tenure groups at the same time.

The area in which Ocean Village is located was historically used for different purposes (e.g. residential, leisure or work). "The history of Southampton as a modern port starts here, with the construction of the 16 acre Outer Dock (now Ocean Village Marina) in August 1842" (Groombridge, 2014:9). In 1838, the Southampton Dock Company was formed by Parliament. The first dock in Southampton, now called the Outer Dock, opened in 1842. Subsequently, the Inner Dock, with an area of 10 acres and with 2,575 feet of quayage, officially opened in 1851. Queen Victoria subsequently opened the Itchen Quays (1876) and Empress Dock (1890) (Groombridge, 2014; Legg, 2010). From the beginning of the twentieth

century until the Second World War, there was an increasing amount of shipping and passengers during which time the railway companies played a significant role (Moody, 1998). Because of improvements in trade, new docks opened in Southampton between 1900 and 1945 (e.g. Ocean Dock in 1911, New Docks in 1930, and Dry Dock in 1933) (Roussel, 2009). The railway contributed to the considerable increase in transatlantic passengers and goods traffic. In turn, this resulted in the requirement for increased dock accommodation and the construction of new docks (Groombridge, 2014). There was an increasing trend in the development of docks in Southampton.

Ocean Village is located at the mouth of the River Itchen in Southampton and is close to the city centre and other significant parts of the city, (e.g. Oxford Street, which has a number of restaurants and pubs, and docks). The figure below (Figure 1.1) gives a sense as to the extent of Ocean Village in the 1980s. Ocean Village used to be an important port, which provided ferry business to France and the Channel Islands from the Second World War until the 1980s (Legg, 2010). However, the transformation of the Outer Dock, now called Ocean Village, began in the latter half of the 1980s. In the first steps of the redevelopment, the developers wanted to create 150 new jobs and a new food hall in Ocean Village (Wow in Soton, 1986). The majority of the old warehouses and buildings were demolished, and £75m was spent on the completion of the first phase of the redevelopment (Rood, 1986). The redevelopment itself began in 1986 with the construction of Canute's Pavilion Shopping Centre. Forty-nine shops with galleries for exhibitions were also completed during the first years of the redevelopment (Wright, 1987), though the redevelopment included houses, restaurants, cafes, cinemas, a 450-berth leisure marina, and the Royal Southampton Yacht Club (JTP Architecture, 2016; Russel, 2009). The new developments changed the physical structure of Ocean Village with its retail, leisure and office facilities in the 1980s (Pinch, 2002). The above changes took place between 1986 and 1987 in particular (Groombridge, 2014), where Ocean Village became a mixed, redeveloping waterfront area that was attracting various different types of people (e.g. dwellers, visitors and workers) with each of its different types of development.

The diversity of Ocean Village increased the popularity of the area, and its transformation continued through the 1990s into the beginning of the 2000s. The luxury and modern apartment blocks, completed in 2003, transformed Ocean Village area into a trendy and fashionable location with an entirely new atmosphere (Legg, 2010). Warehouses were converted

to offices and a cinema complex (Southampton City Council: City Characterisation Project, 2009: 254). Additional restaurants and ground floor bars were established on the north side of the marina (*ibid*, 260).

However, this transformational trend slowed down in 2008 and 2009 due to the global financial crisis in the UK (Groombridge, 2014). Since then, however, Ocean Village has seen continuous development. Many businesses, including businesses such as PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), established their offices in this neighbourhood. Admiral's Quay in Ocean Village officially opened in mid-February 2015, and offers Southampton's residents a variety of new cafes, restaurants and flats. In 2015, Nicholas Roach, the chair of the Nicolas James Group announced the establishment of a five-star hotel and a luxury apartment complex in Ocean Village (a total investment of £33m) (Groombridge, 2014). The construction of the new hotel and apartment complex was completed in 2017. The hotel (Southampton Harbour Hotel) is the only five-star hotel in Southampton.

Table 1.1. below describes the distribution of the population of Ocean Village, which is provided for a better understanding of the current situation in this redeveloping waterfront area.

Table 1.1 Total Households and Population in Ocean Village in 2017

	Owner-Occupiers	**Social Rented**	**Private Rented**	**Living Rent Free**	**Total**
Total Households	43.1% (330)	8.1% (62)	47.7% (365)	1.1% (9)	100.0% (766)
Total Population	42.0% (537)	7.8% (100)	49.4% (633)	0.8% (11)	100.0% (1281)

Sources: Office for National Statistics; National Records of Scotland; Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (2017): 2011 Census aggregate data. UK Data Service (Edition: February 2017). DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.5257/census/aggregate-2011-2

According to the estimated ONS 2017 data, there are a total of 766 households in Ocean Village. These properties are not evenly distributed between the tenure groups: 43.1% (330) households are owned, 8.1% (62) are socially rented, and 47.7% (365) are privately rented. In addition, there are nine properties where people reside in rent-free properties. If we compare these statistics with the national average in terms of the distribution of owner-occupiers and tenants, in Ocean Village, while the

percentage of owner-occupiers is lower, the percentage of tenants is higher. Around 50% of owners rented out their properties in Ocean Village.

Currently, there are seven restaurants and bars in Ocean Village, four of which are on the waterside while the remaining three are located towards the back of the area. Additionally, there are new restaurants and cafes located in the new hotel. In addition, there were two cinemas, the Harbour Lights Picture House Southampton and the Cineworld Cinema, until summer 2018 when the latter was demolished to make way for another residential development. The residents of Ocean Village use these facilities not only to watch movies but also as meeting places and venues for various activities. There are limited public spaces (e.g. gardens, marina area, and parking areas) available to Ocean Village residents. Figure 1.2 demonstrates the current situation within Ocean Village, including its Yacht Club (on the right side), residential buildings, restaurants (on the ground floor of each buildings) and the new five-star hotel (on the left side). Comparing Figure 1.1 and 1.2 perhaps perfectly illustrates the enormous changes Ocean Village has undergone in the course of the last three decades.

Figure 1.1 Ocean Village in 2018

Sources: *Photo taken by author 04.08.2018.*

Lastly, it is important to consider property prices, in terms of both sales and rental costs, in Ocean Village. This data is crucial to the realisation that Ocean Village is an up-market residential area of Southampton.

Table 1.2 Rental prices for properties in Southampton and Ocean Village in July 2019

	1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4 bedroom
Average rent in Southampton	£640 pcm	£853 pcm	£1076 pcm	£1392 pcm
Average rent in Ocean Village	From £800 to £950 pcm	From £900 to £1900 pcm	From £1300 to £2400 pcm	£1850 pcm

Sources: The data produced from the websites: https://www.rightmove.co.uk/, https://www.zoopla.co.uk/ and https://www.home.co.uk/.

Tables 1.2 and 1.3 demonstrate that Ocean Village is a more expensive area in which to buy or rent compared with average sale and rental prices

in Southampton as a whole. The flat's rental price is start from £800 and go up to £1850. The same is true for property prices, which start from £160,000 and go up to £675,000. There are a few properties that are close to the lower end of the average rental and sales prices in Ocean Village. However, most properties' rental and sales prices are close to the upper bounds of the average prices for Southampton. Nevertheless, if we consider table 1.1 and tables 1.2 and 1.3 together, Ocean Village is clearly attractive to both renters and homeowners, regardless of the prices of the properties. In other words, participants ranked where they lived relative to their choice of tenure type.

Table 1.3 The sale prices of properties in Southampton and Ocean Village in July 2019

	1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4 bedroom
Average sales in Southampton	£134,288	£213,503	£288,963	£424,710
Average sales in Ocean Village	From £160,000 to £189,000	From £220,000 to £700,000	From £310,000 to £675,000	£735,000

Sources: The data above was taken from the following websites: https://www.rightmove.co.uk/, https://www.zoopla.co.uk/ and https://www.home.co.uk/.

The above tables (1.1, 1.2, and 1.3), describe the profile of Ocean Village's population and the prices of properties (both rented and for sale) and suggest that people are influenced by where they live regardless of their tenure status. According to these statistics, Ocean Village has as a mixed population, which includes both a significant number of owner-occupiers and tenants at the same time.

It is important to note that tenants in Ocean Village pay higher rents than those in other areas of Southampton. This amount of rent might give them the option to buy properties within other less desirable places in the same city after saving a deposit. Therefore, it is necessary to consider place and tenure status simultaneously in order to determine the exact reasons for people's choices and feelings in this regard. The place of Ocean Village is an interesting example in terms of its location (e.g. next to water, water view, close to local facilities, close to main roads and transportation (train, airport, bus), proximity to the city centre and ease of access to other parts of the city and close cities, prestige area). Its distinctive location makes

Ocean Village an interesting case study through which to evaluate the importance of tenure status and location as an influencing factor in the decision to move into or buy within a certain place, and the experience of a certain place.

1.3 Book Overview and Chapter Outline

This book consists of six chapters. In this chapter, I have introduced the main motivation of this book, research aims and questions. In addition, I introduced the case study area to illustrate how it is important to my study. In chapter 2, I focus on different contexts as part of this research and provide a review of the existing literature. The main focus of my discussion is on neoliberalism and neoliberal urbanism in waterfront areas using housing policy examples from the UK. These examples are discussed in terms of residential status to understand the condition of tenure groups within a neoliberal era. I then discuss elective and selective belonging, place making and place maintenance to evaluate the impact of tenure status and location on people's decisions and experiences. While these concepts consider place as a basis for creating belonging and personal attachment, they neglect to consider tenure status. These concepts help me to create a holistic approach to understand and compare tenure status and location. Lastly, I complete this chapter with an examination of online life (internet and Facebook social media groups) and offline life with their connections.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology used in this book. I start with a general overview of the existing literature, and then note the research aims, objectives and questions, and introduce the concepts underlying and/or relating to the data collection tools, sample participants and data analysis. Next, I address the reliability, validity and reflexivity of my research. Lastly, I point out the ethical considerations and my role in the research as a researcher.

Chapter 4 is the first analysis chapter in which the research findings are presented. I address my research questions in terms of the decision to move into or buy within (elective and selective belonging) a specific place. I emphasise the importance of tenure status in Ocean Village as a representative of tenure groups' decisions, with location being an important contributor.

In chapter 5, I focus on an understanding of the role of tenure status and location in Ocean Village by exploring residents' experiences of place

making and place maintenance in daily life, both in an online and offline context. I argue that in the case of Ocean Village, tenure status plays a significant role in the types of place making and place maintenance activities. Location was identified as another important factor for people with different backgrounds (e.g. the stage of the life-course or occupation).

Finally, in chapter 6, I conclude the book by considering the wider implications of the findings. I reflect on the implications of this book for research, policy and community studies of urban life to illustrate the importance of, and its contribution to the area of study. Herein, I also discuss the limitations of the present study and potential future areas of research.