The Enabling State Roundtable reports

The roundtables brought together key representatives from the third, private and public sector to discuss the questions posed in Sir John Elvidge's Enabling State: A Discussion Paper.

You can find all of the reports in this PDF, in the order that the events took place as listed below. The reports are also available as separate PDFs from our website – use the small icons below the description for this publication.

The Enabling State in Wales

Key issues raised at our Cardiff *Enabling State* roundtable on 4 December 2012 at Cardiff City Hall

The UK and the Republic of Ireland have experienced huge improvements in wellbeing in the last 100 years, however a number of complex social problems persist. Could a new relationship between the state and individuals hold the key to solving these difficult social problems?

The Carnegie UK Trust believes we are at the beginning of a fundamental shift toward more empowered citizens and communities and a more enabling state. With the help of Carnegie Fellow Sir John Elvidge we are engaging with key stakeholders across the UK and Republic of Ireland to better understand this movement and, what this would mean for public service delivery. We will be looking for opportunities for shared learning as we go.

This report summarises the issues raised at our round table discussion on the Enabling State in Cardiff at Cardiff City Hall on 4 December 2012. Roundtable discussions were also held in Belfast, Dublin, Newcastle, Dunfermline and London during December 2012 – February 2013.

We hope you find the report of interest and we would be pleased to hear your views. Please contact Jenny Brotchie, Policy Officer at **jenny@carnegieuk.org** or on 01383 749757. You can find our discussion paper **here**.

1. The Welsh context

Discussions about a greater role for communities in delivering public services have ebbed and flowed over many decades in Wales.

In the early 1990's there was much discussion about moving local authorities away from their traditional role primarily as producers to a role with a greater emphasis on enabling or empowering. The concept of the 'enabling local authority' took on negative associations in Wales however when UK Government Ministers
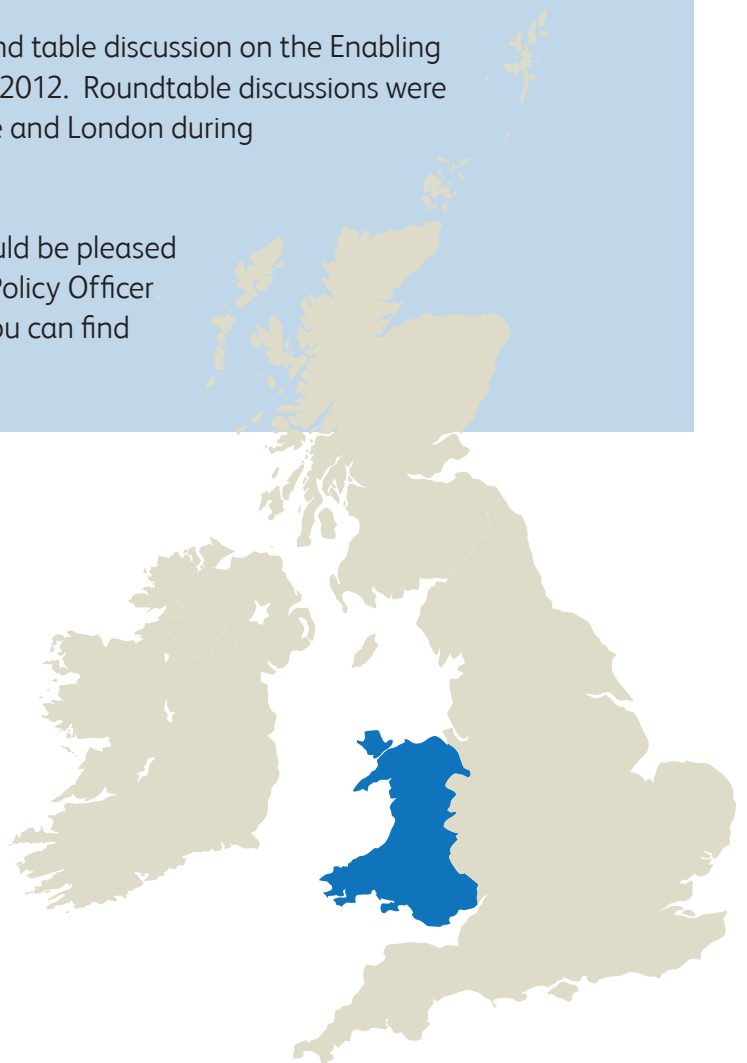
of the time appropriated the term to talk about the radical privatisation of public services. Nevertheless local authorities in Wales began to pioneer the local authority's role as a community leader. Much was made at that time of the proposition in the 7th century bardic tales of the Mabinogion: 'A fo ben bid bont, He who would be a leader, let him be a bridge'. Community leadership was defined as providing the bridges that allowed the interaction of citizens and communities in fulfilling social purposes.

In the first decade of devolution after 1999 the Welsh Government began to set out its own distinctive programme for public service reform. Key documents included the 2004: 'Making the Connections' and 'Beyond Boundaries: citizen centred local services for Wales'. Stress was put on the role of the citizen in defining the content of public services and the responsibility of providers to collaborate in developing responses to citizens. In contrast to reform agendas elsewhere in the UK the language was of 'citizen' rather than 'consume', 'collaboration' rather than 'competition', 'network' rather than 'market'.

The rhetoric of Wales may make strong references to community however when issues of public

Discussion in Cardiff

service delivery become contentious there is a tendency to revert to hierarchical structures and top-down rather than bottom-up solutions.

Indeed recent events indicate that the Welsh Government will revert to hierarchical solutions when under pressure. Thus there is a risk that the fiscal crisis rather than enabling or encouraging innovation, could result in a reversion to top down styles of government in Wales.

2. Key Themes

The discussions at the Cardiff roundtable centred around three key themes:

- A common vision for government and new forms of political accountability
- The tendency toward the 'statist' approach
- The dilemma of equality and consistency

The issues covered within these themes are expanded upon in Sections 2.1 - 2.3.

2.1 A common vision for government and new forms of political accountability

It was felt unlikely that new models of public service delivery could offer any improvements to

our collective wellbeing unless change is driven by a common vision rather than financial pressures alone. Settling on a common goal, which may be growing collective wellbeing, should be the first step in public service reform.

It was recognised however that while a common goal may help set the conditions for effective joined up government, truly joined up, innovative government means fundamental changes in relationships within government and between the state and citizens.

Current assumptions about political accountability often inhibit change and innovation within

Welsh public services. When it is assumed, for example, that a minister is accountable for all public service delivery the space to innovate often gets constrained by the pressure upon the minister to control. Creating new relationships between citizen and state will require changes in both the culture and the processes of political accountability.

A reward system constructed around attempts at innovation rather than punishing failure may be the answer.

2.2. The tendency toward the 'statist' approach

Wales has often been perceived as 'statist' in its approach to public services with a tendency to centralise rather than devolve services and control. This perception was reinforced for some by the decision in 2005 to absorb three major quangos into the Welsh Government: The Welsh Development Agency, ELWa (the agency for the funding of post 16 education and the tourist board) and the Wales Tourist Board. The decision not to marketise schools and hospitals through academies and foundations further confirmed the statist approach of the Welsh Government for many.

Supporters of these decisions however, claim that the absorption of the quangos was simply a re-arrangement of the centre of Welsh Government, rather than a step towards further centralisation and that in the case of schools and hospitals, decentralised networks were being facilitated rather than markets. The creation in 2001 of Dwr Cymru (Welsh Water) as a not-for profit social enterprise, distinguishable from both a shareholder company and a public corporation is often held up as a good example of where the Welsh Government has opted for a distinctly non-centralised approach.

Local government in Wales has had an uncertain role in recent years. At times the Welsh Government has sought a partnership with local government in which outcomes are agreed and space is left for local delivery and local innovation. At other times Welsh Government adopts a competitive or hierarchical relationship with local government which it then seeks to diminish or control.

Discussions about big government touch on where the boundaries lie between personal lives and state run services. Some participants felt quite strongly that the state had no role in our

personal relationships. Others argued that given the significant impact on wellbeing of issues such as anxiety and loneliness, the state had a role here particularly if a preventative approach to public service delivery is to be delivered. Indeed the state already touches on these more personal aspects of our lives by funding services such as Relate.

2.3. The dilemma of equality and consistency

There is significant inequality in citizen voice and capacity in Wales. In some areas individuals and communities are very capable of taking on a more active role in shaping and delivering public services, in other areas however communities require additional support.

The development of sporting activity for example, relies to a very large extent on the widespread contribution of volunteers in communities There is a tendency however for such volunteering to be concentrated in more affluent communities. To bridge these gaps in community capacity and confidence an enabling state would have to be deliberate in using state resources to equalise and redistribute capacity.

This will mean that on occasions programmes may have to be selective rather than universal. This move away from a consistent approach and process in turn raises concerns about equality and challenges in ensuring quality delivery.

3. What would an Enabling State look like in Wales?

There is certainly healthy debate and interest in Wales about community driven approaches and a historic language of community leadership to draw upon.

Over the past few decades in Wales there have been many notable episodes in the developing theory and practice in the inter-relationship of the state and citizens, such as:

- Developing the community leadership role of local authorities
- Developing a model of community ownership in social housing
- Developing a localist approach to community regeneration
- Introducing a social enterprise model for the provision of water
- Developing a collaborative or networked approach to public service delivery
- Creating networks of practitioners to innovate around co-ownership
- Debating a 'total place' approach to public service resourcing

Positive as these experiences have been, there remain, inevitably, numerous countervailing

tendencies in the development of public services in Wales

This continued tension makes Wales receptive to the debate on the 'Enabling State' and now may be a good time to fundamentally review which public services the state should be delivering in the 21st century Wales. There was agreement amongst participants that there may be many
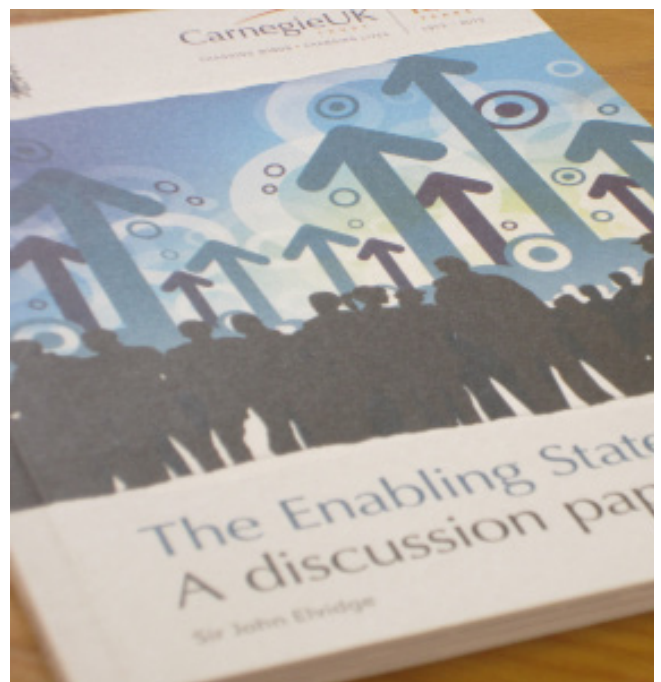
public services which are no longer appropriate or necessary and equally others areas of our lives where the state should perhaps have a greater role. Gaps in the market often mark gaps in social provision and may be helpful in this analysis. The rise in pay day lenders was cited as an example.

There was a feeling amongst participants that the terms 'rights and responsibilities' had been seized by the right and risked shutting down conversations about individual and community responsibilities in Wales. But general agreement

Sir John Elvidge sums up the discussion

that nonetheless this was an important conversation to be had. There was a strong feeling that reasonable expectations about individual responsibilities had to be fair and recognise diverse social, economic and cultural contexts. The assumption that it is reasonable to expect everyone to be able to maintain a healthy weight or diet was not considered fair or realistic and could lead to a culture of 'finger pointing' or blame. It was suggested that talking about individual and community 'contributions' might be a more positive and productive framework within which to have the conversation in Wales.

The success in raising rates of recycling was identified as a good example of the 'Enabling State' in action in Wales. Here central and local government negotiated agreements on the outcomes to be achieved. Local authorities engaged citizens in the aims of recycling, supporting a wide sense of shared responsibility between citizens and state, and provided the technologies that allowed citizens to segregate their own waste. Other examples of good practice include co-produced care programmes in Swansea.

4. Next Steps

Our engagement with stakeholders in each jurisdiction is now complete. We are now carrying out an extensive literature review and seeking out practical examples of an enabling state in action. Our findings will inform our final enabling state project outputs which we expect to publish in summer 2013.

You can keep up to date with our progress by visiting our enabling state project **page** and by following @CarnegieUKTrust, #enablingstate on Twitter

Cardiff Roundtable Attendees
Megan Mathias, Kafka Brigade
Michael Trickey, Welsh Public Services 2025
Laura McAllister, Sports Wales
Victoria Winckler, Bevan Foundation
Ruth Dineen, Co-production training UK
Sue Essex, Former Minister for Finance and Public Services
Nick Bennett, Community Housing Cymru
Angharad Richards, Commission on Devolution in Wales
Martyn Evans, Carnegie UK Trust
Jennifer Wallace, Carnegie UK Trust
Sir John Elvidge, Carnegie Fellow
Paul Griffiths, Carnegie Advisor in Wales
Jenny Brotchie, Carnegie UK Trust

The Carnegie UK Trust works to improve the lives of people throughout the UK and Ireland, by changing minds through influencing policy, and by changing lives through innovative practice and partnership work. The Carnegie UK Trust was established by Scots-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie in 1913 and we are delighted to be celebrating our centenary in 2013. Please see our website for further information on our centenary plans.

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Written by Paul Griffiths, Carnegie Advisor in Wales

Editing by Jennifer Wallace and Jenny Brotchie

March 2013

The Enabling State in Northern Ireland

Key issues raised at our Belfast *Enabling State* roundtable on 13 December 2012 at Carnegie Falls Road Library, Belfast

The UK and the Republic of Ireland have experienced huge improvements in wellbeing in the last 100 years, however a number of complex social problems persist. Could a new relationship between the state and individuals hold the key to solving these difficult social problems?

The Carnegie UK Trust believes we are at the beginning of a fundamental shift toward more empowered citizens and communities and a more enabling state. With the help of Carnegie Fellow Sir John Elvidge we are engaging with key stakeholders across the UK and Republic of Ireland to better understand this movement and, what this would mean for public service delivery. We will be looking for opportunities for shared learning as we go.

This report summarises the issues raised at our round table discussion on the Enabling State in Belfast at Carnegie Falls Road Library on the 13 December 2012. Roundtable discussions were also held in Cardiff, Dublin, Newcastle, Dunfermline and London during December 2012 – February 2013.

We hope you find the report of interest and we would be pleased to hear your views. Please contact Jenny Brotchie, Policy Officer at **jenny@carnegieuk.org** or on 01383 749757. You can find our discussion paper **here**.

1. The Northern Irish context

The very issue of statehood remains at the heart of the Northern Ireland conflict: 'are we British?' (the Unionist position) or 'are we Irish?' (the Nationalist stance). The discourse on 'The Enabling State' therefore had an additional edge.

The most recent 40 years of conflict abound with examples of state power, abuse of state power (the Finucane Report was issued on the same day as the Belfast event, just as flag protests also erupted), non-state actors' involvement - legal and illegal - 'state within a state' services, and 'in and against the state' paradoxes.
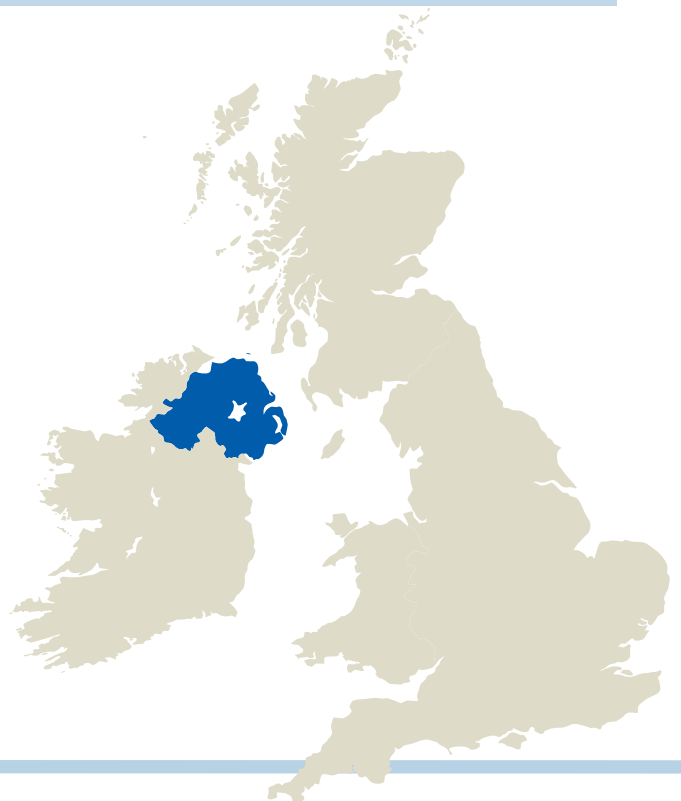
Northern Ireland also shares a land border with another state, Ireland, with a different political economy, currency, media and culture, enabling direct membership of European and international bodies such as the Council of Europe and the UN.

Nevertheless, Northern Ireland enjoys a strong civil society, partly forged out of crisis and a vigorous community and voluntary sector. The new political stability, following the Belfast (Good Friday) and St Andrews Agreements of 1998 and 2006 has allowed participation in and observation of the two states of the UK and Ireland on a similar devolutionary timeline to that of Scotland and Wales.

The Carnegie Falls Road Library, Belfast

2. Key Themes

Three key themes emerged from the Belfast roundtable:
* A divided political system.
* Transparency, risk and responsibility.
* Equality, Human Rights and civil justice.

The issues covered within these themes are expanded upon in sections 2.1-2.3.

2.1 A divided political system
The consociational model of power-sharing government adopted at Stormont has brought a form of 'compulsory coalition' with five parties in government and an 'opposition' of only four out of 108 MLAs. It is sometimes described as good for the peace process (binding everyone in), but rotten for good governance, prone to gridlock and negative veto. However, it has brought consensus on a number of key issues (e.g. Programme for Government, a four-year Budget, and Economic and Investment Strategies).

A tendency to bureaucratic solutions as a defence against allegations of discrimination however has led to audit arthritis, procurement paralysis, consultation fatigue and public appointment sclerosis — leading to frustration amongst those arguing for progressive advances and more

urgent social change. A 'managerial state' has a place, but that alone is insufficient for full responsiveness, especially if it tends to the technocratic and top-down, too.

The energetic voluntary and community sector has worked hard to open up access to the state in all its forms and provide channels for the sometimes angry voices of the otherwise voiceless. Flexible and creative responses to the violence and civil conflict that dominated the agenda for four decades built a solid respect for the non-governmental sector, winning it social partnership status with the state and a global recognition for peace-building and conflict resolution.

At its worst, however, a real disconnect has emerged, exemplified at the time of the roundtable by the Flags protest[1] which was articulated by previously unknown and uncoordinated, but now passionate and militant activists. In this context, a distinction was drawn by some workshop participants between 'capacity' and 'capability', with the former often

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1   The Flags protests emerged against a decision on 3rd December 2012 to restrict the flying of the Union Flag from Belfast City Hall to a number of 'designated' days.

From left: Quintin Oliver, Martyn Evans and Sir John Elvidge, summing up the discussion.

Discussion in Belfast

equated with less sustainable 'grant-writing and form-filling' as opposed to the latter's implications of a wider skill base in community organising and development.

Participants identified some features of the divided society that would bear further examination:

- **Access to government could be better structured and explained:** joined-up government for joined-up communities needs the 'plumbing underneath the rhetoric'. Less internal trading-off, bargaining and deal-making – more openness and partnership. New ways of working for new times.

- **Sharing of best practice:** those departments and public bodies that enjoyed stronger external relationships might capture those successes and share them more widely.

- **Less sterile consultation exercises:** 'consultation fatigue' is widespread. Consultation processes need revivified. Less consultation, better delivered through dialogue and a move beyond compliance.

- **A light touch audit and accounting environment:** so often promised but rarely

implemented, must now be realised.

- **Policy development through co-production:** rather than behind closed doors.

- **A better understanding of and engagement:** with the dynamics of (compulsory) coalition government for civil society.

- **Clearer protocols on the autonomy of NGOs:** to engage with, contest and challenge government and residual paramilitary and local political forces.

2.2 Transparency, risk and responsibility

All states depend on their reputation for openness. Indeed they are often measured on various published scales transferred on to league tables with extensive Freedom of Information legislation on most countries' statute books. The ability of a state to open up to dialogue, negotiation and consensus-building with non-state actors however, often seems more difficult – power relationships seem to persist.

Similarly within the voluntary and community sector, issues of internal transparency are now beginning to be asked – covering governance, user involvement, accountability and transparency of the sector itself, with some concerning examples

of lapses and omissions. A new paradigm is required for the new generation of organisations in a changing and developing relationship with the state.

Issues discussed included:

- transferring the focus of the transparency searchlight from process audit to an examination of the transparency of outcomes;

- shifting the culture of risk (e.g. concern about children being photographed or obsessive data protection self-censorship) to one of calculated risk, with a default towards commonsense;

- shining the spotlight on impact with better use of SROI techniques and a fairer balance between risk and reward;

- further rigorous self-examination within the voluntary and community sector as standards to which others are held must equally apply to all those seeking recognition and partnership.

2.3 Equality, Human Rights and civil justice

A large part of the negotiations of the accommodation of the Northern Ireland question centred on principles of human rights, equality, parity of esteem and the administration of justice. There is much experience and casework on which

to draw in this context of a debate on the role of the state.

The 1998 Northern Ireland Act enshrined tough equality principles in law and established a powerful Equality Commission (alongside a still separate Human Rights Commission) to regulate, advise and promote equality in Northern Ireland. NGOs played a full part in these debates and in the subsequent monitoring of their implementation on both sides of the border.

Debate in Belfast raised a number of pertinent challenges:

- The mythology of progressive communities contesting a regressive state was thoroughly debunked, with examples from integration of minority ethnic groups, 'hard-to-reach' (or 'seldom heard'?) marginalisation, and less publicly popular causes being evidenced.

- Could a firmer human rights underpinning help to mitigate the exclusion of less articulate or favoured voices, including those from out with the prevailing political bloc?

- Given continuing obstacles in the way of full access to justice for all individuals and groups, is there a place for civil justice as mediator, rather than merely as a provider of permissions?

3. What does an Enabling State mean in Northern Ireland?

The 'empowered citizen' may be more relevant within the contested state of Northern Ireland than that of the 'enabling state'. The concept of the 'empowered citizen' would reverse the 'top-down' notion, giving expression to a more grassroots salience, while all the time recognising – and managing expectations about - the limitations of the state. Especially if the very structure of the state and it's scope remains unsettled, if not actively challenged.

It was suggested that a fresh starting point, building on points of unity and common ground across a divided community, could be located in a new test: 'What is good for society?'. A focus on impacts and outcomes (the Scottish tradition of grassroots-led community education, its current 'Outcome Agreement' model, and its community planning progress were all widely admired) and measuring new approaches by their application to all, their fairness and their contribution to reversing multiple inequalities may be a good starting point. The forthcoming Review of Public Administration (RPA) offers up huge potential for transformative approaches in localism, decentralisation, subsidiarity, deploying the power of well-being and locally-led community planning. Traditionally organised in vertical bunkers, government could relax, encouraging

more horizontal collaboration, both within and outwith the public sphere, both at Stormont level and locally.

Many examples were cited of extra-governmental action that had flourished. These included: the Bogside Community Association (1972-76); the integrated education experiment (and its latter-day cousin, shared education) and the current debate on enhanced social enterprise in and from a community-based and focussed social economy.

Community asset transfer was discussed as a huge current opportunity for government to show willing on these principles, not to transfer liabilities, nor to hold the all-empowering equity behind, but to share in deploying state resources creatively and with a powerful social purpose – the enabling state indeed!

Belfast Roundtable Attendees

Anne Moore, Save the Children Northern Ireland
Avila Kilmurray, Community Foundation for Northern Ireland
Bill Osborne, Building Change Trust
Breedagh Hughes, Royal College of Midwives, NI
Brendan Heaney, Diabetes UK (NI)
Brian Pelan, View Digital
Derek McCallan, Northern Ireland Local Government Association
Heather Moorhead, Northern Ireland Confederation
Johann Gallagher, Strategic Investment Board Limited
Michael Wardlow, Equality Commission (Northern Ireland)
Nuala O'Neill, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
Ruth O'Reilly, The Detail TV
Paul Mullan, Heritage Lottery Fund Northern Ireland
Stewart Finn, NICVA
Tracey Teague, Department for Social Development in Northern Ireland
Quintin Oliver, Carnegie Advisor in Northern Ireland
Martyn Evans, Carnegie UK Trust
Jennifer Wallace, Carnegie UK Trust
Sir John Elvidge, Carnegie Fellow
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4. Next Steps

Our engagement with stakeholders in each jurisdiction is now complete. We are now carrying out an extensive literature review and seeking out practical examples of an enabling state in action. Our findings will inform our final enabling state project outputs which we expect to publish in summer 2013.

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March 2013

The Enabling State in the Republic of Ireland

Key issues raised at our Dublin *Enabling State* roundtable on 23 January 2013 at Wood Quay, Dublin

The UK and the Republic of Ireland have experienced huge improvements in wellbeing in the last 100 years, however a number of complex social problems persist. Could a new relationship between the state and individuals hold the key to solving these difficult social problems?

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This report summarises the issues raised at our roundtable discussion on the Enabling State at Wood Quay, Dublin. Roundtable discussions were also held in Cardiff, Belfast, Newcastle, Dunfermline and London during December 2012 – February 2013.

We hope you find the report of interest and we would be pleased to hear your views. Please contact Jenny Brotchie, Policy Officer at **jenny@carnegieuk.org** or on 01383 749757. You can find our discussion paper **here**.

1. The Republic of Ireland Context

Many of the issues raised in the Enabling State discussion paper resonate in the Republic of Ireland but, unsurprisingly, the broadly UK-based analysis does not always translate easily.

Following a 15 year economic boom when GDP per head rose to amongst the highest in Europe and unemployment fell to below 3%, Ireland has experienced a severe five year economic contraction since 2008 seeing unemployment rising to 15% (over 40% for young people); historically high levels of emigration; a complete collapse in the property market; banking failure;
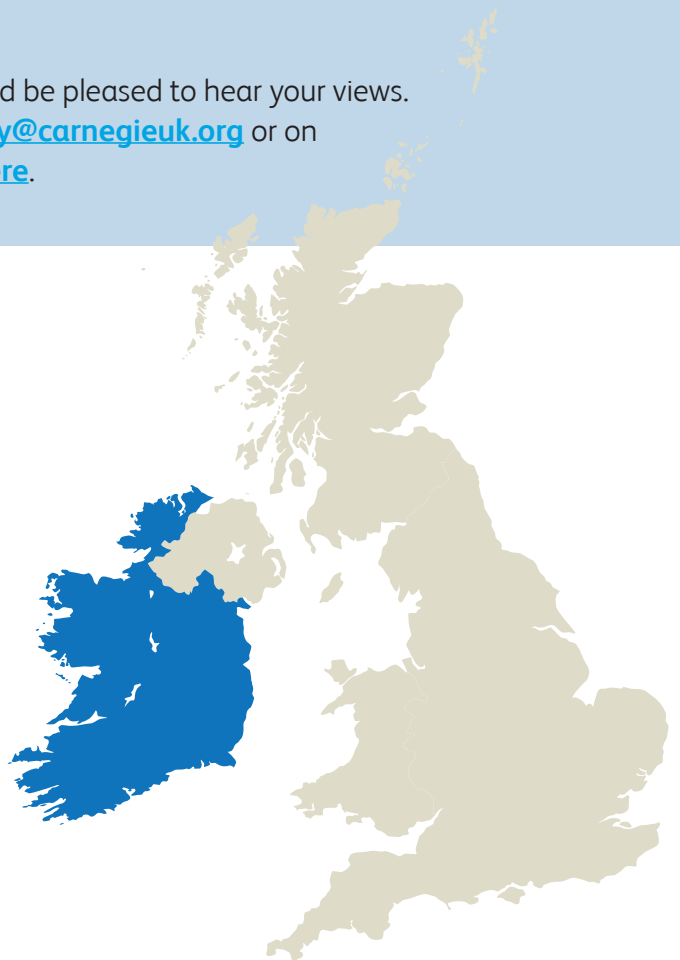
entry into an IMF/EU/ECB rescue and structural adjustment programme; severe cuts in public services budgets and major increases in taxation levels across the board. In short the country has experienced a profound shock and a general crisis of confidence as it has wrestled to stabilise the economy and regain control over its own affairs and destiny.

Social cohesion has been severely tested during this process and the country has been on a five year journey of soul searching and self-questioning as it attempts to identify and agree what caused the social and economic crisis, what lessons need to be learned, and what reforms need to be introduced to ensure the experience is never repeated. The Government's stated overwhelming priority is to exit the IMF/EU/ECB programme and regain national sovereignty, while minimising the severity of the negative impact on the most vulnerable people. The general consensus of the Irish people appears to be that it is doing a reasonable job in this regard, but paradoxically polls suggest that it will be severely punished for the actions it has taken at the next general election. Programmes of local government and constitutional reform are proposed which will have uncertain effects on the relationship between citizens, communities and the state in the years ahead.

Aside from the completely dominating context that Ireland is still a 'bailout' country and is dealing with a five part crisis in the areas of banking, public finances, national competitiveness, social outcomes and national reputation. There are three other main contextual differences that would appear to inform the relevance of the Enabling State concept to the Republic of Ireland and that in the UK:

- Ireland is a highly centralised state in comparison to England and Wales and Scotland. Control of policy development - and responsibility for actual service implementation in many instances – in the areas of health and social services, education,

From left: Martyn Evans, Sir John Elvidge, Fergus O'Ferrall and Ruth Barrington

social welfare and benefits, policing, economic development, agriculture, environmental protection and the administration of justice and many, many others resides with national agencies and Government departments. As a result, local authorities do not have the same significant role as they do in a UK context being largely concerned with the provision of local infrastructure, local planning, maintaining local road networks, public amenities, and the provision of social housing.

- There was no Beveridge Report in Ireland and as such Irelands health, welfare and social services provision developed in a piecemeal fashion involving a mix of provision by statutory bodies, religious orders and laterally civil society and private sector actors.

- There is – perhaps because of a post colonial attitude to authority in general - no great loyalty to, love of or pride in, the organs of government, the state and in public administration generally.

Consideration of enabling state is therefore taking place within a significantly different environment to that in the UK and the debate is influenced by consideration of what is possible in contemporary Ireland, given these multi-faceted challenges.

2. Key Themes

Three key themes emerged from the Dublin roundtable:

- A crisis of trust in the state and confidence in our ability to control our own affairs;

- A lack of proactive leadership, vision and strategic thinking in relation to what's possible for Ireland in the years ahead, with reactive thinking predominating;

- Contested understandings of what the relationship between organised civil society as participative democratic infrastructure and the institutions of our representational democratic system.

The issues covered within these themes is expanded upon in sections 2.1 - 2.3.

2.1 A crisis of trust in the state and confidence in controlling our own affairs

Much of the discussion in the session was affected by a generally negative view of the state and its agencies. This involved a number of dimensions.

Many people think that Irelands proportional representation electoral system with multi-seat constituencies produces public representatives that have to spend too much time attending to personal matters of a clientalist nature on behalf of local constituents (such as procuring medical cards or social housing etc). Holders of this view regard the electoral system as reinforcing a lack of loyalty to the institutions of state, causing electoral representatives to regard the resources of state as being there to be 'exploited' on behalf of their constituents. Ministers are impeded from focussing properly on matters of national import by the requirement for them to prioritise the servicing of the needs of their constituents over the demands of national policymaking.

This view needs to be balanced however, by the fact that there are many who view the existing system as ensuring that public administration stays responsive to the needs of citizens by requiring elected representatives to focus first and foremost on the needs of their local constituents.

There has also been a history of corruption in politics in Ireland with tribunals of enquiry making findings in recent years against public figures at all levels of the public administration system including business people, former local councillors, former local government officials, and former Ministers in national government.

All of these issues have led to their being a sense of a crisis of confidence in the institutions of Irish democracy. They have also led to some populist, but arguably regressive policy responses such as the current government's proposal to abolish the Senate (the upper house of the Oireachtas) – rather that reform to realise the potential it has to become a second house that is truly representative of the many civil society voices and community and voluntary stakeholders in Irish society.

Discussion against the backdrop of Dublin's old city wall at the Wood Quay Venue

There is a general sense of a lack of accountability in the public administration system governing public services in areas of health and social services. There is a feeling that these institutions have become quangoised and distanced from direct accountability to the people and communities they are supposed to serve. There are calls for increased mechanisms for scrutiny and accountability of all institutions which have the public trust including politicians, the church, banks, public administration and public regulation.

There is concern in relation to disengagement from the political process, particularly amongst young people. This oft made observation however needs to be balanced against the evidence of historically high turnouts in the most recent general election and referendums.

2.2 The lack of leadership, vision and strategic planning

Many of the participants spoke about a lack of a guiding vision for society or strategic plan for public services in Ireland. This had added resonance as there was a wide-spread view that the dominant neoliberal model guiding Irelands economic policy has failed and a new politics 'of the common good' is required. It was also noted that it appeared that the Governments vision is restricted to doing only that which is

necessary to exit the EU/ECB/IMF programme by delivering its economic vision to 'make Ireland the best country to do business in'. While there is a national programme to reform public services and the beginnings of a move to outcomes-based performance management there is no sense that this adds up to a new, inspiring and coherent vision for good governance in Ireland.

2.3 The contested role of the community sector and the possibility of partnership working

Ireland has a strong and well-developed history of community and voluntary activity with communities accustomed to providing for themselves, often with a mix of privately fundraised and statutory resources. But while this is largely seen as positive, it has led to a patchwork of provision and the risk of some areas and communities can find themselves 'cast aside' because of their lack of ability to organise themselves and are therefore excluded from social progress. The recent crisis has however seen some positive developments such as an increase in volunteering, a re-commitment to values of community, solidarity, care and an acknowledgement that complex issues such as homelessness cannot be solved through state services alone, and will always involve community participation. Communities are seen as the best place to respond to contemporary

issues such as loneliness, isolation and social vulnerability.

Against this background, the debate on the role of the community sector is markedly different from that in the UK. It focuses on recent experiences of partnership working with government and the ongoing tension between 'partners in service provision' and 'advocates for social change'. While there is still much practical partnership working between community and voluntary organisations and their statutory funders at local and community level, formal national strategising by social partners came to an end in 2011. Social partnership characterised Irelands approach to national policy development for the twenty five years from 1987 to 2010 however many (but by no means all) now view Ireland's corporatist social partnership model as having been a major contributory factor in the 'groupthink' that caused the crisis. Exponents of this view regard social partnership as a 'carving up of the national cake' between vested interest stakeholder groups and reject interpretations of it as constituting effective, if imperfect, national strategising. This debate has been won in the public mind with the idea of social partnership now being regarded as toxic, with apologists regarded by some as national apostates.

There is therefore a fundamental debate about what the role of the community sector and organised civil society is in a democracy. Is civil society to be viewed as simply another 'vested interest' or 'special interest' group vying in competition for scarce statutory resources and limited opportunities to influence the nation's strategic direction? Should the appeal that groups that exist for the public benefit (such as officially recognised charities) typically make to ideas of fairness, justice and the common good be treated as just more special interest pleading? These are profound questions that are now at play in the Irish debate, with powerful voices arguing that that is indeed the case.

Should the sector be a more vocal advocate for disempowered groups and seek to hold the state to account on their behalf - and how can it more effectively do this while also working in a service provider relationship with the state? It was noted that there are voices in the media and elsewhere in Ireland that argue that the state should not be funding groups that criticise it and should focus scarce public funds on services provision and not advocacy and views such as these may make it difficult for the sector to continue to advocate for social change. Given this background, partnership working between the public and community sectors can be difficult to sustain.

The forthcoming reform of local government and local development structures and processes was recognised as an indication of the relationship between citizens, communities and the state that government envisages in the years ahead.

3. What does an Enabling State mean in the Republic of Ireland?

Overall, the discussions in Ireland suggested that the Enabling State 'model' as presented would not work it its entirety in Ireland, but that important elements of it could, and most likely would, if civil society, the community and voluntary sector and governments wanted it to. The language used in the Enabling State paper was discussed in some detail. Concepts like trust, the state, the welfare state and self-sufficiency all have different resonances in Ireland.

There was a strong sense that the time is right for change, that the 'five part crisis' needs radical solutions that challenge the current model of public services and the 'social contract' between individuals and the state. The number of voices calling for public service reform is growing.

4. Next Steps

Our engagement with stakeholders in each jurisdiction is now complete. We are now carrying out an extensive literature review and seeking out practical examples of an enabling state in action.

Our findings will inform our final enabling state project outputs which we expect to publish in summer 2013.

You can keep up to date with our progress by visiting our enabling state **project page** and by following @ CarnegieUKTrust, #enablingstate on Twitter.

Dublin Roundtable Attendees

Ruth Barrington, TASC
Patricia Conboy, Older & Bolder
Mary Cunningham, National Youth Council Ireland
John Dolan, Disability Federation of Ireland
Rachel Doyle, National Women's Council of Ireland
Deirdre Garvey, The Wheel
Helen Johnston, National Economic and Social Council
Charlotte Manson, Stratagem (NI) Ltd
Seamus Mulconry, Philanthropy Ireland
Joe Mulholland, MacGill Summer School and Arts Week
Kieran Murphy, Society of St. Vincent de Paul Ireland
Nat O'Connor, TASC
Fergus O'Ferrall, Department of Public Health & Primary Care
Colm O'Gorman, Amnesty Interational Ireland
Quintin Oliver, Stratagem (NI) Ltd
Paul O'Sullivan, Clann Credo - The Social Investment Fund
Mervyn Taylor, Pathfinder
Brendan Wheelan, CEO, Social Finance Foundation
Ivan Cooper, The Wheel
Martyn Evans, Carnegie UK Trust
Jennifer Wallace, Carnegie UK Trust
Sir John Elvidge, Carnegie Fellow
Jenny Brotchie, Carnegie UK Trust

The Carnegie UK Trust works to improve the lives of people throughout the UK and Ireland, by changing minds through influencing policy, and by changing lives through innovative practice and partnership work. The Carnegie UK Trust was established by Scots-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie in 1913 and we are delighted to be celebrating our centenary in 2013. Please see our website for further information on our centenary plans.

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Written by Ivan Cooper, Carnegie Advisor in the Republic of Ireland

April 2013

The Enabling State in the North of England

Key issues raised at our Newcastle *Enabling State* roundtable on 29 January 2013 at Malmaison Hotel, Newcastle

The UK and the Republic of Ireland have experienced huge improvements in wellbeing in the last 100 years, however a number of complex social problems persist. Could a new relationship between the state and individuals hold the key to solving these difficult social problems?

The Carnegie UK Trust believes we are at the beginning of a fundamental shift toward more empowered citizens and communities and a more enabling state. With the help of Carnegie Fellow Sir John Elvidge we are engaging with key stakeholders across the UK and Republic of Ireland to better understand this movement and, what this would mean for public service delivery. We will be looking for opportunities for shared learning as we go.

This report summarises the issues raised at our roundtable discussion on the Enabling State at Malmaison Hotel in Newcastle. Roundtable discussions were also held in Cardiff, Belfast, Dublin, Dunfermline and London during December 2012 – February 2013.

We hope you find the report of interest and we would be pleased to hear your views. Please contact Jenny Brotchie, Policy Officer at **jenny@carnegieuk.org** or on 01383 749757. You can find our discussion paper **here**.

1. Context

Holding an Enabling State roundtable in the North of England is significant in itself. In choosing to hold separate roundtables in London and the North, the Carnegie UK Trust has recognised that 'the state' is understood very differently between the centre and the periphery in England. The institutions of the state are dense in London – the home of central government, the London Mayor and the London Assembly – in comparison with the North where local government has been steadily eroded of powers over several decades, regional assemblies were rejected in the North East and subsequently regional development
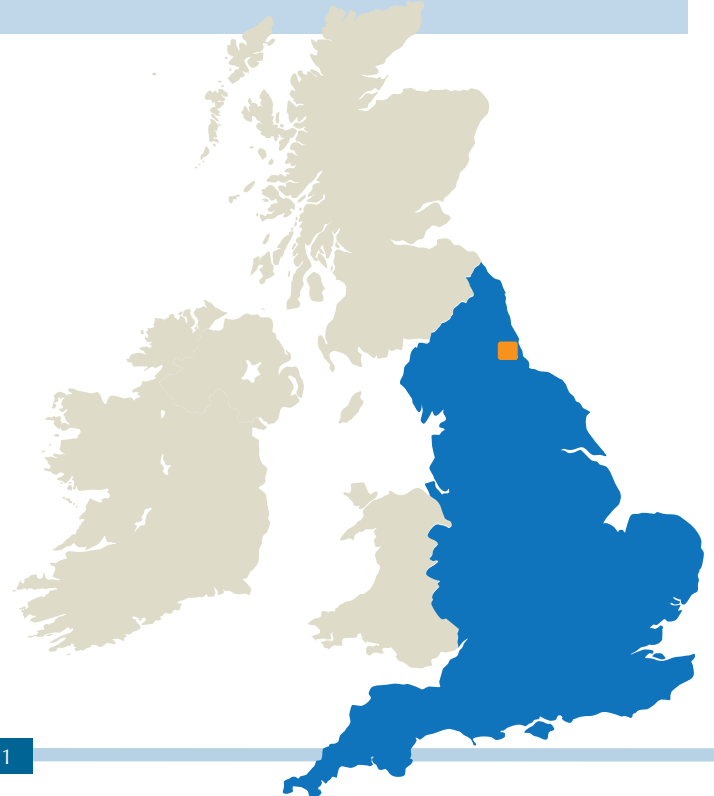
agencies and other regional offices have been abolished. For many in the North, far from being enabling, the state is a distant and centralising force.

Any notion of 'the North' is problematic too. In part this is due to the absence of any boundaries or institutions that can shape or define the term. Whilst the term holds meaning over against 'the South', local and regional identities tend to predominate. Even in the North East, which adopts the term 'North' more readily, it is usually used to mean the 'North East' rather than any wider geography.

These questions of identity and institutions are part of a wider debate about Englishness which at present is being brought into sharp relief by the forthcoming referendum on Scottish independence. Irrespective of the outcome, the so-called West Lothian question and ideas about an English Parliament seem to be growing in relevance, as does the idea of Englishness. Any rethinking about the relationship between state and society must be acutely aware of these important dynamics and how they impact on people's perceptions of public service and being 'enabled'.

At the local level though, many of the themes identified in the Enabling State discussion paper have resonance with government initiatives in England over the past two decades during which there has been something of a journey as regards the relationship between state and society – not least in relation to neighbourhood renewal. Whilst community involvement was a feature of Single Regeneration Budget schemes, the notion that communities should be more effective participants in regenerating their own neighbourhoods came to the fore through the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal in 2001 which put heavy emphasis on 'community engagement'. This was taken a further step forward through the Community Empowerment White Paper in 2008 which attempted to embed concepts such as participatory budgeting, co-production and the community ownership of public assets.

From left: Jennifer Wallace, Sir John Elvidge and Sally Young

These policies – together with some aspects of public service reform under New Labour – provided an important basis upon which the Coalition Government could introduce the notion of Big Society and communities doing more for themselves. The Coalition government has also sought to advance changes in the relationship between state and society through its 'open public services' and 'localism' agendas. Sadly though, such policies have been accompanied by a programme of severe public spending cuts, targeted in particular at local government, falling disproportionately in the North where public spending has been perceived to be higher, and with a growing impact on frontline services. For many, localism and Big Society have become synonymous with a government abdicating its responsibility for local service provision in the name of austerity and the privatisation of public services.

As is clear from this context, to speak of an enabling state in the Northern context is problematic. Whilst few would doubt the need for a changing relationship between state and society, there is a cynicism and weariness about the possibility of change in places that feel stripped of any genuine autonomy by government centralisation and years of austerity.

But in such a context, the idea of empowerment becomes all the more compelling. Could it be

that an enabling state is one which properly decentralises and devolves many central functions and affords the North – indeed England more generally – a greater range of powers and freedoms like those exercised in the devolved nations? Could it be that a communitarian vision could refresh the public appetite for greater

involvement in particular public services such as education and health? The answers remain to be seen. But reflecting on the discussion paper and roundtable, the rest of this paper explores those factors that might make an enabling state in the North more or less likely.

2. Key Themes

Three key themes emerged from the Newcastle roundtable:

- Who delivers?
- The lack of leadership, vision and strategic planning
- The contested role of the community sector

The issues covered within these themes are expanded upon in sections 2.1-2.3.

2.1 Who delivers?

For a number of participants in the roundtable, the critical question concerning the enabling state was 'who delivers'? New public management (NPM) was seen to focus on the 'delivery state' and has been well known for the mantra 'what matters is what works' and there was a strong sense that even if NPM was to be superseded, a pragmatic emphasis on delivery remained key to unlocking the enabling state.

There was an unspoken assumption that state institutions should no longer be the sole delivery agents of public services although examples were cited where local councils were taking an innovative approach to service delivery, themselves providing a 'core' function but working closely with local communities to deliver 'additional' local projects.

There were strong advocates for a greater role for the voluntary and community sector in this regard, citing the fact that such organisations were generally smarter at delivering bespoke, locally

sensitive services underpinned by clear values and altruistic motivations. There was also the sense that voluntary organisations were more adept at addressing the causes rather than the symptoms of key social issues. It was felt that the USA was better at recognising the potential of the third sector but that Whitehall still felt that voluntary organisations were patchy and a risky option.

Others spoke of the role of businesses – particularly local businesses – in delivering public services. The Greggs 'Breakfast Club' was given as good example. Local philanthropy and 'patient capital' were seen to be key to more empowered communities but there was concern that indigenous local businesses had declined and local business people were less involved in local democracy than had been the case in the past. Vaux was cited as an example of a business with

Discussion at the roundtable

strong local attachment and active involvement in training and nurturing the local population. Larger businesses were perceived to be more concerned about shareholder interests and the City of London rather than the local communities in which they operate and to this end the privatisation of public service provision was broadly felt to be negative. An example of one company was given where it had reduced its regional presence from 4000 locally-based staff to just one regional manager.

With a diminishing role for the state in direct service delivery and a greater focus on the role of the voluntary and private sectors, procurement processes had to be right. Public procurement and the 'Open Public Services' agenda were heavily criticised. The reality is that public sector contracts are only open to big private sector or third sector organisations and too much commissioning takes place nationally rather than locally. Most small local business and community and voluntary organisations do not have the capacity to bid for or enter into public service contracts. Procurers attach too large a weighting to price, they tend to be risk averse – particularly as regards rules on state aid – and attach too little value to local knowledge and technical ability.

One of the problems may be a lack of knowledge and understanding about how to measure social

Participants listen as Sir John sums up the discussion

value. A number of participants were aware of individual projects attempting to find a better way to measure social value. Research into social accounting at Newcastle University was given as an example. It was felt however, that public sector commissioners tended to be sceptical about such approaches. One participant noted that there had been no guidance published alongside the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 to properly define social value and that there was still some way to go in developing a good understanding of social outcomes.

Perhaps the most compelling arguments though were for a mix or 'blend' of service providers, recognising the strengths and weaknesses of each. One participant identified a mode or 'logic' that determined different sectors' approaches to resource distribution and service provision. The state was felt to be essentially bureaucratic with the benefits of technical and managerial expertise in allocating resources. The private sector is essentially competitive, effective in improving price and efficiency in some areas of service delivery where this can be helpful such as personal services. The voluntary and community sectors are largely associative, sharing resources and linking people more holistically to sources of support. And there was a role too for friends and family in meeting one another's basic needs based around a logic of reciprocity and love.

The idea in the discussion paper that there was some kind of 'hierarchy of preference' with people always choosing friends and family to meet their (service) needs came under some scrutiny. It was felt that it underestimated the ability of public service professionals to care and the desires of individuals to preserve their dignity and protect their families and friends from the burdens of certain types of care. Instead, it was suggested that an enabling state needed to become more adept at recognising and promoting the complementarity of different forms of service provision and the logics and values that underpin each. In particular, the local and personal knowledge held by communities and

individuals needed to be better combined with the managerial and expert knowledge held by the public service professional from whatever sector.

2.2 Who has the power?

Whilst there was a lively debate about delivery, many participants sought a more penetrating discussion about power and leadership, for without understanding about who controls the state and its resources, matters of delivery and resource distribution will never be properly challenged.

One participant argued that the idea of an 'enabling state' suggested that power continued to lie with the state rather than the individual or community and for this reason an 'empowered community' was probably a more helpful term. The notion of 'self-actualisation' seems important here. Unless people feel able to address their own needs or engage with public service providers then any notion of an enabling state lacked potency. This does not necessarily require money. One person argued that it was insufficient for people to feel 'free from' the state, they needed to feel 'free to' shape it – to have power over it.

In this regard it was felt government was weak, particularly in relation to dealing with difference. The state could be good at providing homogenous services, 'free from' too much bureaucracy, but not at enabling diverse communities to be 'free to' access services which meet their individual needs. This was particularly true in the English context where an over-centralised state was increasingly at odds with the needs of local communities. It was felt that the discussion paper implied an enabling state would necessarily be more localist but this was not explicit. In particular, it did not spell out any role for local government and local democracy and this was considered a flaw in the argument.

But concerns were raised about the risks of greater localism. Some participants spoke about the dangers of 'postcode lotteries' and whilst it was recognised that these already existed across many

services – sometimes as a result of centralised delivery – they should not be exacerbated. It was felt that the Coalition Government's approach to localism tended to favour those with the 'sharpest elbows' and was essentially populist and majoritarian in its approach. This had dangerous implications for minority groups and those living with disadvantage. It was pointed out that even middle class people tended to have complex lives and lacked time to get involved in too much local decision-making and service delivery.

But for many the 'power problem' was more fundamental. There was a strong feeling that people's lack of engagement with local service delivery was symptomatic of a much deeper sense of political alienation and lack of voice. For the North of England in particular, it was felt that the left no longer represented people's concerns and that neither the unions nor the Labour Party were particularly 'enabling' institutions in the way they once were. They too had been captured by elite interests.

There was also concern about a lack of local leadership from both the business and the political community. Some felt that many Northern leaders had given in to a 'narrative of despair' in the present circumstances that does not serve their people well. The lack of political voice and lack of local leadership were seen as the primary reasons why there had been so little resistance to the austerity measures that were having such an impact on the region. There was an urgent need for more enabling political institutions and the Scottish Nationalist Party was identified on a number of occasions as being an example of a more effective approach but questions remained as to whether it could be replicated in England or at a regional level.

Another concern in relation to power was a sense of inter-generational injustice. One participant suggested that those who were now pensioners had prospered very well within the welfare state through things like free healthcare, education and university tuition and that they continued to

receive disproportionate public benefits through protections to pensions, winter fuel allowance, free travel and so on. If the state was to be perceived as valuable to younger generations and there was an expectation that young people should somehow 'contribute' more effectively to the public good then such benefits needed to be better shared.

2.3 Whose values?

A theme that emerged throughout the roundtable was that of 'values'. At an individual level, it was recognised that a more empowering and relational state held inherent value for individuals, not least those who did not have paid employment. Notions of community participation were important for those without paid work in affirming the contribution they can make in their communities and demonstrating their value 'beyond money'.

Values were given as an explanation as to why the third sector was seen as a key contributor to an enabling state – 'shared values' were felt to be an explanation as to why third sector staff could be more effective at delivering services, although others argued that 'public sector values' and professionalism did not eschew a care for the individual. However, the state needs to have

a clear vision about what kind of society it is trying to build and give its staff the power to work toward that vision. Many felt that current public sector values are skewed in favour of the bottom line and minimising risk. One contributor asked whether it was possible for the state to demonstrate 'love'. Some felt that it was more difficult for large organisations with big managerial systems to be caring. One participant gave the example of a housing association that had had to stop delivering a number of the services it had originally set out to provide after becoming more closely associated with state and adopting some of the top-down managerial practices of the larger organisation.

So what are the kind of values that might underpin a more enabling state? Beveridge talked about the Welfare State addressing five evils: Want, Disease, Ignorance, Squalor and Idleness. Perhaps the enabling state might be addressed more positively towards five values: Trust, Care, Welcome, Innovation and Hope. When applied to family services, drug and alcohol support, probation, health or housing, for example, each of these values can shed fresh light on the ways in which the service is currently provided and the opportunities that might exist for a more relational approach to service design and delivery.

3. What does an Enabling State mean in the North of England

The discussion paper and roundtable brought out strong emotions and concern in the North. It would be difficult to underestimate the sense of antipathy towards the current government in Westminster and the deep cynicism that runs deeper about the Whitehall machine. Not a great context for a discussion about an enabling state and an indication of the quite fundamental power shift that might need to take place before a more meaningful conversation about reforming public services can happen in the North.

But that is not to say that the community spirit of self-determination – so often noted as a hallmark of Northern identity – and the importance of individual empowerment or 'self-actualisation' is by any means dead. Voluntary and community sector groups are chomping at the bit to be able to compete on a level playing field to bring values-driven service provision to local communities both as advocates and delivery agencies and to demonstrate the significant social outcomes that might be derived as a result. Local government longs for the autonomy it once had to shape that sense of place and economy according to local needs and strengths. And whilst there is little enthusiasm for big private sector contracts commissioned by the central state, the scope for local business collaboration and a 'blended' approach to local service delivery is apparent. It is through these local, intermediary bodies that individual choices, personalisation, social capital and co-production are most likely to flourish and it is these that should be the focus of decentralisation and a truly enabling state.

4. Next Steps

Our engagement with stakeholders in each jurisdiction is now complete. We are now carrying out an extensive literature review and seeking out practical examples of an enabling state in action.

Our findings will inform our final enabling state project outputs which we expect to publish in summer 2013.

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Newcastle Roundtable Attendees
Dan Brophy, Entrust
David Corner, National Audit Office
Jo Curry, Voluntary Organisations Network North East (VONNE)
Georgina Fletcher, Regional Refugee Forum North East
Simon Hanson, Federation of Small Businesses
Dan Jackson, South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council
Sam Palombella, Groundwork North East
Mark Shucksmith, School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape
Tom Smyth, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
Peter Walls, Gentoo Group Ltd
Ray Ward, Carillion Energy Services
Sally Young, Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service
Jennifer Wallace, Carnegie UK Trust
Sir John Elvidge, Carnegie Fellow
Ed Cox, Carnegie Advisor in the North of England
Jenny Brotchie, Carnegie UK Trust

The Enabling State in Scotland

Key issues raised at our Scotland *Enabling State* roundtable on 30 January 2013 at Andrew Carnegie House, Dunfermline

The UK and the Republic of Ireland have experienced huge improvements in wellbeing in the last 100 years, however a number of complex social problems persist. Could a new relationship between the State and individuals hold the key to solving these difficult social problems?

The Carnegie UK Trust believes we are at the beginning of a fundamental shift toward more empowered citizens and communities and a more Enabling State. With the help of Carnegie Fellow Sir John Elvidge we are engaging with key stakeholders across the UK and Republic of Ireland to better understand this movement and, what this would mean for public service delivery. We will be looking for opportunities for shared learning as we go.

This report summarises the issues raised at our round table discussion on the Enabling State in Scotland at Andrew Carnegie House in Dunfermline on the 30 January 2013. Roundtable discussions were also held in Cardiff, Dublin, Newcastle, Belfast and London during December 2012 – February 2013.

We hope you find the report of interest and we would be pleased to hear your views. Please contact Jenny Brotchie, Policy Officer at **jenny@carnegieuk.org** or on 01383 749757. You can find our discussion paper **here**.

1. The Scottish Context

Prior to devolution a significant amount of the legislation governing public services in Scotland was separate from that governing England and Wales. Health, education and legal systems were all legislated for through Scotland-specific legislation albeit under the auspices of the UK Parliament. This differentiation allowed for policy divergence prior to devolution which impacted to a greater and lesser extent across the public services. The NHS in Scotland, for example, closely resembled the NHS in England and Wales until the market-making policies of the 1990s. On the other hand, a distinctive Scottish approach to the welfare of children and young people who offend or who are offended
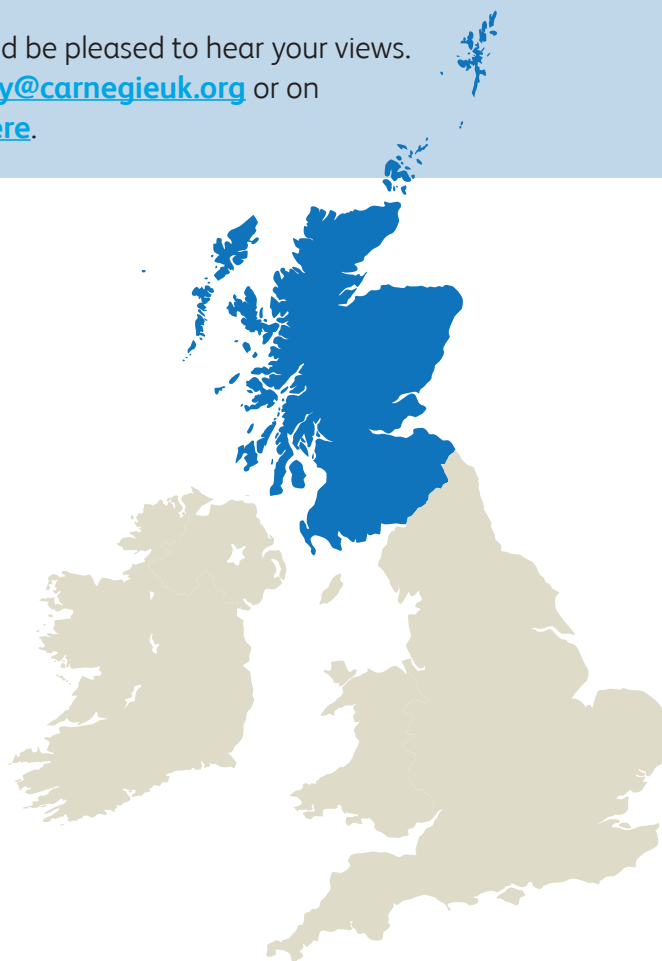
against developed in the 1960s. Housing policy also had a distinctive 'flavour' favouring community housing models.

Devolution has allowed Scotland to legislate more frequently and respond more quickly than was previously the case but the notion of a Scottish-approach to public services was already well-established. The analysis in the Enabling State discussion paper was heavily influenced by policy developments in Scotland over the past 5 years. The discussion and debate in Dunfermline therefore focused heavily on the success of the 'Scottish model' and the extent to which it has provided a 'different way' of working across public services and with communities.

In the early years of devolution, the Scottish approach was characterised by a noticeably collectivist approach to public services. The re-birth of the Scottish Parliament led to a confidence that 'anything was possible'. Fuelled by rising public sector budgets, the Scottish Parliament legislated for free personal care for the elderly, abolished tuition fees and the phasing out of prescription charges.

In 2010 the Scottish Government established The Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services, known as the Christie Commission to provide a longer-term view, against the backdrop of reduced public spending and an ageing population. The Christie Commission identified co-production, preventative action, and integration of services around need as crucial elements of Scotland's future public service model, underpinned by outcomes based performance management. Their recommendations were welcomed by the SNP Government and received broad cross-party support.

Recent developments in Scotland include the establishment of Change Funds to encourage joint preventative action around adult social care, early years and tackling re-offending, integration of health and social care and the proposed Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill which aims to extend rights of community ownership and management of community assets.

2. Key Themes

The broad analysis of the 'Scottish model' in the discussion paper was accepted by the participants but they drew attention to the fact that deep inequalities continue to exist in Scotland. While supportive of the current framework, they were not convinced that it would deliver the scale of change required. As with discussions in other jurisdictions, there was a sense that the reality was not yet matching the rhetoric on integration, preventative spend and participation.

Three key themes emerged from the Scotland roundtable:
- Equality and community empowerment
- Professionalism, skills and the role of the State
- Trust, responsibility and risk

The issues covered within these themes are expanded upon in sections 2.1-2.3.

Discussion in Dunfermline

2.1 Equality and community empowerment

Participants had a broadly positive view on enabling more community engagement in delivering services. They felt that social connectedness has a strong impact on wellbeing and this could be further developed in Scotland.

However, a number of participants were concerned about how best to help people living in deprived communities access the opportunities provided by a more Enabling State. There was seen to be a significant risk that a more Enabling State will simply allow well-resourced communities to flex their 'middle class elbows' and access more resources. The group discussed whether power was necessarily a 'zero-sum game' whereby for some communities to gain power, others would have to give up power. While no conclusions were drawn, there was a sense that community empowerment could be tokenistic and was not yet sufficiently embedded in Scottish public services.

It was argued strongly that the focus of a progressive Enabling State had to be on helping 'low capacity' communities access better services. In particular it was felt important to build on indigenous capacity rather than parachuting in

Sir John Elvidge (centre) sums up discussions in Scotland

expert 'capacity building' programmes. This was especially the case for those participants who stressed the need to re-energise local democracy. There was concern that some communities, and groups like young people, were not voters and had little influence over policy decisions; greater civic engagement should be a key aim of community empowerment and regeneration.

But while there was a desire to build on activity at a community level, and a recognition that there is far more community level action than is generally recognised, the participants noted how embedded a deficit model approach is within the Scottish psyche. Some communities will have to be convinced that their own action will be more successful, and sustainable, than the traditional 'call the council' approach.

Building local community capacity, and focusing heavily on deprived communities to balance inequalities, will lead to variable rather than universal services as communities focus on actions that are most relevant to their needs. There was an acceptance that this would lead to post-code lotteries but a feeling that diversity should be viewed as a positive.

2.2 Challenging professional models of public service delivery

The 'Scottish model' of an outcomes focus and preventative interventions was seen as very positive but there was a view that this requires holistic and joined up working, which is very difficult to do across professional boundaries. There were queries raised about the extent to which this approach was filtering down to a local level.

There was an acceptance that public sector professional groups in Scotland had a significant level of influence on politicians and public services but have little accountability to the broader community. In keeping with the general theme of power in communities, queries were raised as to whether professional groups were able and willing

to move from a 'doing to' model of public services to a 'doing with' coproduction model.

While there was agreement that the rhetoric on empowerment and prevention was welcome, there was less evidence is this filtering down to the local level. Examples were provided where individuals or local community groups had obstacles put in place by their first contact with public services, both health and local councils. Rather than explore ways of reaching shared objectives, barriers were put in place which could put people off pursuing coproduction or community development activities further. It is important to note that these obstacles are not necessarily being created by front-line workers to thwart individual or community endeavours, but rather that the overall culture of public services in Scotland could be seen as disempowering.

Any Enabling State model must therefore work hard to remove barriers for communities and individuals at the interface where people interact with the State or public services. While culture change seems vital to this process, participants were unsure of how such a shift in culture and practice could be achieved.

2.3 Trust, responsibility and risk

Some participants queried the notion, given in the introduction, that Scottish citizens have an inherent trust of public sector institutions. Many felt that a greater sense of trust needs to be built between citizens and the State, particularly for those living in deprived neighbourhoods. The profile of individuals who are stopped and searched by the police, for example, reveals the State's prejudice and lack of trust in certain communities. As a result these members of society do not see the State as force for good and get little out of their interaction with their State. An Enabling State means placing more faith in individual's own capacity and judgement and changing the 'we know best' attitude of the State. Another participant spoke about a need to shift away from the perspective of having to 'fix' or 'change' people.

A parallel point is that there is a need to move investment away from managing risk (with little accrued benefit) to investing in trust. It is also affected by a risk-averse approach to public services; we spend a lot of time talking about the risks of an alternative approach but don't calculate the opportunity-cost of focusing on mitigating risk in all our public services. We need to recognise how much energy we waste managing risk out of the system compared to how much we invest in building trust in both staff and citizens.

While agreeing in general that people should take more responsibility for their actions, some participants were concerned about a prevalent culture of blame. As an example of the limits of individual responsibility, it was felt that young people were being blamed individually for unemployment which is actually caused by a systems failure in the economy. Individual responsibility is important in Scotland, but not to the extent that we ignore the collective responsibility for macro-economic policy failures.

3. What does an Enabling State mean in Scotland?

There was recognition throughout the discussion that the broad direction of travel in Scotland was the right one; that prevention, partnership and coproduction were part of a coherent narrative on the Scottish approach that had a history stretching back to before devolution. What was less clear was whether the current debates and discussions signal a fundamental shift in this direction or are just 'tweaking at the edges' of public services.

The strong focus in the discussion on disadvantaged and vulnerable groups highlighted the challenges facing an Enabling State approach which seeks to empower individuals and groups in society who are not currently well-served by the dominant model of public service delivery. Is it possible to do this in a way that does not further exacerbate inequalities? Many of the initiatives discussed are at a very early stage and therefore at the present time, there is simply not enough evidence to know whether this new approach will reduce or further entrench inequalities.

This analysis provided the Enabling State team with an interesting juxtaposition to our discussions in other jurisdictions. The experience in Scotland tells us that better frameworks are a necessary part of building an Enabling State; but they are not sufficient. To be truly enabling, the model needs to consider how to disperse power and challenge the prevailing culture of public services.

4. Next Steps

Our engagement with stakeholders in each jurisdiction is now complete. We are now carrying out an extensive literature review and seeking out practical examples of an Enabling State in action.

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Scotland Roundtable Attendees

Duncan Dunlop ,Who Cares? Scotland
Paul Gray, Government & Communities, Scottish Government
Shelley Gray, LTCAS
Martin Johnstone, Faith in the Community
Richard Kerley, Queen Margaret University
Jackie Killeen, Big Lottery Fund Scotland
Graham Leicester, International Futures Forum
Karyn McCluskey, Violence Reduction Unit
Jackie McKenzie, Nesta
Des McNulty, University of Glasgow
Andy Milne, Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum
Nicola Munro, Consumer Focus Scotland
Peter Peacock, Community Land Scotland
Martin Sime, SCVO
George Thomson, Volunteer Development Scotland
Keith Wimbles, Voluntary Action Fund
Sir John Elvidge, Carnegie Fellow
Jennifer Wallace, Carnegie UK Trust
Jenny Brotchie, Carnegie UK Trust

The Carnegie UK Trust works to improve the lives of people throughout the UK and Ireland, by changing minds through influencing policy, and by changing lives through innovative practice and partnership work. The Carnegie UK Trust was established by Scots-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie in 1913 and we are delighted to be celebrating our centenary in 2013. Please see our website for further information on our centenary plans.

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Written by Jennifer Wallace, Policy Manager

April 2013

The Enabling State in London

Key issues raised at our London *Enabling State* roundtables on 6 & 7 February 2013 at the Paul Hamlyn Foundation

The UK and the Republic of Ireland have experienced huge improvements in wellbeing in the last 100 years, however a number of complex social problems persist. Could a new relationship between the state and individuals hold the key to solving these difficult social problems?

The Carnegie UK Trust believes we are at the beginning of a fundamental shift toward more empowered citizens and communities and a more enabling state. With the help of Carnegie Fellow Sir John Elvidge we are engaging with key stakeholders across the UK and Republic of Ireland to better understand this movement and, what this would mean for public service delivery. We will be looking for opportunities for shared learning as we go.

This report summarises the issues raised at our roundtable discussion on the Enabling State at The Paul Hamlyn Foundation in London, over two sessions on the 6th and 7th of February 2013 . Roundtable discussions were also held in Cardiff, Belfast, Newcastle, Dunfermline and Dublin during December 2012 – February 2013.

We hope you find the report of interest and we would be pleased to hear your views. Please contact Jenny Brotchie, Policy Officer at **jenny@carnegieuk.org** or on 01383 749757. You can find our discussion paper **here**.

1. Context

The Enabling State discussions in London in February 2013 were the last of our events around the UK and Republic of Ireland exploring the issues raised in Sir John Elvidge's discussion paper. Held in the offices of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, both groups of roundtable participants were largely from the third sector.

In each of the other jurisdictions, the concept of the Big Society had been raised by participants. In the roundtable discussion in Newcastle the week prior to the London discussions the Big Society had been repeatedly criticised. In
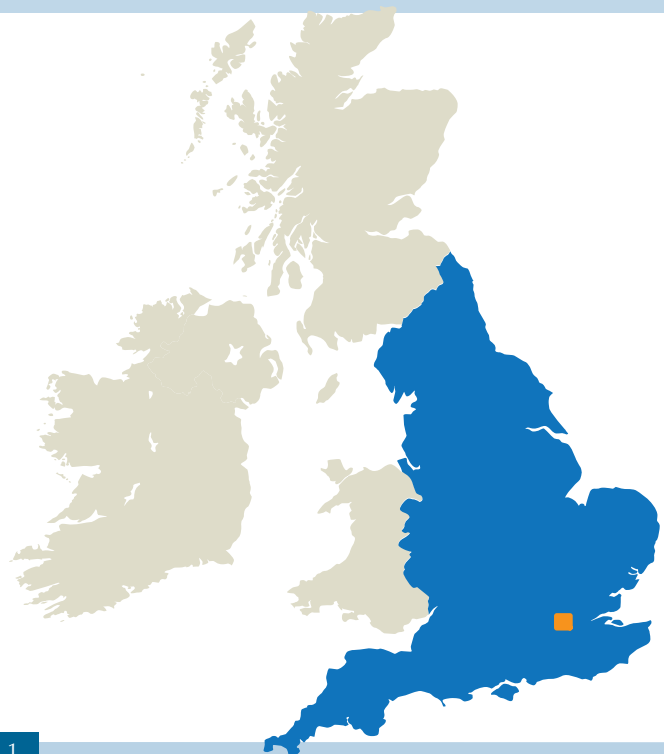
London, we were therefore particularly interested to explore whether the participants found any relevance to the Big Society programme and what their experiences of specific interventions had been to date.

The Big Society programme can be described as having three central aspects:
- empowering communities through localism (for example the community right to challenge and community right to buy)
- encouraging volunteering and charitable donations (for example the national citizens service for young people)
- open public services (commissioning and procurement of public services from third sector and private sector providers).

Despite high awareness of the phrase the Big Society, there is low awareness amongst the public of what it means and a high degree of scepticism amongst the third sector about the programme. The programme has been re-launched 4 times by the coalition government.

Though the Big Society initiative is not highly thought of, this does not mean that the previous Labour model of highly centralised public services, controlled through New Public Management tools such as targets and benchmarking, was supported either. The Francis report on failings in the provision of care in Mid Staffordshire NHS was published on the 6th of February 2013. The report concluded that patients were routinely neglected by a Trust that was preoccupied with cost cutting, targets and processes and which had lost sight of its fundamental responsibility to provide safe care. These conclusions were undoubtedly in participants minds during discussions and were held up by a number of participants as a damning indictment of New Public Management.

The challenge in an English context is therefore not how to return to the New Labour approach to public services but rather how to decentralise and empower communities effectively.

2. Key Themes

Four key themes arose in the discussions in London:

- Retrenchment and the role of the State
- The ability of individuals and communities to fill the gap
- The need to reenergise democracy
- The role of business and philanthropy

More detail is provided in sections 2.1 – 2.4.

2.1 Retrenchment and the role of the State
Both discussion groups expressed broad agreement that the State had indeed failed some citizens and the financial crisis had provided an opportunity to re-evaluate the State's role and its relationship with individuals, communities, businesses and the third sector. While some rebalancing appeared to be welcome, there was

a many participants spoke about their concerns regarding the extent and pace of change.

This rapid retrenchment had sparked considerable debate in England about what the role of the

Sir John Elvidge (right) presents his analysis with Martyn Evans, Chief Executive, Carnegie UK Trust, to the left.

State was or should be. A number of participants noted the State's important role as an equalising force, balancing competing interests in society and ensuring that the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups were protected.

There was broad agreement that the role of the State should be firstly to do no harm but that this was difficult to achieve given the competing interests of members of society. Going further than this, improving wellbeing was seen a legitimate role for the State. However to do this effectively the State's relationship with citizens would have to go beyond crisis interventions. Too often the State's involvement was seen to come at the wrong stage and therefore be highly inefficient. The story of a woman who just needed her boiler fixed to allow her to heat her home, wash and clean was given as an example. Once these basic needs were fulfilled she was able to improve other areas of her life.

A number of participants underlined that early action is key to resolving complex problems and that the State should be refocused on stopping harm occurring in the first place rather than crisis management. Moving resources 'upstream' was welcomed but there were seen to be real challenges in this approach as vocal interest groups would fight to retain resources and act as 'shroud wavers' should the resources available to acute services be reduced.

While prevention is seen as socially progressive, a number of participants highlighted that when we talk of prevention we are usually talking about 'other people' changing their behaviours – there is a suggestion of 'them and us' in this debate and a risk that those who are unable to prevent negative outcomes could be blamed for their occurrence.

2.2 The ability of individuals and communities to fill the gap

The view presented in the discussion paper, that individuals and communities can and should do more to improve wellbeing, was generally

Discussion on 6 February

supported in the discussion sessions. The move to coproduction in England was seen as positive and a renewed focus on what people are currently contributing, or could contribute, was endorsed. Participants in the discussion reflected on their own experiences with public services and noted that they were rarely asked to contribute positively, for example in schools or youth services.

The State's capacity for any truly radical shift was questioned and participants queried whether an Enabling State could ever be created in a top down manner. Many appeared uncomfortable with the Coalition's (presumed) assumption that in pulling back the State others would be able and willing to step in. In particular, there were real concerns that the very networks required to make the Big Society work were the ones being eroded due to reductions in public spending.

The current speed of change in England was felt to be particularly damaging to the community and voluntary sector which were struggling to adapt to the rapidly shifting funding landscape. While open public services may be seen to be beneficial in moving delivery of public services to the third sector, in practice most charities are too small and local to bid for the large-scale public services that have been put out to tender. There was little evidence of a trickle-down effect where

larger third or private sector providers would sub-contract charities to deliver locally.

It was generally felt that complete withdrawal of the State was not the answer. This could lead to unacceptable levels of harm and exacerbate inequalities. The State should instead seek to redraw its relationship with communities by helping communities take greater control. There was discussion about why community action was not more prevalent and some suggested that this was not due to a lack of will within communities but rather, a result of systemic barriers that communities face in dealing with the State.

The relationship between the State, local government and communities was discussed. The role of local government was seen as key to unlocking community capacity and therefore localism was fundamental to any vision of an Enabling State. In the absence of strong local government, with adequate financing, many community and voluntary groups were losing funding and ceasing to exist. There was debate about whether this relationship with voluntary services was helpful and in the medium to long-term should the third sector seek to diversify funding rather than come to rely again on funding from the State.

As in other discussions, participants were concerned that a focus on individual and community action could be used as a way for the State to abdicate responsibility for reducing social inequalities. A related concern was that alliances, networks and community services were inconsistent – relying on them alone as would likely exacerbate inequalities.

2.3 The need to reenergise democracy

The discussion in the London roundtables included a recurrent thread on the need to reenergise democracy. New Public Management had been considered a failure (at least in part) and there was a sense that technocractic solutions to social problems had reached the end of their usefulness. While New Labour had argued that all that matters is delivery, and that every problem is essentially managerial, a number of participants argued that the questions that currently face society are political questions about what kind of society we want, and means and ends towards that society. Some felt that the current level of debate shows a failure of political leadership. While articulating a need and desire for more political debate on these issues, the groups also noted the problem of citizen engagement in politics.

Discussion on 7 February

Many participants spoke about the importance of citizens being involved in local decision making and the value of working more closely with local communities to co-produce solutions. There were concerns that the public spaces to have these debates and discussions were being lost, both in terms of physical assets like community halls and social assets like small voluntary groups. While reenergising democracy, and particularly local democracy, was seen as important, the groups were not able to offer clear suggestions on how to do this.

2.4 The role of business and philanthropy
The London discussion sessions were held in the Paul Hamlyn Foundation which may have meant that the role of philanthropy played a bigger part of discussions than elsewhere, though increasing charitable giving is a key part of the UK Government Big Society programme.

The relationship between an Enabling State and philanthropic organisations was not felt to be particularly clear in the discussion paper. Philanthropic activity often runs in parallel to government activity – for example carrying out small innovative projects to test concepts that, if successful, can be scaled-up by the State - but

the philanthropic sector very rarely funds any activities that are the territory of the State. A clearer understanding of the role of philanthropy in an Enabling State will be necessary to avoid the risk that such organisations are seen as potentially filling the gap left by the retrenchment of the State which participants did not see as a practical solution to the level of need in society.

In both discussion sessions issues to do with the relationship between State, businesses and local communities were explored. On the one hand, the State was seen to have an important role in protecting individuals and communities from the negative impacts of market through greater regulation. For others though, businesses were seen as key social actors and could be harnessed better to improve community wellbeing. Participants queried the view, sometimes given by the third sector, that the market is bad, the State is better but charity is the best. Participants urged the team to consider further the role of the private sector as social actors.

3. What does an Enabling State mean in London?

In our discussions outwith England, the Coalition Governments Big Society programme was held up as an example of the risks involved in creating an Enabling State. Our discussions in London reinforced this.

There was general agreement with the need to support community activity, and a view that this could assist in the reenergising of local democracy. The trends towards coproduction and prevention were supported by participants, though often with words of caution about the potential impact on inequalities. But the current retrenchment of the State was seen to be happening too quickly to build effective, local responses. The bonding and

bridging capital of local voluntary organisations is a necessary part of a successful Enabling State but these organisations are being hardest hit by the combined impact of government policies. A successful Enabling State model would need to support local community spaces and activities, particularly in more deprived neighbourhoods to balance out the equalities impacts. A positive role for business as social actors may also be required, as will a clearer articulation of the role of philanthropy.

4. Next Steps

Our engagement with stakeholders in each jurisdiction is now complete. We are now carrying out an extensive literature review and seeking out practical examples of an Enabling State in action.

Our findings will inform our final Enabling State project outputs which we will publish later in 2013.

The Carnegie UK Trust would like to thank Rob Bell and his colleagues at the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for hosting the London roundtable events and providing invaluable advice and guidance.

You can keep up to date with our progress by visiting our Enabling State project page and by following @CarnegieUKTrust, #enablingstate on Twitter.
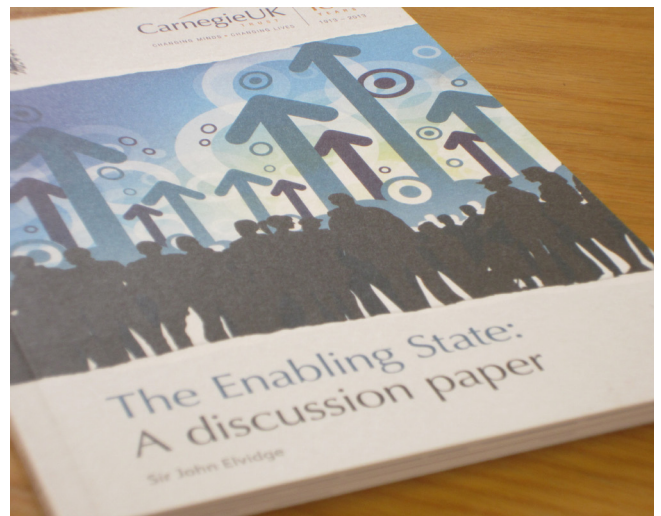
London Roundtable Attendees - 6 February

Robert Bell, Paul Hamlyn Foundation
Adele Blakebrough, Social Business Trust
Tony Bovaird, Third Sector Research Centre
Anna Coote, New Economics Foundation
Peter Couchman, Plunkett Foundation
Andrew Dick, Big Society Network
Alice Hood, TUC
Alan Hudson, Fellow of Kellog College
Rashid Iqbal, The Childrens Society
Matt Peacock, Streetwise opera
David Robinson, Community Links
Razia Shariff, Third Sector Research Centre
Jane Steele, Paul Hamlyn Foundation
Gethyn Williams, National Council for Voluntary Youth Services
Martyn Evans, Carnegie UK Trust
Jennifer Wallace, Carnegie UK Trust
Jenny Brotchie, Carnegie UK Trust

London Roundtable Attendees - 7 February

Diana Brittan, Carnegie UK Trust Trustee
Jenny North, Impetus Trust
Julian Corner, Lankelly Chase
Steve Wyler, Locality
Maggie Atkinson, Childrens Commissioner for England
Robert Bell, Paul Hamlyn Foundation
Robert Dufton, Paul Hamlyn Foundation
Benita Refson, The Place2Be
Martyn Evans, Carnegie UK Trust
Jennifer Wallace, Carnegie UK Trust
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