

Understanding the UK third sector

The work of the Third Sector Research Centre 2008 - 2013

Third Sector Research Centre

The Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC) has been a collaborative venture hosted by the Universities of Birmingham and Southampton with contributions from Middlesex and Kent. The Centre was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Office for Civil Society in the Cabinet Office (OCS), and the Barrow Cadbury Trust (BCT) to provide independent academic research on the UK third sector to support improvements in policy and practice.

TSRC also co-ordinated the activities of three Capacity Building Clusters (CBC) delivering CASE Studentships, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, Placements and Research Vouchers to support the development of research capacity within universities and third sector agencies:

- Social Enterprise led by Middlesex University (with Durham and South Bank Universities)
- Active Citizenship and Community Empowerment led by Lincoln University (with Goldsmiths College and Manchester Metropolitan University)
- Economic Analysis led by Bristol University.

This Report provides a summary of the core research undertaken by TSRC over the five years from 2008 to 2013, and outlines the research activities that we are undertaking over the Bridge Funding period from September 2013 to March 2014. It is only a short summary of what has been a wide ranging programme of work; wherever appropriate we have referred readers to the Working Papers that contain more details on the findings (all of which can be accessed through TSRC's website), or to articles in academic journals where we have developed our analysis for a more academic audience. TSRC researchers have also engaged in a wide range of other research projects most of which have been separately reported to those who funded or commissioned them; these reports can generally be accessed through our website.

The Report includes a short summary of the activities we have undertaken to promote the dissemination and take-up of our research findings through our knowledge exchange and impact strategy. A separate section reports on the Futures Dialogue, an informed debate about the implications for policy and practice of some of our key findings which ran towards the end of our work from September 2012 to March 2013. Reference is also made to the Third Sector Knowledge Portal – an online catalogue of research and information on the sector, which TSRC has built and developed in collaboration with the British Library, supported by additional funding from the BIG Lottery Fund.

Preface



ESRC is delighted to welcome this report on the work of the Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC) from 2008 to 2013. ESRC is committed to supporting research which maps the causes and consequences of social and economic change in a complex and dynamic environment for policy and practice and to seeing this research make a lasting impact on society.

TSRC was established to respond to the relative under-development of research capacity and activity on the third sector in the UK, and in particular the need for the development and maintenance of reliable and independent sources of quantitative and qualitative data.

The Centre was an important initiative which demonstrated our commitment to co-funding research with Government and independent foundations, and to the promotion of research which would contribute to the creation of A Vibrant and Fair Society – one of ESRC's three strategic priorities. As this report demonstrates TSRC has made considerable progress in addressing these needs.

We are also pleased to see the success of the Capacity Building Clusters linked to TSRC which have made a major contribution to the training of future third sector researchers, and have improved and expanded the capacity for research in and on the third sector.

These have been complex and challenging times for research on policy and practice in the third sector. The work of TSRC has provided a critical source of support for policy makers and practitioners over this period, as well as extending the scope of academic analysis of these major social changes. We believe that Civil Society in the UK will be stronger as a result of this investment.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'P Boyle', followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.

Paul Boyle
Chief Executive
Economic and Social Research Council

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Foreword

This report provides a summary of, and guide to, the research undertaken in the Third Sector Research Centre over the five years of our initial funding from September 2008 to March 2013; it builds on our mid-term report, *Informing Civil Society*, which was published in 2011. The Centre was commissioned to undertake a specified programme of research on the third sector in the UK. In implementing this we developed a number of streams of activity which aimed to focus our work around particular substantive concerns or issues of policy and practice. This report is organised around these research streams. It focuses on the core research undertaken within the research programme agreed with the funders. It does not include summaries of the additional research activities undertaken over the period for a range of other contractors, including other Research Council grants and evaluation research for a number of policy and practice agencies – more information about these can be found on our website (www.tsrc.ac.uk) under Collaboration.

However, it should be recognised that neither policy and practice, nor research, can be constrained within the neat categories of our research streams and so aspects of enquiry have sometimes cut across these, and our core data sources have been drawn on to inform research activity across the Centre. In addition, an early priority was to undertake a review of the existing research evidence-base in the country. This informed the development of our research streams and, where appropriate, has been published in Working Papers or in scoping reports which have underpinned further research activity. The extensive material captured in our evidence review also formed the initial impetus for the development of our Knowledge Portal, discussed below.

Central to our work has been our commitment to the development of core data sources for research on the sector, both quantitative and qualitative; these have remained a major part of our work. Prior to the establishment of TSRC, there had been no systematic effort to construct such an evidence base. We have made significant contributions to the assembly of data resources, and we believe that this work should be continued as a permanent resource for research on the sector. We are also committed to making this data available to other researchers.

In addition to data collection, however, our research has also addressed key issues of policy and practice for the sector. We have always recognised the need to engage with policy makers and practitioners to inform the development and delivery of our research. We established an Advisory Board and a series of Reference Groups to engage with key informants and ensure that their knowledge and expertise underpinned all of our work. We have also established extensive engagement and consultation with other stakeholders through our website and newsletters. Over the period of our work there have, of course, been changes in the environment for policy and practice – not the least following the change of UK government in 2010. We have sought, as far as possible, to incorporate analysis of new developments, whilst maintaining the broad commitments agreed in our initial specification.

More generally, TSRC has been committed to working closely with a wide range of research users to ensure that our work is relevant and useful to policy makers and practitioners across the sector and is able to make an appropriate impact on their work.

Our Knowledge Exchange Team led this process of engagement, developing an extensive range of activities and networks to disseminate our findings and to maximise impact. We have also produced a range of outputs, tailored to the needs of different audiences of research users. This includes our extensive Working Paper and Briefing Paper series listed below, which includes over 100 separate items, as well as academic publications, conference presentations and coverage in the trade and national media.

In addition to carrying out our research TSRC has been committed to supporting and developing the capacity of academic and practice researchers to undertake third sector research. This included our role in co-ordinating the activities of our three Capacity Building Clusters, which are reported below, as well as providing more general training and support to practitioners on using, commissioning and undertaking research. We also undertook the development of our third sector Knowledge Portal, in partnership with the British Library, to make as wide a range as possible of other research on the sector available to research users through an online catalogue.

TSRC was established to undertake research on the UK third sector, although the remit of one of our funders, the Office of the Third Sector, and now the Office for Civil Society, was for policy implementation in England only. Third sector policy has been devolved to the separate administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We have included analysis of policy and practice in these countries in our work, and have recruited separate reference groups to advise us on research, policy and practice. We have also worked to establish quantitative data sources on the sector in these countries, although there is still more to be done. Our major qualitative research has been focused on England only, although we have collaborated with colleagues undertaking some similar research in Scotland, and this collaboration is continuing. TSRC participated in international networks on third sector research, presented at international conferences, and published in international journals. We have also developed collaborative relationships with a number of leading academic scholars and undertaken

some comparative work where additional resources have been forthcoming to support this. Our future plans include significant expansion of these international and comparative activities, including participation in an EU funded network on the third sector.

Our Venture Funding from the ESRC, the Office for Civil Society (Cabinet Office) and the Barrow Cadbury Trust came to an end on 31 August 2013. The Cabinet Office have not been able to continue their support for the Centre. The Barrow Cadbury Trust have, however, continued their commitment and have renewed their funding for our core activities for a further five year period. The ESRC have also continued to support the Centre through a period of Bridge Funding from 1 September 2013 to 31 March 2014. This is linked to an application that TSRC has made for further core funding from the ESRC under their 2013 Centres and Large Grants Competition, which included a specific steer on the need for research on civil society. The outcome of this will be known early in 2014. We are grateful for the continuing support of the Barrow Cadbury Trust and the ESRC, and for the support of OTS/OCS from 2008-13.



Professor Pete Alcock
Director,
University of Birmingham



Professor John Mohan
Deputy Director,
University of Birmingham

Summary of research highlights

TSRC has undertaken a wide range of research activities covering research questions of relevance to academics, policy makers and practitioners working in different aspects of the broader civil society and third sector field. Our programme of research was based upon the research priorities identified in a Scoping Report for the ESRC and the OTS in 2008, and the subsequent Specification for the Centre which followed from this. The focus of these was on the need for research on the third sector in the UK, and in particular in England. We outlined a broad programme of activities to meet this, which were agreed with the funders but also included the flexibility to adapt and develop our research priorities as the work of the Centre developed, and as the external environment of policy and practice changed.

Our programme of research was organised into a number research streams, focused on different aspects of the construction and analysis of data and the external policy and practice environment. Each research stream was led by one of our academic researchers and included a number of research staff (with some staff working across more than one stream). Each stream also included a number of different research projects, generally covering a fixed time period, focused on particular research questions or policy issues. In this report we have organised the summaries and highlights within these research streams, but inevitably in practice some of our activities and publications have cut across the streams, for instance, some of our work on equalities issues.

It is particularly difficult to select highlights from across such a wide ranging research programme, and we provide more detailed summaries of most of our major core activities in the other chapters in this report. However, we wanted to select three highlights from each stream to include in this 'executive summary' of our work, to give a flavour of the kinds of questions that we have addressed.

Theory and policy

- Theoretical concepts are contested and the notion of a third sector has been challenged by recent political discourses on civil society. Diversity of organisational form and activity is a fundamental feature of any understanding of the sector; but beyond this a 'strategic unity' can form the basis of collective identity.
- The third sector policy environment has been developed rapidly in the UK from high levels of horizontal support under the previous Labour government to the Coalition's commitment to the promotion of a 'Big Society' and reductions in public support for the sector. Some significant differences have begun to emerge in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland following devolution, in particular since 2011.
- Leadership of the sector is crucial to the creation of a 'strategic unity' and a collective voice; but leadership itself is contested and has to struggle for legitimacy and leverage.

Quantitative analysis

- The databases we have constructed on the distribution, characteristics and finances of registered charities in England and Wales will provide a fundamental resource for understanding sector distribution and dynamics.
- Recent work to capture and classify detailed data on the incomes of registered charities is generating new insights into the exposure of organisations to different funding streams and is being used by ONS in its work on estimating the size of the sector for national accounting purposes.
- Longitudinal and cross-sectional analyses of volunteering have emphasised the need to move away from simplistic debates about rates of engagement to look at the levels and distribution of engagement, the relationship between volunteering and questions such as social capital, and whether there are cohort variations in voluntary activity.

Real Times

- ‘Real Times’ is TSRC’s qualitative longitudinal study of third sector organisations and has tracked the fortunes of fifteen organisations over a critical period of ‘unsettlement’.
- These have indeed been turbulent times for our organisations, and, though their fortunes have differed dramatically, all have survived and continued to pursue their original missions.
- Qualitative analysis of perceptions of policy has revealed that most organisations found the ‘Big Society’ ambiguous and confusing, and challenged by their experiences of funding cuts.

Social enterprise

- Social enterprise means different things to different people across different contexts and at different points in time, and social enterprise is not confined to organisations describing themselves as social enterprises.
- Its contested nature leads to a wide variation in estimations of the number of social enterprises, and to confusion in policies focused on supporting social enterprises.
- Research on the mix of funding within social enterprises has revealed that the balance of profit and nonprofit sources may not be stable.

‘Below the radar’

- The scale of ‘below the radar’ (BTR) community groups and activities is much greater than revealed in formal listings, and micro-mapping of small community groups in local neighbourhoods has revealed an extensive range of organised activity.
- BTR groups make a substantial contribution to the delivery of policy objectives particularly in supporting community health and wellbeing.
- Analysis of network based learning and development has revealed that formal capacity building initiatives may not be the most effective means of supporting BTR groups.

Service delivery

- Research on service delivery on collaboration and partnership working has revealed that these can be complex to develop and take time to set-up, and are often not effective when driven by external forces.
- New commissioning practices, for instance on the DWP Work Programme, have had the effect of squeezing third sector organisations out of direct contracts for delivery.
- Third sector organisations occupy important areas of niche provision in fields such as housing, health and social care, and criminal justice.

Economic and social impact

- The drive towards impact assessment and performance management has led to the growth of a plethora of tools to support this, and guidance is needed for third sector organisations wishing to utilise these.
- Decisions on whether and how to measure impact are often driven by external forces and concerns over funding.
- Analysis of major tools for measurement of performance, including in particular the Social Return on Investment (SROI) model, has revealed that these often require significant organisational commitment to implement.

Workforce and Workplace

- A period of continuous growth to reach around 800,000 employees came to an end in 2011, but more recently there has again been a slight increase in employment in the sector.
- There is greater gender equality in third sector employment than is found more generally.

- Voluntary work does not necessarily lead to improved prospects for paid employment, though it may have other values.

Environment

- While the role of the third sector in responding to environmental issues is increasingly promoted in policy debates, the realities of life for most organisations, particularly given the current political and fiscal climate, makes systematic engagement difficult to realise.
- The development and adoption of performance management tools to evaluate social impact has not yet been replicated in relation to environmental impact.
- Emerging work on 'social practices' offers an effective conceptual framework through which we can better understand the impact and effectiveness of third sector interventions to promote low-carbon living.

These highlights provide only a short guide to some of the key findings from the research carried out in different research streams within TSRC. We provide a more detailed summary of the work of these streams over the next few chapters of this final report. Within these, where appropriate, we also refer to the TSRC Working Papers or Research Reports which carry the full details of our work; or the academic journal articles where the analysis of this has been developed further. We hope that readers who want to explore our work in more depth will take the time to follow up these references, and to keep up with our work more generally as we add to our website and other published material.



Theory and Policy

Stream lead: Pete Alcock

Researchers: Angela Ellis Paine, Jeremy Kendall, Rob Macmillan,
Jane Parry, Rebecca Taylor

Aims

This stream provided TSRC's major contribution to the development of improved theoretical and conceptual analysis of the third sector in the UK. This theoretical work included critical interrogation of existing debates about the sector both within the academic community and amongst practitioners and policy makers, providing a lead in examining and explaining these debates.

The other aim of the stream was description and analysis of the policy environment for the sector. The focus here was on the UK. TSRC was established as a research resource on the UK third sector. However, international comparative analysis of other policy environments, particularly in comparable OECD countries, is essential to understanding the development of policy, and so our research did include

some collaboration with colleagues internationally. What is more, UK third sector policy is now devolved to the separate governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland; and so this stream also included comparative analysis of the separate policy regimes within the UK.

Informing the work in this stream were five key questions:

- What is the third sector?
- How is third sector policy changing?
- Who are the key policy actors?
- How do policy makers decide what matters?
- How does practice respond to policy change?

Methodology

Theoretical research was almost entirely based on critical analysis of existing literature in the field and drew on some of the scoping work developed in our early evidence reviews. More generally the research drew on existing published analysis of third sector policy regimes, and documentary analysis of government and third sector policy publications, as well as regular monitoring of online sources of policy information and debate. In order to support the comparative analysis of policy development across the UK TSRC recruited separate reference groups in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, comprising leading academics, policy makers and practitioners.

The various projects within the Theory and Policy stream also made use of direct data gathering, through qualitative interviews with key respondents in the policy making and practice communities. We recruited a panel of respondents for this activity and this was drawn on as appropriate for different projects and particular research questions. All qualitative data was reported anonymously, unless specifically agreed otherwise.



Findings

Defining the third sector

TSRC research has made a significant contribution to academic analysis of the third sector in the UK, building on earlier work by Kendall. Central to this analysis was the development of the notion of the UK third sector as constructed through ‘Strategic Unity’ i.e. the sector is understood as a strategic response to developing government policy and internal sector dynamics (TSRC Working Paper 24).

Kendall examined the different ideological discourses which underpin different conceptions of the sector, and its engagement with politics and policy, suggesting that in practice there are competing and potential contradictory ideological frameworks in play (Kendall, 2010a; TSRC Working Paper 13). Macmillan explored the claims of ‘distinctiveness’ often made by sector protagonists (Macmillan, 2013a)

The New Labour third sector policy development

Extensive analysis was undertaken of the changing policy environment for the sector developed by the Labour governments from 1997 to 2010, again building on previous work by Alcock and Kendall, and including further analysis by Kendall of the extent to which Labour’s policy development could be seen as a process of ‘modernisation’, based on interviews with policy makers and practitioners (Macmillan, 2013a).

Description and analysis of the Labour policy regime, revealed that policy engagement with the sector developed to previously unprecedented levels during the first decade of the new century, with the provision of major new programmes of financial support for the sector, new terms of engagement

such as the Compact, and the creation of the Office of the Third Sector in the Cabinet Office (Alcock and Kendall, 2011; TSRC Working Papers 32 and 42).

Policy devolution in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

Third sector policy was one of the areas of policy devolved to the new administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in 1999. Analysis of the impact of devolution on third sector policy was undertaken by Alcock, with support from the TSRC reference groups in these countries. This identified the importance of the new institutions for policy development created in these countries and the changing nature of third sector politics which has flowed from this, which can be described as a ‘nationalisation’ of third sector politics.

Initially broadly similar policy agendas were pursued in all four countries following, to a significant extent, the hyperactive mainstreaming environment identified in England (TSRC Working Paper 2). However, the election of the new Coalition government at Westminster in 2010, followed by the elections in the devolved administrations in 2011, left different parties in control in all countries, challenging this policy convergence, with some significant political differences emerging over the Big Society policy agenda (Alcock, 2012).

The response of the sector to the economic recession

The economic recession of 2008–9 was a matter of concern to practitioners and policy makers, in particular if, as many expected, it was likely to have an impact on the sector in reducing income from both government and private sources, and in increasing

demand, at least in some areas of activity. The response of practitioners and policy makers was examined in a research project focused on the 2008 to 2009 period, based on documentary analysis (including media coverage) and interviews with key practitioners and policy makers. This analysis revealed that the recession was a focus for extensive policy engagement with the sector, including a number of high profile 'summit meetings'; but that the broader impacts of the recession on third sector funding and development were taking longer to be realised (TSRC Research Report 78).

The third sector in the 2010

General Election

The 2010 election afforded an opportunity to engage in real time analysis of the politics of the third sector in the UK. Research was based on documentary analysis of a wide range of election manifestos, media coverage and online debates, together with interviews with key practitioners, policy makers and politicians. It found that the sector was very active in promoting political debate during the election; but that in practice there was a significant consensus on support for third sector engagement amongst all the leading political parties (Alcock et al., 2012; TSRC Research Report and Working Paper 44).

The Big Society: third sector policy under the Coalition government in England

The 'Big Society' became a central feature of the politics of the new Coalition government after 2010. The Big Society discourse extended beyond third sector policy to embrace many aspects of politics including public service reform, citizen/state relations and the devolution of power to more local levels; however, the sector was identified as central to the government's ambitions for the Big Society, with voluntary and community action and social enterprise seen as essential to all these broader political goals. The theoretical and political

context for this was explored by Macmillan (2013b). Alcock undertook analysis of the Big Society discourse, through real-time analysis of policy pronouncements and independent external analysis; concluding, inter alia, that significant elements of the policy in practice continued developments which had begun under the previous Labour government (TSRC Working Paper 82).

Qualitative research from the TSRC Real Times case studies revealed an ambiguous and confusing response to the Big Society policies from within third sector organisations (TSRC Working Paper 90). This was supplemented by further qualitative analysis of written responses to the Big Society from the Mass Observation Archive which suggested that most were not well informed about the policy implications of this (TSRC Working Paper 95).

More detailed analysis was carried out on the Social Value Act 2012, introduced into the House of Commons as a Private Members' Bill in 2011 and given support by the government. This explored the tensions revealed in this between the social enterprise and free market dimensions of Conservative Party political support for public service reform (Teasdale et al., 2012).

The Big Lottery Fund (BIG) as a policy actor

Research was carried out in collaboration with the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) to examine the role of BIG as a policy actor in supporting and shaping the third sector. Lottery funding has been the largest single source of income for the sector, apart from government, over the last decade or so and yet there had been no analysis of the extent to which this has impacted at a strategic level on the development of the sector. The research was based on documentary analysis, interrogation of BIG's statistical data, a survey of funded third sector organisations, interviews with key internal and external stakeholders, and focus groups with representatives of organisations and policy makers.

It found that BIG had indeed had a significant impact on the shaping of third sector development, in particular within funded organisations, and these findings were incorporated into the review of funding policies undertaken by BIG (TSRC Research Report 75).

Leadership and infrastructure

The role of infrastructure agencies in supporting third sector organisations was a focus of research by Macmillan, building on earlier work in this field. It explored in particular the changing public funding environment for infrastructure support and the moves towards a more market based approach (Macmillan, 2011a, 2013c).

The concern with infrastructure support led to a wider ranging review of the role of leadership within the third sector, exploring the contentious ways in which this is perceived and pursued (TSRC Working Paper 76), with more detailed research conducted with a sample of TSRC's panel of respondents, which focused on the contentious issues of legitimacy and leverage.

Bridge Funding

Research agenda September 2013 – March 2014:

- Further analysis of the changing nature of support for infrastructure, including the implementation of the Transforming Local Infrastructure Programme by the BIG Fund, and the development of 'demand-led capacity building'.
- Analytical review of the impact of the government's 'Big Society' policy agenda.
- Analysis of the role of 'innovation' as a distinctive feature of service provision by third sector organisations.



Quantitative Analysis

Mapping and measuring the distribution of resources in third sector organisations

Stream lead: John Mohan

Researchers: Steve Barnard, Matthew Bennett, Sarah Bulloch, David Clifford, Corine Driessens, Frida Geyne Rajme, Richard Kapend, Andrew McCulloch, Stephen McKay, Peter Smith, Laura Staetsky, Faiza Tabassum

Aims

One of the central commitments within TSRC's research programmes has been the establishment of robust quantitative databases on organisations and resources in the third sector, and the conducting of high level analyses of these and other datasets so that policy makers and practitioners have a better understanding of trends in the sector and a better basis for prediction of future developments. This has included obtaining, evaluating and preserving datasets such as the records made available to us from the register of charities. It has included analysis of survey data of organisations carried out by the Office of the Third Sector/Office for Civil Society in 2008 and 2010. It has also included

analysis of major national surveys of individuals addressing employment, volunteering and other forms of participation in civil society, such as the Labour Force Survey, the Citizenship Survey, the British Household Panel Survey, the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations, the National Child Development Study, and the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England.

Our aim has been to analyse this data in a more robust and rigorous way than has previously been possible, and where necessary to create and preserve data resources for future research.

Data resources

Creation of a third sector database

We have taken action to develop a database of third sector organisations suitable for our research purposes. We now have a regular supply of data from the Charity Commission; for Companies Limited by Guarantee we obtain information through the parts of Companies House data that are publicly available; and for Industrial and Provident Societies we have the Financial Services Authority's (FSA) register of mutuals and also data from the proprietary FAME database (to which University libraries generally have access). We are in discussions with other organisations about incorporating their databases into ours.

We have established a joint initiative with NCVO to capture information from charities' annual reports and accounts for up to 10,000 charities with a declining

sampling fraction depending on the size of the charity (described in TSRC Working Paper 93). We now have approaching five years of data from this source, which will provide invaluable information on how organisations have responded to their changing funding environment. A particular feature is that, in collaboration with the Charity Commission, we now capture data for a subset of small charities (with income of less than £25,000) for the first time.

Acquisition of existing data sources

This refers to joint work with the centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy (CGAP).

We have now extended our coverage of the Charity Commission register back to 1993



and for a small subset of charities to 1991 and 1992. This has been possible with the help of the School of Electronics and Computer Science (ECS) at the University of Southampton, enabling us to recover data from old media.

We have analysed data from the register of charities for Scotland supplied by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). This work, published as a CGAP working paper, shows first of all that there are more charities in Scotland than in England and Wales. However, we also demonstrate for the first time that these differences persist even after allowance is made for different regulatory requirements (e.g. no financial thresholds of registration in Scotland). We have data for Northern Ireland but the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland has only recently begun the process of registration. It is our intention to obtain a copy of their register thereby creating a UK-wide database on the distribution of charities. This will require work for classification purposes to ensure comparability.

Classification

Prior to the establishment of TSRC considerable work had been done to classify registered charities against the ICNPO (International Classification of Non Profit Organisations) schema developed initially in the USA. We gratefully acknowledge the work of NCVO in this

regard. We have sought to build on it by classifying such data as we have on third sector organisations which take other legal forms, such as Companies Limited by Guarantee, Community Interest Companies (CICs), and Industrial and Provident Societies. We have worked extensively on this using keyword searches and also SIC (Standard Industrial Classification) codes, supplied at the point of registration by those registering a company with Companies House.

This work is important because it affects comparability between datasets. The 2008 National Survey of Third Sector Organisations (NSTSO), for example, excluded some third sector organisations from its sampling frame on the basis of their SIC code, but keyword searches suggest that this is unsatisfactory.

Data resources for research on the sector

We were commissioned by ESRC to lead a scoping exercise on the availability and use of data resources for third sector research; we undertook this activity in conjunction with NCVO and the Royal Statistical Society, holding two well attended events at the RSS. A report will shortly be available. As part of the ESRC Big Data initiative, it is proposed that there will be a substantial investment in big data for and on the sector, and we intend to position ourselves to bid for that.

Findings

Growth and change in the charity sector

Our very substantial panel dataset on registered charities was used by Backus and Clifford for two major papers on the theme, colloquially known as ‘Tescoisation’, of the growth and concentration of resources in the charity sector. These were initially presented in conferences and seminars (TSRC Working Papers 38 and 39; Clifford and Backus, 2012). Additional work is taking place on the survival prospects of charities (initial analysis showed that, controlling for other characteristics, charities have been less likely to survive in disadvantaged areas), and on the date of establishment of organisations (as opposed to date of registration: this provides a longer time-series on growth and change in the sector than previously possible).

Exposure of third sector organisations to public sector funding streams

The National Survey of Third Sector Organisations (NSTSO) data represents the most comprehensive survey dataset which asks organisations about their different sources of income. It does not ask them how much they receive from a particular source but it does identify whether they receive income from a number of different types of public sector bodies. Substantial work was undertaken to clean this data set; only 80% of responses were complete cases, necessitating considerable work to impute plausible values from other sources of statistics.

The analysis showed considerable variation in the extent to which organisations either received public funding or regarded the public sector as their most important source of income, depending on legal form, size, client group served, geographical location, and age of organisation. This was reported to OCS in advance

of the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review (and see TSRC Working Paper 45; Clifford et al., 2012)

Distribution of neighbourhood-level organisations

Using data from the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations (NSTSO) we have identified organisations that operate only at the neighbourhood scale, and related their distribution to socio-economic statistics from the census, showing that there are sharp contrasts between places in terms of the numbers and distribution of organisations (Clifford, 2012). Subsequent work has generated conference papers on the characteristics of these neighbourhood level organisations.

Survey data on volunteering

The recent reports from the Citizenship Survey seem to provide fairly conclusive evidence of a decline in volunteering rates from the peak figures reported in 2005, although the extent to which a decline has taken place depends on the variables used to measure it (e.g. type and frequency of volunteering). We have commented regularly on policy debates about levels of volunteering, including responses to the results of the Community Life surveys and also on the question of an “Olympic effect” on levels of volunteering.

Organisation-based estimates of employment and volunteering

Survey reports on volunteering ask individuals about all of their volunteering activities, some of which may take place outside of the third sector. Surveys of individuals about their employment may underestimate the scale of the paid workforce in the sector if individuals are unaware of the sector in which they work. An alternative source is to use organisations' reports to the Charity Commission about employment, and organisational responses to surveys (the NSTSO) to capture measures of employment and volunteering. We have looked at the differences in estimates (TSRC Working Paper 80). It appears that the Labour Force Survey (LFS) underestimates the scale of the workforce while surveys of organisations, plus data from their reports to the Charity Commission, give us more detailed estimates than previously available of the extent of voluntary activity through registered charities.

The idea of a 'civic core'

In a well-known 2001 paper, Reed and Selbee put forward the idea that a disproportionate amount of voluntary effort (giving to charity, volunteering, and civic participation) was provided by a small subset of the population. Using data from the Citizenship Survey on amounts given to charity, hours of unpaid help given to voluntary organisations, and participation in associations, Mohan has calculated the relative shares of different groups of the population and characterised the 'civic core' as those who provide at least two-thirds of the total amount of effort contributed on each of these dimensions (TSRC Working Paper 73). There are strong socio-economic gradients in the likelihood of being in the 'core groups' but there is also evidence that when these dimensions are considered together, only a very small proportion of the population are not engaged at all in any voluntary activity. There are also substantial differences between neighbourhoods in the likelihood that those who live in them are part of the core groups, and this conclusion clearly has relevance for the extent to which communities can play a greater role in responding to social needs.

Relationship between formal volunteering, area deprivation and social capital

By using the Citizenship Survey a cross classification of sampling units by decile of deprivation and region was developed and correlated with an area measure of volunteering, raising questions about whether volunteering can improve the level of social capital in an area in the absence of improvements in economic circumstances (McCulloch et al., 2012; TSRC Briefing Paper 113).

Stability and persistence in volunteering

The BHPS has asked questions about volunteering at two-year intervals since 1996. We can therefore assess the extent to which individuals move in and out of volunteering 'states'. We find that although only a very small proportion of people have volunteered at every wave of the survey, and that while at any one date approximately 20% of the population volunteer, over time nearly twice that proportion volunteer on at least one occasion. This indicates something of the extent to which cross-sectional surveys may underestimate the extent to which the population engage in volunteering. An extension of this work will involve modelling movement in and out of volunteering states.

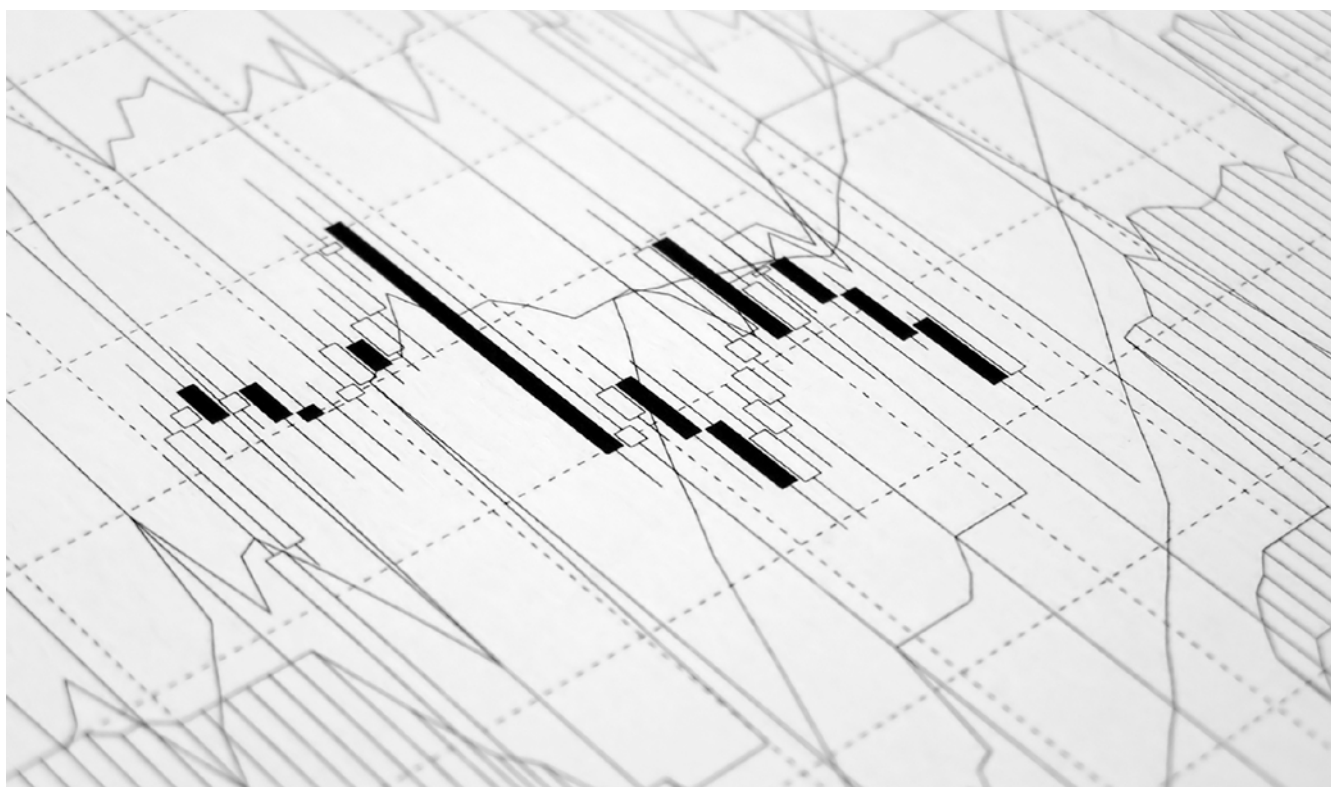
Cohort variations in the membership of voluntary organisations

Work by McCulloch used the BHPS to investigate variations in membership for four cohorts defined using year of birth. The results suggested that men in the 1955–64 and 1965–74 cohorts, and women in the 1965–74 cohort, had lower levels of organisation membership across age than those members of earlier cohorts (TSRC Working Paper 113).

Bridge Funding

Research agenda September 2013 – March 2014:

- Further development of our Charity Commission database; and to capture financial information from the accounts of a sample of 10,000 English and Welsh charities.
- Extension of work on other nonprofit organisations, including mutual organisations registered as Industrial and Provident Societies (IPSs). Initial analysis will involve comparisons of the sectoral and geographical distribution of charitable organisations compared to nonprofit organisations taking other legal forms. Work is also ongoing to develop a menu-driven process for downloading data.
- Use of the BHPS and other relevant volunteering datasets which capture longitudinal information, to examine whether or not voluntary activity is positively associated with outcomes such as adolescent development or well-being.



Real Times

An in-depth study of third sector organisations over time

Stream lead: Rob Macmillan

Researchers: Malin Arvidson, Andri Soteri-Proctor, Rebecca Taylor, Simon Teasdale

Aims

'Real Times' is the Third Sector Research Centre's qualitative longitudinal study of third sector organisations, groups and activities. We have followed the fortunes, strategies, challenges and performance of a diverse set of 15 'core' case studies of third sector activity, and their relations with up to 25 'complementary' case studies, over the period 2010 to 2013.

The intention was to gain a more in-depth and realistic understanding of how third sector organisations, groups and activities work in practice over time. This involved attention to three supplementary questions: what happens within third sector organisations over time and why; what matters to third sector organisations over time and why; and how might we understand continuity and change in third sector activity. There were four substantive focal points for the research:

- 1 Fortunes: what influences the fortunes of third sector organisations?
- 2 Strategies: how do third sector organisations regard and negotiate the environments in which they operate?

- 3 Challenges: what challenges do third sector organisations face and how do they respond?

- 4 Performance: how is the 'performance' of third sector organisations understood by different stakeholders?

Through these the study aimed to contribute to the development of a theoretically informed account of the third sector 'from the inside'. The longitudinal approach allowed us to examine the dynamics of third sector activities over time, in effect to understand what happened next and why.

Methodology

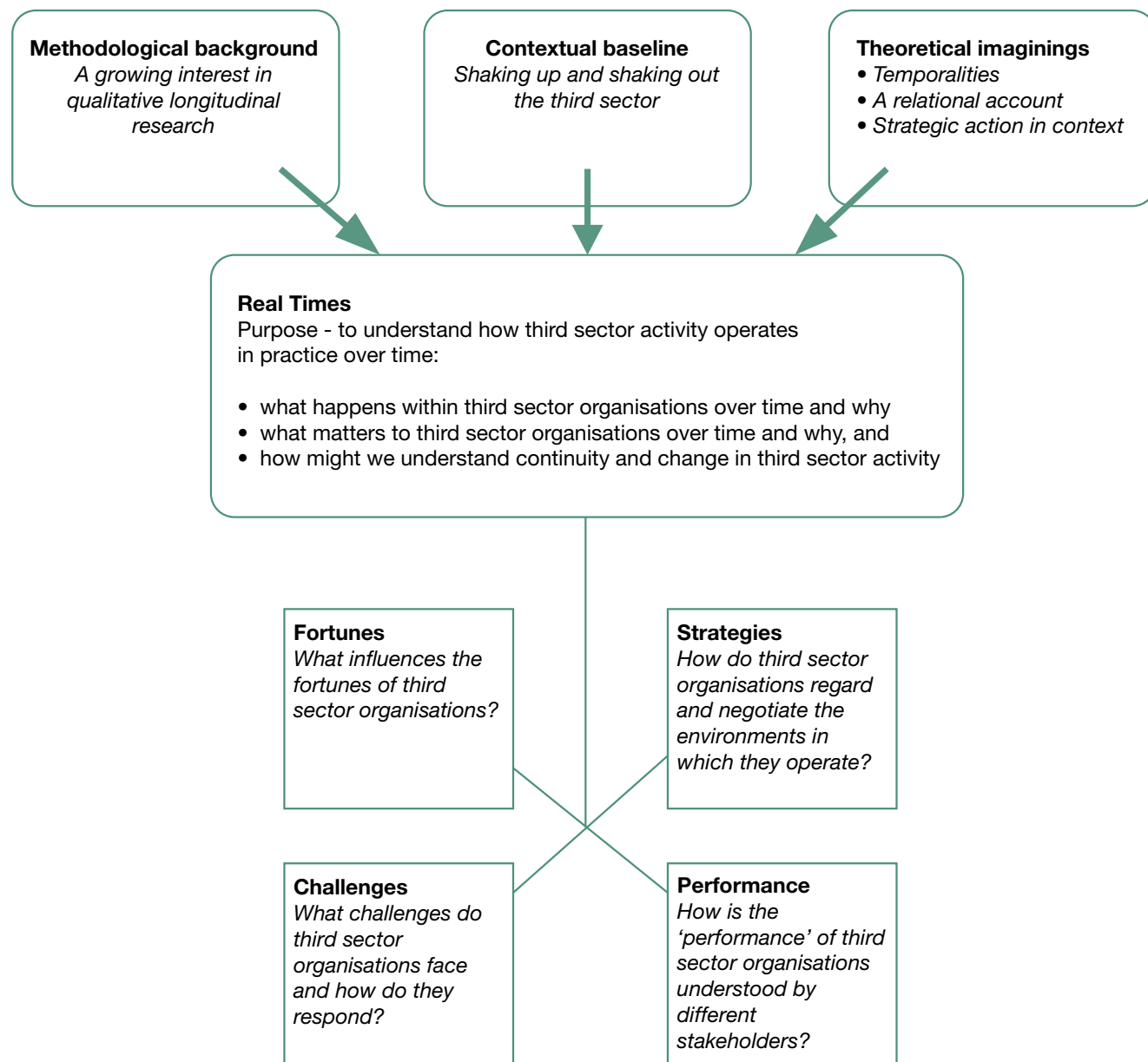
Contextual baseline and theoretical framework

The basic structure of 'Real Times' is illustrated in Figure 1, and is discussed more fully in TSRC Working Paper 56. The study was able to follow an intensified period of transformation for the third sector, involving a combination of a 'shake out', where organisations

scale down or even cease operations, and a 'shake-up', where organisations are re-cast (and exhorted) to become more enterprising, to work collaboratively or merge, and to demonstrate the difference they make. These developments form the backdrop or substantive contextual baseline against which 'Real Times' was set, and the research has been able to follow and explore the experiences of different third sector organisations longitudinally as these developments have unfolded.



Figure 1: The rationale and structure of the Real Times qualitative longitudinal study



Research design

‘Real Times’ involved a prospective longitudinal case study design including research with case studies over an initial period of three to four years. It followed Sayer’s description of ‘intensive research’, where close examination of a number of concrete cases facilitates a qualitative exploration of processes and dynamics. The study had three key features.

- The ‘cases’ were different forms of organised third sector activity, involving a diverse range of organisations and groups, based on internal aspects such as, for example, organisation size, age and function/policy field, and on different aspects of the setting in which cases operated such as, for example, urban and rural, relative affluence and deprivation, and local political context. The sample was not ‘representative’ in a statistical sense; instead it aimed to be broadly reflective of a diverse range of third sector activities and the contexts in which they were operating.
- The sample involved a ‘tiered’ relational structure, with cases studied at two levels of intensity: 15 ‘core’ case studies and, for most of these, up to three related ‘complementary’ cases. The relationships between ‘core’ and ‘complementary’ cases may be collaborative, competitive, harmonious, conflictual, or perhaps all of these. The design enabled an examination of these inter-organisational relationships over time.
- The study employed successive waves of fieldwork for ‘core’ and ‘complementary’ case studies, in order to explore the dynamics of third sector organisations and activities.

Case selection and recruitment

‘Real Times’ was explicitly designed as a general qualitative research programme of use and interest across the Third Sector Research Centre, so its design incorporated a deliberate attempt to reflect the Centre’s range of research interests. The fifteen core case studies are summarised in Table 1, and outlined in TSRC Working Paper 67. They included a large social housing group, a consortium of third sector organisations, a local family support and parenting project, a national campaigning organisation, a multi-purpose community centre, and community-based activities in two small villages. We identified them using pseudonyms.

Real Times’ fieldwork

Selection and recruitment of case study locations took place in 2009. Fieldwork for wave 1 started in March 2010 and was completed by the beginning of September 2010, wave 2 by the end of March 2011, wave 3 by December 2011, and wave 4 by December 2012. A fifth wave, involving feedback discussions with case study participants and verification of general findings, was undertaken in the Spring and Summer of 2013.

Table 1: Real Times core case studies

Case study pseudonym	Description
ASH	a social housing group formed in the 1990s from the merger of several small community-based housing associations
BEECH	a relatively new environmental social enterprise focusing on recycling and training with disadvantaged young people and adults
BIRCH	a large, local information, rights and advice organisation based in an urban area in the north of England
CEDAR	a consortium of third sector organisations aiming to bid for and deliver large scale public service contracts
CHERRY	a multi faith-based network which aims to raise awareness and understanding of social issues by working alongside the most disadvantaged people in society
FIG	a longstanding charity working with children, young people and families to tackle disadvantage and social exclusion, particularly in deprived areas
FIR	a member-owned and controlled co-operative football club based in a large town in the South of England
HAWTHORN	a family support and parenting project for young mothers and mothers-to-be in a town in the north of England
INDIGO	provides culturally sensitive services and support for older people from a particular minority ethnic community drawn from several parts of a large city
LARCH	a former mining area of several small settlements in the north of England
MIMOSA	a local health and social care charity specialising in mental health and located at two sites in a large city
MULBERRY	a multi-purpose community centre based in a deprived urban neighbourhood in the north
PINE	a resource centre in a multi-cultural community in a large city
SYCAMORE	a relatively affluent village in the South of England
TEAK	a social enterprise regeneration group comprising of several distinct subsidiary companies operating in different markets

Findings

Overall picture

Real Times charted the experience of third sector organisations during a particularly turbulent period in and around the third sector. Using ‘strategic action field’ theory, we characterised this as an ‘unsettlement’ in the third sector’s operating environment, where existing resources, relationships, approaches and understandings are all called into question (TSRC Working Paper 109). For some case study organisations, though not all, the period was dominated by the prospect and reality of public expenditure cuts associated with the new Coalition government’s deficit reduction programme. Case study organisations reported a sense of ‘anticipatory anxiety’ during 2010 about the prospect of cuts, with considerable ongoing uncertainty about their scale, scope and impact. From 2011 (wave 2) onwards, several case studies experienced cuts in their public funding streams, where grants came to an end or services were re-commissioned on tighter budgets. Subsequently, and for a wider range of case studies, there was an overall sense of contained ambitions and thwarted plans in a more constrained financial environment. However, all of the case studies survived, in some form or another, through to wave 5 of the study in 2013.

Third sector organisations in unsettled times

In the context of an unsettled environment, we explored the broad strategies adopted by five case studies delivering different kinds of public services, in order to preserve or advance their ‘room’ to operate in their ‘strategic action fields’ (TSRC Working Paper 109). Firstly, case studies were engaged in significant restructuring exercises involving reductions in paid staff hours and redundancies, designed to cut costs

and maintain services where possible. The third sector appears from this picture to be quite adept at shedding hours, staff and projects rather than organisations. Secondly, we noted rather more discussion than action around merger and acquisition as strategies to save services or grow organisations in the context of austerity. Thirdly, we were able to observe the efforts of case study organisations to reposition their activities and rebrand their organisations to offer a more professional or business-like image. Through these processes organisations were attempting to distinguish themselves not only from others in their fields, but also from their own pasts.

Community activities in two contrasting villages

We explored a range of community-based activities in two contrasting villages - ‘Sycamore’, a relatively affluent village in the south, and ‘Larch’, a relatively deprived ex-mining village in the north. Here we noted some commonalities, such as the vibrant range of community activities in each place, and the concentrated efforts of a relatively small cadre of residents in keeping community activities going. But there were also some important contrasts between the two case studies, including the role of the respective parish councils, but more fundamentally in terms of longer term historical legacies and current socio-economic composition. Sustaining and developing community activities appeared to be less of a struggle in Sycamore compared with Larch. The former could draw on significant financial and professional resources within the village, with little need to access external funding. The latter had been the setting for significant community regeneration investment in the aftermath of pit closures. However, much of this and other organised community development work had come to an end,

leaving residents struggling to sustain groups and activities. We characterised this as successive layers of community investment and disinvestment over time.

Exploring discourses in the third sector – the Big Society and Social Enterprise

We have used our qualitative data to explore the impact of major policy discourses on organisations. We assessed the changing fortunes of the Big Society as a narrative, revealing an overwhelming scepticism, combined with an awareness of potential opportunities ahead, and a need for participants to ‘position’ their organisations and activities in relation to the Big Society (TSRC Working Paper 90). We also explored the extent to which practitioners endorsed or rejected the norms and principles of ‘social enterprise’ (Dey and Teasdale, 2013).

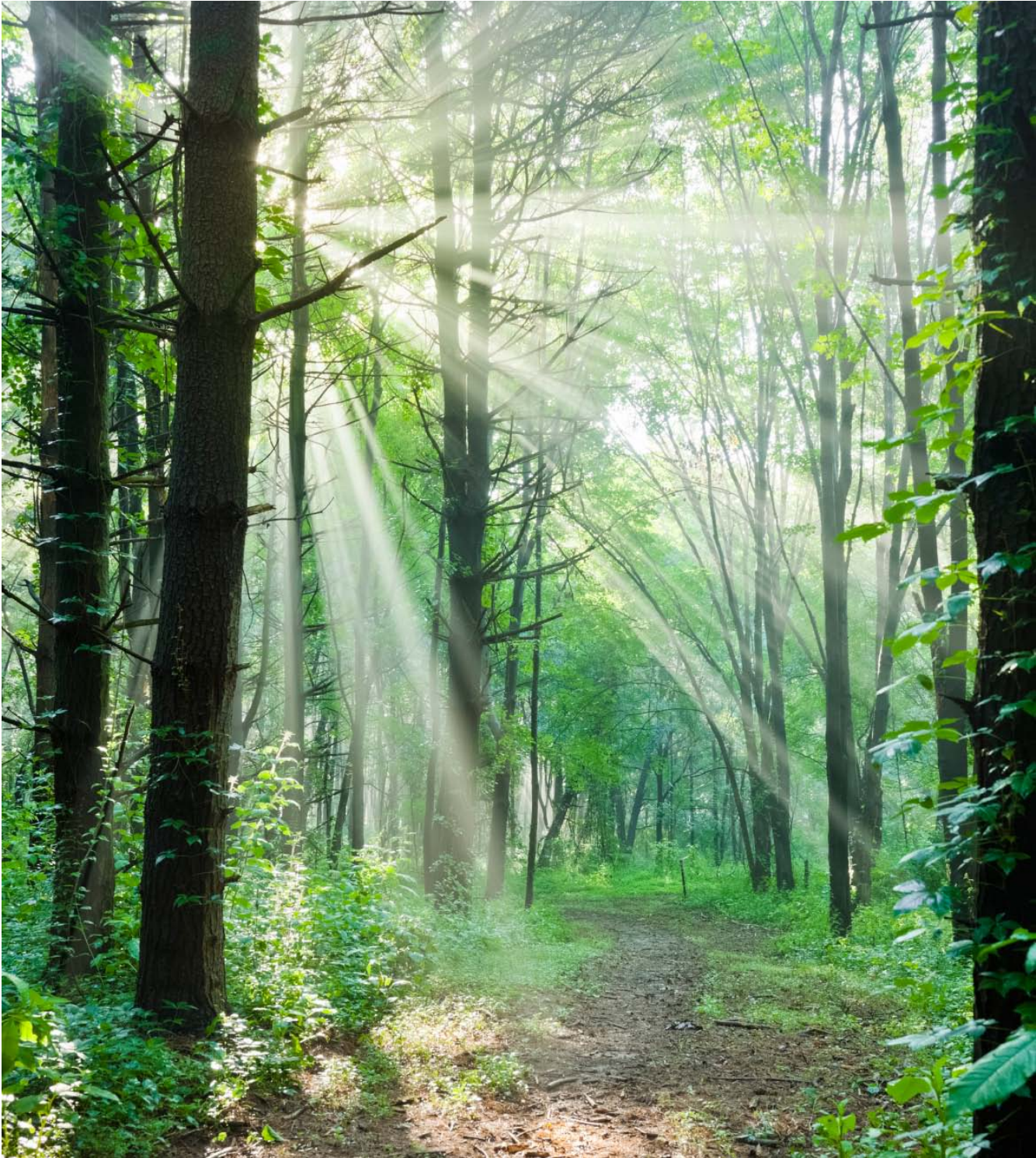
Recruiting case studies and sustaining relationships – a methodological reflection

As an in-depth and long-term programme of study, ‘Real Times’ required the development of close on-going relationships between case study participants and researchers. We were able to reflect on the process of gaining consent and access, and maintaining relationships with research participants, and in doing so to consider some of the practical and ethical challenges of undertaking qualitative longitudinal research in organisations. Reflection on subsequent waves of fieldwork indicated that recruitment is an on-going negotiated process, and that maintaining relationships with our case studies meant on-going navigation of shifting organisational structures and dynamics.

Bridge Funding

Research agenda September 2013 – March 2014:

- Analysis of feedback discussions with case study participants and subsequent review of case study sites and core questions underpinning the study.
- Further analysis of data on ‘community investment’ and on boundary crossing career trajectories of research participants.
- Research synthesis and secondary analysis of data across a network of qualitative longitudinal projects on the third sector, as the core element of the ESRC funded ‘Changing Landscapes for the third sector’ knowledge exchange project, undertaken in collaboration with the Timescapes initiative at the University of Leeds.



Social Enterprise

Stream lead: Fergus Lyon

Researchers: Heather Buckingham, Ross Millar, Robin Miller, Steven Pinch,
Leandro Sepulveda, Peter Sunley, Simon Teasdale

Aims

Social enterprise has received much policy attention since the late 1990s, yet the concept has remained ill-defined and poorly understood. Our research has covered theoretical analysis of the concept

of social enterprise, quantitative descriptions of the extent of the social enterprise sub-sector, and qualitative work to understand the distinctive (or otherwise) contributions made by social enterprise.



Methodology

Academic and policy literature

We have reviewed different definitions of social enterprise, explanations for its emergence, and its relationship to the third sector. We also show how the term has been constructed in different ways and for different purposes by policy makers since the late 1990s.

Quantitative data

A wide range of statistical sources provide evidence on social enterprise, although few have been constructed solely for this purpose. To provide estimates of the number of social enterprises and their economic impact, we reviewed and conducted further analysis

of the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations and the Annual Small Business Service surveys, while work on the relative prevalence of women in the third sector has been conducted through analysis of the Labour Force Survey and the Citizenship Survey. We have also had access to a large nonprofit database from the USA which has allowed us to explore the growth of social enterprise activity in a comparative context.

Qualitative data

Much of our qualitative work has used interviews to collect data on specific issues. Additionally, as part of the Real Times stream, three core cases were selected specifically to shed light on the behaviour of social enterprises over time through in-depth longitudinal research.

Findings

Meanings of social enterprise

The term social enterprise means different things to different people and varies across time, context and place (TSRC Working Paper 46; Teasdale, 2011). One can distinguish organisational types by the ways in which they reconcile social or economic goals, and by their degree of collective decision-making and democratic process (Teasdale, 2010). There has been much debate as to whether social enterprise should be seen as part of the third sector with many commentators fearing that the label is being used as a smokescreen for privatisation (TSRC Working Paper 15). Policy makers have used the label in a range of ways. Initially use of the term originated through an alliance between practitioners from the co-operative movement and high profile politicians. The term was subsequently

broadened to include community enterprises and, later, to draw attention to the potential role of social businesses in providing 'business responses to social problems'. Further expansion of the construct saw voluntary organisations deriving some of their income through trading, particularly those delivering public services, labeled as social enterprises. Under the new Coalition government social enterprise has predominantly been seen as a way of delivering public services, although it would appear that the collective nature of social enterprise emphasised in much of the early literature has been abandoned in favour of more entrepreneurial approaches to 'getting the job done'.

Mapping the scale and scope of social enterprises

The contested nature of social enterprise makes it impossible to reach a commonly accepted estimate of their scale and scope (Lyon and Sepulveda, 2009; TSRC Working Paper 35). We have shown that estimates have ranged from 16,000 to 281,000 social enterprises and have explained why these wide discrepancies have occurred (TSRC Working Paper 43). Work was also undertaken with Co-ops UK to adapt their database of members as a future resource for policy and practice in the field.

Additional research has focused on charities in England and Wales, particularly the extent to which they are becoming more reliant on commercial revenue when compared with nonprofits in the United States (TSRC Working Paper 47). More detailed analysis of US data found no evidence that nonprofits were increasingly adopting mixed revenue strategies. Mixed revenue strategies appeared less sustainable over time than predominately commercial or predominately donative strategies. Our results suggest that for most nonprofits, relying predominately on either commercial or donative revenue is a more stable equilibrium than attempting to achieve a balanced revenue mix (TSRC Working Paper 99).

Public policy and social enterprise

Research has also focused on the role of social enterprise in specific areas of public service delivery. Within the health sector much of the policy literature emphasises the potential for social enterprises to serve as vehicles for spin-outs from the NHS. However despite this policy attention there has been limited action in this area (TSRC Working Paper 52). Additional support for social enterprises delivering health and social care was also examined in separate research on the Social Enterprise Investment Fund (SEIF), which found that, whilst

helping enterprises to grow, this did not develop a significant market for loan finance (Hall et al, 2012).

Within the homelessness field policy makers have adopted a more clearly defined descriptor of social enterprise as an organisational form adopted by third sector organisations and designed to move homeless people into employment (TSRC Working Papers 3 and 5; Teasdale, 2010).

Finance, networks and management

The Coalition government is looking for ways to strengthen the sector, with much attention given to scaling-up and social investment. Research examined the factors affecting the emergence and development of social enterprise in four different geographical contexts within the UK, focusing particularly on finance and networks, and explored the influence that local government can have on these (TSRC Working Paper 35). Research on the scaling-up of social enterprises delivering early years provision provided guidance on different models for achieving this (TSRC Working Paper 79). Learning from 'failure' is also important and early research explored one case study example of this (TSRC Working Paper 31).

Research has explored learning and innovation in social enterprises with analysis of three case studies showing that innovation came about through new products and new ways of operating, most notably through harnessing parts of the market (TSRC Working Paper 83).

Diversity and social exclusion

Social enterprises are widely claimed to combat social exclusion, and promote gender and ethnic equality through their activities and working practices. We found evidence of a sizeable and growing Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) social enterprise sector in London. However these organisations do not generally

accept being characterised as ‘social enterprise’ and their growing reliance on commercial revenue is actually an artefact of reduced grant funding from government. Moreover BME social enterprises in London were not well connected to the mainstream social enterprise support bodies or to related policy mechanisms (TSRC Working Paper 48).

Secondary analysis of existing data sources found that female social entrepreneurs were under-represented as leaders of private sector social enterprises, but were more equally represented leading or initiating third sector organisations (TSRC Working Paper 72). Moreover the gender pay gap was lower in the third sector than in the

private sector, and women were more likely to reach management positions in third sector organisations (Teasdale et al., 2011; TSRC Working Paper 40).

Research on gender balance on the boards of social enterprises revealed a more equal gender balance in social enterprise governance compared to the private sector, but that women were still under-represented on boards when considered as a proportion of the population or the proportion of women’s employment in social enterprises, with a smaller proportion of women on boards of larger organisations (TSRC Working Paper 107).

Bridge Funding

Research agenda September 2013 – March 2014:

- The role of social enterprises in public services provision and the nature of this involvement.
- How social enterprises position themselves in relation to the public, private and third sectors.
- Spin-outs and social value creation in health and social care services established under the Right to Request.

Below the radar

Small community groups in policy and practice

Stream lead: Angus McCabe

Researchers: Jenny Phillimore, Andri Soteri-Proctor

Aims

Much third sector research relates to formal, often publicly funded, voluntary organisation in terms of role, function and management. There has been less activity around more informal community based activities: those groups that do not appear on the records of regulatory bodies such as the Charity Commission or are 'below the radar' in terms of publicly available printed or on-line directories. The Below the Radar (BTR) work stream was developed to research the small, informal and semi-formal community groups and activities that may be operating here and to address a range of research questions relating to these:

- Is it possible to quantify the range of BTR groups operating within local neighbourhoods and their contribution to civil society?
- What is the role and function of these BTR groups, organisations and activities, and how do they operate?
- What are the motivations of those involved in BTR groups and activities?
- What is the life cycle of BTR organisations and how do those active in them learn and develop?
- What is the impact of more informal community action and organising?
- What is the relationship between BTR groups, the formal third sector, and government policies?

Methodology

The Below the Radar research adopted a mixed methodology model. This included a baseline literature review, updated and supplemented through regular desk research. Further, given the speed of change in the sector, particularly after the 2010 General Election, there was increased access to, and participation in, online discussion fora. In addition, the research used both individual semi-structured interviews and focus groups to explore the core research questions. The Below the Radar work also included analysis of two 'whole community' case studies, within the Real Times study discussed above – Larch and Sycamore.

These 'traditional' methods evolved alongside more action research orientated approaches, including:

- micro-mapping of local community activities, in particular developing an innovative neighbourhood based exploratory study called 'street-walking';
- the recruitment, training and employment of community researchers with diverse language skills;
- the use of word café and other participatory techniques to generate data.



Findings

Literature review

This drew attention to the lack of a common definition of 'Below the Radar', and the limited nature of academic research into community groups and activities (TSRC Working Paper 8). Much coverage has taken the form of 'grey' literature (in particular in evaluations of regeneration and area-based initiatives) though the quality of these materials is highly variable. There is no homogeneous 'community sector', but rather a series of subsectors (TSRC Working Paper 29).

Micro-mapping

This element of the work stream started with a standard search (both in directories and on-line) for voluntary and community groups in two areas of England with a view to gaining an overview of the range of community activities within particular localities. This indicated that there was substantially more activity than might be suggested through an analysis of Charity Commission and other regulatory body databases, but it did not reach beyond groups that were known, in some way, to third sector umbrella bodies or local authority departments.

However, by employing a more intensive local search through an innovative, 'street-walking' methodology (visiting shops, community meeting places, cafés etc., and interviewing local community activists), we were able to identify a much greater density of diverse informal, but organised, activity operating within two small local neighbourhoods – 'little societies' operating below the radar of Big Society policy planners (Soteri-Proctor and Alcock, 2012; TSRC Working Paper 71)

Distinctiveness

A key claim surrounding community based groups and activities is that they are distinct and different from the formal and formalised voluntary sector. This hypothesis was tested through a series of interviews with key academics, policy makers and practitioners active in 'the community sector'. This highlighted characteristics such as the multiple purposes and functions fulfilled by BTR groups, their flexible and informal nature, the potential beneficial impacts of such groups (particularly in terms of acting as a bridge between communities and political systems), their role in sustaining the free exchange of resources (even in the absence of funding), and their potential ability to attract resources to communities or to support existing resources (TSRC Working Paper 33).

Research has explored the distinctive ways in which many below the radar groups and organisations grow and develop, revealing the relative importance of informal network learning (TSRC Working Paper 91).

Below the Radar in a Big Society

Building on the distinctiveness paper, further research explored the relationship between changing policy towards community groups in the Big Society. Discussion covered the continuities and discontinuities between the Coalition government policies and the previous New Labour administration's approach; the expectations placed on BTR organisations in the Big Society agenda; the range of attitudes to the Big Society agenda in both BTR community groups and the formal voluntary sector - from positive and welcoming to sceptical and hostile; different models of working with communities, and whether it was possible to 'scale up' community activity as a means

of delivering the 'Big Society' (TSRC Working Paper 51). This was followed by further analysis of a another round of interviews to explore the early impacts of deficit reduction strategies on BTR community groups and activities (TSRC Working Paper 87).

Other activities

The literature review highlighted substantial gaps in the knowledge base around BTR groups and activities. This has led to a range of further activities in collaboration with other partners and drawing on some of the contributions made by TSRC Associate Fellows:

- joint work with the Universities of Exeter and Glamorgan, and Voluntary Arts (co-funded and published by the AHRC: Connected Communities Programme) to examine the role of voluntary arts activity in communities;
- a literature review on the Black and Minority Ethnic voluntary and community sector (TSRC Working Paper 58);
- two reports analysing the Gypsy, Traveller and Roma third sector and tenants and residents group in the UK, undertaken by Ryder, TSRC Associate Fellow (TSRC Working Papers 63 and 84);
- research into changing senses of identity within refugee and migrant communities under taken by Piacentini, TSRC Associate Fellow (TSRC Working Paper 85);
- exploring and using an ethnographic methodology, the role of 'emotion' in the work of grassroots activists and policy makers by Anderson, TSRC Associate Fellow (TSRC Working Paper, 96).

These have been supplemented by six discussion papers exploring different theoretical and practice issues in the third sector.

Bridge Funding

Research agenda September 2013 – March 2014:

- Completion of research on the role that social networks and social media play in mitigating or moving people on from poverty in diverse communities - 'Making the Links: poverty, ethnicity and social networks' supported by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation;
- Examination of the role of 'community capitals' in the creation, development and sustainability of below the radar groups;
- Primary research into community responses to destitute migrants.

Service Delivery

Stream lead: David Mullins

Researchers: Tony Bovaird, Heather Buckingham, Helen Dickinson, Dina Gojkovic, Rosie Meek, Robin Miller, Alice Mills, James Rees, Rebecca Taylor

Aims

The main aim of the service delivery research stream has been to deepen understanding of the role of the sector in providing important welfare services and the implications this has for their wider role in society.

Third sector organisations (TSOs) have for a long time been involved in the provision of public services, though that role is not always widely appreciated and understood. TSOs were particularly promoted as service providers under the previous Labour administration, in a spirit of partnership with the state. Under the Coalition government, there have been changes of emphasis but also considerable enthusiasm for the role of the sector in delivering services, in areas such as health and social care, employment services, and in criminal justice and probation reforms. These services are usually provided under contract from various levels of government and other public agencies, sometimes through partnerships with public and private organisations, and often involve a remit or expectation of increasing responsiveness to citizens, service users and local communities.

Critical understanding of service delivery by the third sector is important to policy making. Our research has interrogated the political and policy discourses around the 'added value' of TSOs vis-à-vis their public and private counterparts, explored the dangers inherent in the third sector becoming over-dependent on funding from service contracts, examined the changing climate for the commissioning of services, and explored the impact of competition, collaboration and partnership working on organisations delivering public services. More recently we have also explored the impact of the increasing move towards commissioning for outcomes and the use of payment by results regimes. Finally, research has also focused on the specificity of roles played by the sector in some key services areas – health and social care, criminal justice, housing, and employment.

Methodology

An evidence review (TSRC Working Paper 20) examined four themes from the literature relating to emerging commissioning and procurement practices; the experience of third sector service providers; support and capacity building needs; and service delivery impacts. This review shaped the research agenda suggesting work on commissioning models, inter-organisational responses, the tension between scaling-up and local responsiveness, sustainability and resilience, and impact on organisational mission. It was supplemented by a detailed review of public service commissioning practices, carried out for the National Audit Office (TSRS Research Report 86).

Further scoping work for the Service Delivery work stream included the mapping of organisational fields. Housing scoping studies used an institutional perspective to map the history, numbers, activities, funding, policy and regulation drivers and umbrella bodies in each of six housing sub-fields (TSRC Working Paper 10). Scoping work for the Employment Services project mapped the supply chains of a selected number of 'prime' providers, as well as cross-programme key characteristics of all subcontractors to inform sampling strategy (TSRC Working Paper 70).

Service Delivery projects have generally adopted a mixed-methods approach with literature reviews and stakeholder interviews used to scope topics. Surveys of organisations and service users have occasionally been used to provide broad coverage, 'mapping' exercises to understand the institutional delivery context, and case studies widely used to provide in-depth exploration of issues in different contexts, including individual organisations, organisational fields and networks, or sectors and sub-sectors. We have also drawn on the longitudinal perspective on organisational change and adaptation provided by the Real Times team (TSRC Working Paper 45).

Most work has focused on the English context, but the partnerships project has also explored procurement groups and Supporting People partnerships in Northern Ireland in collaboration with the University of Ulster and Queens University, Belfast. We have also contributed to wider international comparative work, for example, in relation to co-production in public services (TSRC Briefing Paper 12), and on the role of housing associations in neighbourhood work in the Netherlands and England.



Findings

Scoping work

The preliminary evidence review examined four themes relating to emerging commissioning and procurement practices, the experiences of third sector service providers, support and capacity building needs and service delivery impacts.

A key issue to emerge concerning commissioning practices was the shift from 'giving' to 'shopping' by public bodies and concern to ensure that services were not cross-subsidised from reserves. The dominant finding in relation to organisational experiences was uncertainty of the commissioning landscape and the importance of building good relationships with commissioners. TSOs were thought to need capacity building in relation to business and strategic planning and a culture shift to embrace commissioning; but there was a lack of clarity on the best ways to provide such support. There was considerable anxiety about the impact of involvement in service delivery on independence, mission and innovation (TSRC Working Paper 20).

The five housing scoping papers (summarised in TSRC Briefing Paper 11) explored specific features of sub-sectors concerning housing associations, homelessness advice and support, co-operative and mutual organisations, tenants and residents groups, social enterprises and self-help housing organisations. A key finding was that a thriving third sector is dependent upon strong inter-organisational links and it is therefore important for research to consider the ecology of organisational fields (nationally, regionally and locally). The papers also helped to prioritise, for more detailed study, the under-researched field of self-help housing.

Partnerships

Work on third sector partnerships for service delivery has sought to understand the key forms of inter-organisational collaboration in service delivery involving TSOs; the main drivers and rationale for collaboration and partnership; the relative advantages of different types of collaborative arrangements in terms of service outcomes, accountabilities, efficiency, cost; and the impacts on innovation, and learning. A diverse set of case studies have identified the difference between internal motivations and external drivers, the importance of cultural barriers to collaboration, the difficulties of evidencing the benefits of merger, and the tensions of developing 'partnerships' within vertical supply chains (TSRC Working Paper 88).

Commissioning

Research has highlighted the need to differentiate TSOs' responses to commissioning based on organisational values and positioning. This was captured by the four response categories of: 'comfortable contractors', 'compliant contractors', 'cautious contractors', 'community-based non-contractors' (TSRC Working Papers 41 and 50; Briefing paper 105). Further, a wide governmental perspective was provided by research reported in TSRC Working Paper 86. This earlier work influenced the development of a wider research agenda around commissioning as well as a core research project focused on the operation and impact of commissioning within a particular city-region and the sub-sector of mental health. This project was completed in August 2013 and the working paper and two academic papers are being prepared. Finally, recently completed research considered the extent to which commissioners in health and social care were operationalising the requirements

to measure impact and social value, and questioned whether the requirements and demands for impact data by third sector funders are taking precedence over the requirements and needs of beneficiaries and service users (TSRC Working Paper 106).

Sub-sectors

Sub-sector studies have explored more specific policy developments in health and social care, criminal justice, community housing and employment services – but have always aimed to shed light on wider theoretical and policy debates.

Health and social care

The development of personalisation has been argued to align well with values advocated by some TSOs for a long time. However, research on this revealed that moves towards greater devolution of personal budgets might also potentially mean significant changes for providers involved in the delivery of welfare services, and that many TSOs are not ready to engage with implementation issues here (TSRC Working Paper 30). Further work was also done to highlight the important role played by carers in implementation of personalisation and concluded that more evidence is needed on how to support users and carers (TSRC Working Paper 64), and that TSOs may struggle to compete with other providers if carers act as ‘individual consumers’ in managing budgets (Working Paper 104).

Research on the Right to Request scheme, under which NHS staff have been able to set up community health services as social enterprises, found from case studies in the Midlands that much more support would be required if this is to happen on a larger scale (TSRC Working Paper 52).

Criminal justice

Work has focused on the role played by TSOs within prison establishments, looking at this from the perspectives of TSOs and prisoners themselves. This found that knowledge of and engagement with third sector organisations was low. On the other hand, whereas in the past volunteers in the criminal justice system had traditionally been undervalued and viewed with considerable suspicion, this is no longer a prevalent opinion and the expertise and time of third sector organisations are strongly valued by prison staff, and professional rivalries are rare. There is need for a greater use of third sector coordinators within prisons, who should promote services offered by these organisations more widely in the prisons and improve communications between offenders, staff and TSOs (TSRC Working Paper 77).

Community housing

Self-help organisations can play an important role in working with homeless people to provide a route out of homelessness and unemployment as well as contributing to tackling the empty homes problem (TSRC Working Paper 53). There are, however, considerable challenges involved in expanding and scaling-up such activities which are inherently small-scale. This required attention to the potential ‘policy fit’ of self-help to the localism agenda and how it can be converted into ‘policy action’ when matched with the continued emphasis on large-scale procurement and efficiency within the mainstream housing procurement programme (TSRC Working Paper 54). Further research explored the comparisons between self-help housing and community land trusts (CLT) in innovation in community-led housing, and concluded that while partnerships with technical experts that act as intermediaries may be crucial for the diffusion and expansion of CLTs and self-help housing, there are tensions in accessing technical skills and resources in a manner that maintains the

local scale, accountability and unique added value of community-led housing (TSRC Working Paper 94).

Employment

Research on employment services has focused on the flagship Work Programme introduced by the government in 2011 to create a single programme for long term unemployed claimants delivered by independent providers under a significantly expanded 'payment-by-results' system. A literature review and policy analysis revealed concerns that TSO providers

were being 'squeezed out' of direct contracting and delivery as a result of the new commissioning procedures and the reliance on the Prime contractor model (TSRC Working Paper 70). Qualitative research based on interviews with key informants and subcontractors from all sectors in the Work Programme explored these issues, including low flows of clients to subcontractors and the 'creaming and parking' of hard to help customers. It concluded that in practice the sector was not the most important factor in accounting for providers' experiences of the Work Programme (TSRC Working Paper 92).

Bridge Funding

Research agenda September 2013 – March 2014:

- A short and focused research project on the wider role of TSOs in the delivery of employment services including the range of resources they draw on, the content of the work they carry out including with users, and how they relate to and negotiate tensions with programmes such as the Work Programme.
- Examination of the relationship between innovation, risk and accountability in complex supply chain and contractual relationships - an environment that increasingly represents the norm for many TSOs.
- Further development of conceptual understanding of service delivery TSOs as operating in strategic action fields (see TSRC Working Paper 109).



Economic and Social Impact

Measuring the value of the third sector

Stream lead: Pete Alcock

Researchers: Malin Arvidson, David Clifford, Jenny Harlock, Fergus Lyon,
Lindsey Metcalfe, Domenico Moro, Stephen McKay, Simon Teasdale

Aims

There has been an increasing emphasis in recent years on the economic and social impact that third sector organisations have. This has particularly been focused on organisations themselves with new agencies such as New Philanthropy Capital encouraging organisations to pay more attention to the outcomes of their activities and promoting different means of measuring performance to achieve this. What is more many funders, especially in the public sector, are expecting, or requiring, organisations to demonstrate the value and impact of their work, especially in order

to bid for and deliver public service contracts. A key research priority for TSRC has therefore been to explore the development of this new drive towards impact assessment and performance management, and to provide critical analysis of the tools being offered to do this. This includes empirical work to survey the different tools available and their use by third sector organisations, theoretical analysis of the policies and practices that have informed these, and technical analysis of the use of one of the leading forms of measurement.

Methods

Research in this stream has included documentary review of current literature in the field, including international literature on impact measurement models, drawing on collaboration with New Philanthropy Capital (NPC). Qualitative interviews with key respondents have been used to discover the range of models currently in use and the strengths and weaknesses identified by respondents.

Economic analysis of leading models of impact measurement has been employed to assess the effectiveness of these – notably Social Return on Investment (SROI).

Research in this stream has also included analysis of statistical data on trends in sector funding, developing comparative analysis with the United States, to model the complex interactions between commercial income and donations.

Findings

Economic analysis and the third sector

Theoretical work by Westall took both a practical and critical view of economic analysis in relation to the third sector. TSRC Working Paper 14 considered issues of both practical and conceptual importance, in order to identify possibilities and priorities; and enable further in-depth work of the economic analysis of the third sector. A second paper (TSRC Working Paper 25) on value and the sector provided a broad sweep across the ideas and practices around 'value', and how these relate to third sector organisations and activities.

Measuring social and economic impact

Research has reviewed material presented by third sector organisations, funders and academics with the aim of outlining the way evaluation is practised, experienced and discussed within the third sector. This revealed that third sector experiences of

performance measurement often included frustration and tension due to the mismatch of expectations and poor communication with funders (TSRC Working Paper 27). This was followed by a more extensive review of the research on impact measurement, which revealed that this has thus far tended to be boosterist in nature. Nevertheless there was a growing concern that requirements and demands for impact data from third sector funders are taking precedence over the requirements and needs of beneficiaries and service users (TSRC Working Paper 106).

Research has focused on the role that impact measurement can play in helping organisations and commissioners identify the social value produced by organisations in delivering services now a requirement in commissioning following the Social Value Act 2012. It concluded that, even though not all measures focus explicitly on social value, they can help organisations to highlight the social values linked to their activities

(TSRC Working Paper 110). We have also analysed more generally the range of impact measurement tools available to third sector organisations, based on analysis of the Online Marketplace, which is being developed by Substance for the Inspiring Impact Network and includes information about over 130 different impact measurement tools, and has provided guidance on selecting and using these based on analysis of some of their main features (TSRC Working Paper 111).

Policy and practice interest in measuring the social impact of third sector activities has focused in particular upon one approach to this - Social Return on Investment (SROI). This received support and promotion from government through the OTS and has also been promoted by a number of third sector organisations. Research has examined this approach in detail and identified a series of issues that require further investigation. These include technical and methodological issues; and the ways in which SROI is being used by stakeholders (TSRC Working Paper 49).

Comparative analysis of sector funding

Analysis of the relationship between commercial revenue and grants and donations has drawn on comparison between UK and US data to explore trends in funding mixes (TSRC Working Paper 47). Analysis of the US data demonstrated that here, commercial income and grants and donations were inelastic substitutes, with a small rise in one leading to a decline in the other, and a balanced mix being more difficult to sustain (TSRC Working Paper 99). Similar research on charities in England and Wales showed that between 2003 and 2007 there was a significant increase in the proportion of overall revenue attracted from commercial sources and that the annual persistence of commercial revenue over time was 44%. However, a +10% change in grants and donations was associated with a -3.1% change in commercial revenue. Thus commercial revenue here too was an inelastic substitute for grants and donations (TSRC Working Paper 69).

Bridge Funding

We are not developing any further research on impact measurement during the Bridge Funding period.



Workforce and Workplace

Stream lead: Stephen McKay

Researchers: Katie Bruce, Susan Halford, Pauline Leonard, Domenico Moro, Rebecca Taylor

Aims

This stream analysed both the paid labour force and volunteer labour within the third sector, including comparison with the public and private sectors. Key research questions have included what attracts people to working in this sector, what the implications are for their work identities and career trajectories, and what the relationships are between volunteering and paid employment in the sector.

Work in this research stream has been supported by additional funding from Skills Third Sector, for activity in collaboration with NCVO, for which TSRC has conducted the analytical work. This included timely statistics on the size and composition of the workforce, with quarterly data being supplied in a manner similar to an 'observatory' function.



Methodology

The research in this stream has been undertaken using both quantitative and qualitative methods of investigation.

A key element of our published research in this area has been secondary data analysis of large-scale data resources. Our analysis has drawn on the following two sources in particular, although we have also made use of the 2006 Skills Survey and the 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey (WERS):

- *The Labour Force Survey* (LFS). This quarterly dataset, generally available around 12 weeks after data collection, provides a long time series of information relating to employment in the third sector, allowing direct comparisons to be made between people in the different sectors, and between different industries.

- *The British Household Panel Survey* (BHPS) contains 18 years of observations on the same people over time, and with new individuals joining the panel. As with the LFS, it is possible to identify those working in the third sector and their characteristics – including their views about their jobs. It has now been superseded by the much larger UK household longitudinal survey from 2009, known as *Understanding Society*.

We have employed in-depth ethnographic methods to analyse workplaces in the third sector, observing the day-to-day activities of both workers and volunteers in third sector organisations.

Findings

Workforce trends

In collaboration with NCVO and Skills Third Sector, we contributed to the production of a new Workforce Almanac. This was first published in 2011 and is available through the NCVO website. It set out key details about those working in the third sector, and is an authoritative source on such matters. This contains details about the size of the sector, average hours of work, contractual basis of employment, the rate of remuneration, and more.

We have also published regular statistics on our website looking at the changing situation of the third sector workforce. This revealed that numbers had

been growing since 1998, with only a few quarters when that growth has been reversed. The workforce reached a peak of just over 800,000 in early 2010, after a period of growth stretching back to 2004, it then fell back slightly below this level in the second half of 2010 and into 2011, but had grown again slightly in 2012 and 2013. More details about other trends including: the qualifications of those in the third sector (higher than average), the gender balance (more women), the age distribution (fewer younger and more older workers), the industrial balance (concentrated in a small number of sectors, including health and social care), working hours (more are part-time) are summarised in TSRC Briefing Paper 28.

Estimations of the regional distribution of employees in the third sector in England were developed using data from the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations (NSTSO), revealing a concentration in London and the South East (TSRC Working Paper 80).

Job satisfaction in the sector

Theories of the third sector – the ‘warm glow’ of working within it – assume that levels of job satisfaction will be higher among third sector workers than those in other sectors, once other factors are taken into account. Alternatively, workers will be content to work for less, given their higher levels of satisfaction. Our research has found that this picture is true, but to a declining extent. Levels of job satisfaction do remain higher in the third sector, even controlling for a range of differences in job and personal characteristics. However, there is evidence that this advantage over other sectors has been declining over time (TSRC Working Paper 74).

Gender equality in employment

An exploration of differences in management level and pay rates in the voluntary, private and public sectors found that there was greater gender equality in the third sector – albeit there were still gender gaps with women receiving lower pay than men (Teasdale et al., 2011).

Volunteering and employability

There is considerable support in the literature for the idea that volunteering helps improve employability and acts as a route to employment. We analysed longitudinal evidence from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) to test this theory, and found that volunteering has a significant, but weak, effect on employability in terms of entry into work. The evidence on job retention is weaker, and volunteering appears to have zero or even negative effects on wage progression. Overall we suggested that too much has been made of the link between volunteering and employability, and indeed that intention is infrequent among volunteers (TSRC Working Paper 100).

Organising the third sector: working lives and organisational challenges

Qualitative research, using key criteria, has selected six appropriate case study organisations from around 10,000 potential organisations to investigate working lives, careers and organisational practices in the third sector.

Bridge Funding

Research agenda September 2013 to March 2014):

- Continue to provide regular up-dates on labour market trends in the sector, and will contribute to the Workforce Almanac.
- Quantitative and qualitative research will focus on the impact of external pressures on key features of employment in the sector, including pressure on pay and conditions, including the use of qualitative data from our Real Times case studies to explore the impact of changes in funding and demand for services on employment patterns and practices in individual third sector organisations.



Environment and the third sector

Stream lead: Milena Büchs and Graham Smith
Researchers: Rebecca Edwards

Aims

This work stream has investigated activities of third sector organisations (TSO) on environmental and climate change issues through three interconnected strands:

- Mapping the environmental third sector.
- Mainstreaming the environment.
- Shaping low-carbon practices.



Methodology

Mapping the environmental third sector

This strand of work has involved close collaboration with members of the quantitative work stream to undertake statistical analysis of the environmental third sector with a comparison of the data from the Charity Commission Register (CCR) and the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations (NSTSO).

Mainstreaming the environment

This strand of research employed a review of key policy documents from within the sector and relevant public authorities; stakeholder interviews with representatives from peak organisations and public authorities; attendance at key sector events; and participation in expert seminars.

Low-carbon practices

Work on this strand began by focusing on the conceptualisation of social practices, how they change, and the development of a particular approach to understanding types of intervention by TSOs, followed by interviews with case study organisations and 'policy strategists' within the third sector to learn more about the discourses that are currently circulating within the sector.

Findings

Mapping the environmental third sector

Analysis of data from two databases (the CCR and the NSTSO) was used to provide the first systematic knowledge of the size, scope and activities of registered third sector organisations with an environmental mission in England. This included comparisons with the rest of the third sector, providing insights into the distinctive characteristics of environmental activity. It also drew preliminary comparisons with data from the United States (TSRC Working Paper 98).

Mainstreaming the environment

The role of the third sector in responding to environmental issues, and in particular climate change, is increasingly being promoted in policy debates. Our research has reviewed the evidence that has been offered to date on the role of TSOs in pro-environmental behaviour change. We found some evidence that participation in environmental third sector initiatives could facilitate certain changes in people's day to day lives, particularly with easy targets such as increasing recycling or switching off appliances. However, the review also identified a range of challenges that TSOs experienced in their work, including engaging the broader public around climate change or other environmental issues, scaling up changes in practice

to a wider audience, and a lack of resources to sustain successful initiatives (TSRC Working Paper 81)

Shaping low-carbon practices

A move to a low-carbon society will require significant changes in everyday lives. Studies of social practices can help us understand why it can be so difficult

to change well-established and embedded, but environmentally unsustainable, practices related to energy use, travel, eating, leisure and the consumption of other goods and services. Our research set out a framework to unpack aspects of the context that co-constitute practices and identified different features of TSOs and their interventions (TSRC Working Paper 59). This will facilitate further research on the effectiveness of TSO interventions aimed at reshaping the way we live.

Bridge Funding

We are not developing any further research on the environmental third sector during the Bridge Funding period.



Knowledge Exchange and Impact

Aims

TSRC established a Knowledge Exchange Team (KET) to ensure that our research was fully accessible to, and useful for, a wide range of research users in academic, policy and practice. We were also keen to ensure that policy makers and practitioners were fully engaged in the research process. The team comprised Razia Shariff and Naomi Landau, and was based in the NCVO offices in central London to facilitate close networking with leading sector agencies.

KET's key goals were to:

- bridge gaps and build understanding between research, decision making, policy making and practice;
- ensure that the experience and knowledge of policy and decision makers, practitioners and funders informed our research;
- make knowledge available in meaningful and accessible ways;
- to maximise the impact of research on policy and practice in the sector.

Consultation

TSRC established an Advisory Board comprised of leading representatives of sector agencies, central and local government policy makers, and academic departments (see membership list). The Board met on a regular basis to inform research plans and to promote and support the dissemination of research findings.

Reference Groups were also established to provide more specialist advice and support for particular areas of activity (see membership lists). These supported research on Below the Radar, Social

Enterprise and Service Delivery. There were also separate Reference Groups in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to support research on policy and practice in the devolved administrations.

Virtual engagement

TSRC Website

TSRC launched its website in September 2009. The site had an average of 5,072 visits per month over the year (July 2012 – July 2013). This compared to 4,793 in the previous year (2011-12), and 3,246 in 2010 to 2011.

KET also created two additional micro-web sites for specific projects:

- the Beyond the Radar website had a further 2,362 visits between August 2011 and April 2012;
- the Third Sector Futures website has had an additional 5,081 visits since September 2012 – with an average of over 700 visits per month while the *Futures Dialogues* (see below) were taking place.

We set up 98 RSS feeds to keep researchers informed of relevant debates and issues raised by third sector stakeholders.

Media coverage

During 2008 - 2013 TSRC has had over 650 media mentions. These include regular articles in the third sector press, a number of public sector and trade news outlets, as well as mainstream media including the Guardian, Observer and

Telegraph. Our researchers have also been interviewed on radio programmes, including Radio 4, BBC 5 live and local radio broadcasts. TSRC researchers have written blogs and articles for media publications, including the Guardian and Third Sector Magazine.

E-newsletter

This was launched in September 2010, and by July 2011 had 2,632 subscribers who received regular updates on our latest research as well as news about forthcoming events and activities organised by TSRC.

Twitter

We set up an account in January 2011 (@3sectorrc) and attracted 1,164 Twitter followers. A Tweet Reach report for a week in July 2013 showed that 36 tweets for @3sectorrc reached 43,337 people with 67,090 impressions.

Events and seminars

Regular academic seminars have been held in both Birmingham and Southampton Universities, with both internal and invited speakers. In addition the Knowledge Exchange Team organised 16 London seminars hosted at the NCVO's *Society Building*.

Over 25 other national events and seminars have been organised by KET, some in partnership with key third sector stakeholders. These included our *Policy Circles* offering closed meetings between researchers and key government officers in central government departments on priority policy areas. Other co-hosted events targeted at particular research user groups have included:

- The Big Society Evidence Seminar (with NCVO)
- Service Delivery and Social Enterprise (with PMPA)
- Ethics of Knowledge Exchange (with AURIL)
- Rethinking Research (with SRA, NCRM, ARVAC, Ipsos Mori, NCVO)
- Impact of Evaluation (with CES)
- Housing and Community Empowerment National Conference (with HACT)
- The Future Role of the Third Sector (Cumberland Lodge)
- Bridging the Social Investment Gap (with SEC, Coops UK and ISBE)
- Beyond the Radar: maximising the impact of community activities (with BCT and CLG).
- Bridging the Social Investment Gap (with SEC, Coops UK and ISBE for Coops Fortnight)
- The Commissioning Agenda and the New Role for Councillors (with PMPA)
- Below the Radar: working with the grassroots (with ESRC and GMCVO)
- Social Enterprise: social investment, promise and possibility (with ESRC and NESTA)
- Big Society: a critical appraisal (with ESRC and NCVO)
- Marrying Scale and Responsiveness: third sector service delivery (with ESRC and ACEVO)
- Third Sector in Transition: the distribution of voluntary resources (with SRA)
- Third Sector in Transition: the funding mix (with SRA)
- Third Sector in Transition: change on the Ground (with SRA)
- Civil Society and Volunteering, Futures Dialogue Report Launch (with All Party Parliamentary Group)
- Postgraduate Research Workshop (with Cumberland Lodge)
- Northern Ireland Voluntary Action Futures (with NICVA)
- Scotland's Third Sector Research Conference 2012 (with SCVO)

We also collaborated with the ESRC to co-host four cross-centre events with other ESRC investments, three of which have led to separate publications* with the ESRC:

- **The third sector as a public service provider* - with the Centre for Market and Public Organisation (CMPO), University of Bristol.
- **Social enterprise and environmental sustainability* - with the centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society (BRASS), Cardiff University.

- **Entrepreneurial philanthropy and social investment in the 21st century: implications for social entrepreneurship and social innovation* - with the centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy (CGAP), Cass Business School, London, and the Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ISBE), London.
- *Innovations in public services* - with the Innovation Research Centre (IRC), Cambridge University, and Imperial College, University of London.

A total of over 1,250 individuals have attended these from the worlds of policy, academia and practice. We have also held 14 webinars which received over 1,400 comments.

Members of KET have presented at 15 conferences, including three international events in Northern Ireland, Jordan and Canada, speaking on

TSRC's knowledge exchange model. Three of these led to papers which were published as two book chapters and a journal article.

The team was also invited to be part of the Association of University Research and Industry Links (AURIL) / JISC CPD National Steering Group to develop national standards in knowledge exchange.

TSRC has held two major national conferences to publicise its research to a broader public audience, each attended by over 200 participants. Both were hosted in collaboration with The British Library and held in BL's central London Conference Suite on the Euston Road.

- *Informing Civil Society* - October 2011
- *What is the Future of the Third Sector?* - April 2013.

Bridge Funding

- During the Bridge Funding period knowledge exchange and impact activity is concentrated at the University of Birmingham, under the leadership of the Centre Manager.
- The TSRC website will be updated and transferred to a new and more sustainable platform.
- Seminars are continuing at Birmingham, Southampton and London.
- An Advisory Board meeting will be held in Autumn 2013.

Futures Dialogue

The Futures Dialogue was established by the TSRC in summer of 2012 and ran for eight months through to spring 2013. The aim was to use the findings from TSRC research to provide the basis for a dialogue on some of the key issues underpinning the future development of the third sector in England, focusing in particular upon how the sector would, and should, respond to emerging challenges. The dialogue took a number of forms including:

- publication of a series of discussion papers from TSRC researchers outlining key findings and identifying issues for debate;
- open invitation seminars where these findings were presented and discussed;
- online 'Question and Answer' sessions hosted by Guardian Professional;
- online commentary and blogs on a dedicated Futures Dialogue website established by TSRC;
- meetings of a 'Sounding Board' of leading sector experts from policy and practice to debate the issues and discuss the future challenges for the sector;
- a TSRC National Conference at the British Library in April 2013 where these issues were debated further by a large public audience.

The five discussion papers were:

1. The worst of times?
2. No longer a voluntary sector?
3. Is the third sector so special? What is it worth?
4. Is the third sector being overwhelmed by the state and the market?
5. A strategic lead for the sector?

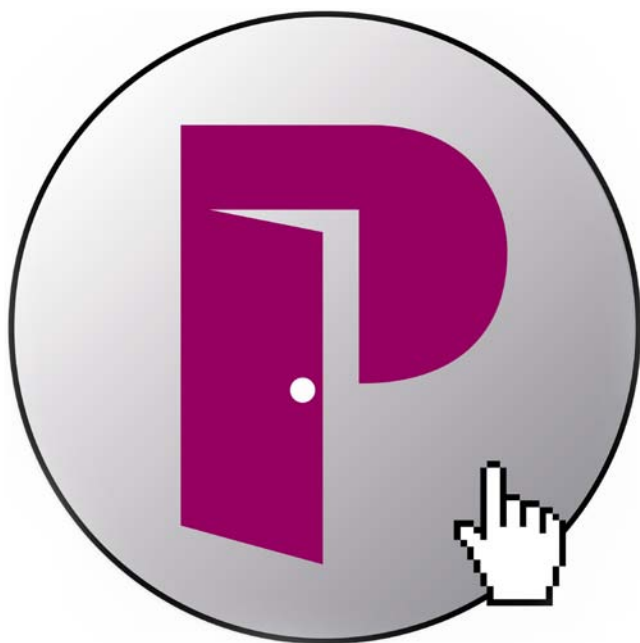
Despite the differences of view expressed by participants and experts throughout the Futures Dialogue, there was a considerable amount of consensus over many of the key issues, and a shared concern to explore a positive role for the third sector in responding to the political and economic circumstances that it faced. However the dialogue did not conclude on a prescriptive model for the future of the sector, and much of what was agreed on was the direction or context for responses (what needs to be done), rather than the substance of a particular vision for the future (how we should do it):

- Diversity and unity – the diversity of the sector is a key strength, but there was also felt to be a need for collective voices to represent the sector and influence the policy environment.
- Distinctiveness – third sector organisations do have distinctive characteristics as the basis for collective social action and for normative discourse about the promotion of progressive social values or 'doing good'.
- Autonomy – independence of action and organisation is critical to the sector, although in practice this often means organisations having the autonomy to manage proactively their interdependence with other agencies and actors. Third sector organisations are autonomous agents.
- Politics and policy – the changing policy environment does influence organisational development; however organisations can, and should, challenge policies when they deem this appropriate and should continue to advocate for policy change on behalf of their users and beneficiaries. Third sector organisations are not 'policy victims' and should act to challenge the environment in which they operate.

- Normative debate - it was also recognised that discussion of the purpose of the sector encompassed a normative discourse on values and purposes. Should the sector aim to promote social value and to 'do good'? And, if so, how can we ensure that these issues remain at the centre of debate, and practice?

TSRC published a report containing all the key elements of this process, including the Big Picture Papers, the outcomes from the debates, an overview of the conclusions from the Sounding Board discussions, and some of the challenges identified for the sector – 'Unity in Diversity: what is the future for the third sector?'. This is available as a PDF on our website, and printed copies are available on request.

The Knowledge Portal



The Knowledge Portal is an online library and web catalogue. It has been developed by TSRC in partnership with the British Library to promote and preserve evidence, research and analysis of the work of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors. It brings together academic analysis, government studies, and reports from third sector organisations themselves, in one easy to use collection of links and downloads. It has been funded by the BIG Lottery Fund.

The Portal has a unique third sector thesaurus of keywords, developed in partnership with the British Library, which helps to guide users to information of interest. Every record in the catalogue is manually classified at TSRC. Users can click the keywords and author names assigned to each item to find further related content.

The Portal is free to use. Wherever possible it provides links to publications available online for free. The full text electronic versions of reports and papers can either be found on the internet or in our own repository. The Portal also includes summaries of works not yet freely available in full; and direct links to the British Library catalogue where users can request reference access or interlibrary loans.

The Portal aims to include material documenting every aspect of the sector's work, including areas such as anti-poverty work, service commissioning, social and economic impact, equality, political analysis, social enterprise and much more.

Content is drawn from a broad range of carefully selected sources, including:

- academic research collections;
- reports produced within the sector nationally, locally and internationally;
- government publications and consultations;
- abstracts for books and journal articles;
- guidance and training materials.

Over 6,000 documents have been catalogued in the Portal since it was launched in 2011. Works are selected for inclusion in the Portal through three channels: publication by a recognised publisher; citation or recommendation by a trusted source; or through our new Independent Content Selection (ICS) process. ICS has been designed to open up the Portal for the inclusion of new, high quality, unpublished writing on the sector. An external panel of respected

third sector authors assesses submissions based on our criteria for quality, relevance, and substantiveness.

The @3rdSectorPortal Twitter account has over 2,000 followers, and is used to promote links to publications in the Portal relating to topical issues; to engage with events and debates via Twitter hashtags; and to foster a 'user community' through informal dialogue and responses to queries.

The Portal has a UK-wide focus, and has been developed with a particular awareness of the lessons that can be learned by comparing the sector's differing developments in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and England. It also includes international works which provide useful comparisons with the situations around the UK. This growing, diverse and dynamic

collection should be of relevance to anyone working in or with the sector across the UK and beyond. We are particularly interested in preserving collections and publications at risk of being lost as austerity cuts deeply into the sector's support capacity. We are also committed to signposting and preserving other resources, such as charity and foundation archives, of use to the third sector and its research community.

The Portal is managed by Peter Lambert with support from Mary Somerville, Portal Assistant. Volunteers are used to maintain a steady input of new material. We acknowledge the enormous support provided by the British Library in the creation, development and expansion of this facility, and the dedicated funding provided by the Big Lottery Fund.

Capacity Building Clusters

The Third Sector Research Centre has also co-ordinated the work of three Capacity Building Clusters (CBCs) on Social Enterprise, Community Engagement, and Economic Impact. The CBCs help train future third sector researchers and give organisations an opportunity to work in partnership with academics. The CBCs offered:

- PhD CASE studentships - partner universities host PhD students, who work with third sector organisations on a project of mutual interest. This helps promote the exchange of knowledge, skills and research between academics and third sector organisations.
- Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP) - are long-term partnerships between researchers and third sector organisations. Researchers work directly with organisations, applying their skills and knowledge to important organisational problems and issues.
- Placements - the CBCs work with third sector organisations to exchange skills and knowledge through reciprocal placements. Practitioners spend time in a university or with academics to acquire new research skills and techniques; and academics and research students spend time in TSOs, gaining experience of the sector and building an understanding of their research needs.
- Vouchers - allow organisations to commission specific projects by academics, letting researchers to respond directly to the information needs of third sector organisations.

Social enterprise

Fergus Lyon at the University of Middlesex worked in partnership with colleagues at the University of Durham and London South Bank University to run the Social Enterprise CBC. The CBC trained researchers on social enterprise issues and developed links between social enterprises and academics.

Middlesex, Durham and London South Bank universities have worked with 36 third sector organisations to provide eight CASE PhD studentships, seven KTPs, 15 vouchers, and three three-month placements. The projects are social enterprise centric but have involved work on ethnic minority issues, environmental issues, housing and homelessness, cooperatives, employment, poverty particularly around childcare, impact measurement, and mapping social firms. The TSOs involved ranged from large well known charities such as CRISIS and RNIB to smaller less well known groups such as the Hour of Revival Association.

Active Citizenship and community engagement

Working in partnership with London Goldsmiths University and Manchester Metropolitan University, Zoraida Mendiwelso-Bendek from Lincoln University has led this research cluster, developing innovative approaches to community engagement and empowerment. The cluster has had a particular emphasis upon enabling the voices of the most disadvantaged groups to be heard effectively, as part of wider agenda for social change, social solidarity and social justice.

This CBC has worked with 30 third sector organisations to provide seven CASE PhD studentships, two KTPs, 15 vouchers and seven three-month placements. Projects have included topics such as citizenship, community cohesion and empowerment, education, devolution, rural engagement, sustainability, and gender participation. A number of faith and youth based organisations have been involved together with trade unions and voluntary councils.

Economic impact of the third sector

This capacity building cluster led by Sarah Smith at Bristol University, offered opportunities to develop partnership projects between third sector organisations (TSOs) and academics, focusing on economic impact.

The aim of these projects was to help organisations to assess the impact and value of what they do and to use data and analysis to improve service delivery.

This CBC has worked with 30 (TSOs) to provide six CASE PhD studentships, one KTP, 15 vouchers, and more than ten short and long-term placements. Much of the work has focused on how to evaluate and measure impact – including work with the South West Forum, Barclays Money Skills Programme, Tree Aid, Frank Water, Citizens' Advice Bureaux, Care Forum, Soberlink. Other projects have used data to gain new insights, including work with the Women's Resource Centre (on financial vulnerability) and with the Charities Aid Foundation (on generational patterns in giving).

Further details

The work of the CBCs and a full list of partners organisations, staff and students involved in this work can be found in reports on the websites of the participating universities at:

Bristol University: www.bris.ac.uk/cmpa/cbcluster

Middlesex University: www.mdx.ac.uk/research/business/ceedr/social/capacity_cluster.aspx

Lincoln University: www.takepartresearchcluster.org.



Reflections

This report contains a summary of the wide ranging research activities undertaken by TSRC. Here we reflect on the broader changes underpinning this work through an overview of some of the key challenges that TSRC faced at its inception, the progress we have made towards overcoming these, and the challenges ahead that we believe still remain to be faced.

The challenges we faced

Prior to the establishment of TSRC academic research on third sector issues in the UK was limited to the work of academics based primarily in social science departments or business schools in a relatively small number of universities. Some of these academics were operating within small research units or centres focusing on the third sector, although many were working alone, and co-ordination and support was mainly provided through the Voluntary Sector Studies Network. Much research activity took the form of short term projects funded by external agencies, often to evaluate particular policy or practice initiatives, and often without the time or resources to develop and analyse significant data sources to support this. There was no critical mass of specialist researchers working in the field, and no systematic training or career development to support the development of such a resource.

There were also small teams of practice based researchers in some of the larger third sector infrastructure agencies and charities; and NCVO had developed their Civil Society Almanac. However, these teams (sometimes only one individual) generally did not have the capacity or the resources to undertake

long-term or in-depth analysis, and did not have access to the detailed data and information sources that could underpin this. Their focus, understandably, was on providing topical and practical information for their members and stakeholders, rather than reflective and sophisticated research analysis.

Sources of reliable data on the third sector were under-developed and under-used. Organisational data (based on Charity Commission returns) was held by Guidestar UK; but that company went into administration in 2010 and this data was no longer available. Survey data was going to become available from the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations (NSTSO 2008), carried out by the OTS; but there was no capacity or skill base to analyse this potentially rich data source. Major national surveys providing information on individuals engaged in volunteering and employment had not been analysed from a third sector perspective. Statistical analysis of the sector was therefore limited in scope and scale. There was also no capacity to collect and analyse qualitative data on the experiences and dynamics of third sector organisations; and in particular longitudinal analysis of organisational development had not been undertaken as existing researchers did not have the resources or the expertise to undertake this.

Research on key issues in policy and practice was largely funded by policy makers or practice agencies, some of whom had an interest in the research questions to be explored and the findings that flowed from these. In the context of a rapidly changing policy context, there was relatively little independent research on the impact of these changes on the practice of third sector organisations, or on the public and private agencies with which they were working. The devolution of political power and policy making to the new administrations in

Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland had dramatically altered the policy environment for the third sector within the UK; but there had been no comparative analysis of the implications of these major political changes.

The progress we have made

TSRC has created teams of dedicated research staff at Birmingham and Southampton, who have become established as the leading researchers in the field within the UK. There is now a critical mass of qualified, experienced and committed third sector academic researchers based in the Centre. These researchers are now publishing in numerous academic and non-academic outlets, as well as presenting papers at conferences and seminars, and regularly uploading research findings as Working Papers on the TSRC website. They are disseminating their work to international, as well as national, audiences and are developing comparative analysis with international colleagues in other countries. The research careers of these staff are also developing as they move on to permanent academic posts or practice based research careers.

TSRC and its related Capacity Building Clusters have recruited and trained a significant number of PhD students working in the third sector field. Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, Placements and Research Vouchers have been used to underpin collaboration with practice-based researchers and to support the development of increased and improved capacity for practice-based research.

Partnerships have been developed to improve the data resources for research, for instance with the NCVO on the organisational data that now underpins their annual Civil Society Almanac as well as academic analysis conducted with TSRC. TSRC has established reliable sources of quantitative data on third sector organisations, based on extensive development of Charity Commission returns in England

and Wales. We now have a panel of observations of the financial returns submitted by registered charities in England and Wales from the mid-1990s onwards, and we have begun to extend this to charities in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and to other third sector organisational forms. A wide range of quantitative analysis has been undertaken on the NSTSO 2008, and the National Survey of Civil Society Organisations (NSCSO 2010) that followed it. Quantitative analysis of national surveys has explored patterns of volunteering and employment, and developed new understanding of patterns and dynamics in these. The reliable quantitative resources and sophisticated analytical skills that TSRC has developed have meant that robust analysis of statistical trends can now be provided for a variety of organisational and individual aspects of third sector policy and practice.

TSRC has established a major longitudinal qualitative research resource in Real Times, its case study based ethnography of third sector organisational dynamics. This has provided new insights into our understanding of organisational change over a critical period of economic and political development; and has been developed as a model for longitudinal qualitative analysis of organisational change within social science.

TSRC has developed independent analysis of some of the key policy and practice challenges facing the third sector in the UK, locating this within a broader analysis of the rapidly changing political and economic context, and underpinning it with the development of new theoretical and conceptual approaches to understanding the role of the sector. We have provided answers to, and developed understanding of, some of the key questions facing third sector organisations, including the impact of social enterprise, the role of third sector organisations in public service delivery, the scale and scope of activity 'below-the-radar', and the problems of measuring organisational performance. Comparative analysis of the new policy environments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland has revealed the changes in policy and practice that have flowed from devolution.

The challenges ahead

More work needs to be done to develop further our main quantitative and qualitative data sources, and to make these more widely available for further academic and policy focused research. Further development and analysis of our longitudinal data on charitable organisations in England and Wales will allow us to explore in more depth trends in charity structure and funding over two decades. Development and analysis of administrative data on charities from the registers in Scotland and Northern Ireland will allow us to compare trends across all four countries.

Development of new administrative databases on Co-operatives, Companies Limited by Guarantee and Community Interest Companies need to be linked to our charities data to compare trends across different legal forms within the sector. There is still much to be done to consolidate and further exploit organisational data on sector trends.

Further work needs to be done to analyse the quantitative data in major national surveys, including Understanding Society, the recently expanded national household panel survey, and the new Community Life Survey. For instance, quantitative analysis of volunteering can be compared to further qualitative research on the experiences and motivations of volunteers to provide in-depth understanding of how and why people volunteer.

Continuation of our qualitative research in Real Times could lead to unprecedented developments in longitudinal analysis of organisational dynamics over an extended time frame, which would permit us to track different organisational responses to the impact of austerity. Its scope could also be expanded to extend the focus of this to new and emerging forms of local social action, as policy interest increasingly focuses on these.

The third sector will continue to face challenging, and changing, times over the next few years, as we have outlined in the conclusions of our Futures Dialogue report, 'Unity in Diversity: what is the future of the third sector? Third Sector Futures Dialogue 2012-2013'. There is a continuing need for independent research on the implications and impact of these changes, drawing on robust and reliable longitudinal quantitative and qualitative data. Furthermore our understanding of third sector organisations in the UK needs to be set in the broader contexts of improved understanding of comparative developments in other similar countries, more reflection on the lessons that we can learn from history, and more sophisticated conceptual analysis of the role of the sector in wider debates about the future of Civil Society.

TSRC has made great progress in expanding the capacity for robust and independent research on the third sector in the UK. The data we have gathered and the knowledge and expertise we have developed provide the resources to answer many of the questions that will face policy makers and practitioners in the coming years. The need to address these questions, however, remains acute.

Afterword

The Third Sector Research Centre has been based at the Universities of Birmingham and Southampton over the period from 2008 to 2013, although it has also included contributions from Middlesex and Kent. However, over the last five years we have also benefitted from the contributions of a wide range of partners and supporters across the third sector academic, policy and practice communities. These include:

- our Advisory Board and Reference Groups, who have provided invaluable guidance on the development of our research programmes and have been excellent champions in disseminating and promoting our work.
- our TSRC Fellows who have included academics in other universities, visiting researchers from overseas, leading practitioners, independent policy researchers, and a number of retired (but active) academics and practitioners. All have worked collaboratively in different ways with our in-house researchers, and many have contributed to our published outputs.
- our volunteers, mainly based in Birmingham, who have undertaken research fieldwork and analysis under the supervision of our researchers, or have helped in the development of our Knowledge Portal.
- our partners, including the NCVO and Skills Third Sector, who have collaborated with us in securing data and analysing sector trends.
- the funders who have supported the wide range of additional research activity we have undertaken over the last five years, including the BIG Lottery fund, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the Department of Health and many more.
- the participants in our Futures Dialogue events, who engaged actively in the debates we arranged and helped to shape the conclusions and recommendations which flowed from these.
- our wider stakeholder communities who have signed up to our newsletter and twitter feeds, attended our many seminars and events, participated in our on-line question and answer forums, or more generally provided feedback and commentary on our work.

For a policy and practice focused research centre to be successful it needs the support and engagement of a wide range of research users in all aspects of its work. We are grateful for all the support we have had from all those who have an interest in our work and in securing the success of TSRC.

Glossary of Acronyms

ACEVO	Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations	ISBE	Institute of Small Business Enterprise
ARVAC	Association for Research in the Voluntary and Community Sector	KET	Knowledge Exchange Team
AURIL	Association for University Research and Industry Links	KTP	Knowledge Transfer Partnership
BCT	Barrow Cadbury Trust	LFS	Labour Force Survey
BHPS	British Household Panel Survey	NCRM	National Centre for Research Methods
BME	Black Minority Ethnic	NCVO	National Council for Voluntary Organisations
BRASS	Centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society	NESTA	National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts
BTR	Below the Radar	NICVA	Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
CBC	Capacity Building Cluster	NSTSO	National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises
CCR	Charities Commission Register	OCS	Office for Civil Society
CES	Charities Evaluation Services	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
CIC	Community Interest Company	OSCR	Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator
CGAP	Centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy	PMPA	Public Management Policy Association
CLG	Department for Communities and Local Government	SCVO	Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations
CMPO	Centre for Market and Public Organisation	SEC	Social Enterprise Coalition
CPD	Continuing Professional Development	SRA	Social Research Association
ECS	School of Electronics and Computer Science, University of Southampton	SROI	Social Return on Investment
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council	TSO	Third Sector Organisation
FSA	Financial Services Authority	TSRC	Third Sector Research Centre
GMCVO	Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisations	WCVA	Welsh Council for Voluntary Action
HACT	The Housing Action Charity	WERS	Workforce Employment Relations Survey
ICNPO	International Classification of Nonprofit Organisations		

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Governance

Advisory Board 2008 – 2013

A number of people were members of TSRC's Advisory Board over the five year period. The membership changed over time with people moving on as their roles and responsibilities changed. The list below includes those who took part for all or some of the time.

Anderson, Rosie	Community Matters
Bland, Jonathon	Social Enterprise Coalition
Bubb, Stephen	Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO)
Carr, Helen	Charity Commission
Chase, Nick	Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE)
Cleeveley, Nick	National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)
Coburn, John	Housing Associations Charitable Trust (HACT)
Cooke, Caroline	Charity Commission
Curley, Kevin	National Association of Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)
Danton, Katharine	Unltd
Deakin, Nicholas	Retired Academic
Edwards, Jennifer	ESRC
Ellis-Paine, Angela	Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR)
Gohil, Vandna	Voice4Change
Gregg, Andy	Charities Evaluation Services (CES)
Halfpenny, Peter	Editor, Voluntary Sector Review (VSR)
Harland, Jenny	Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG)
Harrow, Jenny	CGAP, CASS Business School, City University
Holbrook, Peter	Social Enterprise Coalition
Howlett, Steve	Association for Research in the Voluntary and Community Sector (ARVAC)
Hughes, Helen	Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA)
Hughes, Michael	Audit Commission
Johnson, Hayley	Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG)
Judge, Tim	Community Matters
Kazmi, Arjumand	Voice4Change England
Llewellyn, Sara	Barrow Cadbury Trust
Massey, Alex	Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO)
Matthews, Sam	Charities Evaluation Services (CES)
Mawson, John	Institute for Local Governance, University of Durham
Michelle, Ralph	Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO)
O'Beirne, Maria	Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG)
Ockenden, Nick	Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR)
Parker, Mark	British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres (bassac)
Paton, Rob	Open University
Paulson-Ellis, Catherine	Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)
Peattie, Ken (Chair)	Centre for Business, Relationships, Accountability and Society, (BRASS), Cardiff University
Petch, Heather	Housing Associations Charitable Trust (HACT)

Pharoah, Cathy	CGAP, CASS Business School, City University
Rowley, Christina	ESRC
Scott, Matthew	Community Sector Coalition
Smith, Sarah	Centre for Market and Public Organisation (CMPO), University of Bristol
Turner, Cheryl	Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)
Tyler, David	Community Matters
Westlake, Jackie	Departments of Communities and Local Government (CLG)
Wilding, Karl	National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)
Wilson, Tim	Charities Evaluation Services (CES)
Wright, Ben	Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations (CEMVO)
Chris Wyatt	ESRC
Wyler, Steve	Development Trusts Association (DTA)

Reference Groups 2008 – 2013

A number of people were members of TSRC's Reference Groups over the five year period. The membership changed over time with people moving on as their roles and responsibilities changed. The lists below include those who took part for all or some of the time.

Below the Radar

Randi Baden	Federation for Community Development Learning
Nick Beddow	Our Life
Sioned Churchill	Trust for London
Gary Craig	University of Durham
James Derounian	University of Gloucestershire
Chris Ford	Independent Consultant
Sarah Golden	Community Development Foundation
Margaret Harris	Aston University/Institute for Voluntary Action Research
Sarah Llewellyn	Barrow Cadbury Trust
Janice Marks	Federation for Community Development Learning
Sophie Marsden	Locality
Steve Miller	Faith Based Regeneration Network
Rachel Newton	Urban Forum
Nick Ockenden	Institute for Volunteering Research
Debbie Pippard	Barrow Cadbury Trust
Robin Simpson	Voluntary Arts
Neil Smith	Office for Civil Society
David Tyler	Community Matters
Joy Warmington	BRAP
Mandy Wilson	Independent Researcher
Mike Perry	Plunkett Foundation

Social Enterprise

Ash Amin,	Durham University (then Cambridge University)
Sarah J. Atkinson	Durham University
Carlo Borzaga	University of Trento
Miia Chambers	P3
Amitti Canagaretna	Dept of Health
Katharine Danton	UnLtd
Lea Estherhuizen	UnLtd
Melvyn Evans	Middlesex University
Hannah Garrad	UnLtd
John Goodman	Coops UK
Charles Jardine	London South Bank University
Ceri Jones	Social Enterprise UK
Eleonore Kofman	Middlesex University
Gordon Macleod	Durham University
Peter Maple	London South Bank University
Lidija Mavra	Social Enterprise Coalition
Stephen Miller	Unltd
Alex Murdock	London South Bank University
Craig Myers	Cabinet Office
Alex Nicholls	Oxford University
Marthe Nyssens	Catholic University of Louvain
Ken Peattie (Chair)	Centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society (BRASS), Cardiff University
Michele Rigby	Social Firms UK
Tamsyn Roberts	Cabinet Office
Daniel Shah	Social Enterprise Coalition (then BIS)
Stephen Syrett	Middlesex University
Ian Vickers	Middlesex University
Kate Welch	Acumen

Service Delivery

Stephen Bubb	Associate of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO)
David Clark	National Audit Office
John Coburn	Housing Action Charity (HACT)
Caroline Cooke	Charity Commission
Julie Harris	Barnardo's
Michael Hughes	Audit Commission
Richard Johnson	the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations
Ben Jupp	Social Finance
Mark Lovell	A4E
Ralph Michel	ACEVO/OCS
Rob Murdoch	A4E
Denise Platt	Committee on Standards in Public Life
Victor Pestoff	Ersta Skondal University College
Rob Prideaux	National Audit Office
Philippa Simkiss	Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)
Gavin Smart	National Housing Federation

Sarah Smith	Centre for Market and Public Organisations (CMPO)
Matthew Thomson	London Community Recycling Network
John Tizard	Independent Consultant
Jeremy Vincent	Department for Communities and Local Government

Scotland

Pat Armstrong	Association of Chief Officers of Scottish Voluntary Organisation
Kay Barclay	Scottish Government
Eleanor Burt	University of St Andrews
Philomena de Lima	University of the Highlands and Islands
Colin Lindsay	Edinburgh Napier University
Colin Mair	Improvement Services
Louise Meikleham	Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator
Julieanne Murphy	Scottish Government
Stephen Osborne	University of Edinburgh
Ruchir Shah	Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations
Eleanor Shah	University of Strathclyde
Antonia Swinson	Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition

Wales

Dave Adamson	University of Glamorgan
Celine Chew	Social Enterprise, Cardiff
Bryan Collis	Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Graham Day	Bangor University
Paul Dear	Communities First Unit
Bella Dicks	Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods, Cardiff
Angela Evans	Office of the Chief Social Researcher
Paul Milbourne	Wales Rural Observatory
Elin Royales	Aberystwyth University
Alun Taylor	Coalfield Regeneration Trust
Iain Willox	Welsh Government

Northern Ireland

Nicholas Acheson	University of Ulster
Stephen Bloomer	Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
Ann Graham	Social Economy Network
Frances McCandless	Charity Commission for Northern Ireland
Majella McCloskey	Chief Officers 3rd Sector
Stephen MacDonald	Social Economy Policy Group, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
Roy McGivern	Voluntary and Community Sector Unit, Department of Social Development
Gillian Robinson	University of Ulster, ARK
Bill Smith	Queen's University Belfast
Arthur Williamson	University of Ulster

Staffing

1 September 2008 – 31 August 2013

Director	Pete Alcock (Birmingham)
Deputy Director	John Mohan (Southampton)
Centre Manager	Catherine Butt (Birmingham)

University of Birmingham Researchers

Name	Tenure	Current situation
Alcock Peter	2008-2013	University of Birmingham (TSRC)
Bovaird Tony	2008-2013	University of Birmingham
Buckingham Heather	2010-2013	University of Birmingham (TSRC)
Dickinson Helen	2008-2012	University of Melbourne
Ellis-Paine Angela	2011-2013	University of Birmingham (TSRC)
Harlock Jenny	2013	University of Birmingham
Mason Paul	2008	GHK Consulting
Macmillan Rob	2008-2013	University of Birmingham (TSRC)
McCabe Angus	2008-2013	University of Birmingham (TSRC)
McKay Stephen	2008-2013	University of Lincoln (TSRC)
Metcalfe Lindsay	2013	Liverpool John Moore's University
Millar Ross	2011-2012	University of Birmingham
Miller Robin	2011-2013	University of Birmingham (HSMC/TSRC)
Moro Domenico	2010-2013	Birmingham City University
Mullins David	2008-2013	University of Birmingham
Phillimore Jenny	2008-2013	University of Birmingham
Rees James	2011-2013	University of Birmingham (TSRC)
Soteri-Proctor Andri	2009-2013	Independent
Taylor Rebecca	2009-2013	University of Birmingham (TSRC)
Teasdale Simon	2009-2013	Glasgow Caledonian University

University of Southampton Researchers

Name	Tenure	Current situation
Arvidson Malin	2009-2013	Lund University, Sweden
Barnard Steve	2012-2013	University of Southampton
Bennett Matthew	2012-2013	University of Birmingham
Bolton Vicki	2013	University of Southampton
Brookfield Katherine	2013	University of Southampton
Bruce Katie	2010-2012	Independent
Bulloch Sarah	2010-2013	SCOPE
Büchs Milena	2009-2103	University of Southampton
Buckingham Heather	2010	University of Southampton
Clifford David	2009-2012	University of Southampton
Driessens Corinne	2013	University of Southampton (TSRC)
Edwards Rebecca	2009-2011	Bournemouth University
Geyne-Rajme Frida	2010-2012	Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, Mexico
Gojkovic Dina	2009-2011	University of Southampton
Halford Susan	2010-2012	University of Southampton
Hinton Emma	2012-2013	University of Southampton
Kapend Richard	2013	University of Southampton (TSRC)
Leonard Pauline	2010-2012	University of Southampton
Lindsey Rose	2011-2013	University of Southampton
McCulloch Andrew	2009-2011	Independent
Meek Rosie	2009-2011	University of Teeside/Royal Holloway
Mills Alice	2009-2011	University of Auckland, NZ
Mohan John	2008-2013	University of Birmingham (TSRC)
Parry Jane	2011-2013	Independent
Pinch Steven	2009-2011	University of Southampton
Smith Graham	2009-2012	Westminster University
Smith Peter	2008-2013	University of Southampton
Staestky Laura	2009	University of Southampton
Sunley Peter	2009-2011	University of Southampton
Tabassum Faiza	2013	University of Southampton (TSRC)

Middlesex University Researchers

Name	Tenure	Current situation
Lyon Fergus	2008-2013	Middlesex University
Sepulveda Leandro	2008-2013	Middlesex University

University of Kent Researchers

Name	Tenure	Current situation
Kendall Jeremy	2008-2013	University of Kent

Knowledge Exchange, Communications and Impact team (London)

Name	Tenure	Current situation
Landau Naomi	2009-2013	South America – Brazil/Columbial (TEFL)
Shariff Razia	2009-2013	Canterbury University (Masters student)

Knowledge Portal

Name	Tenure	Current situation
Lambert Peter	2010 -	Big Lottery funded to 2014
Somerville Mary	2011 -	Big Lottery funded to 2014

Support Staff

Name	Inst.	Role	Tenure	Current situation
Berridge Rebecca	Bham	Secretary/PA	2009-2013	Teacher training
Butt Catherine	Bham	Centre Manager	2009-2013	Birmingham (TSRC)
Cooper Rachel	Soton	Finance Manager	2010-2013	Southampton
Elvins Nicki	Soton	Personal Assistant	2010-2013	Independent
Rivers Ellie	Soton	Publication Assistant	2010-2013	Independent

TSRC Research Fellows 2008-2013 —

Researchers from a variety of backgrounds have gained formal status as TSRC Fellows. They have benefitted from collaboration, advice, and support from the Centre's academics and staff. Our fellows have come from a variety of backgrounds – from academics in honorary or active associate capacities, to independent researchers, third sector practitioners, and policy-makers.

Research Fellows Area of Interest

Acheson, Nick	Services Delivery/Theory and Policy/SE	Mavra, Lidija	Social Enterprise
Anderson, Rosie	Below the Radar	Mayblin, Lucy	Below the Radar/BME
Bassel, Leah	Below the Radar	McKay, Stephen	Quantitative Analysis
Buckingham, Heather	Social Enterprise (and others)	McLaren, Vic	Evidence Review
Collis, Bryan	Theory and Policy	Meek, Rosie	Service Delivery (Criminal Justice)
Conn, Eileen	Below the Radar	Millar, Ross	Social Enterprise
Cornforth, Christopher	Real Times	Miller, Robin	Social Enterprise
Cotton, Peter	Below the Radar	Mills, Alice	Service Delivery (Criminal Justice)
Craig, Gary	BME	Minora, Francesco	Service Delivery (Housing)
Derounian, James	Below the Radar	Moore, Tom	Service Delivery
Dey, Pascal	Social Enterprise	Munoz, Sarah-Anne	Social Enterprise
Dickinson, Helen	Service Delivery (Heath and Social Care)	Murdock, Alex	Social Enterprise
Dobbs, Joy	Quantitative Analysis	Nicholls, Alex	Social Enterprise
Doherty, Bob	Social Enterprise	Orlandini, Matteo	Theory and Policy
Donegari, Chiara	Workforce/Economic Impact	Parameshwaran, Meenakshi	Quantitative Analysis
Emejulu, Akwugo	Below the Radar	Parry, Jane	Theory and Policy
Gill, Ben	Service Delivery (Housing)	Piacentini, Teresa	Below the Radar/BME
Grenier, Paola	Social Enterprise	Randall, Adrian	Below the Radar
Hall, Kelly	Social Enterprise	Richardson, Mark	Social Enterprise
Jones, Patricia	Service Delivery	Rickhoff-Fischer, Iris	Workforce
Kara, Helen	Social and Economic Impact (SROI)	Ryder, Andrew	Below the Radar/BME
Keech, Dan	Environment and Social Enterprise	Sacranie, Halima	Service Delivery (Housing)
Kerlin, Janelle	Social Enterprise	Scott, Duncan	Real Times
Kythreotis, Andrew	Environment	Shah, Ruchir	Quantitative Analysis
Lang, Richard	Service Delivery (Housing)	Ware, Phil	Below the Radar
Larkin, Mary	Service Delivery (Health)	Westall, Andrea	Economic and Social Impact
Sonia, Liff	Below the Radar	Whitworth, Adam	Service Delivery (Employment services)
		Wilding, Karl	Quantitative Analysis
		Wincott McGrath, Chloe	Service Delivery (Health)

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