

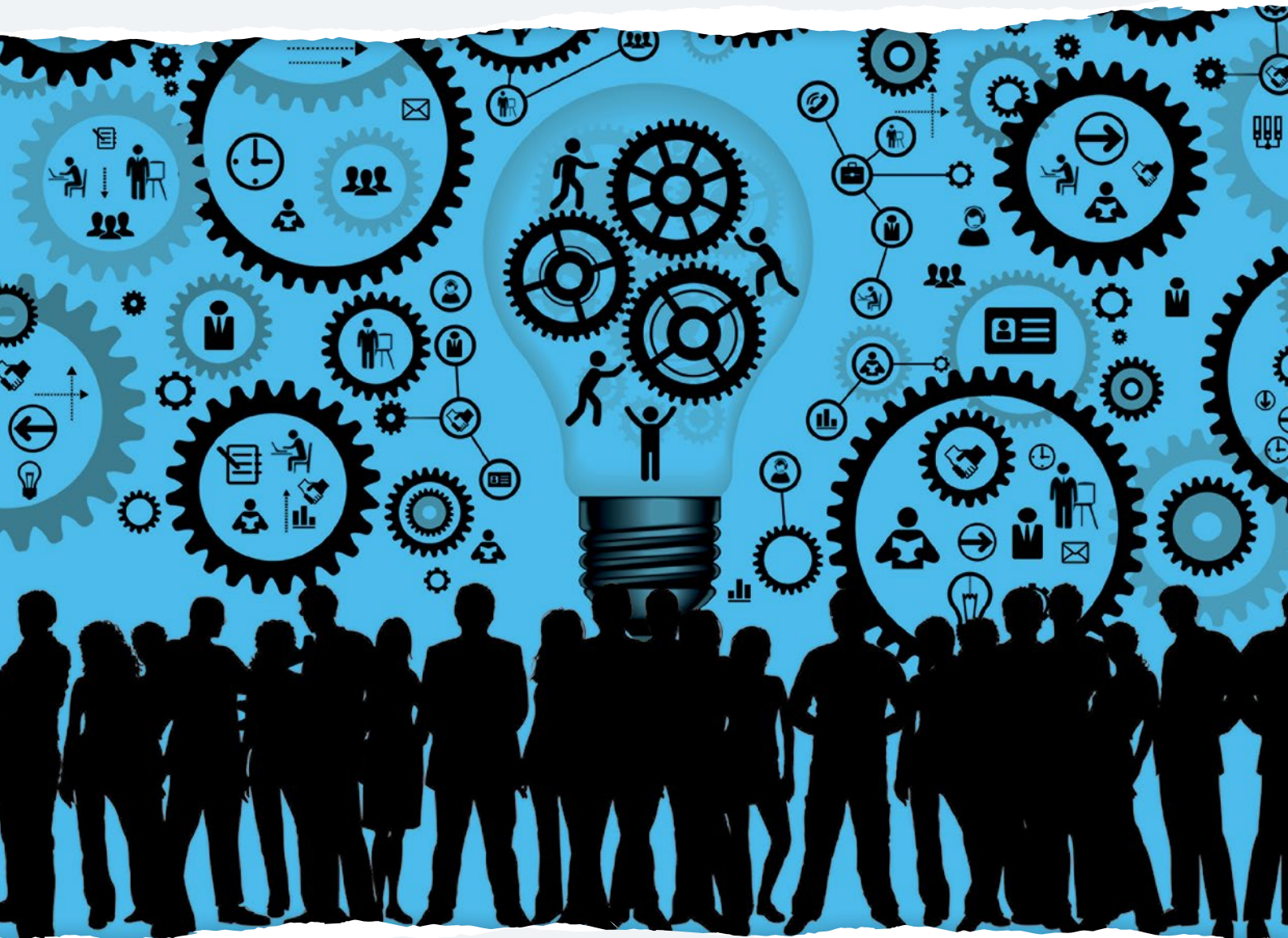


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# The Enabling State: From Rhetoric to Reality

Case studies of contemporary practice

Jenny Brotchie



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# 1. Introduction

*‘There is a debate in progress across the UK, and in much of Europe, about the role of governments. It takes different flavours in the devolved nations and policymakers, stakeholders and the public in general use a variety of words to describe and take part in the debate.’*

**Sir John Elvidge, *The Enabling State: A Discussion Paper*, November, 2012.**

In each of the devolved jurisdictions of the UK and Ireland, there is a discernible shift in thinking about how public services are delivered. At the Carnegie UK Trust, we are using the term the ‘Enabling State’ to describe this ‘paradigm shift’.

In England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, governments are forging a new kind of relationship with individual citizens and communities. Traditional ‘top down’ public services are being discarded in favour of models built from the ‘bottom up’. Individuals and communities are being given new opportunities for greater control over their interaction with the state and their own wellbeing.

The distinct ‘flavour’ of these reforms is not uniform across the UK and Ireland. The ‘Localism’ and ‘Big Society’ agenda in England is, for example, in many ways quite different to the ‘Community Empowerment’ agenda in Scotland, the moves toward greater collaboration and co-operation in Wales or ‘Active Citizenship’ in the Republic of Ireland.

The aspirations driving these reforms and debates, however, share common features. They stem from a desire to reorganise and redesign

public services in such a way that some of the key shortcomings of existing systems can be tackled. They share an aspiration to move away from the traditional top-down models where citizens are simply passive recipients of state services. They favour instead inverted models of public services where citizens and communities have greater opportunity to shape and influence services based on their own experiences and where state support is built around individual and community capability and capacity. These new models take a more holistic approach to public services and there is a greater focus on existing individual and community strengths.

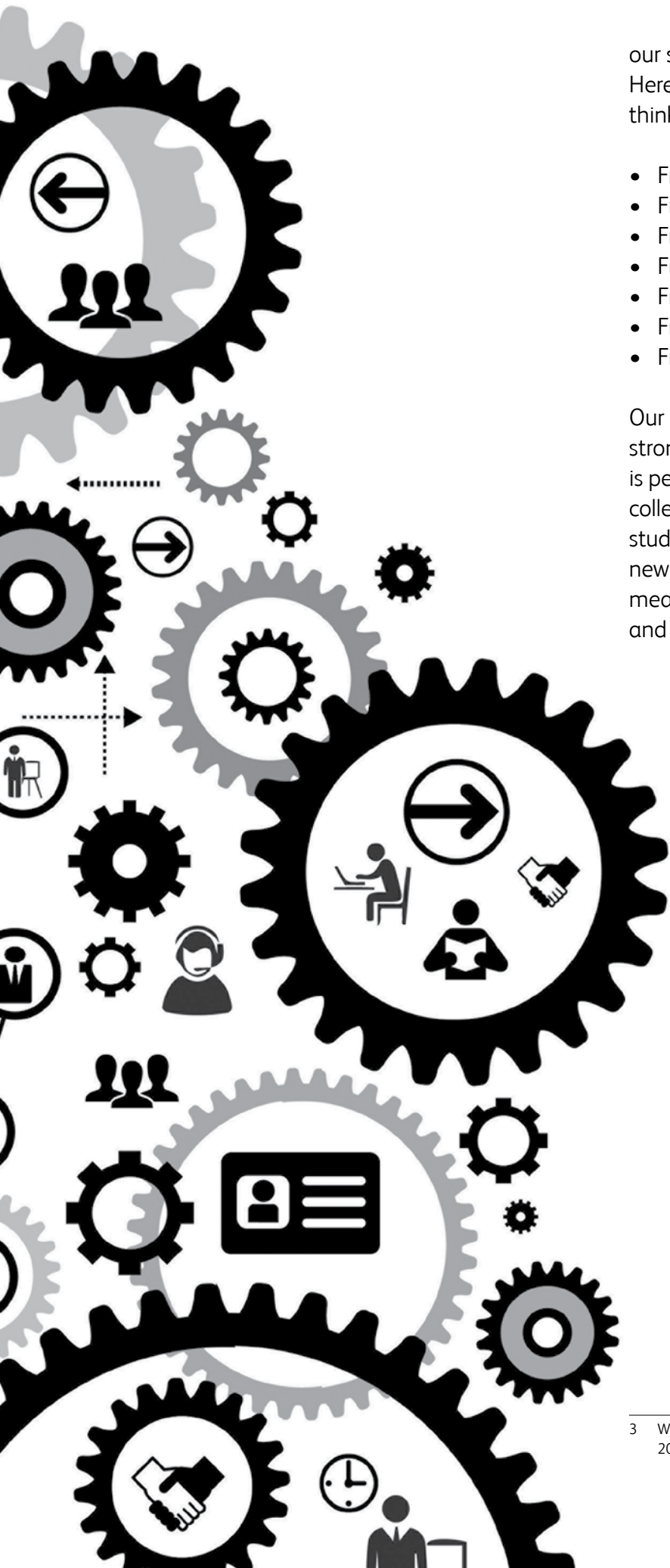
The Carnegie UK Trust has been exploring this shift in thinking in our [Enabling State](#) project. Our aim is to develop a common language to describe this shift whilst challenging traditional models of public service delivery by describing an alternative that recognises the importance of individuals and communities. Our work is led by Carnegie Fellow Sir John Elvidge.

The first stage of this process has been to generate debate via Sir John Elvidge’s: *The Enabling State: A discussion paper*<sup>1</sup> published in November 2012. The themes in Sir John’s paper were explored in more detail at roundtable discussions with key stakeholders from the public, private and third sectors in Cardiff, Belfast, Dublin, Newcastle, Dunfermline and London<sup>2</sup> in late 2012 and early 2013.

We have also carried out a more in-depth review of current policy and evidence. This is available in

1 Elvidge, John, *The Enabling State: A discussion paper*, Dunfermline: Carnegie UK Trust 2012 <http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/2012/the-enabling-state---a-discussion-paper>

2 Summary reports of the roundtable discussions are available to download from the Enabling State project page of the Carnegie UK Trust website: <http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/changing-minds/people---place/enabling-state>



our sister report: *The Rise of the Enabling State*<sup>3</sup>. Here we have identified this common shift in thinking as:

- From new public management to public value
- From centralised management to localism
- From representative to participative democracy
- From silos and towards integration
- From acute intervention to prevention
- From recipients to co-producers
- From state delivery to the third sector

Our discussions have, at times, been theoretically strong, but light on the practical realities, which is perhaps not surprising at this early stage in our collective shift in thinking. The aim of this case study compendium is therefore to profile some new ways of working to help clarify what we mean when we talk about a more 'Enabling State' and to identify some early learning.

<sup>3</sup> Wallace J, *The Rise of the Enabling State*, Dunfermline: Carnegie UK Trust 2013



## 2. Methodology

Our discussions with stakeholders at roundtable sessions in Cardiff, Belfast, Dublin, Newcastle, Dunfermline, and London have highlighted the very different political, social and economic contexts to a shift towards a more enabling approach to public services<sup>4</sup>. Nonetheless, they allowed us to identify a set of emerging<sup>5</sup> characteristics which define an enabling approach to public services these are:

### 1. Empowered citizens and communities:

Communities and individuals are empowered to use their own capacity to improve their community wellbeing and to realise their own aspirations. This could involve the community ownership of assets or delivery of services. An enabling state uses its resources to unlock and develop community and individual capacity.

### 2. A co-production model for public services:

Citizens are able to both shape local services provision (through community engagement or other democratic processes) and have influence over their own experience of receiving a service (through co-production).

### 3. Success where the state has traditionally failed:

Communities and individuals hold the key to improving wellbeing in areas of our lives where the state has been less successful: for example, combating loneliness and anxiety. An enabling state would support communities and individuals to address problems where the state was unable to respond adequately.

**4. A level playing field:** An enabling state would seek to reduce not exacerbate inequalities. An enabling state must be effective in recognising and responding to differences in community and individual capacity so that inequalities are reduced and no community is left behind.

**5. A holistic approach to public service delivery:** A joined-up and preventative approach to service delivery is a key feature of an enabling state. An enabling state channels resources toward supporting preventative action or joined-up working, or both.

**6. Shared responsibilities:** All parts of society have a role in improving our collective and individual wellbeing. An enabling state welcomes effective partnerships between individuals, civil society (including business) and the state.

These six, interrelated characteristics formed the basis of a call for evidence of practical examples of an 'enabling state in action'.

The invitation to nominate projects, programmes or services that demonstrated these characteristics was initially issued in spring 2013 and sent to approximately 300 key contacts across the UK and Ireland. A general call was also issued in our Carnegie UK Trust April 2012 e-newsletter (circulated to about 4,000 contacts) and advertised on our social media sites (Facebook and Twitter).

<sup>4</sup> Summary reports of the roundtable discussions in each jurisdiction are available at: <http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/changing-minds/people--place/enabling-state>

<sup>5</sup> We have since clarified our thinking and we identify and describe in more detail the shift in thinking in our sister report *The Rise of the Enabling State*.

The call was closed on June 21, 2013. Over 100 individual suggestions were received by this date. A final shortlist of 12 case study examples was identified on the basis of their closeness of fit with the six characteristics above. Shortlisted case studies were chosen carefully to ensure a balance of large and small projects and services:

- at various stages of development;
- addressing a number of different issues;
- set against the different political, economic and social backdrops of the five jurisdictions of the UK and Ireland.

As a result, the case studies we feature in this compendium are not all polished examples of an enabling approach that neatly fit the six characteristics we have identified. Rather, they represent a real-world collection of people, communities and organisations aspiring to do things differently, with their approach and success shaped by their history and the challenges and opportunities they have encountered.

The case studies that follow were compiled on the basis of telephone interviews with nominated representatives from each project and a rapid desk-based review. As such, they are intended to provide a feel for the practical experiences of addressing complex social issues in a more enabling manner.





### 3. The 12 Case Studies

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Table 1: Case study summary on the following page provides a summary of the 12 case studies featured in this collection.

As Table 1 shows, the case studies in this collection showcase a range of projects and initiatives from across the UK and Ireland.

Four of the case studies are from Scotland, three from England, two from Wales, another two from Northern Ireland and one from the Republic of Ireland. Our Enabling State analysis, as laid out by Sir John Elvidge in his 2012 discussion paper, comes inevitably from a Scottish perspective. Whilst our discussions with stakeholders across the UK and Ireland since publication have confirmed that our analysis does resonate beyond Scotland, we were naturally concerned about a potential Scottish bias. Would we, sub-consciously, respond to the familiar language of ‘empowering communities’ that is used to describe the shift toward a more enabling state in Scotland when shortlisting our case studies? While we have taken care to avoid this, language, we have found, can obscure good and bad practice. We touch on this again in Chapter 4.

Most of the 12 case studies have been active for less than five years, reflecting to some extent, perhaps, the greater focus in recent years on more enabling approaches. Three: Healthworks, NICIE and the Laggan Forest Trust have been active for longer periods. It was interesting to us that the more recent case studies tended to have received greater support from the state since inception. Some, like the work of the Effective Services for Vulnerable Groups (ESVG) programme in Wales are programmes initiated and led directly by government. In contrast, NICIE and Laggan Forest Trust represent

activities initiated by grassroots communities that have, at times, struggled to find high level support.

We have deliberately focused on case studies that are working with some of the most vulnerable individuals and communities in our society. It is these groups that potentially have the most to gain from a more enabling approach to public services, but also potentially the most to lose without appropriate support and resources. We were therefore interested in the determinates of success and the biggest challenges that an enabling approach faced in these areas.

The case studies cover a wide range of issues from older people to ‘troubled families’, communities facing multiple economic and social challenges and people with long-term conditions. In each of these areas, there is a clear role for the state, but it is one that is quite different to the traditional ‘service provider’ role.



Table 1: Case study summary

Case Study	Issues addressed	Period of activity	Key features						Led by	Funding	Jurisdiction
			Empowered communities	Co-production	Success where state has failed	Level playing field	Holistic approach	Shared responsibilities			
<b>The Self Management Fund</b>	Self management of long-term conditions	4 years							Third sector	State	Scotland
<b>Genio</b>	Self directed living	3 years							Third sector	Philanthropic and State	Republic of Ireland
<b>Link Up</b>	Re-establishing trust in deprived communities	2 years							Philanthropic organisation	State	Scotland
<b>Local Area Co-ordination</b>	Vulnerable members of the community	3 years							Local Authority with social enterprise	Local Authority	England
<b>Participle: Circle and Life</b>	An active third age and 'troubled' families	4 years							Local Authority with social enterprise	Local Authority	England
<b>Effective Services for Vulnerable People: Gwent Missing Children and Young People Project</b>	Young people who go missing	< 3 years							State	Public Agencies, Local Authority and Big Lottery	Wales
<b>Violence Reduction Unit: Hawkhill Community Centre</b>	Health improvement and crime reduction	< 2 years							Public agencies	State	Scotland
<b>NICIE: The Integrated Schools Movement</b>	Realising integrated education in Northern Ireland	25 years plus							Third sector	State and Philanthropic	Northern Ireland
<b>Bron Afon Youth Forum</b>	Engaging young people	4 years							Third sector	Community mutual	Wales
<b>Healthworks</b>	Health inequalities	10 years plus							Social enterprise	Public Agencies, Local Authority and others	England
<b>Laggan Forest Trust</b>	Community ownership and management	10 years plus							Community Development Trust	State, EU and others	Scotland
<b>Skainos</b>	Urban regeneration	10 years plus							Social enterprise	State, EU, philanthropic and other	Northern Ireland

## 4. What can we learn from our case studies?

The backdrop to each of these case studies is very different. Some have received strong strategic support from the state, while others are examples of ‘lone voices’, early adopters with limited state support working to change the system from the bottom up. Some have been operating for many years and others are just starting out. Some have enjoyed a smoother road and greater success, while others have faced greater challenges. Some come very close to encapsulating an ‘enabling approach’ as defined by the six characteristics laid out in Chapter 2; others are at an earlier stage on that journey. All however, are examples of people and organisations seeking to do things differently: building services, support and development around existing individual and community strengths, ability, enthusiasm and experiences.

We are conscious this collection of case study examples does not constitute a comprehensive review of enabling practice and we are therefore cautious not to draw any definitive conclusions from our collection. We have, however, used the following section to discuss some of these successes and challenges and to reflect on some of the key lessons that emerged from our interviews. Table 2 identifies some of the emerging learning and the case studies that discussed or highlighted these broad issues in our interviews.

### 4.1 Leadership and financial support from the state is critical

Creating an enabling environment is not an easy task for government. A state that is too directive in its approach risks failing to make best use of existing individual and community strengths at the local level. On the other hand, a ‘hollow’ state that simply withdraws and leaves communities to ‘get on with it’ risks exacerbating inequalities.

Communities with good access to social and financial resources may well be able to capitalise on new opportunities, but communities facing multiple social and economic challenges are likely to fall increasingly behind.

Our case studies suggest that financial investment and leadership from the state are both important.

#### Financial

It was striking that all of our featured case studies rely to some extent on the availability of financial resources from the national or local state.

A significant proportion of the case studies in this collection are discrete programmes or pilot initiatives funded for a limited time period only, and many identify short-term funding and/or austerity as a key challenge to their on-going success. While some, such as Participle’s Circle movement or the Laggan Forest Trust lend themselves to a social enterprise model of long-term funding, others – such as the initiatives being supported by the Self Management Fund or the work in Hawkhill – will require funding from elsewhere if they are to continue.

In one example from our case studies, only one project from a particular cohort of funded projects was able to sustain itself as a social enterprise following the initial funding. Others had to seek out other sources of on-going funding and many struggled to do so.

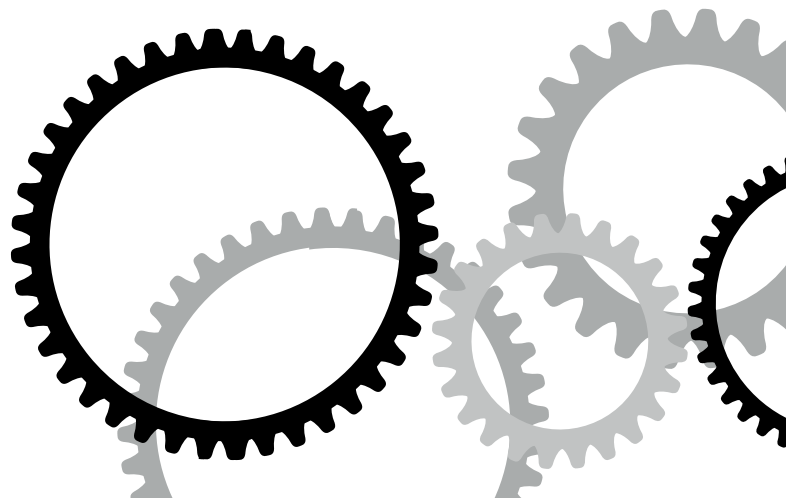


Table 2: Lessons from our case studies

Case Study	1. State leadership and/or financial support is critical	2. Building links within and/or outwith the community is crucial	3. Transformational rather than incremental change is important	4. Mutually beneficial relationships are at the heart of coproduction	5. Sufficient time was critical	6. The right staffing is important
The Self Management Fund						
Genio						
Link Up						
Local Area Coordination						
Participle: Circle and Life						
Effective Services for Vulnerable People: Gwent Missing Children and Young People Project						
Violence Reduction Unit: Hawkhill Community Centre						
NICIE: The Integrated Schools Movement						
Bron Afon Youth Forum						
Healthworks						
Laggan Forest Trust						
Skainos						



*'[one of the biggest challenges is] projects who have been previously funded do great stuff and have come up with some fantastic things, and [are] then hit with that usual challenge of not being too sure where to go next, they need some funding to keep it going and they need some support to maybe develop their ideas or develop their capacity ...'*

#### Case Study Interviewee

In a more enabling state, a major challenge is to ensure that financial investment is distributed fairly – to those that would benefit most. This is a particular challenge when it comes to supporting grassroots community activity. Data from England and Scotland for example, shows that those living in the most deprived areas appear to be struggling to activate the new 'community rights' associated with Community Right to Buy and Community Right to Bid<sup>6</sup>. Case studies such as Laggan Forest Trust, NICIE, Hawkhill Community Centre and Link Up offer some insight as to why 'upstream' investment in deprived communities is likely to become increasingly important. The experience of Laggan Forest Trust and NICIE demonstrate that the journey to community control or ownership is rarely smooth. A wide range of skills and knowledge are required: from knowledge of good governance, to financial management, public speaking or the ability to provide evidence to public consultations. While some communities may already be in possession of these skills or at least in a position to access these, others such as Hawkhill or the communities in which Link Up are operating require additional support and resources.

#### Leadership

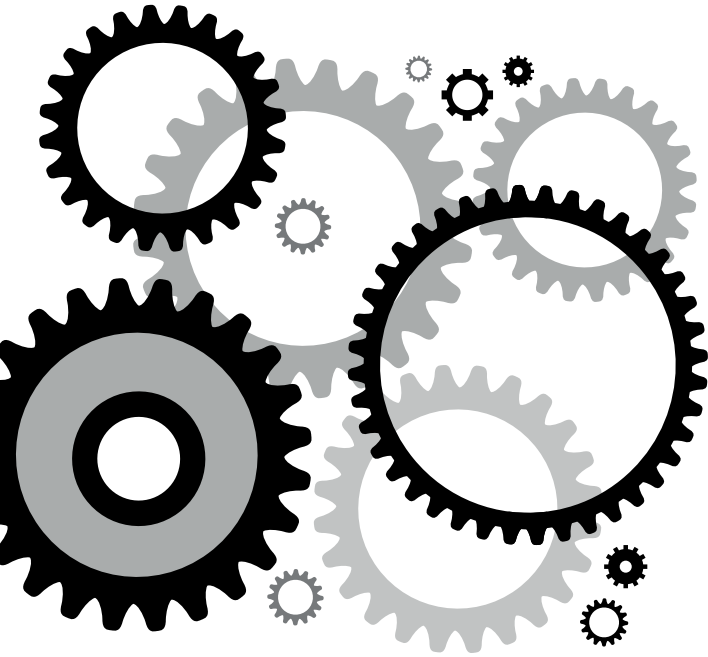
The experiences of our interviewees highlight that the public service environment within which our case studies operate is very important.

At the very least, operating outside of the mainstream makes it difficult to form successful partnerships and diverts effort. From overcoming bureaucratic hurdles or aligning programmes to fit with someone else's objectives, our interviewees repeatedly spoke about the challenges associated with convincing partners that:

- they had shared responsibility for complex social issues;
- it made sense to invest time and resources in preventative approaches rather than crisis intervention;
- individual and community wellbeing should be the key priority rather than organisational targets.



<sup>6</sup> Wallace J, *The Rise of the Enabling State*, Dunfermline: Carnegie UK Trust 2013



The difference that a shared language of change can make is well illustrated by the experiences of those managing the Self Management Fund for Scotland. In Scotland, aspirations for a more ‘mutual’ NHS model where citizens are ‘service owners’ as much as ‘service users’<sup>7</sup> have existed within the health service for a number of years, alongside an interest in asset-based approaches to public health. These aspirations were bolstered by the wider Scottish public service reform agenda centred around four pillars: prevention; joined-up delivery; services built around individuals and communities, and improved performance. This strategic buy in has arguably done much to create a receptive context for the development and delivery of the Self Management Fund for Scotland. The Fund itself emerged as a recommendation of the Management Strategy for Scotland: ‘Gaun Yersel’, a strategy co-produced with services users. On-going investment and support from the Scottish Government for the fund and funded projects has helped over 81 self management projects to, in turn, help people living with a long-term condition to improve their own life. Our interviewees in Scotland noted that while the realities at the ‘coal face’ do not yet, always marry well with policy rhetoric, there was a growing understanding and receptiveness amongst public service partners to new ways of working.

*‘... I think one of the main attitude changes that I’ve noticed ... was that [professionals felt that] people couldn’t really take much control for themselves ... and didn’t really know where to get additional support and information without the professionals’ input and guidance [they] felt very responsible for people at every step of the way. And that is changing; it’s still around, I’m not saying it’s changed completely, but I think ... things are changing and have changed over the past few years.’*

#### Case Study Interviewee

In contrast, interviewees in England and Ireland tended to be less optimistic about state support: reporting a greater local variation in levels of support/‘buy in’ from public sector bodies and a greater negative impact of austerity in terms of convincing partners of the benefits of new ways of working. This has meant that success has been patchy and more reliant on finding the right individuals to work with.

The Public Service Leadership Group (PSLG) and Effective Services for Vulnerable Groups (ESVG) programme in Wales is interesting in that it is the most ‘top down’ example in our collection. One of our interviewees raised concerns about whether this style of approach could effectively catalyse the radical changes in service delivery that define a more enabling approach. The greatest challenge for ESGV, however, will be to ensure that the more enabling principles of the new approaches, as much as the operational specifics, promoted by the group are retained and enhanced as they move to the mainstream.

<sup>7</sup> Scottish Government, (online) *Better Health, Better Care: Action Plan* <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/12/11103453/2> [Accessed August 2013]

High-level commitment, of course, relies on assurance that these new ways of working are effective. Many of our interviewees spoke about the importance of being able to respond flexibly to local circumstances and community aspirations and, in case studies such as the Hawkhill Community Centre or 'Link Up', of 'having no fixed agenda'.

*'... [the] approach has given [our local workers] the freedom and the flexibility to operate that few other organisations would be able to do ... So, for example, two or three people had mentioned guitar lessons and learning to play the guitar. The next day [our worker] went and bought four guitars. The next week he'd established a group. So it's very, very responsive and flexible. But crucially, it's the freedom not to be encumbered with other organisations' agendas and objectives. [Our workers] are going in there and genuinely asking local people what they want to do.'*

**Case Study Interviewee**

Our case studies confirm that the six elements of an enabling approach are self reinforcing and highlight the importance of a public service culture and structure that values and supports: joint working, preventative action rather than crisis intervention, local decision making, outcomes rather than outputs and processes and, of course, greater opportunities for citizens and communities to shape the public services that they receive and to take on a greater role within the social economy.

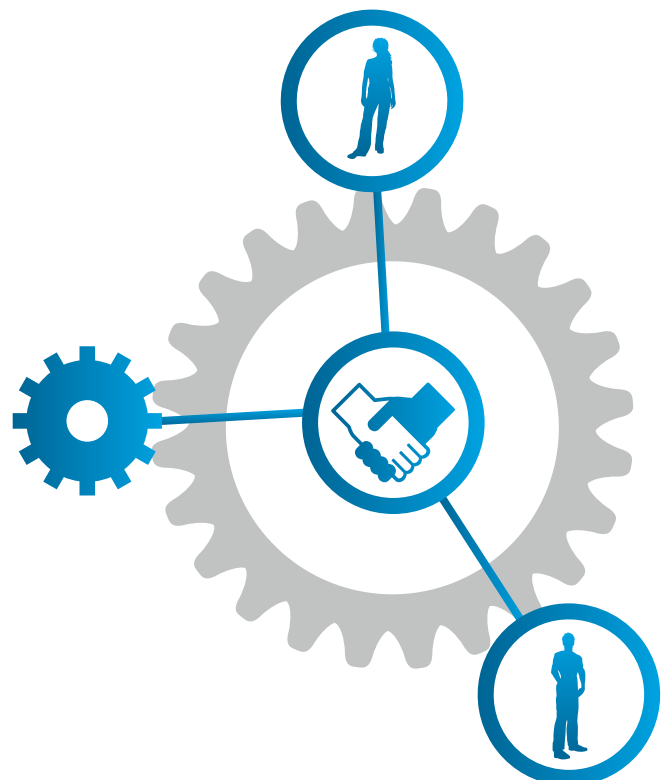
## 4.2 Building links within and/or outwith the community is crucial

*'The positives in any community are the people, and it's about looking, speaking, and finding these positive attributes.'*

**Case Study Interviewee**

One of the most significant concerns about an enabling approach is the risk that communities with limited connections within their communities and to professionals and influential people or organisations are left behind. How can we ensure that individuals in these communities are able to grasp new opportunities and fulfil their potential?

In almost all of our case studies, a 'linking' or 'bridge building' component was present. In some of our examples, technology helps facilitate links such as in the case of local Circles or ALISS. In others, such as Local Area Co-ordination, Link Up, Bron Afon Youth Forum and Hawkhill Community Centre, frontline staff embedded in communities perform the 'linking' role.



*'... what I bring is a network of connections, I bring the confidence to meet with partners, I bring a bit of resilience and toughness to actually be able to face undoubtedly the challenges that we have to face whenever you're brave enough or stupid enough to put your hand up and suggest that we do things differently to the traditional ways that we do things.'*

Case Study Interviewee

In our case studies, 'bridge building' took three forms:

- Building Networks of Mutual Support:**  
At the most basic level, our case studies intentionally build links and informal networks of support populated by individuals within the local community. This is the key aim of the Link Up programme and an important component of the support provided by Local Area Coordinators and local Circle's.
- Linking Individuals to Specialist Support:**  
On another level, staff or activities play an important role in linking individuals, families and communities to appropriate support (professional and informal, public sector and third sector) to develop their capabilities. The SMF and Genio support many projects in this area and the physical community space provided by Skainos is intended to facilitate these connections.
- Connections to Influential People:**  
The final form is more subtle, but just as crucial. These are the wider networks that a professional member of staff brings. Links to these influential networks are critical to communities that have few existing links to the professional world. Our interviewee at the Hawkhill Community Centre sees this as a

vital component of the frontline worker role. His professional status has allowed him to connect individual community members with senior figures such as the local Sheriff, Prison Governor and local business owners – contacts that community members would not ordinarily have had access to. Through their frontline worker, community members are now in a position to negotiate directly with significant and influential contacts within the local area.

All three forms of linking support appear to be an important component of service design.

### 4.3 Transformational rather than incremental change is important

*'... sometimes people try and reshape [the model] to re-present it in a [traditional] service model. Well, of course, we want to do things upside down. It's quite easy for the system to try and turn it back into something that they're comfortable with ...'*

Case Study Interviewee

Top-down service-orientated models are so prevalent and traditional service boundaries so entrenched, that pressure to conform to familiar models of service delivery can be enormous.

It is unsurprising then that early adopters are too often tempted to 'tinker' with, rather than 'transform', service delivery for the sake of speed, efficiency or just through sheer force of habit. Enabling components may simply be 'added on' to existing services or enabling approaches moulded into something more familiar to fit neatly alongside more traditional services.

As a result, a number of our interviewees spoke of regret and missed opportunities along the way.



Incorporating co-production: involving 'service users' in the design, development and implementation of the services that they receive appeared to be one of the most challenging elements of service redesign.

For example, the Self Management Fund in Scotland was the only initiative in this collection to have emerged from a co-produced national strategy. It is a good example of an initiative in which the co-production element of the enabling approach is evident from conception to implementation and development.

Other case studies offer insights into opportunities to incorporate co-production into development and implementation. For example, one of our interviewees from the Thurrock Local Area Co-ordination programme described how a citizen-led panel oversaw the recruitment of four new Local Area Co-ordinators. With the help of Thurrock CVS and a local social enterprise, a community interview panel of 25 local people was assembled. Using a 'speed dating' process, the panel narrowed over 100 candidates down to a final 16 who went for a formal interview. Community leaders were given the final say on the post holder for their local area and made the job offers to the four successful candidates. The process was so effective that the local authority is now exploring introducing a citizen led recruitment process in other areas. Families that have chosen to participate in the Participle Life programme are similarly in control and are closely involved in the selection process for staff members.

Involving vulnerable 'service users' in the design and delivery of services can be particularly challenging. Participation in a steering group or an interview panel may not always be appropriate for some vulnerable groups, while other more creative routes may need to be found to ensure that individual voices are heard. For instance, the Participle team spent eight weeks living alongside troubled families. They asked the families to record videos of 'things we did not know about' to better understand their experiences of existing services and what was particularly important to them. In Gwent, vulnerable children and young people who had experience of going missing were interviewed by specialists at a local university who had the skills to unpick their experiences in therapy sessions.

There is a big difference between transformational service change and tinkering about the edges of existing services. Many of our interviewees attributed 'remaining true' to enabling principles to their success, but there are a number of barriers to transformational change, not least existing structures and cultures and an equal proportion also identified it as a major challenge. Our case studies suggest that there may be a particular challenge in incorporating co-production into service design.



#### 4.4 Mutually beneficial relationships are at the heart of co-production

*‘It’s very much about going out and speaking to people first and foremost, forming relationships, forming trust, then asking the question of people what’s important to you and your community?’*

**Case Study Interviewee**

An interesting characteristic of almost all of our case studies was that where co-production occurred, it was always on a voluntary basis.

Care was taken to intentionally build and nurture mutually beneficial relationships, to understand participants own goals and priorities so that those involved in co-production all directly gain something from ‘activation’.

Healthworks, the Self Management Fund and Genio help individuals to realise their own goals for independent living and improved health. NICIE and Laggan Forest Trust are examples of local communities realising their own aspirations through greater control over local services and resources.

In the case of the Participle Life Programme and Local Area Co-ordination, individuals are invited rather than referred or compelled to take part in the programmes. If individuals are willing to participate, the starting point is to ask them what their own vision ‘of the good life’ is. Our interviewees described how many participants, unused to being asked such a question, often became quite emotional. This is an important shift in the traditional balance of power. While there is a risk that individuals opt not to take part, our interviewees’ experience was that if local workers took the time to patiently build trusted relationships with ‘hard to reach’ individuals, their persistence paid off.

Another interesting aspect was the number of the case studies that specifically used an asset-based approach to empower individuals to realise their own aspirations through co-production. A quarter of our case studies: Hawkhill Community Centre, Link Up, Local Area Co-ordination and Genio used asset-based language to describe their approach.

An asset-based approach focuses on existing strengths and abilities, rather than on weaknesses or needs. Link Up activities, for example, are determined not by the Link Up worker, but by the interests and aspirations of local people. At Hawkhill Community Centre, local community members are encouraged and supported to take their own ideas and initiatives forward. Our interviewees described how long-term unemployed community members with drug or alcohol problems built their confidence by becoming involved in running ‘fun’ community activities and how many have since reduced their alcohol consumption. Some members have gone on to find employment. One powerful story from the Inclusive Neighbourhoods network involves a woman who was supported to overcome her agoraphobia by building on her passion for antiques. Understanding that this was an important motivator to her allowed the Local Area Co-ordinator to link this lady with another community member with a similar interest and the two began to attend antique fairs together.

*‘Supporting people who have a vulnerability, needs to be done on the basis of identifying of their strengths, and identifying with them [what they have to achieve] in order to get the kind of life that they want to live. It’s all about making sure that somebody really, really has to present themselves as being used by their community in the best possible way.’*

**Case Study Interviewee**

For many of our interviewees, recognising that each individual has different aspirations, strengths and abilities and develops new skills, knowledge and relationships at their own pace was very important. The journey to ‘activation’ was individual and could not be rushed or predetermined. This is well illustrated by the story from the Link Up project of a young mother who had been personally affected by drug and alcohol abuse. Her journey began when she attended a local bingo night organised by community volunteers. This sparked an interest in becoming more involved in the community. With the help of the Link Up worker, she started becoming involved in small-scale community activities such as children’s parties. Nine months later, she had gained the confidence to pursue something that was close to her heart. Concerned that there was a lack of neutral, safe space in the local community, she was instrumental in setting up an ‘open café’ – a safe space for local people with drug or alcohol problems to meet and support each other.

Although participation was always voluntary, broad expectations were placed on individuals. For example, there is an expectation in many of our projects that individuals will work towards their own goals and that they will take the lead.

#### 4.5 Sufficient time is critical

*‘... first and foremost you have to take the time ... you can’t just expect it to happen it takes time to build trust and relationships ...’*

**Case Study Interviewee**

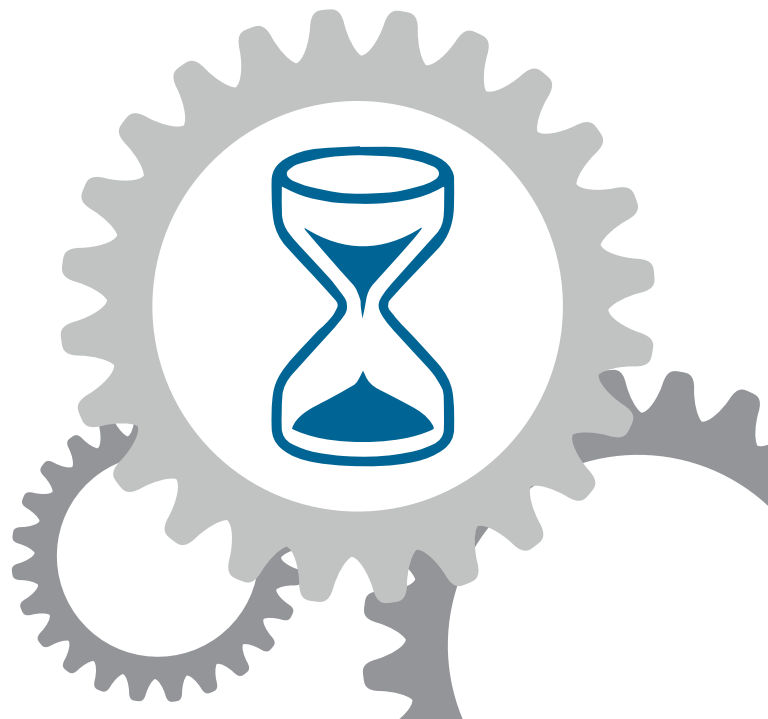
While it may be a truism of any new approach, the experiences of our case study interviewees suggest that it is worth emphasising the length of time required for development and implementation.

If services are to be dismantled and rebuilt in an enabling manner – transformed rather than simply tinkered with – then it is critical that a sufficient period of time and resources are set aside. This reduces the pressures to rush new approaches through in top-down fashion and allows service users and other stakeholders to be properly involved in the design and development stage.

Frontline staff and their managers must also be equipped and ready to work in a new way, and new deeper relationships with individuals and communities must be built so that citizens can be properly engaged in the design, delivery and development of services.

Many of our case studies emerged after a year or more of planning and preparation, demonstrating that this shift does not happen overnight. For example, the Missing Children and Young People project in Gwent took two years to bring multiple services together to work in a different way to address missing children and young people. Our interviewee described a long process of re-educating staff and raising awareness:

*‘We did it twice – bottom up and then right back down again from the top ... we’re very proud of the breadth of the consultation and the awareness raising that we’ve managed to achieve.’*



A similar period of time was required before the results of new, deeper relationships with citizens began to be seen and setbacks were common (see Section 4.6).

*‘... there’s a huge [amount] of trust there that needs to be built ... people have their traditional and historical attitudes about each of the services. And a lot of people within a community, there’s big challenges around previous criminal histories, there’s big challenges around health experiences which in the past might not have always been as positive as you would like them to be. So we’ve got that to address.’*

**Case Study Interviewee**

At Bron Afon Housing Association, the Senior Community Engagement Officer spent a year visiting youth clubs and schools and introducing herself to local young people on the street before any meaningful activity began. Similarly, our interviewees from Inclusive Neighbourhoods (which supports Local Area Co-ordination in England) and the Violence Reduction Unit tell stories about frontline workers patiently finding opportunities to introduce themselves to vulnerable or ‘hard to reach’ community members and slowly building relationships with people who are often extremely wary or suspicious of public services.

In the case of Skainos, the length of time between conception and completion was 12 years. While this was not intentional, reflecting on the experience now, our interviewee believes that this generous period time was important, as it gave the East Belfast Mission an opportunity to really engage with local people on the project.

*‘... [the biggest challenge is] really letting local people develop at their pace. I don’t think you can force this. You need to work with local people and nurture them to develop, because they have to be the ones that make the decision I’m going to stop being a participant, I’m going to volunteer, I’m going to not just volunteer for [the project], I’m going to volunteer for this other group. I’m the one that’s going to go and get myself training to get a job. They have to decide that pace ...’*

**Case Study Interviewee**

Table 2 shows that the availability of sufficient time – particularly to build these new types of relationships – was critical to success by five of our interviewees.

Our interviewees’ experience suggests that managing expectations about development and implementation periods and committing appropriate time to design, embed and implement the new approach is vital. A ‘community timetable’ rather than an ‘organisational timetable’ must be adopted.

## 4.6 Investing in the right staff is critical

*‘... the right worker is absolutely crucial.’*

**Case Study Interviewee**

Investing in staff with the right mix of skills, experience and personal attributes is vital.



Many of our case studies feature frontline workers embedded within the community that they are working in. Their job is to build trusted relationships with local people and to begin forging links within the community. Traditional state-individual power dynamics are reversed and the individuals that they work with are in the driving seat. This is difficult and demanding work. Relationship building is slow and often occurs outside of normal office hours. Periods of progress are followed by sudden setbacks or regression, and workers must have the skills, experience and personal attributes to handle conflict, community politics, personal crisis and other setbacks.

*‘When you work with people and communities it’s tough. That ranges from people being outright hostile and quite threatening to people wanting to control groups, to even at the simplest level, actually getting people to engage and come along to the group meeting is very, very difficult.’*

**Case Study Interviewee**

Our interviewees from Link Up, Inclusive Neighbourhoods (Local Area Coordination), Participle and Laggan Forest Trust all spoke about the importance of selecting the right frontline worker and/or just as crucially ensuring that the right kind of support is available for frontline staff. For Link Up in particular, this was an important learning point.

*‘... establishing those support mechanisms is really important. You [also] need to continuously reinforce the local workers that they need to take time to reflect. They operate at 100%, but there’s always extra work, so they work well beyond their normal hours... I think we should probably have reinforced that a bit earlier.’*

**Case Study Interviewee**

Investing in enough staff is also critical. A number of our interviewees particularly those who had experience of implementing enabling initiatives in multiple locations reflected that activity was greatest where they had invested in staff resource.

*‘... our money goes into obviously technology, which is very cheap, really, once you’ve built it and brings the cost down, but [also] into high quality people because that’s what you need to develop relationships, the [project] that has invested most in people and have the most people, also have the highest level of volunteering. So people bring people. It’s not like you can cut out the paid people and you’ll fill it with volunteers. That isn’t how it works.’*

**Case Study Interviewee**



Once a certain level of community-led activity is underway, it becomes much easier to draw in the ‘harder to reach’ members of the community, supporting partners, resources and to catalyse further activity. It is at this stage that the more dramatic stories of individuals enabled to use their own capacity to improve their own wellbeing begin to emerge. Investing in staff was therefore critical in our interviewees’ experience.

*‘... it’s not we want, it’s we have done, which encourages... we don’t ask for anything before we’ve actually done something ourselves. It’s like a snowball of positivity that the more we do, the more people ask about it. The more credit people get for it, the more people want to be part of it. The more successful it is, the more people want to be part of the success.’*

Case Study Interviewee

Finally, many of our case studies provide some sort of on-going support to staff. The Local Area Co-ordination Network, provides on-going support to local Local Area Co-ordination teams and operates as a central resource and information hub. Participle have found that staff are motivated if they feel part of the ‘Participle’ family, so staff come together for summer barbeques and receive regular visits. Others, such as Laggan Forest Trust and Link Up, spoke about the value of finding a local ‘mentor’ to provide

a friendly, critical ear. On a larger scale, the Self Management Fund and Genio are proud of the on-going support and advice that they offer to funded projects and staff.

In all of our case studies, the staff play an important role in catalysing and supporting community activity.

*‘[in terms of advice to others running a similar project?] Probably to make sure you’ve got someone you can bounce ideas off. A mentor, if you like.’*

Case Study Interviewee

#### 4.7 Final reflections on language, measuring impact and the broadening social economy

One of the biggest challenges for us in identifying case studies was the difference in the way staff described their work.

Many employed ‘enabling’ language such as: ‘empowering communities’, ‘co- production’, ‘co-design’, ‘reciprocal relationships’, ‘community capacity’, ‘capability’ and ‘realising potential’. Others used simpler or more traditional language, speaking about: ‘forming relationships’, ‘asking people what they would like to do’ and the ‘benefit of the community’. Often when probed, it became clear that the underlying approaches were very similar, but the language used was quite different.

capability forming relationships  
asking people what they would like to do  
Empowering communities  
realising potential community capacity  
co-design co-production reciprocal relationships  
benefit of the community

Language can, of course, be important in framing the ethos of an approach. This is particularly clear in asset-based approaches where the language of strengths and capabilities helps steer the user away from the more traditional focus on need and deficit. It can also, however, in some instances, add a layer of opaqueness.

This is a major challenge in moving towards a more enabling approach, where good practice may be obscured by 'old fashioned' terms and mediocre practice veiled by more radical language.

Another big challenge was getting a feel for how effective each of the approaches had been in improving wellbeing. While this collection was never intended to be a rigorous review of enabling practice, we did anticipate that a number of our case studies would be able to demonstrate their impact through an independent evaluation of some sort. What we found, however, was that while most of our case studies were able to tell us about 'outputs' (participation rates, events held etc) and many were able to speak about powerful individual stories of change, few were able to tell us about the long-term change that the approach had made.

In part, this reflects the fact that most of our case study examples (eight) have only been 'live' for five years or less, with five running for three years or less. However, it may also reflect a larger issue. Measuring the effectiveness of more enabling interventions is inherently complex. Many of the case studies here intervene at an early stage and the long-term impact of these projects will only become evident at a much later stage. Over such long periods of time, it is difficult to tease out cause and effect. Yet it is crucial that we know what works well now. A significant challenge within a more enabling state, then, is how to effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of enabling approaches, to identify what works well and to demonstrate to the impact of enabling approaches to policymakers and funders.

Our final reflection is on the close links between co-production, participative democracy and the social economy. As our sister report *The Rise of the Enabling State* notes, the three are often conflated.

But there are important differences and benefits to each. As we move towards a more enabling state, we might expect to see a growth and expansion of community-led initiatives and projects – a rise in the social economy. While this is positive as successful community activities grow and become more professionalised, it becomes increasingly challenging to stay in touch with local concerns and ambitions. Some may risk becoming removed or disconnected from the local community. Our case studies illustrate just how important it is for these emerging new professionals within the growing social economy to work hard to retain their empowering and enabling roots. The challenge for the enabling state is how to support a broadening social economy, whilst ensuring that the wider community is able to participate in and shape public services.



## 5. CASE STUDY: ALLIANCE SCOTLAND and THE SELF MANAGEMENT FUND

**Jurisdiction:** Scotland

**Lead organisation:** Third sector

**Key partners:** NHS, Local Authorities, community and voluntary groups

**Funding:** Scottish Government

**Area:** Helping people with long-term conditions access the support they need to successfully manage their lives.

**Website:** <http://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/>

**Period of activity:** Medium 5 years+

**Resource required:** £4 million for funded projects in 2009-11. A further £4 million 2013-15. The Fund is administered by ALLIANCE Scotland by a two staff and with support from a Finance and Administration team.

**Key Features:** Empowered individuals and communities, co-production, holistic approach

**Background:** ALLIANCE Scotland is an umbrella organisation and strategic partner of the Scottish Government. It is led by its 300 members. ALLIANCE's vision is a Scotland where: 'people of all ages who are disabled or living with long-term conditions, and unpaid carers, have a strong voice and enjoy their right to live well.' An individual's ability to control of the management of their own condition is central to this vision. In 2008, ALLIANCE Scotland produced 'Gaun Yersel' – a Self Management Strategy for Scotland<sup>8</sup>. The strategy was based on the life experiences of people with long-term conditions and their carers. A Self Management Fund (SMF) for Scotland was one of the key recommendations.

**How does it work?** The aim of the Fund is to help more people self manage successfully. Designed to be a learning Fund, it has a particular focus on supporting innovative practice. Applications are open to any voluntary or community organisation working to build the capacity of people with long-term conditions to effectively self manage. A core criterion is that people living with long-term conditions take a leadership role and are involved in the design, delivery, implementation and evaluation of the projects. Successful projects are also encouraged to work closely with local public agencies and third sector organisations. Planning for the SMF began in 2008 and the first round of funding launched in 2009, closing in 2011. A second round of funding, also over three years will open in 2013.

**What's different?** The experience of people living with long term conditions has shaped the development of the fund and the design, delivery and development of funded projects. The SMF provides a high level of pre- application support, something that has been particularly important for organisations with a low capacity.

<sup>8</sup> Scottish Government, (online) 'Gaun Yersel' *The Self Management Strategy for Long Term Conditions in Scotland* <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/10/GaunYersel> [Accessed August 2013]

**Impact:** A total of 81 projects received funding in the first two years to work on a range of issues supporting 132,789 people across Scotland to learn more about their condition and improve the quality of their lives. Collectively, the projects have helped decrease dependency on traditional services and support and improved people's ability to self manage<sup>9</sup>. ALLIANCE argue that there is now a much greater understanding of what self management means within the NHS and other public bodies as well as a greater willingness to fund projects based on people's experience. The Fund has helped grow innovative practice such as ALISS (A Local Information System for Scotland). Developed in partnership with people living with long-term conditions, ALISS captures informal knowledge about sources of self management support in a local area (anything from a friendly café to a local peer support group) in an easy-to-use, online platform. The platform allows users to both contribute and curate local information. According to ALISS's Project Manager, the tool has been so powerful in changing the approach to healthcare provision in the pilot areas (GP surgeries are now much more community facing) that the team behind it are now keen to roll out the platform across Scotland and believe that it could be beneficial in other areas (such as community development) as well.

**Success factors:**

1. Strong support and commitment from government.
2. Strong commitment within the fund to a person centred approach.
3. Taking the time to work with projects to develop their applications.
4. A willingness to support new ideas.

**Key challenges:**

1. Helping partner organisations understand a new way of working.
2. Managing an over demand for funding.
3. Many small voluntary groups come back to the fund seeking developmental funding. An on-going challenge to the SMF team is knowing where to send small voluntary organisations for support/ resources to develop and grow their capacity.



<sup>9</sup> ALLIANCE Scotland, (online) *IMPACT an evaluation of the Self Management Fun for Scotland 2009-2011* <http://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/what-we-do/self-management/self-management-fund/> [Accessed August 2013]



## 6. CASE STUDY: GENIO

**Jurisdiction:** Republic of Ireland

**Lead organisation:** Registered Charity

**Partners:** Atlantic Philanthropies, Department of Health, Health Service Executive, public sector agencies, NGOs and communities

**Funding:** Atlantic Philanthropies, Department of Health and the Health Service Executive (HSE)

**Area:** To bring together government and philanthropy to develop, test, and scale, cost-effective ways of supporting people who are disadvantaged to live full lives in their communities. Genio currently works in the field of disability, mental health and dementia.

**Website:** <http://www.genio.ie/>

**Period of activity:** 3 years

**Resource required:** Disability and mental health: €6 million/year. Dementia: €6.6 million/year. Funding covers innovation grants, capacity building, evaluation and staff costs

**Key features:** Co-production, empowered communities and individuals, shared responsibilities

**Background:** Established as a registered charity in 2010, Genio emerged from research commissioned by Atlantic Philanthropies looking at how they could most effectively invest to improve the lives of people with disabilities in Ireland. Extensive consultation with people with disabilities, carers, health care providers and third sector organisations revealed a tendency towards institutionalisation and segregation as well as the need to support self-directed living within communities. The practice of institutionalism was not only expensive and unsustainable, but also one that ultimately did not respond to individual's aspirations and requirements – often simply being able to live within and contribute to the wider community. The research concluded that system change was required toward services that were built around individuals and that there was a clear role for the third sector, government and philanthropy in bringing about that change. Genio was established to occupy the space between philanthropy, government and the third sector and to channel philanthropic and government funds to catalyse change through a programme of grant making, knowledge sharing and evidence gathering.

**How does it work?** Genio's work has expanded to cover the fields of mental health and dementia and consists of three interrelated strands. 1. A nationally advertised grant funding programme that provides funding for innovative ways of working in the field of mental health, disability and dementia to support people to lead independent lives within their community eg community-based respite care. 2. Capacity building amongst key stakeholders by identifying areas of good practice and leadership and supporting shared learning and mentoring 3. Evaluating innovative ways of working and building an evidence base of 'what works'. The funding criteria reflect recommendations and emerging themes from consultation with stakeholders (including 'service users' themselves). In the fields of disability and mental health, any NGO or public sector agency is eligible to apply for the funding. In the field of dementia bids are invited from area based consortia of individuals and organisations.

**What's different?** The bringing together of philanthropy, the state and the third sector to catalyse new ways of working and achieve sustainable and scalable change is central to Genio's approach. The area based funding of dementia initiatives led by a consortium of individuals, carers and local organisations.

**Impact:** To date, Genio have funded 155 innovative projects and as a direct result of their work 8 institutions have closed because former residents are now able to choose to live more independently within the community. An independent evaluation, conducted by Professor Roy McConkey of the University of Ulster looking at outcomes for 180 beneficiaries across 23 grantees, found that:

- quality of life is better for people who have moved from institutions to personalised supports and accommodation;
- their level of choice and control over their lives is significantly increased (as shown in various indicators including having their own front door key);
- the cost of this form of support is considerably lower than the institution.

Processes associated with effective change have been identified to inform the scaling of personalised supports across more sites/individuals<sup>10</sup>.

#### Success factors:

1. Genio's independence provides critical 'neutral space' and incentivises reform.
2. Genio's 'under the radar' approach allows partners to shine.
3. The funding is allocated on an open and competitive basis with clear criteria with on-going monitoring and evaluation.
4. On-going support is provided to funded projects and Genio runs a professional capacity building programme.

#### Key challenges:

1. Moving a large amount of grant funding and managing the associated risk.
2. Reaching beyond the 'early adopters' to the mainstream.
3. Engaging stakeholders in strategic thinking at a time of significant uncertainty and pressure on public services.



<sup>10</sup> A copy of the study summary will be available on Genio's website in late 2013.

## 7. CASE STUDY: INSPIRING SCOTLAND and LINK UP

**Jurisdiction:** Scotland

**Lead organisation:** Philanthropic organisation

**Partners:** Key partners Scottish Government, local charities.

**Funding:** Scottish Government- Cash Back for Communities (recovered proceeds of crime).

**Area:** Re-establishing trust and improving wellbeing within communities facing economic and social challenges.

**Website:** <http://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/Home/Our-Funds/Link-Up>

**Period of activity:** 2 years

**Resource required:** £2.25 million over three years for 10 x Link Up workers (salary and expenses) and £15,000/ annum budget for each community, on-going support from an Inspiring Scotland Performance Advisor.

**Key features:** Community empowerment, shared responsibilities, success where the state has failed, a level playing field

**Background:** Inspiring Scotland is a philanthropic organisation that seeks to achieve sustainable social change in Scotland by improving people's lives for the better through long-term funding for effective projects and through on-going development support. Link Up is one of four funding streams administered by the organisation and is currently solely funded through the state. Link Up recognises that traditional top down approaches to community regeneration can fail to achieve long term change. The programme seeks to reconnect communities by helping local people get to know and trust their fellow residents through shared activities and time spent helping each other.

**How does it work?** The Link Up programme works in 10 areas across Scotland, selected for their size, economic and social challenges and the availability of a suitable host organisation. Each Link Up worker is based within a local host organisation (this may be a national charity or a small local voluntary body), has a small budget and is supported by an Inspiring Scotland Performance Advisor. A four-step asset-based approach is followed:

1. build relationships and engage with the local community and local third sector organisations to find out 'what is good about the local area?' (using innovative techniques like a pop-up beach or large interactive map);
2. support local people to organise and deliver activities that they would like (eg cooking or archery);
3. nurture and develop the new groups forming round these activities;
4. get the groups/ activities onto a sustainable footing.



### What's different?

- Link Up starts by asking *what's good* about a community and what local people can contribute, rather than re-enforcing the 'usual' focus on deficits.
- Link Up is *not about enforcing external agendas*. It has a strong vision and aims around individual and community wellbeing, but at a local level the participants choose their own groupings and define their own activities without being steered in any particular direction to deliver an external agency agenda, predefined activities or externally imposed targets.
- Link Up workers have – within defined principles – significant *autonomy to develop and 'flex' their approach in-line with the local context* and the aims of local people.
- Link Up's flexible funding model enables participant *ideas to be rapidly turned into action*, sometimes within days or a couple of weeks.
- The principles that underpin the Link Up approach feed through into the *respect and value* shown to participants by Link Up workers, where they are recognised as valuable contributors, not victims/issues to be saved/resolved.
- Link Up intentionally supports *a culture of seeking ways round the barriers (personal and institutional)* that all too often lead to delay and frustrate local delivery.

**Impact:** Although it's still early days (most Link Ups have been 'live' for just over one year), 55 Link activities led by over 300 volunteers and attended by 5,000 people have taken place. According to our interviewee, individual stories are also emerging. For example, a young mother whose engagement started as a participant at the Link Up local bingo night has seen her confidence grow and has now set up a drop-in café for people struggling with alcohol or drug abuse (a service gap she identified in her community). Other people are getting jobs, reducing their alcohol intake, eating better, reducing their medication and typically 'hard to reach' individuals are getting more involved in community activities.

### Success factors:

1. A skilled local worker, based in the community with a genuine commitment to bottom-up working.
2. The resource and ability to act quickly to support community ambitions.
3. The right support for the local worker and allowing time for reflection.
4. Defining and sticking to the principles of an asset based approach right from the start including working in sustainability right from the beginning.

### Key challenges:

1. Community dynamics.
2. Finding the right worker.
3. Achieving sustainability (so that on-going funding is not required).
4. Learning to work at the community's pace rather than a top down timetable.
5. Encouraging partners to adopt asset based/ co-production principles.

## 8. CASE STUDY: INCLUSIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS and LOCAL AREA COORDINATION

**Jurisdiction:** England

**Lead organisation:** Varies across locations eg Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)

**Partners:** Inclusive Neighbourhoods, NHS, third sector and community organisations, individuals within the community

**Funding:** Local Authority and other public sector. The ambition is to secure joint funding from across the public sector.

**Area:** Supporting people who are vulnerable through age, frailty, disability or mental health issues to stay strong and to achieve their vision for a good life, reducing the need for formal services.

**Website:** <http://inclusiveneighbourhoods.co.uk/>

**Period of activity:** 3 years

**Resource required:** Variable, the Middlesbrough LAC programme works out at £92.77/case<sup>10</sup>.

**Key features:** Empowered communities and individuals, co-production, success where the state has failed, a level playing field, a holistic approach, shared responsibilities

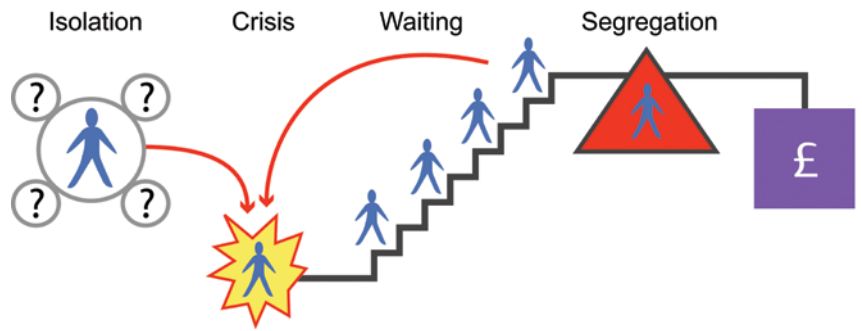
**Background:** The Local Area Coordination (LAC) approach to social care services began in Western Australia in 1988. Rather than focusing on assessments of need and deficit the LAC approach draws on the strengths, skills and abilities of local individuals, families and communities. Using these strengths as a basis, local workers support vulnerable individuals to build and pursue their vision for a good life within their local community. Evaluations of LAC programmes in Australia and subsequently in Scotland where the approach has been applied have demonstrated a range of positive outcomes including:

- increased community and family capacity;
- increased supportive relationships/circles of support;
- reduced demand for services, improved access to relevant and timely information and cost savings.

The first LAC programme was launched in Middlesbrough in 2010 and with the support of Inclusive Neighbourhoods, the approach is now being developed or operating in Derby City, Thurrock, Northamptonshire, Walsall, Derbyshire, Gloucestershire and Cumbria. It also being introduced in Monmouthshire in Wales. Inclusive Neighbourhoods provides early-stage support and guidance to local authorities as well as on-going networking and knowledge exchange for 'live' sites.

<sup>11</sup> Peter Fletcher Associates Ltd, Evaluation of Local Area Co-ordination in Middlesbrough Sheffield: Centre For Welfare Reform 2011 <http://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=4431&p=0> [Accessed August 2013]





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**How does it work?** The lynchpin of the LAC approach is the Local Area Co-ordinator. A single, local point of contact, the co-ordinator typically works with 50-65 individuals and their families in their local community. The co-ordinator intentionally embeds themselves into the local community and builds strong relationships with service and community partners, getting to know the strengths, skills and resources in the local area, making links and ‘bumping into’ people. In this way, the co-ordinator establishes trust, allowing them to make connections to vulnerable and isolated people within the community without a power dynamic developing. As the co-ordinators develop relationships, there are increasing numbers of connections or ‘self –referrals’ directly from local people, as well as from a range of professionals and community partners. Support is always built around existing strengths, ability and capacity in the individual, family and local community. The co-ordinator will ask ‘what is your vision of a good life?’, ‘what skills and abilities do you have?’. Support may include helping individuals connect with people with shared interests or experiences, building family and/or community capacity to support the individual, helping the individual find their voice or providing links to information, resources and appropriate public services.

The role of services remains very important, but as a back-up to LAC and local solutions, rather than the start or primary source of support.

**What’s different?** Rather than waiting for people to fall into crisis, LAC supports people to stay strong and connected. The LAC works not just with the individual but the whole family and the wider community, bringing together a range of traditionally separate, disconnected roles in a single point of contact. Crucially, support is provided alongside along-side local people and their communities across service types and age groups and the building of reciprocal relationships is central to the approach. The aim is to simplify the service system for both citizens and services.



*What can you do for yourself using your gifts, skills and experiences?*



*How can friends, family and communities help or contribute?*



*What is the role of services?*

**Impact:** Although early days for most of the LAC programmes in England a 2010 evaluation of the Middlesbrough programme<sup>12</sup> (just eight months in) found positive outcomes that reflected those found in Australia and Scotland. Those who had used the service reported that it had made a positive difference to their lives. In Derby City, Thurrock and Middlesbrough, there have been examples of:

- increasing personal and supportive relationships – reduced isolation;
- people engaging with LAC, where they wouldn't engage with other services;
- people diverted from/less dependent on more expensive formal services;
- development of personal, relevant and local, low cost/no cost support alternatives;
- people feeling better informed, in control and more confident in their future;
- LAC influenced change in other areas of local public services.

**Success factors:**

1. Strong leadership – in each LAC location a cross sectorial leadership group of public and third sector representatives and 'real' people is formed to ensure accountability, joined up contributions and mutual support.
2. Strong vision and good design – adhering to the core values and principles of the LAC approach.
3. A commitment to partnership working.

**Key challenges:**

1. Preventing slippage back to old ways of working.
2. Maintaining a balanced workload in the face of financial pressures is also a challenge.
3. Avoiding 'short cuts'.

**Learning:** The importance of taking the time right at the start, to intentionally build relationships at the individual, family and community levels.



12 Peter Fletcher Associates Ltd, Evaluation of Local Area Co-ordination in *Middlesbrough Sheffield: Centre For Welfare Reform 2011* <http://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=4431&p=0> [Accessed August 2013]

## 9. CASE STUDY: PARTICIPLE

**Jurisdiction:** England

**Lead organisation:** Social Enterprise and Local Authority

**Partners:** Local Authority

**Funding:** Local Authority funding

**Area:** Participle develops and scales social enterprises and this case study looks at Circle, which supports an active and rich third age, along with the Life Programme, which supports families with complex problems.

**Website:** <http://www.participle.net/>

**Period of activity:** 4 years

**Resource required:** For Circle, start-up costs are required for a small staff team and operational costs, but the aim is for initiatives like Circle to become self-financing after three years. In Life, local authority partnerships second frontline teams and resource a community space for the team to work out of as well as providing operational and supervision costs.

**Key features:** Empowered communities and individuals, co-production, success where the state has failed, a holistic approach

**Background:** Participle was established as a social enterprise in 2007. Drawing on Beveridge's own concerns about the limitations of the Welfare State, Participle works with the state to redesign public services and institutions so that they better support a flourishing 21<sup>st</sup> century society in which everyone has a fair chance to realise their potential. Each year, Participle moves into a new area, where current public service models have continually failed or modern issues are creating new challenges. Redesign starts with finding out about people's lives, aspirations and priorities (sometimes involving complete immersion – living alongside the families and individuals who will be engaged in the new programme). Ordinary people then work alongside the Participle team to redesign services and the new model is piloted, scaled up, evaluated and developed. Participation and contribution are central design tenets. Circle and the Life Programmes are two of Participle's longest-running innovation projects. The first Circle was set up in Southwark in 2009, and Life began in Swindon in the same year.

**How do Circle and Life work?** Circle is a membership programme for individuals aged 50 or over. It responds to priorities older people identified as important in helping them lead a rich and active 'third age'. Via an interactive online platform, members can access a social calendar and a '0800' helpline number for support with small everyday issues (for example, help with changing a light bulb or arranging a lift to a hospital visit). Circle is open to everyone over the age of 50 for a small subscription and is run by a team of staff and volunteers. A mixture of free and paid-for services can be accessed via the platform and although there is no obligation for members to get actively involved in Circle activities, the goal is to 'activate' membership.

The Life Programme works with families with complex problems, often labelled as 'troubled'. Traditional approaches put the state in control, but the Life Programme aims to be family-led. Entry into the programme is by invitation and entirely voluntary, families select the team that they want to work with and the support (which may include contact with professionals) is about building individual and family capability and is driven by the families' own aspirations.

**What's different?** Individuals are actively involved in the design of the new programmes. Circle members are not a 'burden' on the state, but are supported to become active and involved members of the community. Building consistent and trusting relationships with families and fostering positive family relationships is key to the Life Programme. Where families may previously have experienced visits from up to 73 different services, they are now supported by a cohesive team around them.

**Impact:** Circle and Life use measurement frameworks to gather cost, outcome and capability data, and both programmes have been able to demonstrate improvements in people's capabilities and reductions in re-active service involvement and costs to the state. In Life Programmes, change for families can be incremental and difficult to sustain at times, particularly for families with such entrenched difficulties and against a backdrop of austerity. However, there have been many positive changes in individuals and families across Life Programmes and a number of families having now 'graduated' after having achieved sustained positive change<sup>13</sup>.

**Success factors:**

1. The most successful Circles have invested in staff to support and nurture the development of the Circle and its members.
2. Life's success stems from the deep relationships that staff build with families.
3. The most successful programmes have received cross sectorial support and engagement from the local authority and other public sector agencies.

**Key challenge:** Finding strategic level support has at times been difficult, particularly in a climate of austerity where public bodies are often wary about investing in preventative services.



13 For further detail see Cottam H, *The Life Programme: An Interim Report*, London: Participle 2013 <http://alifewwant.com/download/attachments/4980969/The+Life+Programme-An+Interim+Report.pdf> [Accessed July 2013]

## 10. CASE STUDY: GWENT MISSING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PROJECT and WELSH GOVERNMENT EFFECTIVE SERVICES FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS

**Jurisdiction:** Wales

**Lead organisation:** Gwent Police

**Partners:** Aneurin Bevan Health Board, five local authorities and third sector partner (Llamau)

**Funding:** Gwent Missing Children and Young People Project is funded jointly by Gwent Police, the local Health Board, local authorities in the region and the Big Lottery. Welsh Government provided funding to support the development of the new approach.

**Area:** Providing a better service to young people who have gone missing.

**Website:** <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/improvingservices/pslg/nwp/effectiveservices/?lang=en>

**Period of activity:** Less than three years

**Resource required:** The Gwent Missing Children and Young People Project multi-agency team includes 1.5 FTE police officers, 1.5 FTE social workers, a clinical specialist nurse and an educational worker. The independent debrief service will be commissioned from a third sector provider. The staffing costs will be met by the public services involved (£700k in staff costs over three years). The start-up costs associated with setting up the hub and the independent debrief service project were secured via Big Lottery (£500k over three years) and the Welsh Government contribution of £60k supported evidence gathering and pump-priming for the development of the new approach.

**Key features:** A holistic approach to public service delivery

**Background:** The **Effective Services for Vulnerable Groups (ESVG)** programme is a work stream of the Minister led Public Service Leadership Group (PSLG) which provides leadership on public service reform and service improvement in Wales. The programme is chaired by Dr Andrew Goodall, CEO of the Aneurin Bevan Health Board. It seeks to throw a spotlight on innovative and effective practice on some of the most intractable areas of public policy in Wales and provide an evidence base for new and more collaborative ways of working. In doing so, the aim is to improve outcomes for some of the most vulnerable people in Wales. The programme addresses three to four priority areas at a time and membership reflects current work. A 'pipeline' approach is used: new areas of work are explored and issues defined, areas of good practice are identified and then promoted. As approaches begin to be picked up more widely, services are challenged and checked. Where good practice or innovation is not already occurring in a priority area, the programme will intentionally set out to foster new ways of working. Learning is promoted at Ministerial level via the PSLG and through a variety of other mechanisms by the ESGV. Other recent projects have included: a review of good practice in Citizen Directed Support in Wales and internationally and a study of Swansea and Wrexham's multi-agency approaches to increasing the proportion of young people in education, employment or training.





**Gwent Missing Children and Young People Project:** Young people who repeatedly reported as missing were identified as an acute problem that could benefit from collaborative working and a greater citizen focus. The Gwent Missing Children and Young People Project was developed with the support of the Acting Chief Constable and ESGV. Every year, hundreds of children and young people go missing in Gwent, many of them multiple times. Despite the significant costs to public services in responding to these incidents, it was felt more could be done to address underlying issues and to reduce the likelihood of the child going missing again in the future. In April, 2011, work to redesign the service began. Central to the design of a new collaborative service was the commissioning of an independent consultation with young people who had been missing and their carers. The feedback and experiences of the people directly affected by the current service shaped the development of the new multi-agency hub in Gwent. The hub facilitates closer joint working and ‘deep’ information sharing between public sector services and third sector partners. Now when a young person goes missing in Gwent, the aim is to rapidly build up a comprehensive understanding of that young person and their circumstances so that the response from the police and other agencies is proportionate and effective. When the young person is returned, they are offered a ‘debrief’ session with an independent ‘third sector’ partner – this not only allows the young person to be connected with appropriate specialist services for further support (anything from peer mentoring and family mediation to specialists in child sexual exploitation), but also gathers vital feedback and information for the multi-agency hub.

**What’s different? Gwent Missing Children and Young People Project:** Previously, inter-agency information sharing was limited and a report of a missing child elicited a binary response from the police (largely informed by whether the child was a repeat offender and usually returned safely or not but also influenced by resource issues). The new approach allows for a more tailored response which more appropriately considers the risk faced by the child in question. There is a greater emphasis, on prevention and helping young people manage the risks associated with going missing<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> One of our interviewees has suggested there is opportunity for Gwent Police to go further and link in better with more informal, less traditional forms of third sector support in the local area.

**Impact: Gwent Missing Children and Young People Project:** It is still very early days, but data so far suggests that the number of children going repeatedly missing has reduced by about 50% in the first three months (although Gwent Police, are cautious about these figures). A significant early impact is the greater awareness, across all sectors, of the value of sharing information and working together to address an issue that impacts on a wide range of public services.

#### Success factors:

##### ESVG:

1. Capable senior leaders.
2. The facilitation of frontline perspectives.
3. Focus.

#### Gwent Missing Children and Young People Project:

1. Getting seven different organisations (five local authorities, the Health Board and the Police) to commit to the project and to work together to succeed.
2. Good communication: the individual children's stories: driving the response of the agencies, but also demonstrating the limitations of the previous approach.
3. Strategic buy in and support from the ESGV and ministers.

#### Key challenges:

##### ESVG:

1. Communicating the learning to wider stakeholders within Welsh public services.
2. Penetrating below CEO level and embedding the messages in organisations.

#### Missing Children and Young People Project:

1. Persuading other agencies that this was a shared problem.
2. Each agency having their own IT system, process, policy and language.



## 11. CASE STUDY: VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT and HAWKHILL COMMUNITY CENTRE

**Jurisdiction:** Scotland

**Lead organisations:** Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and NHS Clackmannanshire

**Partners:** Hawkhill Community Centre, Central Scotland Police, Fire and Rescue Service

**Funding:** Principle funding from VRU, NHS Clackmannanshire additional funding from various sources

**Area:** Health improvement and crime reduction in an area facing social and economic challenges.

**Website:** <http://actiononviolence.co.uk/>

**Period of activity:** Less than 2 years

**Resource required:** Two part-time officers (from VRU and NHS Clackmannanshire) and a small initial budget for training.

**Key features:** Community empowerment, success where the state has failed, a level playing field, a holistic approach

**Background:** The VRU was established by Strathclyde Police in 2005 to reduce violent behaviour in Glasgow. By 2006, its remit had extended to the whole of Scotland. The Unit takes a preventative, public health approach to violence reduction and functions as a national centre of expertise. VRU's work with NHS Clackmannanshire in Hawkhill began in 2011 when a Health Promotion Officer at NHS Clackmannanshire, inspired by similar work elsewhere, approached the VRU for support to develop an asset based approach in Clackmannanshire. Willing strategic partners were found in Central Scotland Police, Clackmannanshire Council, the Fire and Rescue Service and, Hawkhill Community Centre in Alloa. Hawkhill was chosen as the first location. Hawkhill is a relatively self-contained community. Unemployment is high and the community faces a number of challenges related to health, education, poverty and anti-social behaviour. The community centre itself, has faced a number of difficulties over the years and when work began in 2011 – the centre was underused – 'a place where staff worked rather than the centre of the community'.

**How does it work?** Work began in September, 2011, with a community listening event at the Community Centre – where local people had the opportunity to identify their priorities for the local area and a period of strategic partnership building and training. A community police officer on secondment to the VRU joined the project in August, 2012, and now spends 80% of his time at Hawkhill as a frontline worker. The officer began by building relationships within the community, something that was not always easy. Community members had seen 'a revolving door' of professionals and initiatives over the years, others had had negative experiences with the police or prison and many were sceptical or wary. The officer persisted by knocking on doors and offering to help with shopping. Slowly, he has built trust within

the community and is now beginning to help members to achieve things that are important to them. Achievements include repainting the community centre, upgrading a local footpath, turning waste ground into a community garden, setting up a successful men's health group – 'Man Up' – and most recently, establishing a 'community fun day'. All of these activities have been delivered by the community. External partners such as the Alloa Plant Company have often assisted by providing tools, time or labour, but the relationships are always reciprocal and community members have negotiated support for their own projects.

**What's different?** Our interviewee at the VRU believes that the key support the community police officer brings to the community is his resilience (his ability to 'bounce back' when a problem is encountered) and his professional connections. He believes that everyone has something positive to offer the community – whether it is enthusiasm, a talent for painting or the skills to support vulnerable members of the community. Reciprocity is central to the relationships being built at Hawkhill.

**Impact:** Although it's still early days the most obvious change is the liveliness of the community centre and levels of involvement in community activities. Use of the community centre is up 300-400% compared to the start of the project. According to our interviewee, confidence, self belief and pride has increased – community members are now confidently engaging with public services and negotiating with senior public officials. Local people are reporting feeling healthier and happier and even appear physically healthier. Police reports on anti-social behaviour in the local area are also down.

**Success factors:**

1. A community catalyst (in a paid post) to galvanise community activity, grow community confidence, facilitate connections and provide resilience.
2. Willing community members prepared to take activities forward.
3. Strategic support from public agencies, third sector partners and others. Including local businesses that are willing to listen and work in partnership with the community.

**Key challenge:**

People, the ups and downs of relationships, both professional and personal.



## 12. CASE STUDY: NICIE and THE INTEGRATED SCHOOLS MOVEMENT

**Jurisdiction:** Northern Ireland

**Lead organisation:** local parent groups with support from NICIE

**Partners:**

**Funding:** Various including Department of Education, Atlantic Philanthropies, the International Fund for Ireland and the Esmee Fairburn Foundation

**Area:** Realising integrated education.

**Website:** <http://www.nicie.org/>

**Period of activity:** 25+years

**Resource required:** Core funding has always been modest and is currently £640,000 per annum covering 12 staff.

**Key features:** Community empowerment

**Background:** Education in Northern Ireland has historically, been delivered through two parallel school systems – a Catholic school system and a state school system. Integrated education in Northern Ireland has been an aspiration of many over the years, but is a complex area. The greatest progress has, however, been made by the grassroots efforts of parent groups. The first parent-led integrated school in Northern Ireland – Lagan College – was opened in 1981. NICIE: The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education was formed in 1987. A voluntary organisation, NICIE’s objective was to act as a representative for these parent groups and help parents to establish integrated schooling in their local area. Over the years, the political, economic and demographic landscape has shifted in Northern Ireland bringing fresh challenges and opportunities and NICIE’s role has developed alongside this. NICIE’s main focus is now on advocacy and knowledge sharing. In 2013, NICIE was invited by the Department of Education to take on the role of Sectorial Support Body for integrated education.

**How does it work?** Until 2007, NICIE’s main activity was to support interested parent groups to achieving their aspiration for integrated schooling. In these early days, this meant building a new integrated education facility. Integrated schooling was, and remains, a controversial topic and to be successful, parents needed the skills to host public meetings, to answer questions from the media and to discuss the ethos of integrated schooling. In addition, the parent group had to have the capability to oversee the building of a new school building, the recruitment of staff and to secure funding to see the facility through the first three years (before the school was eligible for state funding). Capacity building in these areas with parents, staff and governors was therefore a key component of NICIE’s support. More recently, however, as pupil numbers in Northern Ireland have been falling, the focus on integrated education has shifted to the transformation of existing schools into integrated facilities and NICIE’s focus is now on advocating for more integrated school places within the educational system.





**What was different?** NICIE's capacity building, support and guidance to parents allowed these pioneering groups to make progress in an area that was complex and controversial.

**Impact:** There are now 62 parent-led integrated schools in Northern Ireland (40 new builds and 22 'transformed' schools). NICIE's work to develop an integrated school 'ethos' and a model of education that is child centred, based on parental involvement and focused on reconciliation is being practised at these schools. NICIE believes that the importance of integrated education is now widely recognised.

**Success factors:** The CEO of NICIE has identified the top three factors behind NICIE's successes as being:

1. The strong case for integrated education.
2. The determination of parents.
3. The expertise of NICIE.

**Key challenges:** NICIE is the oldest case study in this collection and, in many ways, has faced some of the greatest challenges on its journey from the margins to the mainstream in terms of the significant opposition that NICIE and the parent groups have faced over the years. Now as NICIE moves closer to government to secure core funding, the challenge will be to remain a 'challenging' voice of the grassroots within government. Securing sufficient funding to support parent groups has also been an on-going difficulty over the years.

## 13. CASE STUDY: BRON AFON YOUTH FORUM

**Jurisdiction:** Wales

**Lead organisation:** Community mutual

**Partners:** Torfaen County Borough Council, Communities First and a wide range of third sector and external partners

**Funding:** Core funding comes from Bron Afon Community Housing

**Area:** Supporting young people to play an active role in their community.

**Website:** <http://www.bronafon.org.uk/>

**Period of activity:** 4 years

**Resource required:** Part-time support from Senior Community Involvement Officer and a budget of approximately £5,000/ annum. Additional funding and resources are secured by the young people themselves.

**Key features:** Empowered communities and individuals, a level playing field, shared responsibilities

**Background:** With over 1,800 members Bron Afon Community Housing in the valleys of South Wales is one of the largest community mutuals in Wales. It was established in 2008 when the community voted to transfer around 8,500 tenanted properties and land from Torfaen County Borough Council to Bron Afon. Bron Afon is led by its members and works for the benefit of the whole community. The Bron Afon Youth Forum was established in 2009 and aims to engage and involve young people in Bron Afon and the local community.

**How does it work?** In 2008, the Senior Community Involvement Officer at Bron Afon recognised a gap in youth involvement in Bron Afon and set out to change the situation. The officer spent a year building relationships with young people in the local community – visiting local youth clubs, out on the streets and in local schools. Bron Afon Youth Forum became fully constituted in 2009. From the start young people set the agenda, facilitated the monthly meetings, determined priorities and identified the activities that they would like to be involved in. Aiming to improve the perception of young people in the local community, the group started out relatively small but has gone on to tackle more ambitious projects. Most recently, members have been concerned about peers who fall into homelessness and have initiated activity on two large projects. The Own2Feet Project aims to prevent homelessness by supporting young people in the early days of their first tenancy. The project provides 'Starter Packs', offers peer mentoring and runs a weekly workshop on topics such as Eating on a Budget and Employability Skills (all topics identified by young members who had experienced homelessness). The Youth Forum has also catalysed work on a new transitional housing unit that will provide a bridge between the homeless hostel and private tenancy. The refurbishment of the building is providing employment for local unemployed young people.

**What's different?** The priorities, agenda and activities are led entirely by the youth forum. The Senior Community Involvement Officer sees herself simply as a 'facilitator' in this process.

**Impact:** Youth involvement in the activity of Bron Afon has significantly increased in the past five years and the achievements of the forum have been recognised in a national award from Community Housing Cymru<sup>15</sup>. Staff have seen increased levels of confidence and self-esteem in young members, and young people report feeling listened to and supported. Involvement in the forum has helped a number of young people secure long-term employment.

**Success factors:**

1. Taking the time to build trusted relationships with the young people.
2. Letting the young people lead.
3. Putting the benefit of the young people before organisational priorities.

**Key challenges:**

1. Knowing where to start.
2. Managing expectations (especially given the time it takes to build solid relationships).
3. Making sure that you don't rely on the same people to keep things going and maintaining momentum.



15 Community Housing Cymru Group (online) <http://chcymru.org.uk/en/policy/good-practice-and-innovation/capturing-creativity-pat-chown-innovation-award/> [Accessed July 2013]

## 14. CASE STUDY: HEALTHWORKS

**Jurisdiction:** England

**Lead organisation:** Local Social Enterprise

**Partners:** A wide range of public, private and community and voluntary sector partners. The West Newcastle Change4 Life project alone has engaged over 56 different local partners.

**Funding:** Principle funding has been through service level agreements with the NHS (now via the Local Authority)

**Area:** Tackling health inequalities in an area of deprivation.

**Website:** <http://www.healthworksnewcastle.org.uk/>

**Period of activity:** Long, 10+ years

**Resource required:** Healthworks has a turnover of £1.5 million per annum<sup>15</sup>.

**Key features:** Empowered communities, a level playing field, a holistic approach

**Background:** Based in an area facing both social and economic challenges, Healthworks started life in 1995 as the West End Health Resource Centre in Newcastle. Set up following the closure of the existing local medical practice, the resource centre was steered by a partnership group that included Newcastle City Health Trust, Newcastle City Council, Adelaide Medical Practice and local community and voluntary organisations. As well as housing the new medical facilities, the centre sought to take a more holistic approach to improving the health of the local community through their community gym and healthy eating programme. Over the intervening years, the work has grown to take on a wider range of community health programmes under the banner of 'Healthworks' and the organisation now operates out of three buildings and employs over 70 local people.

**How does it work?:** The wide range of community health services and activities provided by Healthworks includes: a community gym, foodskills training via the Healthworks' food and nutrition team, breast feeding peer support, personal health trainers, community learning and development and, at the West End Resource Centre a SureStart Children's Centre. Working with public sector agencies and a range of third sector partners, Healthworks also delivers a number of projects including: Hearty Lives, Wellbeing Naturally (green gym with The Conservation Volunteers), Staying Steady Falls Prevention and healthy living awareness programmes such as 'Change4Life'. Empowering individuals to self-care and a network of peer educators, and community champions are central to the approach. Community feedback is gathered regularly and fed back into the delivery of programmes.

<sup>16</sup> Drinkwater C, (online) *Why every GPCC needs a healthy living social enterprise* <http://www.sph.nhs.uk/sph-documents/c.drinkwater-gp-colloquium-presentation> [Accessed August 2013]



**What's different?** Services are built around empowered individuals, advice and support is provided through peer educators and champions rather than 'from on high'.

**Impact:** The number of service users has steadily grown over the years. Staff are able to point to a number of individual stories that demonstrate the positive impact of Healthworks programmes.

**Success factors:**

1. Partnership working.
2. A good network of local, national and regional contacts.
3. The ability to respond to what the community needs but also to link community activity to national priorities.

**Key challenges:**

1. Short-term funding, austerity (and the impact this is having on local people's resilience and energy to participate in Healthworks activity).
2. Structural changes in the NHS.



## 15. CASE STUDY: LAGGAN FOREST TRUST

**Jurisdiction:** Scotland

**Lead organisation:** Development Trust

**Partners:** Forestry Commission

**Funding:** Various including Scottish Government, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, LEADER, EU, Robertson Trust and Cairngorms National Park Authority, Highland Council

**Area:** Community ownership and management.

**Website:** <http://lagganforest.com/>

**Period of activity:** 10+ years

**Resource required:** Current funding for development 2011-14 £750,000.

**Key features:** Empowered communities and individuals

**Background:** Laggan is a small community c. 300 people south of Inverness. Relatively geographically isolated, the population has been decline since the early 1900s. The Laggan Forest Trust (LFT), a community-led development trust was established in 1998 to work in partnership with the Forestry Commission to manage the local forest for the benefit of the community. The Laggan Forest Trust Forestry Company is the trading arm of the Trust and manages the operational side of the partnership. The roots of LFT date back to the 1990s when local people became concerned that the forest may be sold off to private interests. A campaign was launched and activities began to bring the forest into community control – after many years of negotiating, a pioneering partnership with Forestry Commission was signed in 1998. The Trust now employs a staff team of six and following a favourable community ballot in 2003 has taken ownership of 20 hectares of the forest. Funding for the purchase came from the Scottish Land Fund and community fundraising.

**How does it work?** Membership of LFT is open to anyone within the Laggan community and over the years many community members have served on the LFT board. LFT have built a strong partnership with the Forestry Commission and a wide range of public, private and community and voluntary sector partners. The partnership with the Forestry Commission means that local contractors are now the first choice for contracts within the forest and the popular Wolftrax bike trail has been developed jointly with LFT. LFT now deliver a wide range of community activities within the forest including educational courses, Easter egg hunts and theatre productions. LFT is now in what it considers its 'third phase of development' and is seeking to establish a sustainable income stream. Plans include the development of a forest centre, café and bike shop, the development of a wood fuel enterprise, a trail building company and a camp site.

**What's different?** The partnership between LFT and the Forestry Commission was one of the first of its kind in Scotland and was to blaze a trail for other communities.

**Impact:** Wolftrax is one of the top tourist attractions in the local area attracting 16,000 visitors each year<sup>17</sup>. A variety of community educational activities and entertainment takes place in the forest. LFT have seen community members grow more confident about building and developing local assets.

**Success factors:**

1. A community champion – who has vision and is able to drive things forward.
2. Volunteer support.
3. Resources and influential support (Michael Forsyth the former Secretary of State for Scotland was instrumental in helping Laggan take control of the forest).
4. Education and wider community engagement is also key.

**Key challenges:**

1. Community dynamics.
2. A lack of previous knowledge and experience within the community building a robust system of governance.

**Learning:** A clear vision and good management of resources is fundamental. Sustainability should be built in early on. A neutral partner to bounce ideas off is useful.



<sup>17</sup> Ekos Limited and Tourism Resources Company, Laggan Wolftrax Evaluation for Forestry Commission Scotland, *HIE Inverness & East Highlands & Laggan Forest Trust, Glasgow: Forestry Commission Scotland 2006* [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/LagganWolftrax-FinalReport.pdf/\\$file/LagganWolftrax-FinalReport.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/LagganWolftrax-FinalReport.pdf/$file/LagganWolftrax-FinalReport.pdf) [Accessed August 2013]

## 16. CASE STUDY: SKAINOS

**Jurisdiction:** Northern Ireland

**Lead organisation:** Social enterprise

**Key partners:** East Belfast Mission, Age NI, Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health, Replay Theatre Co, New Life Counselling and Tearfund NI

**Funding:** EU Peace III Programme, Department for Social Development NI, International Fund for Ireland and East Belfast Mission

**Area:** Urban regeneration – providing a shared community space.

**Website:** <http://www.skainos.org/>

**Period of activity:** Operational for less than a year

**Resource required:** £15.8 million for construction and development.

**Key Features:** A holistic approach

**Background:** Skainos is a structural regeneration project in a socially and economically challenged community in North East Belfast. Led initially by the East Belfast Mission and then laterally by a separate development company (a social enterprise which spun out of the East Belfast Mission), the project grew out of a desire to redevelop the current Methodist church into a more functional workspace that would allow the Mission to better carry out its voluntary work in the local area. When the mission was enabled to land bank an area with vacant business units on it in 2003 the project began to grow into something much more ambitious. At the heart of the development was an ambition to build a shared community space and to bring together housing, voluntary and community activity and local enterprise. After over 12 years in development, Skainos opened in October, 2012.

**How does it work?** It is an architecturally striking development on a street that remained untouched during the troubles. Skainos is a managed community facility that cohouses commercial office space (largely office space for third sector organisations that can bring added value to the local community), community facilities (auditorium, civic square), office space for voluntary sector organisations, a day nursery, a café and a mixed tenure housing development. From the start, the East Belfast Mission sought to engage local people in the design of the project: knocking on doors and taking the architects out to meet the local community. The project board includes members of the community and the mission recognises how important a sense of community ownership and control over the development is. Glenn Jordan, the CEO of the development company says that doing things to or for the local community is very much against the ethos of the Mission. He sees the building as a facilitator and catalyst of community activity and development.



**What's different?** In many ways, Skainos could be seen as a traditional regeneration project, what makes this project different is the desire to build a holistic space that enables community led development.

**Impact:** It is still early days, but the community is already beginning to use the space as their own. A women's group has started using some of the community rooms for meetings and inspired by their success a men's group and a walking group have also sprung up. Recently the community spontaneously used the civic square as the location for a vigil after the drugs linked deaths of 5 local people. Events and exhibitions are bringing a wide variety of groups into the space, connecting the community to wider networks and activity.

**Success factors:**

1. Length of time from development, although not intentional, actually gave the community a chance to be fully involved in the design process.
2. The quality of the design has meant that it has attracted lots of attention and positive publicity, helping the community adopt it as a space to be proud of.

**Key challenges:**

1. The on-going impact of the Troubles.
2. The bureaucracy involved in the planning, building and grants.







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This report was written by Jenny Brotchie, Policy Officer

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