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**Social Innovation in Poor Places**

**Organizational and Institutional Work in  
Developing and Sustaining an Entrepreneurial  
Third Sector Organization**

**Context Statement  
for the award of**

**Doctorate in Professional Studies by Public Works**

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**August 2012**

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Keystone is built on upon the goodwill and contributions of numerous stakeholders, academic partners and funding bodies that have enabled us to adapt and innovate. Many thanks.

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Finally, I would like to thank Dr Kate Maguire and the team at the Institute of Work Based Learning, Middlesex University, firstly for developing an innovative programme that provides an opportunity to reflect critically and further develop professional practice. Secondly, they have provided a challenging, deeply committed and reflective supervisor; Kate, thank you for your belief and support.

## The Public Work

The public work submitted for the award of a Doctorate in Professional Studies is *Keystone Development Trust*, as an organization and portfolio of socio-economic interventions. While Keystone is presented as the overarching public work, a range of public works that support the submission are presented in evidence such as publications and innovative projects. Therefore, my claim is based on:

- i. An organization is a public work
- ii. Demonstrable outcomes of an organization are public works
- iii. Entrepreneurial third sector organizations span community, public and market institutional logics and are sites of experimentation, creativity and learning which informs future practice
- iv. While organizations are co-created through the interplay of context, ideas and individual and collective action, to create an organization in a poor, rural context required that I was at the 'leading edge' of professional practice that included:
  - Reinterpreting, transforming and translating knowledge in a new context
  - Dissemination of new knowledge and approaches in the creation of the public work through publications, consultancy practice and engagement in policy and practitioner forums.

My central claim is that to build an organization that simultaneously delivers social impact and financial sustainability requires continual organizational and institutional work at the individual, organizational, community and societal levels. This is demonstrated through a retrospective framework that combines:

- i. Critiquing and reconceptualizing the institutions that frame the development trust and social enterprise models
- ii. An overview and reflections on the journey of organizational and institutional work in developing and sustaining the public work; an entrepreneurial third sector organization
- iii. An overview and reflection on supporting evidence, including the following public works:
  - a. Trust documents
  - b. Publications (sole and co-authored)

c. Consultancy reports

d. Films

e. Projects.

In retrospect, as Chapter 2 reflects, my journey is one of contending with personal and professional paradoxical tensions. In Chapter 3 the public work is presented within a framework that reflects the key phases in Keystone's organizational development:

- Framing and forming 2003
- Entrepreneurial foundations 2004-07
- Approaching sustainability 2007-10
- Innovation within austerity 2010-12

Chapter 4 provides concluding reflections on the public work.

# 1. Introduction

In 2003, when appointed Chief Executive of a new development trust charged with delivering holistic solutions to entrenched social problems *and* achieving financial sustainability through enterprise (rather than public subsidy) within three years, I was immediately struck by a dilemma which has challenged and driven me ever since: *how is it possible in a poor place?* While delivering a major public funded programme was the pressing priority, I was acutely aware that a flood of public monies did not necessarily result in sustainable organizations or community infrastructure when regeneration schemes ended. Moreover, relatively short ‘big bang’ programmes rarely lived up to the transformation claims made at project inception (Stott, M.<sup>1</sup> et al. 2009). Twenty years as a community development manager and practitioner had taught me that making a difference in poor places required relationships forged over time through interventions that mattered to local people. I was determined that the new Trust would be in it for the long haul, although at the time I was not entirely sure how. Furthermore I was concerned that policy and practitioner discourses on development trusts, social entrepreneurship and social enterprise were heavy on rhetoric and messianic fervour, but short on a critical understanding and practical solutions to the dilemma (Stott, 2005).

Keystone Development Trust<sup>2</sup> was established in the Thetford area to be the successor of a public sector led regeneration partnership midway through a Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) programme and integral to a bid for European Objective 2 (EO2) funding. The area faced entrenched deprivation, predominantly due to the legacy of massive social housing programmes (London overspill) and changes to the rural economy.<sup>3</sup> Following visits to flagship trusts, the Partnership Board had been persuaded by influential actors that the model of a not-for-profit organization aiming to achieve social and economic regeneration through creating wealth and opportunity, keeping returns within the community and being owned and managed by the community, would be a sustainable option. The legal form of trusts varies, and in Keystone’s case a charitable company had been established.

On arrival, I found a complex, messy situation with competing demands and little clarity or consensus on organizational objectives or how to achieve them (KDT, 2003a). As Weick

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<sup>1</sup> For clarification, I am referenced as ‘Stott’. ‘Stott, M.’ is a co-author of a number of the public works.

<sup>2</sup> Registered as Keystone Community Partnership; the name was changed to Keystone Development Trust as part of the process described in Chapter 3.

<sup>3</sup> See *Keystone Community Profile* (2005) <http://www.keystonetrust.org.uk/common/pdfs/keystoneprofile2ndedition.pdf>

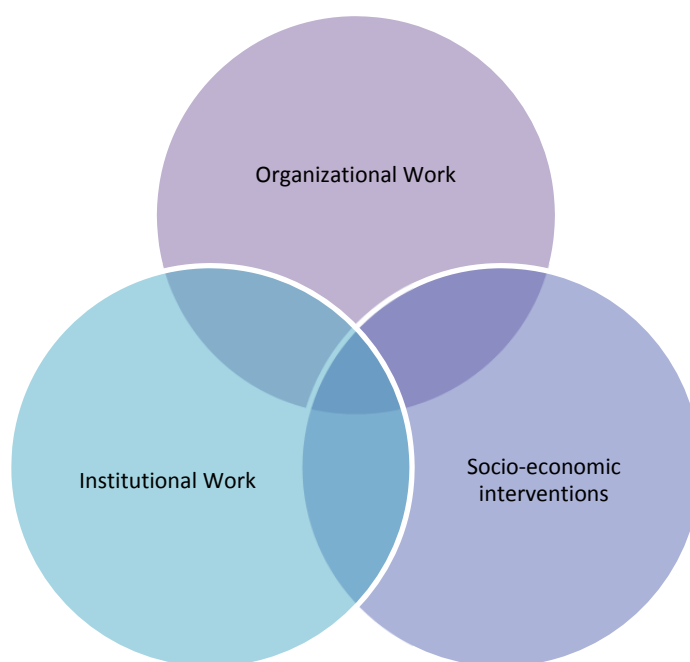
(1985) suggests, making sense of a mess requires making connections and formulating the problems. What appeared most urgent threatened to overshadow reflection and the sense making process – not least financial over commitment; collapse of proposed capital projects and taking on accountable status. The immediate delivery of significant programmes with punishing timescales had to be achieved within a new organization bereft of policy and procedures. There were major staff issues and complex governance arrangements to contend with. Public disquiet on its predecessor's performance and confusion around future intentions also added to the mix; an away day participant described the Trust as 'over promised and under delivering' (KDT, 2003a). Moreover, I got the impression that public partners perceived the Trust as a means to continue channelling resources to their projects; a 'front' rather than a social innovator. However, it was the model which increasingly concerned me.

For Moulaert et al., social innovation combines the satisfaction of human needs, changes in social relations, increasing socio-political capacity, access to resources and empowerment (2005: 1976). The premise of the development trust model was rooted in the idea that, given state and market failure in poor places, social innovation was best achieved through integrated bottom up interventions across multiple domains (such as housing, health, economy and education). Ontologically it resonated with my experience, but simultaneously delivering social impact and sustaining it through wealth creation appeared a particularly challenging paradoxical problem riddled with potential tensions around governance, focus, organization, delivery, reception and what, if anything, could be sustained. Luscher and Lewis argue that in sense making driven by organizational change, managers need to provide 'workable certainty' to avoid confusion, stress and paralysis (2008: 221). For most partners, Trustees and staff, the workable certainty was focusing on managing programme delivery in the 'traditional' style: deliver projects until the monies runs out and bid for more of the same. Finding order, making change, delivering quality services and following the 'poverty pound' elsewhere when the public money dried up in 2007 was an option, but not one that I felt comfortable with. Instead, I embarked on a 'dog with a bone' strategy to problematize and make sense of the model which Smallbone et al. (2001) portrayed as having the *potential* to generate an innovative synthesis.

Reflecting on the experience of creating a public work, *Keystone Development Trust*, my approach to social innovation combined mutually reinforcing organizational work, institutional work and socio-economic interventions. Institutions are formal and informal constructs which inform, shape or regulate individual and organizational behaviour such as rules, laws, codes, habits and expectations; for Scott, institutions provide 'stability and



meaning to social life' (2008: 48). Organizations are groups of actors structured to achieve certain objectives within boundaries 'that foster distinctions and dichotomies' (Smith and Lewis, 2011: 388). *Institutional work* is 'the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions' (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006: 215). Following Lawrence and Suddaby, *organizational work* can be characterized as the purposive action of individuals and groups aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting organizations. *Socio-economic interventions* are the projects and activities delivered by organizations for their beneficiaries to fulfil organizational mission.



**Figure 1.1: Mutually reinforcing work**

In choosing what to do, how, with whom and within what timescale, organizing creates tensions and competing institutional and organizational demands. Tensions may be tackled by treating them as a puzzle, dilemma, trade-off or a paradox. As a *puzzle*, tensions need to be better understood and an optimal solution found. A *dilemma* usually has two possible incompatible solutions therefore a choice has to be made. In a *trade-off* approach, there are numerous potential solutions and the ideal is to find a balance between conflicting pressures. In a paradox, opposite positions appear equally valid *and* apparently incompatible, but both have to be managed or reconciled. There are no answers but contingent 'innovative reconciliations' (De Wit and Meyer, 2004: 2004: 15). From a paradox perspective organizations face increasing complexity, diversity, rapid change and conflicting demands which need to be attended to simultaneously to achieve long term sustainability. Lewis argues that organizations are inherently paradoxical and 'embroiled in

tensions' (2000: 760). Smith and Lewis (2011) identify four categories of paradoxes: learning, belonging, organizing and performing. Learning paradoxes arise through change and tensions between the old and new – 'a struggle between the comfort of the past and the uncertainty of the future' (Lewis, 2000: 766). Belonging paradoxes are tensions of identity between individuals, groups and the collective. Control or flexibility are central to organizing paradoxes, while performing paradoxes 'stem from the plurality of stakeholders...and competing strategies and goals' (Smith and Lewis, 2011: 384). Performing tensions are created when choosing what to do. Organizing tensions stem from decisions how to operate. Belonging tensions arise from who does what and learning tensions from timing.

The public work presented for the award of Doctorate in Professional Studies chart a personal and organizational journey attempting to problematize, understand, communicate and overcome the paradoxical tensions inherent in the dual goals of social and wealth creation enshrined in the organizational purpose of development trusts (Stott, 2005; Stott and Tracey, 2007). The doctorate provides an opportunity to reflect on my sustained contribution through the conceptual lens of institutional work and the organizational work literatures as well as a paradox perspective on approaching organizational tensions. Confronting the paradoxical tensions facing a new trust and undertaking organizational and institutional work to simultaneously tackle competing demands and deliver innovative interventions, frames the work presented here.

The social entrepreneurial literature often privileges the role of heroic individuals or organizations. Social heroes are often credited with shaman like powers to conjure socially valuable innovations and assume the status of 'thought leaders' (O'Conner, 2006: 80). The value and virtue of third sector organizations are often assumed merely by adding 'social' or 'community'. I make no such claim for myself or the Trust I manage, tempting as it may be (Stott, 2004). Zietsma and McKnight's work on the processes involved in the *co-creation* of institutions which include 'ongoing negotiations, experimentation, competition and learning' (2009: 145) provides a useful framework for reflection on the public works. Organizations are also co-created and not purely the product of individual leaders or managers, rather the complex interplay of organizational context, ideas and individual and collective action of internal and external stakeholders. Indeed, co-creation is a central motif of my approach to tackling the paradoxes facing the Trust and in the creation of the public work.

With the Trust almost a decade old and facing new challenges, I thought the Doctorate in Professional Studies would provide an opportunity to reflect on the influences and learning

prior to joining as well as reflecting on the experience of tackling the paradoxical tensions the Trust faces. The following chapter explores my experience before joining Keystone and how it contributed to my development and thinking. Chapter 3 critically examines Keystone as a public work and the concluding chapter provides a critical reflection on the public works.

## **2. Public Entrepreneurship: Negotiating between policing and pirating**

On joining Keystone I was eager to lead an organization and apply the experience and learning from twenty years of practising and managing community development, but somewhat daunted by having to achieve an organizational mission through developing entrepreneurial activities. I considered myself as a reasonably effective *public* entrepreneur in the sense of risk taking, securing legitimacy and resources to achieve community development goals within local authorities, but having no business experience, not as a *social* entrepreneur. On reflection, my personal and organizational journey had equipped me better than I had thought.

On leaving Canterbury City Council in 2003, the Head of Legal Services opined that there were two types of people in organizations: pirates and police. The latter provided order and played by the rules; the former created chaos and broke (or least bent) rules. ‘At first,’ he continued, ‘I thought you were a pirate, now I realise you are both’. I suspect most are, to a greater or lesser extent, who are engaged in the institutional and organizational work of creating, maintaining *and* disrupting simultaneously. However, his statement captured the tensions I felt inherent in practising and managing community development within organizations as well as my own approach and character; not least enjoying the fluidity and risks of change making while wanting to order messy organizations or create boundaries to behaviour. According to Mason, public entrepreneurs in the public sector are ‘rare animals’ and an anti-entrepreneurial attitude ‘could well contribute to, and explain, lack of achievement in public bodies’ (2006: 49). Mason identifies characteristic behaviours of a public entrepreneur:<sup>4</sup> risk taking; divergent thinking; focus; personal responsibility and learning from experience (ibid). I would argue that personal responsibility, an ‘internal locus of control’ (ibid: 50), and accountability coupled with coherent values are of particular importance.

Making sense and then organizing change within complex contexts, supporting others in doing so, had been central to my career, as had a passionate commitment to public service, community development values as well as somewhat thinly disguised anger in the face of poverty, inequality and exploitation. Trying to make a difference and holding to an ethic of reciprocity (‘do to others as you would have others do to you’) had been guiding principles

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<sup>4</sup> Although Mason prefers ‘public innovator’ to overcome ‘negative connotations’ of entrepreneurship (2006: 49).

since volunteering in a Dr Barnardo's home, resettling children from the 'mental handicap' hospitals in the late 1970s. A visit to a hospital and witnessing the impact of an exclusionary total institution (Goffman, 1961) on children who then blossomed in a caring environment made the injustices I detected in society tangible. Inspired by the commitment of the Barnardo's staff who patiently re-socialized damaged children, *doing* felt as important as *thinking* about issues. My grammar school privileged public service, leadership and team work; preparation for establishment leadership roles. While internalizing much of the ethos, since turning down a place at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (awarded at 16), I had begun to challenge norms, behaviours and authority; teenage arrogance tinged with early sociological instincts to understand *why* rather than accept received wisdom.<sup>5</sup>

Subsequent political activity and early community work experiences led me to believe that maintaining compassion and commitment was of equal importance as career building. Too much distance from the people and places I served in could lead to complacency and policy solutions not grounded in the everyday experience of challenged communities. Taking the course of least resistance did not feel like an option; working with people and communities was never easy, tidy or always successful and took time and stamina. So did persuading organizations to invest in painstaking, long-term work that engaged, politicized and might challenge the organization, rather than quick fix projects or punitive social policy. Being a thorn inside the organization felt a virtue as a community development practitioner rather than an adult version of 'oppositional defiance disorder', as a social worker colleague once suggested.<sup>6</sup> As virtues can rapidly become vices and personal history can veer towards hagiography, reflexivity is crucial. While the challenges and associated tensions I have faced remain relatively consistent over time (some depressingly so, such as persistent poverty or racism) as well as the context (predominantly poorer places) and community development techniques, I have attempted to constantly learn, reflect and act; crucially, challenging my own assumptions as well as others in an attempt to problematize, crystallize, apply and refine community interventions.

I began community work during a placement year during my BA Peace Studies degree, developing an unemployment centre. Following graduation I ran a community centre in Kings Cross and projects for Mencap, Elfrida Rathbone and Contact-a-Family, with

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<sup>5</sup> To the chagrin of my teachers I moved from being an exemplary Deputy Head Boy, senior cadet NCO, etc, to what one school report described as 'barrack room lawyer' and 'thinks he is more able than he actually is', followed by suspension: an early lesson in how non-conformity has consequences within organizations.

<sup>6</sup> 'Oppositional defiant disorder is a pattern of disobedient, hostile, and defiant behavior toward authority figures'. US National Library of Medicine, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0002504/> Accessed 22/3/12.

children and young people with special needs while volunteering with an ex-offenders charity and *Undercurrents*, a radical environmental magazine. I was attracted to localized interventions with stigmatized groups and unpopular issues. I was particularly influenced by Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid* (1939) and *Field, Factories and Workshops Tomorrow* (1974), Sale's *Human Scale* (1980) and non-statist traditions such as social anarchism, guild socialism and the cooperative movement. The community development ethos of starting where people were and working on issues important to them, however mundane, building solidarity and political skills, appealed.

A key issue at the time was the integration of the 'mentally handicapped' into mainstream organizations and communities. Resistance to change was strong, particularly within host organizations that benefited from segregation and influential parents within governance structures. I rapidly learnt three key lessons. Firstly, hosts may articulate a community development ethos of 'bottom up', but actually adopt a directive 'top down' approach to meet organizational rather than community objectives. Secondly, community workers with overt political agendas or low tolerance to frustration could become manipulative when baulked. This lesson was reinforced later in a community development team in Cambridge, some of whose ideology on how women should be politicized and on what to focus (challenging patriarchy) got in the way of what local women actually wanted to achieve (removing dog faeces from parks). Although tempted, I felt being a community worker was a privileged and relatively powerful position; if the urge to impose ideas or order was not checked, it was both an abuse of power and did not actually facilitate lasting change. Thirdly, resistance to change within organizations or communities was underpinned by fear: fear of the unknown, losing power, resources or control (Stott and Longhurst, 2011). Just because a change was rational, could bring future benefits or just was not necessarily sufficient to overcome such fears. Whether a change agenda was from the top or bottom, unless participants perceived a 'workable certainty' (Luscher and Lewis, 2008: 221), no amount of directives or cajoling would work.

Working in the Community Development Service at Cambridge City Council (1987-2000) I believe I made a significant, if relatively localized, contribution to practice, the organization and communities served. I learnt that community development is an inherently challenging activity and surprisingly difficult to do well. It focuses on 'empowerment' and recognizing that some have access to resources, opportunity, skills and capacity and others do not. Communities were not just places, but were also about

identity and interest; people belonged to multiple communities (Stott, M. et al., 2009: 18).<sup>7</sup> Communities were messy, cacophonous and conflicted; there were myriad voices, needs and issues; it was relatively rare for communities I worked in (rather than a few ‘leaders’) to crystallize around shared needs and issues and take action. Communities tended to be based on loose or ad hoc connections of place, friendship or activities (Brint, 2001). When it occurred, convergence was usually to confront a direct threat. Community development done well was a *patient strategy* as it requires time, perseverance and a willingness to listen and make changes by the sponsor agency. Building relationships and trust through commitment, empathy and delivering on promises was crucial within the council and communities. Personal qualities and the ability to connect with anyone were equally as important as professional knowledge. Community development was a *political strategy* recognizing that change requires collective action, and on occasions those with power and influence do not like to share (Stott, 2009).

Within a local authority, to deliver interventions that target what communities actually want rather than others feel they need, practitioners have to engage in constant organizational and institutional work. Bauman argues the state presides over distinctions of order/chaos, law/lawlessness, belonging/exclusion and useful/useless (2004: 33); the ‘gardener’ state converts and cultivates ‘wild’ people, culture and places (1987: 67). This ‘gardening’ tendency permeates councils. Institutional norms, codes and rules privilege certain behaviours in public discourse and decision making, as well as professional knowledge and solutions. The ‘wild’ people and places, predominantly social housing, are viewed as the ‘other’, subject to a panoptical gaze and control interspersed with missionary efforts to improve and ‘behave in an orderly fashion in a well-ordered society’ (Bauman, 1998: 84). From the institutional logics perspective, the state is as an institutional order alongside market, religion, family, professions and corporation with distinct sources of legitimacy, authority, control mechanisms and strategy. Institutional orders shape and are shaped by individuals and organizations. Institutional orders within an inter-institutional system cohabit, compete and conflict. For Thornton et al., community is also an institutional order (2012: 73). Marquis and Battilana (2007) argue that community influence on organizations has been underestimated in institutional theory. Thornton et al. suggest that communities are the ‘mediators of performance and growth’ and a potential

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<sup>7</sup> Community is a contested term and hard to define. Common usage stresses the positive and normative assumptions around cohesion, stability and behaviour; that transgression can lead to exclusion or worse is often ignored. For a full discussion see Stott, M. et al., 2009.

alternative to extant organizations (2012: 70).<sup>8</sup> However, the institutions of poorer places and communities and the local state not only conflict, but the resources available to resist, mediate or create alternatives are often, in my experience, limited or at least latent.

The ‘top down’ gardening tendencies of the local state and ‘bottom up’ philosophy of community development practitioners make uncomfortable bedfellows. Even though they are on the institutional and organizational periphery, as ‘embedded actors’, community development practitioners have conflicting institutional logics to local authorities and their constituent professions. Institutional logics are ‘socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs and rules (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999: 804). They provide coherent guidelines for action (Besharov and Smith, n.d). There is an inherent tension in being an agent of the local state and a community worker; indeed, some believe it an untenable position and part of the problem, not the solution.

In 1989, the Association of Metropolitan Authorities’ *Community Development: The Local Authority Role* made a valiant attempt to promote an enabling, not just servicing, logic to communities, focusing on institutional and organizational concerns,<sup>9</sup> in other words enhancing existing institutions and organizations to enable the excluded to benefit (Marti and Mair, 2009) while strengthening local state legitimacy. In my view, a community oriented ‘public entrepreneur’<sup>10</sup> potentially has access to resources unavailable to third sector colleagues; negotiates both contexts; can balance competing demands and makes a significant impact. This entails integrating both logics into one’s repertoire (Besharov and Smith, n.d). Lacking material resources initially, practitioners employ cultural tools and social relationships to confront, challenge, amend or ameliorate institutions, social or organizational practices (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008). Given that a dominant institutional logic in local authorities is a democratic process and community development practitioners occupy numerous social locations, mobilizing community actors to ‘reinterpret and manipulate prevailing symbols and practices’ (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008: 115) is a pragmatic strategy. Following Tracey, this institutional and organizational persuasion incorporates community building (shared identity), ‘strategic use of emotion’ (compassion and empathy) and ‘strategic use of theatre’ (spectacle) (2012: 6).

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<sup>8</sup> This is an important insight in the context of the recent policy emphasis on localism and Big Society volunteerism. Leaving the financial imperative to one side, encouraging communities to organise services could fundamentally alter the relationship between community and state.

<sup>9</sup> This paper and *Local Authorities and Community Development: A Strategic Opportunity in the 1990s* (AMA, 1993) heavily influenced my approach to working with a local authority and provided conceptual frameworks that colleagues and I used to develop and grow the Cambridge service. Although dated, they remain pertinent. I still use their model of the crucial differences between public information, consultation and participation in local authorities today.

<sup>10</sup> Not a term I would have used at the time.



Insights that, in retrospect, underpinned much of my future work occurred while attempting to set up yet another committee of young parents to run much needed childcare provision on a working class estate. Being cash poor, mainstream provision was unaffordable. To achieve legitimacy and resources, local governance was essential. Moreover, it was a community development tenet that people should self-organize to develop skills and capacity for engaging with power structures. Even with support, to set up and maintain the provision required substantial voluntary time from women who were time poor, juggling family responsibilities with low-paid jobs. It struck me that while middle-class people paid for others to organize services, working class communities were expected to organize their own to access public largesse or be heard (Stott and Longhurst, 2010: 104).

The Council determined the norms of engagement and legitimized collectives that fitted or mirrored its own governance, priorities and timescales (in particular, relatively short political horizons) to create order through accommodation and assimilation.<sup>11</sup> While empowerment and collective action were important to make lasting change, ‘bottom up’ approaches that purely extended the reach of the local state were not necessarily challenging power structures or meeting a need. I came to the conclusion that ‘doing for’ communities was a valid middle way strategy, as long as it was rooted in needs articulated by the target communities and a means to an end, not an end in itself. For instance, if childcare was a necessity to enable work, why spend months setting it up when it was ‘bread and butter’ to a community worker? Securing income for poorer households was surely more important than deferring to the isomorphic pressures of advocates of pure ‘bottom up’ community development. Young and Willmott’s seminal 1957 community study referred to a ‘springboard’ approach, facilitating activities as means to deliver immediate interventions and opportunities for future engagement which resonated and I incorporated it into organizational practice at Cambridge, Canterbury and Keystone. Not immune from frustration, wanting to force the pace of change or engage in bigger issues than dog fouling, I found the springboard approach demonstrated new opportunities to communities, identified potential activists and proved to be a catalyst for change. The second conclusion was the need to experiment with more innovative forms of engagement in order to; reach people who had neither the time nor the inclination to participate in traditional structures; and embrace the messiness and cacophony of communities and challenge institutional norms.

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<sup>11</sup> Examples include tenants committees, youth councils and neighbourhood committees.

Two innovations that had particular impact and demonstrated a combination of institutional and organizational work with social interventions (as well as the strategic use of emotions and theatre) are the Racial Harassment Public Inquiry and Young Person's Citizen Jury on which I worked as a Principal Officer (Community Services) in the late 1990s. The motivation was to generate political and public legitimacy for change. I had recently taken on the management of the Racial Harassment Service, which was experiencing an upsurge in complaints but was not dealing effectively with them. The Citizen's Jury emerged from engagement with young people in the community centres and neighbourhood services I managed. I led the Public Inquiry process and coordinated the Citizen's Jury with the Assistant Chief Executive. The former attempted to combine the more traditional planning inquiry or social commission approach, where political leaders take evidence from experts and groups representing black and minority communities, with evidence gathered from individuals through focus groups, interviews and questionnaires. The latter turned the model on its head with young people hearing evidence from adults, deliberating and making recommendations.

The Inquiry was a conscious attempt to challenge the norms and rules governing tackling racial harassment at the time; not least overt racism in white communities, covert within agencies and lack of confidence (therefore under-reporting) from the black and minority community. It was also aimed at legitimizing organizational change, priority and access to resources. It was a highly contentious, emotionally charged, risky project that, in retrospect, was a personal *cause celebre* reflecting a tendency to charge windmills (and persuade others to join in), oblivious of unintended consequences.<sup>12</sup> However, it led to significant policy and financial commitment from the Council, procedural changes, improved inter-agency work and increased confidence demonstrated through a massive increase in reporting. It established new norms and rules and established boundaries to behaviours. It also reinvigorated community development approaches to race equality within the Council, focusing on the white community (CCC, 1994).

The Citizen's Jury process began with 700 street and school-based interviews with young people, followed by a 'Grand Jury' of 40, deliberating the findings and choosing 'things to do' as the key issue to explore further. Fourteen young people were trained in interviewing, confidence-building and presentation skills before four half-day sessions questioning senior Council officers and other agencies. The process was a deliberate attempt to expose

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<sup>12</sup> Not least a backlash within communities or raising expectations. One consequence was racist hate mail from across the UK to the Council officers involved, which, I felt at the time, meant we were doing something right.

powerful agents to excluded voices on young people's terms.<sup>13</sup> It was also to disrupt adult perceptions and legitimate claims for enhanced resources. The Council auctioned most of the 32 recommendations, including resourcing youth work and an extensive participation scheme still running in 2012. Widely praised for its innovation, it won a Guardian/Institute for Public Policy Research Public Involvement Award in 2000. The real success in entrepreneurial terms was a city council investing in what was normally a county council duty, adopting engagement techniques relevant to young people and activities they actually wanted.<sup>14</sup>

My 'public entrepreneur' skills were particularly put to test when appointed Head of Community Development at Canterbury City Council in 2000 to establish a new service. While there was political will from the ruling Liberal Democrats, there was resistance from the Conservatives and some senior officers, as well as limited resources. The fear was that, in creating new services, existing services would lose out financially unless external resources could be secured. Some saw potential disruption to normal practices, roles and responsibilities, others saw no need to move from servicing to enabling communities. The community development function was perceived as helping other officers undertake direct work rather than specialists, to administer grants and manage 'community' services such as senior citizens' bus passes, CCTV and community safety. I had the impression that community development was perceived as a political fad that most hoped would go away as soon as possible, and that there was limited appetite for targeted social interventions apart from the 'normal business' such as housing, tenant participation and consultation exercises for audit purposes.

To resource the fulfilment of local needs, community development had to make a contribution to 'the enhancement of existing institutions' (Marti and Mair, 2009: 101) and organization, as well as creating new institutions. Of course, organizations expect and seek to manage internal entrepreneurship. Local authorities are adept at managing political and officer entrepreneurship through bureaucratic processes. Existing resources had to be bent to provide the springboard: evidence of need, new voices to engage with the democratic process and high profile 'taster' interventions to provide 'proof of concept'. Providing powerful actors with what they wanted (press coverage, happy voters and plaudits from external legitimizing agencies) could smooth the way for further investment. I tried to continue what Mintzberg describes as 'engaged management that cares, not a heroic

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<sup>13</sup> My favourite moment was when a rather pompous director was cross-questioned in detail by a 13-year old girl. The more he evaded, the more she pushed, with Jeremy Paxman-like skill.

<sup>14</sup> See Dean (2000), for an account of the process; <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2000/nov/01/bestvalue.guardiansocietysupplement>

leadership that cures’ (Kleiner, 2010). Although much of the organizational work to ‘establish confidence’ relied on expert knowledge and experience, to ‘disavow perfection’ (Weick, 2001: 120) and work with and through others was of equal importance as being perceived as an innovator or *the* leader. I felt I had good intuition, born of experience, and could ‘recognise key patterns that indicate the patterns of the situation’ (Klein, 1999: 31). However, as Weick suggests, inviting doubt, reassembling and shaping experience to ‘fit novelties in the present’ (2001: 113) promotes learning and militates against over-confidence or dogmatic approaches. Balancing immediate impact, resisting the temptation to impose solutions and enhancing my reputation with consensus and co-production was often a struggle. In fact, I used directive and non-directive approaches simultaneously, establishing control and order, and exemplifying normative behaviours of a council officer<sup>15</sup> alongside bending rules and creating innovative spaces.

Through bending existing budgets, improving delivery of services, building on springboard activity and attracting external funding, within three years the portfolio grew extensively, employed over fifty staff (see CV, Appendix iii) and met identified local needs. High profile projects such as the ‘511’ children’s team and ‘Streerunner’ (detached youth work) provided a breakthrough and consolidated preparatory organizational persuasion, development and the embedding of community development institutions. I gave particular attention to creating a brand (while reinforcing the council brand) and ensuring services added value to corporate objectives. Alongside Cambridge, Canterbury’s remains one of the few significant local authority community development services left in the UK.

The creation of the Public Safety Service typifies my approach and the integration of institutional logics. Initially resisting involvement in community safety work at Cambridge because of its enforcement ethos, I created a well-resourced the service and targeted the same communities. Punitive policy had populist appeal, unlike preventative initiatives. However, the community safety agenda offered scope for a public entrepreneur. At Cambridge, preventative projects were ‘bolt on’; at Canterbury, they became integral. My first step was to improve existing services and build confidence, the second was to secure external resources, and the third to disrupt imposed interventions and demonstrate new ways of working. For instance, individualized punitive measures, the Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) were prioritized by Government and local Community Safety Partnership. By integrating and co-locating Police and Council staff within the service and

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<sup>15</sup> This is apart from my failure to wear the quasi-official senior officer dress code of suit and tie beyond my first week. The Chief Executive suggested strongly that the politicians would not take me seriously if I did not, but I argued that communities would not take me seriously if I did; the compromise was a tie at official events, T shirts at all other times!

developing a methodology that combined legal, environmental and social interventions to community safety issues and incidents, a more nuanced approach evolved. For instance, rather than using ASBOs to tackle the nuisance of youths drinking in public spaces, a strategy that combined youth work reconnaissance to scope the issues; targeted interventions if required against ringleaders; displacement activities (youth projects); trading standards action against retailers; and improvements to natural surveillance to reassure adults (cut down bushes). The service became a Local Government Association 'Pathfinder' and I presented the approach to Ministers (Stott and Arias, 2002). Resisting the coercive isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) of the state (sanctioned success was measured in the number of ASBOs achieved) actually provided better solutions<sup>16</sup> as well as cross-subsidizing youth work. By reinforcing the council's community safety credentials and gaining external legitimacy, it created space for innovation and subsequently investment. Persuading a district council to undertake county responsibilities such as youth work is, in my opinion, no mean achievement.

My time at Canterbury was intensive, exhilarating and I believed the apex of a career in community development. I felt that my approach was valued (a team player, but critical friend) and demonstrable success brought enhanced confidence and space for innovation. I contributed to national forums and debates and had a degree of influence not normally associated with a 'third tier' council officer. The next step was managing non-related services as a Director. However, having commuted weekly for three years from Cambridge it was time for a move.

Reflecting on my experiences before joining Keystone, Marti and Mair's description of strategies utilized by the 'often powerless, disenfranchised and under-resourced' (2009: 101) resonates. While I had significant power, the strategies reflected the institutional and organizational work I had undertaken acting with or for disadvantaged communities: experimentation; 'probing for weaknesses and exploiting small advantages'; enhancing existing institutions; challenging myths and 'structures of dominance'; building 'provisional institutions'; 'navigating across different institutional logics' (2009: 101). For Marti and Mair, institutional change has consequences often unintended and not necessarily beneficial. From university I had a deep suspicion of state or large social engineering programmes that began in good faith but resulted in numerous unintended consequences, usually with a disproportional impact on already disadvantaged groups or places. Following Marti and Mair, favouring 'small steps and reversibility' (2009: 103) to

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<sup>16</sup> ASBOs were relatively easy to apply, but difficult to monitor and enforce. They absorbed incredible amounts of Police and council staff time, yet rarely altered behaviours, in my experience.

minimize negative consequences was central to my approach to community work. A skill was to understand 'how and under what conditions agency was possible' (ibid); not necessarily to confront head on (which could lead to a war of attrition that the powerless frequently lose), but simultaneously enhance and disrupt institutions and organizations. Within a local authority, as a community-oriented 'public entrepreneur' it indeed meant policing and pirating; the integration of seemingly conflicting institutional logics. As Besharov and Smith suggest, such integration can assist in creating novel interpretations, innovation and survival (n.d: 2); the ability to combine logics certainly assisted in my next challenge.

### 3. Public Works

#### 1. Overview

The public work submitted for the award of a Doctorate of Professional Studies is *Keystone Development Trust* as an organization and portfolio of socio-economic interventions. Keystone is presented as the overarching public work, with a range of public works that support the submission presented in evidence. To build an organization that simultaneously delivers social impact and financial sustainability required continual organizational and institutional work at the individual, organization, community and societal levels. This is demonstrated through a retrospective framework that combines a critique of the institutions framing the development trust and social enterprise models; an overview and critical reflection on the journey and an overview and critical reflection on the supporting evidence.

The retrospective framework charts the key phases as the Trust evolved. The first section focuses on the framing and forming of the Trust in 2003: in particular, the conceptual foundations. The second concentrates on the entrepreneurial foundations 2004-2007, including the implementation of the conceptual framework and a critical engagement with social enterprise discourses as services developed. The third continues to develop the above themes as the Trust approached sustainability in the aftermath of the cessation of public funding in 2007-10. It reflects on how learning was shared and built upon to challenge institutions and develop new approaches to the issues facing the Trust and its beneficiaries. The fourth focuses on adaption and innovation within austerity 2011-12, including new alliances, areas of business and challenges to social policy. It concludes with critical reflections on the current challenges facing entrepreneurial third sector organizations.

The evidence presented includes *Trust documents, publications (sole and co-authored), short films and consultancy reports* (see Appendix i, a-c). Within the evidence, Trust socio-economic interventions are detailed; within the text, a number of key projects are discussed to demonstrate how institutional and organizational work was combined in furtherance of mission. When mentioned in the text, the evidence is highlighted by italics. Supporting evidence is also included such as press cuttings, external reports featuring Keystone and Trust newsletters (see Appendix ii).

While much of the evidence is accessible online, for assessment purposes I have included accompanying discs. The evidence contains co-produced and co-authored works. I had a leadership role in all the works, which included framing, project managing, authoring and editing. To demonstrate dissemination of learning and impact, with the clients' permission a selection of confidential consultancy reports is made available for the purposes of this context statement.

### *Creation of the public works*

The context in which the public work was created is extremely challenging. The Trust serves an area that experiences entrenched deprivation and pressing social needs. The area faces significant growth and combines urban and rural issues. It is increasingly diverse as mobile European workers live, work and settle. Local resources to meet social needs are limited. Public grants for community organizations (local, regional and national) are shrinking and intensely competitive, as is access to grants from philanthropic trusts. The Trust did have significant public resources 2003-07, but the challenge was to invest in entrepreneurial projects that could sustain future activity. Many stakeholders did not initially support the entrepreneurial approach or consider it viable. I felt that the development trust model of fusing community and market logics was riven with tensions, and particularly problematic when working in a poor area.

Given the challenging context of the work, not least having to sustain an organization committed to the poorest people and places through trading, necessities for survival are continual reflexivity, sense making, adaption and innovation because social action (or lack of it) has real consequences for people and places. In retrospect, the public works were co-created through a recursive process of observation, orientation, decision making and action; Boyd's<sup>17</sup> OODA loop<sup>18</sup> provides 'a model of individual and organizational learning and adaption' (Osinga, 2007: 235). The key elements of the OODA loop are:

- Observing focuses on sensing the external environment
- Orientating is synthesizing information recognizing the importance of: previous learning; institutions; context and organizational history (own and others)
- Deciding represents a plan of action
- Acting is the execution of the plan

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<sup>17</sup> Boyd's strategic theory has heavily influenced contemporary military thinking and organizations, but not mainstream organizational theory as yet, partly because his thoughts were disseminated primarily through presentations and briefings.

<sup>18</sup> <http://lesleym100.wordpress.com/2009/12/11/eight-social-media-commandments-and-the-ooda-loop/ooda/> Accessed 5/4/12.





**Figure 3.1: Boyd's OODA loop**

Boyd emphasized the development, maintenance and reshaping of individual and organizational orientation to adapt to change, complexity and surprise (ibid: 237). Adaption includes the repair and remodelling of concepts, ideas and observations 'to provide coherent, robust, and actionable insight into an organizational dilemma' (Boxenbaum and Rouleau, 2011: 281) involving a degree of improvisation and *bricolage*. Existing knowledge is reinterpreted and transformed in 'response to contextual factors'; 'the situation in a given place at a particular moment in time' (ibid).

For individual and organizations to thrive in uncertainty requires agility and leadership that builds trust, and encourages cooperation and space for creativity and innovation (Osinga, 2007: 239). Following Tracey et al., my contribution has focused on problem framing, counterfactual thinking, building and theorizing the 'organizational template' connecting with a 'macrodiscourse, and aligning with highly legitimate actors' (2011: 75). It has also concentrated on developing a leadership style that facilitates learning, adaption and innovation. My Keystone journey has been an attempt to blend prior and contextual experiences with academic study to provide actionable insights in response to the paradoxes inherent in combining social and commercial logics of the organizational form. The evidence demonstrates a sustained contribution to social innovation and local impact

as well as a wider impact through; an engagement with national debates; sharing learning through consultancy; shaping institutions and organizations.

*Organizational context: the development trust model*

Development trusts are independent, ‘not for private profit’ organizations located in a defined community. Development trusts aim to achieve social and economic regeneration through creating wealth and opportunity and keep social and financial returns within the community. They are community-owned and managed. Most trusts operate within the most deprived communities in the United Kingdom, although in the last few years the model is being applied to a wide range of communities (Stott et al., 2004). Currently there are around 500 trusts in the UK.

Development trusts are a micro response to macro social and economic change. They aim to achieve a degree of community economic stability and a ‘buffer’ between the local and the global through community control and ownership of capital (Imbroscio et al., 2003). They also aim to achieve a degree of social resilience as the state retreats, and social innovation in reaction to perceived failures of the state and market. I would also argue that development trusts attempt to foster new forms of social solidarity that reflect diversity, but finds common cause, interests and mutual aid.

Development trusts can take many legal forms, for instance: charity, company or Community Interest Company. They tend to be classified as part of the voluntary and community sector or third sector. However, as entrepreneurial organizations engaged in trading activity, such classifications are not always clear-cut. Recently trusts, along with social and community enterprises, have been described as hybrid organizations as in institutional terms, as they attempt to fuse commercial and community logics.

To confuse matters further, development trusts may also be described as social or community enterprises (the differences between community and social enterprise are discussed later in this chapter). What is distinctive about the development trust model is that they are rooted in particular communities of place in which they develop a long-term relationship. Place, in this context, reflects people’s sense of belonging and emotional commitment, whether a street, neighbourhood or town (Cresswell, 2004). Development Trusts tend to have an organizational mission which attempts to tackle social and economic issues holistically. For instance, they may be engaged simultaneously in social, housing and economic development activity.

## 2. Framing and forming (2003)

Today, Keystone is perceived as an exemplar of the development trust model, with a portfolio combining community development, social enterprise and property. The Trust owns £5.6 million of assets and a turnover of around £800,000; it earns around 75% of its income through trading activities (rent, sales, and contracts). Through achieving asset-based post-public funding sustainability, balancing institutional logics, a focus on unpopular people (such as European migrants and the ‘workless’) and fulfilling funder’s expectations, the Trust has had an impact and influence disproportionate to its size.

In March 2003 it was in transition from a quango hosted by a district council to a charitable company. Keystone Partnership was largely a ‘front’; resources flowed in from national funds to deliver social, environmental and physical projects through external public and third sector organizations. There was little clarity on how the development trust model could be operationalized or sustainability achieved by 2007. From attending meetings before joining I concluded the model had been adopted for three reasons; funders’ isomorphic pressures for an ‘exit strategy’;<sup>19</sup> the unwillingness of local authorities to commit to post-2007 resources and a somewhat blind faith in new national funds materializing or that a community organization could access sufficient philanthropic grants.

Keystone Partnership was riven with learning, belonging, organizational and performance paradoxes (Smith and Lewis, 2011: 384). Apart from a few Board members, I perceived few with an appetite for shifting from a conduit for resources to a delivery organization, let alone an entrepreneurial organization. The Board was conflicted; external interests often trumped Keystone’s and there were tensions around how to achieve organizational outcomes. The plurality of stakeholders created tensions around goals and priorities. An option was to focus on the delivery of the regeneration programme rather than create an entrepreneurial organization and move on before the watershed of 2007; a personal strategy with which I was not comfortable.

Within the first month at Keystone I presented three papers to the Board: *Developing Keystone*<sup>20</sup> (KDT, 2003a); *Land and building acquisition* (KDT, 2003b) and *Keystone’s ‘Endowment Plan’* (KDT, 2003d); these lay the foundations for all subsequent work. Prior

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<sup>19</sup> In regeneration projects, exit strategies are curious beasts. ‘Spend and deliver then do nothing’ is not an option, on paper at least. The options are usually ‘mainstream activity into local authority budgets; create independent income streams; a combination of both’, given that delivery pressures exit strategies are often written, shelved and worried about too close to the end of funding to be implemented.

<sup>20</sup> A preliminary draft was presented by myself to the Board in February as Chief Executive Designate (KDT, 2003c).

to joining I had drawn up my initial strategy in an interview presentation (Stott, 2002) and drafted *Developing Keystone*, on recruitment. In the first month I met key external stakeholders, Board members and staff to familiarize myself with the local context, critiques of the organization and aspirations. I also researched the experiences of other development trusts to understand how others had approached the fusion of community and commercial logics. I felt that the Trust was at a critical point in its development. The decisions made as it moved to independence would frame all future developments, in particular how it used the public ‘endowment’ to create sustainability when the funding ceased. There was pressure to make rapid decisions from funding bodies and stakeholders, so time was not on my side. The papers were a product of previous experience, intuition, studying the literature and a rapid assessment of the context.

*Developing Keystone* critiqued organizational performance to date and crystallized my initial insights into how a new Trust could deliver a substantial regeneration programme and the first steps towards sustainability; built on investments in assets which generated sustained income. From my experience at Canterbury I recognized the importance of building relationships, trust and legitimacy through branded delivery; also a coherent vision and implementation strategy; *Developing Keystone* provided a vision, aims and organizational design. The paper also captured insights that had major implications; the importance of holistic interventions; mixed income streams and the need to differentiate between enterprises aimed at maximizing profit and social outcomes within the portfolio.<sup>21</sup>

The holistic approach emerged in reaction to the influence of Putnam’s (2001) conceptualization of social capital on public policy which neglected economic, cultural (Bourdieu, 1986) and human capital. In my experience, enhancing social capital alone is insufficient to make real changes in poorer places; Keystone needed to build on the vision of the SRB 6 programme for multiple socio-economic interventions and implement Smallbone et al.’s suggestion that trusts have a ‘holistic approach implicit in their development model’ (2001: 21). I proposed a ‘community capital’ model<sup>22</sup> to build social, personal, financial, environmental, cultural and physical capital simultaneously, later summarized as:

To **build** community capital – the collective skills, knowledge, experience, facilities and organizations which ensure greater returns in the quality of life for all, and to **anchor** community capital locally to ensure sustainable returns. (KDT 2004b)

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<sup>21</sup> It built on preliminary thoughts outlined in my interview presentation (Stott, 2002).

<sup>22</sup> First presented during the interview process (see the presentation ‘*Leading the Trust, making a difference*’ Stott, 2002).

Enshrined in organizational aims, the model allowed a wide range of interventions but, as ‘opportunities for social entrepreneurs often far outstrip the resources available to address them’ (Austin et al., 2003: 19), it also gave rise to a major strategic problem in choosing ‘what not to do’ (Porter, 1998: 85). My overriding goal at the time was to demonstrate that the Trust could be ‘distinctive, relevant and effective’ (KDT, 2003a: 3).

Although the social enterprise literature privileged self-sufficiency through trading (Stott, 2005) and ‘grant dependency’ in the third sector was becoming akin to ‘benefit dependency’ in policy discourses (Macmillan, 2007), I was not convinced that an ‘either/or’ strategy was sensible. I considered grants as a form of redistribution; a means to fund activities unsustainable by any other means or unpopular with the giving public. Trading was fine if you had something to sell and people willing to buy; Keystone did not. It felt premature to shut down any income opportunity. Two approaches dominated the social enterprise literature at the time; the social business and community models. The former emphasized wealth creation and market engagement (Dees et al., 2001; DTI, 2002); the latter concentrated on place and social outcomes within ‘community businesses’ (Pearce, 1993, 2003). While the social business model was in the ascendancy, following Pearce (1998) I suggested that Keystone needed to do both; develop commercial activities primarily to maximize profit to underpin the Trust and ‘protected’ social enterprises that met social or environmental outcomes but required subsidy due to the additional cost (KDT: 2003a: 3). Although controversial, I emphasized the need for commercial projects that focused on profit, not necessarily social aims and engaged with the market on its own terms.

An immense amount of organizational work followed the March 2003 Board; restructuring, re-branding, bending resources to fit objectives; releasing monies to enable direct delivery, as well as shaping policy and procedures. The pace of organizational development was intense; legitimacy (over and above the ‘honeymoon’ afforded to a new Chief Executive) relied on demonstrable successes. *Developing Keystone – six month review* (KDT, 2003e) charts the rapid organizational change, but highlights the frustration over time spent ‘tidying up’.

### *Challenging conceptual frameworks*

Kirchner argues that the three leadership spheres of a Third Sector Chief Executive are: leading upwards (managing governance); leading downwards (managing resources); leading outwards (managing relationships) (2007: 52). While pertinent, the challenge I faced was to lead a relatively new form of third sector organization riven with tensions. Publically embracing the development trust model, I worried about how to operationalize a

model I considered flawed; the combination of market and community logics within organizations tied to poor places. The challenge was to provide leadership while understanding how to ameliorate or resolve the tensions created by combining logics. Furthermore, I was surprised at the resistance to the model, developing commercial activities in particular, from a significant part of the Board and external stakeholders who had, in theory, endorsed the model. The key areas of dispute were direct delivery, prioritization of poorer people and places, commercially driven property and trading outside the charitable area. Alongside the organizational work, understanding the implications of combined institutional logics and undertaking institutional work to inform and shape individual and organizational codes, norms, behaviours and expectations seemed paramount: in other words, creating new organizational discourses, influencing key stakeholders and shaping external relationships.

In July 2003 I began a two-year Masters in Community Enterprise at the Judge Business School; although perhaps rash having started a new job the experience was invaluable. While ‘learning on the hoof’, combining the immediate demands of work with space to problematize the issues through an engagement with management literature and discussion with faculty and experienced practitioners proved crucial to my development. Firstly I used the course to heuristically test ideas, intuition and assumptions around creating a sustainability strategy for a development trust as well as a research focus on strategic tensions. Secondly I translated learning and actionable insights to leading actors and thirdly, operationalized insights.

Alarmed by the neglect of the ‘awkward realities’ (Patton, 2004: 37) inherent in development trusts within the wider movement, I built on Ketchen et al.’s seminal paper (1996) and Tracey (2004) to clarify the strategic tensions (Stott, 2005; Stott and Tracey, 2007) summarized below:

<b>Process</b>	Governance – community/participatory v business models Multiple stakeholders and accountabilities Community/entrepreneurial cultural differences Capacity – expertise (Board and staff), access to finance for capacity building
<b>Content</b>	Goal compatibility – community/market building Emphasis – social capacity or profit maximization Position – private, public or third sector orientation?
<b>Context</b>	Policy Position – engaging with 3 worlds; public, private, third sector. Lack of understanding of model Socio-economic

**Table 3.1: Strategic tensions**

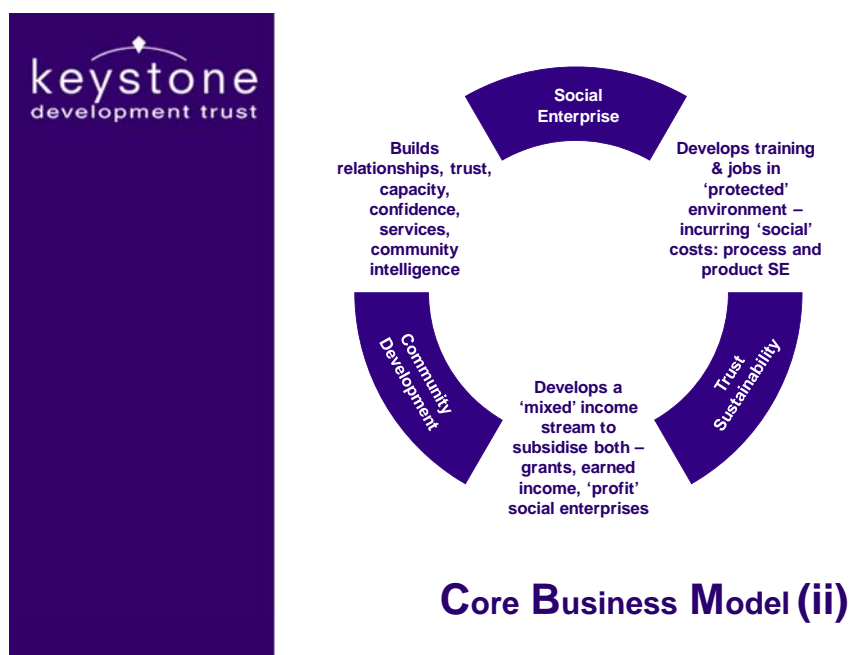
These tensions captured the dilemmas facing Keystone in framing a strategic direction. A key insight drawn from the history of US Community Development Corporations (Halpern, 1995), confirmed later by research and experience, was the proposition that the dual goals enshrined in organizational purpose create an inherent tension which is compounded by place related tensions; in particular being rooted in poor places. This ‘dominant tension’ infuses all aspects of strategy and presents a paradox trusts and their predecessors struggled to cope with (Stott, 2005).

By late autumn 2003 the proposals in *Developing Keystone*, the early experiences leading the Trust and the academic work crystallized into a conceptual framework which shaped the direction of the Trust. Given delivery and spend timescales, decisions had to be taken rapidly; I was reassured that intuition built on prior experience resonated with the more critically orientated social enterprise literature. In summary;

- The dual goals appeared valid and incompatible but had to be attended to simultaneously; therefore the Trust had to deliver a holistic programme spanning community development, social enterprise and property development to fulfil social-economic mission and achieve sustainability.
- Governance had to balance business and community approaches to achieve sustainability while maintaining legitimacy.
- Direct delivery was essential to build trust, relationships, presence, brand and track record.
- The public investment should be treated as an ‘endowment’ to generate further income; deliver agreed programmes but ensure as much as possible contributed to achieving sustainability.
- A mixed income stream of grant, rent and commercial services was a pragmatic strategy; in time trading activity may provide a surplus for reinvestment into community services.
- Poor places present a major challenge in generating surplus; therefore to serve cash poor communities, cash rich communities needed to be targeted to generate income.
- Achieving a profit while either serving poorer customers or providing opportunity for disadvantaged clients and/or an environmental good was a tall order; to be sustainable, the Trust needed ‘strictly commercial’ enterprises.

Without robust relationships, trust and a deep understanding of the local community, organizational legitimacy and the ability to develop appropriate interventions would be compromised. Without the development of mixed income streams the long term future of

the Trust would be compromised. Therefore the Trust's core business was conceptualized as a cyclical process summarized below (KDT, 2004c):



**Figure 3.2: Core business model**

*Product, process and profit: a typology and model*

It felt important at the time to differentiate between the roles of social enterprises that the Trust intended to create as 'process, product and profit'. Stakeholder expectations were high. The isomorphic pressures on social enterprises and entrepreneurial charities focused on achieving a 'triple bottom line' of social, environmental and financial impact (McKay et al., 2011). 'Heroic' practitioner accounts that emphasized the potential rather than problems in achieving a triple bottom line have percolated into Government policy on social enterprise (c.f DTI, 2002). I worried about how it was possible simultaneously to be nice to people, save the planet and make a profit! As Pharoah et al. argue:

To suggest that there are tensions between the social and economic is to go against the grain of much social enterprise literature, in which social return and economic return are sometimes portrayed as a sort of 'peaches and cream' combination. (2004. 29)

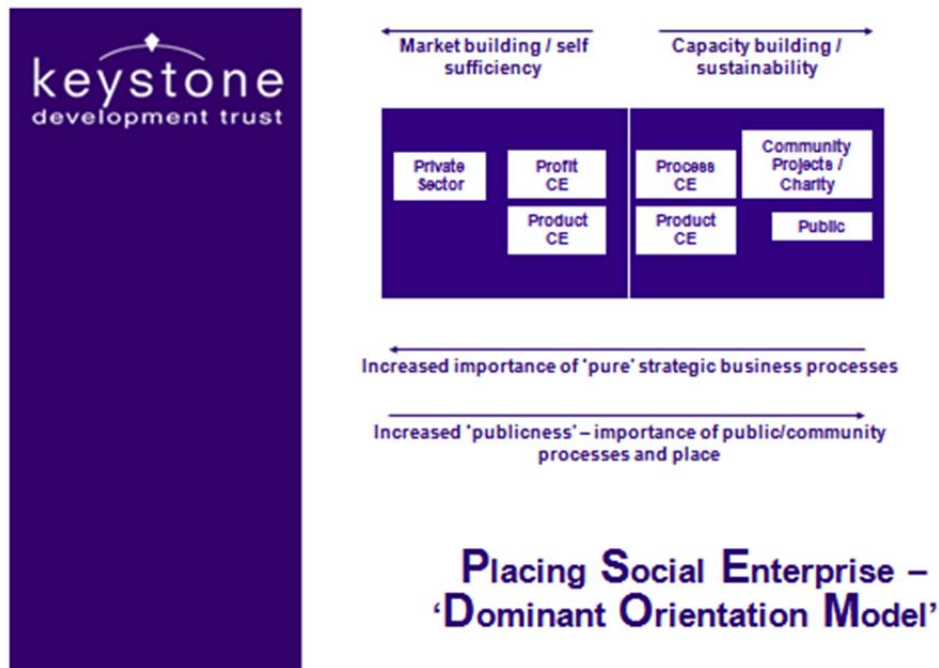
The evidence that social enterprises or development trusts without an endowment of land in areas of growing affluence (such as Coin Street Community Builders) could deliver significant social, environmental and economic impact without on-going public subsidy was limited. Historically, social enterprises and their predecessors, were closely tied to local or national state policy and funding (Amin et al., 2002). Moreover, many relied on public grant or contracts to achieve sustainability. The social/community typology I developed included;



- Product-oriented enterprises that focus on delivering essential service or meet a social/environmental need
- Process-oriented enterprises that prioritize social objectives such as training, assisting target groups back into work
- Profit-oriented enterprises that prioritize surplus generation.

The rationale for the typology was that by emphasizing social outcomes, product and process enterprises would probably incur significant costs that would be difficult to recoup, such as extra support required for staff or sub-optimal production processes, because of the nature of the staff or trainees. Product and process social enterprise would operate in a limited local market with poorer clients or consumers. Small-scale, they might not achieve the efficiencies, capital investment or economies of scale of potential competitors. Sustainability rests on the offer to public clients and attracting subsidy through grants or a 'social premium' through branding. Fairtrade products, for example, may be more expensive than their competitors, but customers recognize that the extra cost contributes to the development of the producers and their communities. Profit-oriented social enterprises' prime purpose would be to deliver surplus to reinvest into core costs and cross-subsidize the above or community projects.

The typology aimed conceptually to fuse the social business and community models prevalent in the literature within the Trust; achieving sustainability through a mixed income stream but striving towards self-sufficiency through an engagement with the market on its own terms. Each type of enterprise had a particular rationale, context, financial and governance challenges and understanding their orientation was crucial in making choices, developing appropriate business plans and balancing overall social and economic impact. My 'dominant orientation model' (KDT, 2004c) placed each in relation to; market/capacity building priorities; business/ community processes; and importance of place.



**Figure 3.3: Dominant orientation model**

The model clarified my thinking and provided a tool to communicate the Trust’s intentions to simultaneously deliver community projects; locally-oriented social enterprise to create opportunities or provide goods and services for vulnerable/excluded people; and profit-generating enterprises. I envisaged each cluster to be delivered within separate legal entities (charitable company and a number of trading subsidiaries) to overcome strategic tensions inherent in the model through providing clarity of purpose; minimizing financial risk to the charity; ‘fit to form’ governance (inclusive charity board and lean business-oriented boards) and minimizing cultural differences between community and business-focused staff.

While subsidiaries were established, to date none have been activated, primarily because of the tax benefits of trading as a charity, costs of multiple governance and the Trustees’ increasing sophistication in balancing tensions utilizing the model. In 2003/04 the model provided a framework for decision making on potential enterprises, organizational structure and persuading external stakeholders.

*Applying the model: the property portfolio*

I was convinced that how the Trust invested in property would define its future. The model was immediately applied to developing a portfolio in which each property had a defined function; community, local socio-economic development or surplus generation. Moreover, the Trust needed a significant and commercial asset to generate long-term income. There

has been a growing trend, linked to the burgeoning asset transfer movement,<sup>23</sup> of expecting property to deliver the ‘triple bottom line’ even in poor places. With declining public grants, community centres, leisure facilities and other public buildings are expected to develop trading activities in order to survive. While this is possible in certain contexts (for instance, village halls or arts centres in predominantly affluent areas), I believed it to be untenable in poorer areas and distracting from the core mission. If Keystone’s mission was to provide community facilities but could not balance the books through renting space to local groups, it would cross-subsidize from commercial activities. Given twenty years of managing community centres, I also felt that attracting commercial tenants or customers into community facilities was problematic due to culture clashes, perceptions of particular areas and operational practicalities. Regeneration schemes involving third sector organizations in poorer places often provided ‘managed workspaces’ to stimulate local entrepreneurial activity predominantly with low rents for start-ups and small businesses; it was rarer to provide high quality space to attract external businesses.

A few weeks before I joined Keystone, the plan to purchase a single factory and office block to accommodate regeneration projects fell apart.<sup>24</sup> I quickly realized that it was not a disaster, but an opportunity to rethink the asset strategy. The Board had envisaged community and economic development (mainly delivered by others) operating cheek by jowl. I was not convinced, particularly as the factory would not have been conducive to commercial lets even after major refurbishment. In *Keystone’s ‘Endowment Plan’* (KDT, 2003d), *Land and building acquisition* (KDT, 2003b) recommended buying land for business units, an existing centre for voluntary organizations and a listed building as the Trust’s headquarters. The first step was to ensure that each property was fit for a particular purpose. Negotiations began with a local council on the transfer of a key community centre as well as a windfall opportunity for extra European grant to purchase a large factory as a start-up/social enterprise centre.

The critical decisions the Trust took in 2003 were around what was to become the Keystone Innovation Centre. Land was purchased to build a new business centre. External stakeholders envisaged a quick build, ‘portacabin’ style offices to house start-ups and small businesses managed by an external property specialist. I argued for prestige offices within an iconic building to attract maximum rental values and managed by Keystone. Once the concept was agreed for a £3.2 million investment, considerable pressure was exerted to include a nursery and other community spaces. I was adamant that mixed use

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<sup>23</sup> See <http://atu.org.uk/>

<sup>24</sup> The vendor doubled the price to £2m at the last moment.

would undermine the primary rationale of attracting top-end tenants to provide significant income streams. Mainstream opinion was that such a facility was not appropriate for the local context and unsustainable; this was supported by a report commissioned from external consultants which stressed the lack of demand. I felt Thetford had sufficient affordable property for local needs, but little to attract new white collar jobs. I advocated a ‘build it and they will come’ strategy; public investment to drive demand. Given the risks of a ‘white elephant’ and mildly shaken by the opposition (at one point the Leader of a Council asked my Chair to fire me, which she declined to do), I amended the concept to include a cafe and conferencing suite to diversify income, rather than purely office accommodation.

Having convinced the Board and regional fund managers to support the innovation centre concept, Keystone took direct control of the design, procurement and build process. In the face of continued local stakeholder opposition it took a degree of ‘pig-headed’ resilience by key Trustees and me to implement the concept; as well as the wider conceptual framework.

#### *Promoting the conceptual framework*

Kraatz argues that institutional work done by organizational leaders consists of ‘legitimacy seeking behaviours’ and the ‘creation and maintenance of organizational integrity’ (2009: 73). Pluralistic organizations need to be ‘multiple things to multiple people’, win support and ‘demonstrate cultural fitness to the different elements of its institutional environment’ (op cit: 72). Creating integrity requires efforts to ‘knit together diverse constituencies’ and ‘to engender cooperation and win consent’ (op cit: 73). As *Developing Keystone – six month review* (KDT, 2003e) illustrates, the embryonic Trust was in the middle of a ‘perfect storm’ of competing stakeholder priorities, change and challenges to legitimacy. It was still my overriding impression that many local stakeholders wanted the Trust to spend the public money and then quietly fade away. Two basic problems remained. Firstly, the model of an entrepreneurial third sector organization that aimed to deliver community interventions and trade was not well understood; it challenged common perceptions of public/private/charity or voluntary sectors. Secondly, the Trust had yet to deliver anything over and above existing SRB projects and many of those were delayed.

*Income generation and development and trusts* (KDT, 2004f) and *Trust sustainability* (KDT, 2004d) papers discussed the key issues and proposed framework. The *Trust Strategic Development Plan 2004-2008* (KDT, 2004b), drafted and consulted on in 2003, articulated the vision, framework and delivery intentions. Designed for a mixed audience,

it actually appealed to regional or national more than local stakeholders. While cohesive, reflecting a holistic approach and underpinned by a framework that attempted to balance organizational tensions, it was perceived locally by some as too ‘academic’, aspirational and unachievable.<sup>25</sup> While I was wrapped up in problematizing the development trust model and engaged in institutional work with funder stakeholders, Board and staff to legitimize my approach, I was acutely aware that local external legitimacy was equally important. I gave numerous talks to local organizations, which remained unmoved. The fusion of community and commercial logics was perceived as a rather dubious ambition for a charity or unachievable in the local context. Selling ideas and intentions was an uphill task without demonstrable evidence; it did not help using examples from elsewhere, since ‘it is different here’ was the refrain. Through the prism of existing local institutional frameworks, the alternative proto-institutions of an entrepreneurial third sector organization lacked legitimacy or traction.

I realized achieving institutional legitimacy or traction locally was not immediately achievable; it required patience and persistence. I began to emphasize that Keystone was a community regeneration *charity*, to ground it in a recognizable form. I also downplayed the social enterprise and sustainability elements until we had projects underway; this decoupled internal action from external presentation. Drawing on previous experience and bending available resources, I drove the implementation of community projects to meet identified needs through direct delivery; this built legitimacy through engagement with less vocal or politicized groups. Delivering quasi-leisure projects for children and young people or large-scale public events built legitimacy and ‘showcased’ what could be achieved and were understandable, popular and photogenic. Targeted well, they provided a ‘springboard’ within key communities and a ‘stalking horse’ for investment into the less popular groups such as ‘anti-social’ youths. I considered that reaching the people and places others couldn’t or wouldn’t to be central to the Trust’s mission.

#### *Early work with European migrants*

Amongst the most unpopular groups in the area was the growing Portuguese and Polish community. The Portuguese, in particular, caught unwelcome local attention; migrants with Brazilian or Angolan roots were noticeably ‘different’. Norfolk had not been known for its ethnic mix. As Derbyshire (1994) pointed out, isolated migrants in rural areas could suffer acute racism without the supportive networks developed in urban areas. Attracted to East Anglia by employers and recruitment agencies to fill ‘picking, plucking and packing’ jobs, London overspill towns like Thetford provided cheap private sector accommodation

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<sup>25</sup> Some feedback was less polite.

(ex-social housing on large estates). Not only was racial harassment on the rise, migrants experienced exploitation by some gang masters and by some employers and landlords. Local sensitivities were growing around pressure on public services and jobs being taken, fuelled by media attention (Wiles et al., 2007). Legitimate European migration for work was confused in the popular consciousness with illegal immigration.

Much of the everyday tensions revolved around community interactions in shops, schools, GPs and homes. While the language was a barrier, much of the tension focused on cultural differences or migrants not being aware of everyday practices; not putting bins out on the right day, or overflowing bins, became a lightning rod for community wrath. Estates which already experienced significant deprivation population rose rapidly as migrants sought cheaper homes to rent. Homes of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) blossomed as migrants attempted to reduce expenditure through sharing homes, adding further to tensions.

Having led a change programme around racial harassment and race equality projects at Cambridge and Canterbury, and with no noticeable actions by public agencies, I felt Keystone should intervene by;

- Helping migrants help themselves through stimulating mutual support
- Celebrate diversity through events/community arts
- Provide space for positive interaction between host and migrant communities
- Provide information to help migrants settle in and ameliorate everyday tensions
- Provide language teaching
- Research and dissemination.

Leveraging existing resources, a substantial Home Office grant was secured and an Equalities Team established by late 2003. I did not realize at the time how much work with migrants would shape the Trust, build our national reputation or impact on local relationships.

### *2003: A defining year*

Telling the organizational story before embarking on the professional doctorate, I emphasized how important 2003 was in defining the future work of the Trust. A re-reading of Board papers showed that in terms of the conceptual underpinnings to all subsequent work it was actually the first few months, if not weeks, that were crucial. To develop, communicate, engage others and hold to a vision are crucial elements of leadership. While not all were convinced initially, by the end of 2003 results were tangible. This phase can be characterized by 'iron grip' leadership and intense 'up close' and personal engagement

with every aspect of development to drive change, as well as entwining organizational with personal integrity (Kraatz, 2009: 65). However, organizations do not necessarily prosper with continual 'iron grip' leadership or slavish adherence to conceptual frameworks. If leaders become rigid, uncreative and believe their own rhetoric it restricts learning, adaption and innovation. It prevents a real sense of shared mission, ownership and learning. Even as the Chair wrote the statement below, I was conscious of the need to shift from managing from the institutional and organizational front to managing through others and not to stop learning:

At the same time as Keystone celebrated its first birthday, Neil Stott, our Chief Executive, completed his first year, a challenging year in which he has taken a fledgling organization and established a dynamic, fit for purpose Trust. His personal contribution to the development of the Trust has been fundamental. (Childerhouse, in KDT 2004a)

As the *Annual report 2003-04* (KDT 2004a) illustrates, the conceptual framework was embedded in structure, capital and social enterprise project development, as well as *direct* community delivery. Alongside the quieter community work developing on the target social housing estates, we ran children and youth performance art festivals. Aiming to emulate my early Canterbury experience of achieving legitimacy, the Trust organized a carnival to showcase new projects such as the K Team (children), Games Machine (mobile video gaming) and Keystone Kollektive (youth musicians). To engage local stakeholders it was badged as the Mayor's Carnival. Existing programmes and staff resources were bent as far as possible to deliver multiple targeted interventions with disengaged or disadvantaged groups focusing on building relationships over time and reflecting what people actually wanted, rather than external agencies' perception of needs.

### **3. Entrepreneurial foundations 2004-07**

During 2004-07 Keystone rapidly became a complex hybrid organization and delivered an extensive community programme, developed social enterprises and completed numerous capital projects (See the *Annual reports 2005-08*, KDT 2005, 2006a, 2007, 2008 and *Trust Business Plans 2007-09*, KDT 2007b, 2008b, 2009b). The socio-economic rationale was presented in a series of in-depth profiles (Carney 2004, a-d) and research reports (Carney, 2005, Pinto, 2005, Schneider and Holman, 2005). I felt it important to legitimize interventions with evidence as well as raise the profile of marginalized groups, such as in *Youth Speaks: talking to young people in the Keystone area* (Jermy, 2005). I framed, commissioned, contributed and edited the documents with staff and external researchers. The profiles were innovative at the time as they combined data from numerous sources into a comprehensive analysis of local circumstances.

Cushioned by large public grants and employing over fifty staff, the Trust had the capacity to experiment, innovate and to make false starts and mistakes. It was an intense, exciting and satisfying period. While the vision remained intact, circumstances often required learning, adaption and ‘bricolage’ solutions (Boxenbaum and Rouleau, 2011). With each success, confidence grew amongst Trustees and staff that the ambitious programme outlined in the *Trust Strategic Development Plan 2004-08* (KDT, 2004b) might actually come to fruition. However, I was still acutely concerned that the funding clock was ticking and delivering new income streams was paramount. The entrepreneurial foundations of the Trust rested on using the capital endowment to deliver long-term surpluses and revenue to invest in social enterprises. Even with acres of newsprint written on our successes, local legitimacy was still an issue, expectations huge and strategic tensions still apparent.

### *Asset development*

Most of the assets developed provided space for community or local enterprises and work creation, fulfilling our mission but with marginal returns. Underpinned by income from public funds, most achieved full tenancy by hosting our own and other agencies’ projects. However, the survival rate post-2007 of European/SRB funded projects was debatable, as significant income was required. Many of the partner agencies had not taken the same strategy as Keystone in trying to deliver funders’ objectives as well as longer-term income streams. The partner’s exit strategies stressed ‘mainstreaming’ projects within their core operations. My experiences of managing regeneration schemes elsewhere was that exit often meant closure, as the agencies could or would not mainstream projects or failed to secure further external resources. The loss of projects would have a ‘knock on’ effect on the occupation levels of the property portfolio, hence making the Trust financially vulnerable. Even full, the property portfolio would not sustain the Trust without the Keystone Innovation Centre and that was a leap of faith.

Completed in 2006, I consider the Keystone Innovation Centre<sup>26</sup> as a public work in its own right. It embodied the Trust’s ambition and approach; it was also a test of my leadership, as sustainability rested on its success. Such an opportunity may not come twice. Its development was a severe test of collective will with disputes over design,<sup>27</sup> Keystone’s direct management, and pricing structure. I considered its prime socio-economic rationale was to attract prestige businesses at scale, therefore to have larger units than small start-up offices. As a premium business centre the internal quality was paramount and cost-cutting was to be resisted.

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<sup>26</sup> See <http://www.keystonetrust.org.uk/business/>

<sup>27</sup> Initially rejected by the Planning Committee, with one member describing it as an ‘insult to log cabins’.



Quite apart from the learning from implementing numerous capital projects, the experience drove home the challenging political and funding context in which entrepreneurial third sector organizations operated. Balancing myriad stakeholders' objectives was difficult, but the greatest challenge was achieving legitimacy for the concept of the Keystone Innovation Centre primarily as 'strictly commercial' and a profit centre. In fact, an increasing degree of disconnect between external and internal discourses proved to be pragmatic. The Keystone Innovation Centre achieving sustainability was not in dispute; what was in dispute was generating significant surplus for reinvestment in the Trust.



**Figure 3.4: Keystone Innovation Centre**

### *Social enterprise*

As the team developed proposals for social enterprises, the 'dominant tension' of dual goals coupled with place became ever more real. In deciding what to do, normal business factors such as product, market, competition and profitability came into play. Laid over this was rurality, deficient demand, some Trustees not wanting to compete with existing businesses and the spectre of state aid, due to concern that a public subsidy would distort markets.<sup>28</sup> There was no shortage of social needs to be met through product or process enterprises, such as sheltered work or cheap goods, but profit-generating enterprises (over

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<sup>28</sup> State aid has become a particular *bête noire*. I have never known any third sector organization to face a direct challenge, but it is constantly used by risk adverse public agencies.

and above property) remained elusive. I was conscious that reacting to social demand and opportunistic pursuit of funding could trigger growth before it was coherently planned (Austin et al., 2003), leading to increased sustainability pressures. A holistic approach intensifies the temptation to engage in multiple activities across multiple markets. An often forgotten 'cost of entry' for social enterprises is reputational risk as, given stakeholder pressure, divesting social projects is an acute problem. Lack of focus or planned growth in the 1960s led to the forerunners of development trusts, the US Community Development Corporations (CDC), collapsing 'of their own weight and ambition' (Halpern, 1995: 138). Financial risk when emphasizing social goals (process and product) is compounded by a focus on consumers who 'are unable to pay enough to cover the costs' (Austin et al., 2003: 20).

Research on development trusts for the Masters increased my gloom. In *Between a Rock and a Hard Place? Exploring the strategic tensions experienced by development trusts*<sup>29</sup> (Stott and Tracey, 2007), we argued that the dual goals enshrined in organizational purpose create an inherent tension compounded by place-related tension; it infused all aspects of strategy and presented a paradox not reflected in practitioner literature. Learning myopia was rampant, overlooking 'distant times, places and failures' (Jones, 1998: 415), including the CDCs' experience. Described as 'a fragile and a vital strategy' (Halpern, 1995: 145) but 'relatively flexible and enduring' (ibid: 127), the CDCs constantly battled with the dominant tension. The CDCs found that the 'depleted and unforgiving contexts' (Halpern, 1995: 142) with 'marginal neighbourhoods with marginal populations' an extreme challenge (ibid: 145). Dwarfed by context, even the well-managed and capitalized CDCs struggled (ibid: 136). Our conclusion was sobering:

The evidence overwhelmingly points to the fragility of trusts that are focused solely on deprived areas.... Locating contemporary trusts purely in deprived areas has more to do with the 'pull' towards concentrations of public funding and the 'push' of policy, than it has to do with community-based initiatives. Trusts would be strongly advised to balance *prime cash poor beneficiaries* with *cash rich beneficiaries*.... The key is differentiating between beneficiaries and customers; beneficiaries are local, customers (individuals or organisations) potentially anywhere. Automatically equating customers with area of beneficiaries is a self-defeating strategy.

...trusts should not allow themselves to 'be boxed into the regeneration or anti-poverty corners' and 'not to be seen as relevant only to poor people, in low income, under-invested communities' (Pearce, 2003: 57). The evidence is unequivocal; *deprived places can create competitive advantage but rarely sustainability*. (Stott and Tracey, 2007: 55)

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<sup>29</sup> The paper built on Stott, 2005.

Rather presciently, we suggested that the test would be ‘...when current public funding streams cease, and the dress rehearsals are over. The tensions in achieving dual goals in deprived places may never be overcome’ (ibid). Mired in the often overwhelming task of achieving and sustaining dual goals by March 2007, I had not learnt from my own conclusion of the malaise of learning myopia and looked to distant places for more positive experiences. A trip to study social enterprises in Oregon proved an antidote.

St Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County in Eugene<sup>30</sup> exemplified the principle of balancing cash rich and cash poor beneficiaries through trading outlets and products and took it one step further. Focusing on recycling, the Society had achieved scale by capturing the waste stream for clothes, books and furniture locally as well as affluent areas of San Francisco and Berkeley, transported them to Eugene and sold into numerous local, regional and international markets. Moreover, recycled material was reconditioned or made into new products such as pet beds (mattresses), architectural glass and eco fire starters (candles). Their social enterprises:

[H]ave a quadruple bottom line: they responsibly reuse and recycle products; provide quality goods and services to the community; provide jobs and job training; and generate revenue to fund our charitable activities.<sup>31</sup>

I was impressed with how they seamlessly balanced enterprise and social mission. Profit was recycled into an extensive range of social and housing services. I was less impressed how US social policy drove working families into services offering ‘end of the month’ food parcels or assistance with rent and healthcare; given the UK Government’s penchant for copying US policy, I felt it was a harbinger for what we may have to face.<sup>32</sup> I was reassured that the organizational structure was similar to Keystone’s, in particular that all service/business units were within the charity and functionally separated, recognizing teams’ cultural differences. Perhaps the most enduring lesson was how business unit leaders were empowered to feel a sense of ownership and responsibility. Organizational control was decanted, resulting in high performance with light touch central management, unless there were significant problems. Performance metrics were kept simple and relevant, and external pressures for complex social audit resisted. For once I had witnessed a social enterprise where reality outstripped rhetoric.

The social enterprises we explored focused on social need and taking advantage of local circumstances, resources and national agendas. *The Local Food Group* was set up to

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<sup>30</sup> See <http://www.svdp.us/>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.svdp.us/what-we-do/recycling-and-manufacturing/>

<sup>32</sup> Recent welfare ‘reforms’ are likely to push more people to the margins and remove state-funded safety nets, leaving it to charities and churches to pick up the pieces. A recent example is the rapid rise in the number of Food Banks.

provide quality catering using local, seasonal, organic or Fairtrade products. *Green Ventures Furniture* recycled goods at affordable prices with a grant voucher scheme for the most in need. *The Building Block* taught basic carpentry and bricklaying. *As Noticias* was a Portuguese national newspaper, the first in the UK.<sup>33</sup> The paper was a major risk, but embodied the ambition of the time to break out of the local context and achieve a profit oriented social enterprise at scale. False starts included an animal crematorium to meet farming and household needs, wood oil production (a high value product used on boats) and resurrecting a local technology, Thetford Pulpware,<sup>34</sup> to produce ornamental goods. While a combination of capacity, time and necessary capital investment halted further development, they were all potential ‘breakout’ enterprises engaging with lucrative markets while providing work that matched local labour. An opportunity lost, perhaps. The pursuit of the ‘magic widget’ to create local jobs at scale continues today.

### *Social action*

The *Annual reports* summarize the numerous social interventions made 2004-07 that aimed to provide access, opportunity and mutual aid. We focused on what people wanted to do rather than what others felt they should do. Projects like ‘The Big Sitting Room’ (small youth venues providing ‘chill out’ space with TV, games and music) and the Kollektive (young musicians) focused on fun and passion in supportive environments, as well as the means to build confidence, soft skills, leadership and tackle issues the young people brought up in their own time. As issues emerged, new projects were co-produced with participants such as a young parents’ project. Our role was to match needs with public policy and resources and create relevant opportunities.

### *META: a defining project*

Work with the migrant community led to the co-creation of a project that would simultaneously enhance the Trust’s national reputation and stigmatize it locally (Tracey, 2012b). It led to sustained institutional work to challenge and change discourses and practices. It exemplifies the process of adaption and innovation to pressing social needs with limited resources, as well as the inherent ‘messiness’ of community engagement.

In 2004 META was established; Multi-lingual Thetford Association and later Migrant Europeans Taking Action. Initially, the community development instinct of the team

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<sup>33</sup> See <http://www.newswiretoday.com/news/10592/>

<sup>34</sup> Thetford Pulpware produced helmets and household goods made from fibres such as jute or paper; sold across the British Empire, the business employed many locals. Plastics killed Pulpware. Light, sturdy and largely recyclable, it is a product whose time may yet come.

leader, Mark Allison<sup>35</sup> and myself was to develop distinct Portuguese and Polish groups and work towards a unified ‘migrant solidarity’ approach as confidence grew. Mark’s initial fieldwork with the Portuguese highlighted that some of the existing ‘community leaders’ increasingly used by the Police and keen to get involved were actually unscrupulous gang masters,<sup>36</sup> feared by the community. In my experience, it was not unusual for self-proclaimed ‘community leaders’ to have other agendas and vigilance was essential. Even when we moved to working with volunteers to set up a group for all migrants, it became apparent that Keystone would have to have a more direct role to maintain accessibility, fairness and transparency.

When Portugal beat England during Euro 2004, Thetford erupted in violence, with rioting outside a Portuguese pub in the town square, which was then besieged by a mob of around 300.<sup>37</sup> The event had a galvanizing impact on local agencies to tackle ‘community cohesion’. However, the lasting impact on me was the behaviour of the national press throughout the day. TV coverage began at breakfast outside the pub and I considered the tone to be virtual incitement. Many of those arrested came from outside the town and I believe were attracted by the reports. Populist reporting on European migration was becoming commonplace and was conflated with non-European illegal immigration. The silence from those large employers who encouraged migration and the politicians who facilitated it was noticeable.<sup>38</sup> Silence, in my opinion, gave permission to the increasing anti-migrant sentiments. As the migrants felt uncomfortable speaking out, challenging perceptions became a personal *cause célèbre* as well as increasing our social justice role in supporting newcomers, even if it impacted on local legitimacy.

META’s core service provided information, support and guidance to migrants, *by* migrants, as well as the brand for other migrant activity. It was aimed at easing transition for the new communities and minimizing potential tensions. Most migrants settled in rapidly, but issues such as exploitation, debt, housing and homelessness became prevalent as the new communities grew rapidly. What evolved was a series of interventions to prevent rather than cure, which entailed engagement with numerous agencies as well as designing new services. It also involved agenda raising through the creation of networks

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<sup>35</sup> Mark had worked in international charities in Africa and was fluent in Portuguese.

<sup>36</sup> Some gang masters not only coordinated labour for employers, but levied workers’ pay for finding work and operated as loan sharks.

<sup>37</sup> See <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/norfolk/3838531.stm> With a background in community safety, I had been in the police station to receive assurances that any problems would be managed. I was not convinced by the response. The Police were under resourced when the riot began and had to hold off for a considerable time before reinforcements from a neighbouring Force arrived. During the event, Mark Allison was inside the pub sending me updates.

<sup>38</sup> Employers such as Tesco’s and Bernard Mathews actively recruited in host countries.

such as the East of England Development Agencies' Migrant Steering Group,<sup>39</sup> the development of 'alternative micro-discourses' (Tracey, 2012b: 21) to change local perceptions and contribute to national debates:

[T]hree national commissions – the Commission in Integration and Cohesion, the Audit Commission, and the Commission for Rural Communities – each identified Keystone's approach as one of the best of its kind and presented it as a template for other communities to follow. For example, the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (2007: 137) stated that Keystone's 'community development approach has helped it to become one of the most successful migrant worker initiatives in the country'. (Tracey, 2012b: 18)

By 2007, the Polish Consul General could say:

[This] is a wonderful project that caters for the needs of the migrant communities and has the full support of the local community and my office.... However, it seems very unique and it is strange that there are not more of these throughout Britain and it would be wonderful to have more.<sup>40</sup>

However, such plaudits came at a cost. For Hudson, 'core stigma' can be attributed to organizations because of what it does and who it serves (2008). Keystone has been stigmatized by some local stakeholders, although organizations 'can simultaneously be perceived positively by some audiences and negatively by others' (ibid: 254). The stigma is primarily located within target communities and has posed a legitimacy problem. Even though META was only a relatively small part of the portfolio, some residents perceived it as *all* we did and,

If they [Keystone] stopped helping them then they would stop coming. They're just encouraging them to come over. They come because they get all the help.... We should look after our own, not the foreigners. (Quoted in Tracey, 2012b: 33)

#### *Communicating mission, challenges to legitimacy*

While I attempted to communicate intent and puzzle out dilemmas in Trust documents, reflected in the lengthy *Trust Strategic Development Plan* (KDT, 2004c), I increasingly simplified how the mission was communicated, since my preoccupations or verbosity did not necessarily help public perceptions.

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<sup>39</sup> Mark moved to EEDA to lead the project and it was sponsored by an ex Keystone Chair who had become Deputy Chair of EEDA.

<sup>40</sup> Eastern Daily Press, February 3, 2007.



The objectives are:

- To tackle financial exclusion through support, advice, training and job creation
- To combat social exclusion through empowering individuals, groups and communities
- To protect the environment through recycling, local procurement and saving historic buildings
- To generate wealth through property and social enterprise development.

The business model focuses on;

- Generating a mixed income stream; grants and earned income from property and social enterprises
- Maintaining a balanced portfolio of core social projects and enterprises
- Delivering new activity through new income.

*Annual report, 2007*

### **Table 3.2: Trust objectives**

Even with significant success and investment in other projects, some local stakeholders continued to characterize the Trust as a ‘quango’ that did not do enough for residents. In a rare fit of pique I published an impact account provocatively entitled *What has Keystone Done for Us?* (KDT 2006b), following Monty Python, to the disquiet of senior staff. Needless to say, it did not change certain stakeholders’ opinions.

*Passion, pockets and place* became our unofficial mantra: doing things people wanted to do; getting money into pockets; and the importance of place. Initially I had insisted the Keystone brand take precedence, but as the portfolio developed and beneficiaries and customers relationships focused on particular services, all were given distinct brands, further enhancing team leaders’ sense of ownership.

As Kapferer argued, ‘brand awareness, image, trust and reputation, all painstakingly built up over years, are the best guarantees of future earnings’ (2004: 4). The most severe reputational challenge came from strained relationships with a local council. Having decided to let go the SRB and European programmes, some officers and members did not want to really let go, and challenges to Trust decisions were commonplace. When the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) auditors descended to investigate accusations of potential fraud, the Trust suspected the source to be certain council officers. Cleared and commended for being ‘best managed third sector organization we have encountered’,<sup>41</sup> the Board and I confronted the council. This, coupled with a poor reception a letter of ours, arguing that the council was not fulfilling its obligations to tackle poverty and disadvantage, threatened the relationship.

Following an acrimonious ‘summit’ meeting, I belatedly realized that conflict would only damage Keystone, as legitimacy and access to future resources were inextricably bound up with our relationship. Conscious that my own attitudes may have contributed to

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<sup>41</sup> Confidential letter, DCLG.

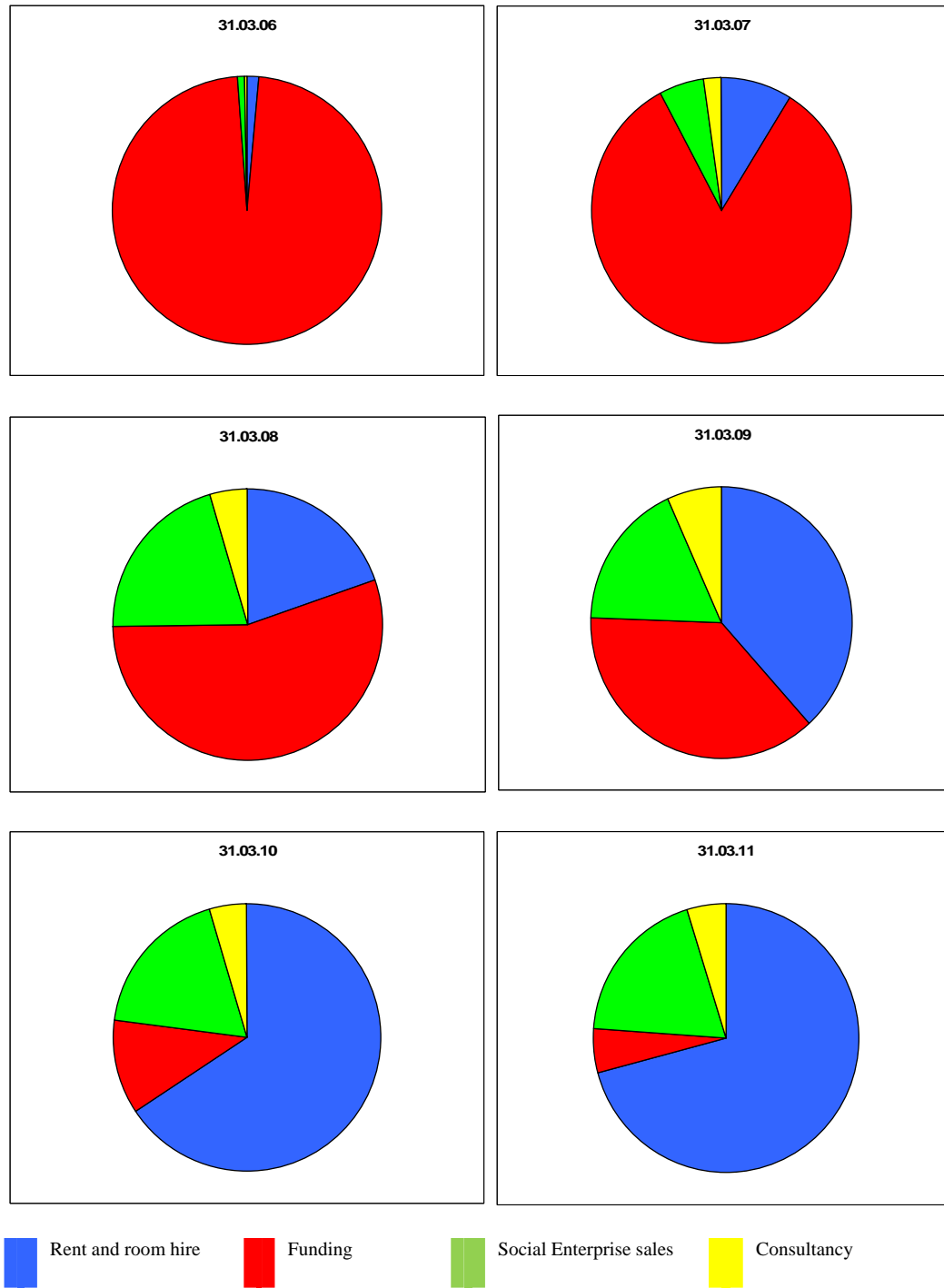
organizational hostility to the council, I commissioned an external investigation into our contribution to the relationship breakdown. Thankfully, the investigation highlighted frustration rather than malice. However, considerable effort was required to rebuild bridges. The episode reinforced how place, place-based organizations and institutions simultaneously constrained and enhanced legitimacy. Marquis et al. argue that the community institutional environment and localized isomorphic forces have been underestimated in the 'emergence of social action by corporations' (2007: 942). I did the same from a third sector perspective, and it was not a mistake I made twice.

#### **4. Approaching sustainability 2007-10**

On March 31<sup>st</sup> 2007 the major public funding ceased. It is a day etched in my memory. I thought we were ready with restructuring to reduce costs and promising income projections from property and social enterprises. Perhaps nothing tells the Trust's story in transiting from public to earned income better than the pie charts over page.

Although income dropped from £3m plus per annum to under £1m (much of the public money was capital), by 2008 over 75% was earned through trading and the remainder through new grants. In public policy terms it was a success, and was heralded as such. In fact, as I suddenly realized, we were actually moving from reliance on grant to property (the Keystone Innovation Centre, in particular), which could be problematic if rental values fell or large units were left empty.





**Figure 3.5: Trust income 2003-11**

The ‘reality shock’ of 2007 required further rounds of restructuring. Although business discipline had been rehearsed, suddenly issues such as cash flow, maximizing income and debt management became of paramount importance. The capacity to innovate, take risks and make mistakes was curtailed. The luxury of specialized internal management capacity (such as information technology and human resources) was removed, moreover the long close-down period for the SRB and European programmes required continued expenditure without additional income. Green Ventures diversified to recycle bikes, but losses and increased competition from national charity chains moving into Thetford resulted in the

closure of the furniture enterprise.<sup>42</sup> Social projects were slimmed down, in particular leisure opportunities for young people. By 2010 the Trust could reinvest surplus from the Keystone Innovation Centre into core costs and projects, but the social enterprises made marginal surpluses at best and grants still had to be pursued to maintain or extend social impact.

Eager to share learning, and to contribute to macro discourses as well as promote the brand and monetize learning to create new income streams, I developed a portfolio of research, publications and consultancy that became mutually reinforcing. Internal or commissioned research was recycled in publications for a national audience. Building on our reputation, knowledge and strengths, consultancy work built up. In turn, this was used for further publications. Lacking internal capacity, I developed a network of associates from ex-colleagues, staff and local universities to build consultancy, research or writing teams, often supported by editorial volunteers keen to build their CVs.

#### *Applying learning: Consultancy*

In the *London Borough of Newham Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Service Review* (Stott, 2006), I developed a ‘critical friend’ approach to consultancy. I had a rather jaundiced view of management consultancy as something commissioned to do others’ ‘dirty work’; mirroring back management’s intentions with a veneer of external independence; and being knowledge brokers (McKenna 2006) who peddled management tools. I believed my somewhat unfair characterization was commonly shared and consultants were viewed with suspicion. As Newham confirmed:

To undertake an external review of any organisation presents challenges as the consultant frequently experiences varying degrees of cooperation, resistance and candour. To review a Service which has experienced a formal investigation and imposed change within the last year potentially adds further resistance – including questioning why bring in an external reviewer and what added value can they bring. (Stott, 2006)

To me, being a ‘critical friend’ meant developing confidence and relationships rapidly at all levels, reserving judgement while doing fieldwork and developing a critique, even if the message was unpopular. I also felt it important to be immersed in many of the issues faced by others rather than being a full-time consultant. The approach worked, as the client director’s response illustrates:

Your report was exactly what I was looking for, an independent, honest and detailed professional view on our area of work. Having talked to many members of my staff they respected and enjoyed your open and honest approach.

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<sup>42</sup> *As Noticas* also made losses, but was handed over to the editorial team who could secure finances that a charity could not, and published until 2011.

We will now use your findings and recommendations to re-shape our service.... The Council, on behalf of the people of Newham, are in your debt and thank you wholeheartedly for your help and professional support in this matter.

If income is the goal, being a critical friend is not necessarily conducive to sustaining client relationships, as I discovered working on *Northstowe Community Trust; consultant's papers* (Stott, 2008) and *Kent youth gatherings and gangs: Full report* (Stott et al., 2009b). In both cases, even after extensive work, the clients did not particularly appreciate the findings. Although perhaps it is the consultant's lot, the failure to persuade was frustrating. The *West Thetford Community Consultation* (Stott and Stott, 2009) report was not circulated to key partners until 2012 because of perceived criticisms of partners. Robust methodologies and evidence was clearly not enough if it conflicted with the organizational agenda or highlighted issues that the client did not wish to be exposed to the public gaze.

Since 'discretion may be the better part of valour', whilst I still approach consultancy with the same attitude, I now spell it out to clients. I tried to incorporate relevant academic perspectives in reports such as *Flagship Housing Group and community engagement* (2009) but rapidly found that clients favoured a concise practitioner orientation, as demonstrated in *West Middlesbrough Neighbourhood Trust: Advice note 3* (Stott, 2009) and *Westwood and Ravensthorpe Development Trust review* (Stott and Flack, 2010). In partnership with the DTA's consultancy, numerous contracts were delivered and the learning recycled into: publications,<sup>43</sup> presentations and articles<sup>44</sup> and in extending the Trust's service portfolio.

Burns argues that 'consultants as leaders' (2010: 72) working across organizational boundaries can generate transformational change. The 'transformational consultancy' process is cyclical combining authority, presence, impact and personal/organizational/field impact and reflection (ibid: 73). I would suggest that being a 'practitioner consultant' adds to authority in fluid fields such as social enterprise or asset transfer. Clients know that the consultant is fully engaged with the same issues they are experiencing. The impact of consultancy work has been significant, financially, in sharing practice and facilitating organizational change, particularly work supporting asset transfers and sustainability plans.<sup>45</sup> It has been a two-way process, as learning from others has been incorporated into organizational practice and publications.

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<sup>43</sup> For instance 'Managing Financial Risk' (Stott, 2009).

<sup>44</sup> For instance 'Eco towns can thrive with trusts' (Stott, 2008).

<sup>45</sup> See *Age UK Eastern region 'Fit for Purpose', review for Age UK Suffolk* (Stott, 2011).

### *Creating and disseminating knowledge: Keystone publications*

Keystone's first nationally oriented publication, *Workers on the Move: migrant workers, growth and housing in the eastern region* (Wiles et al., 2008), engaged head on with the increasingly acrimonious discourse around European migration. It sought to challenge myths and institutional norms through engaged scholarship consisting of a fusion of practitioners and academics. Although engaged in institutional work regionally to promote the economic benefits of migration, I was angered by the experiences of META clients, the silence from the main beneficiaries (employers) and the unhelpful contributions from Ministers.<sup>46</sup> If others would not stand up in public, I was determined that Keystone should. Collaborating with likeminded funders and a Board prepared to take risks, the publication provided a blueprint for all subsequent publications, with multi-disciplinary writing teams; an evidence base; a challenge to public policy; a challenge to institutions and promotion of alternatives. The links with academia were particularly important, bringing rigour, critique and legitimacy. Of course, the publications also showcased Keystone's work and contributed to the national brand recognition so crucial in securing new income.

*Learning from the Past? Building community in New Towns and growth areas* (Stott, M. et al., 2009) originated in the frustration generated by my consultancy experiences and asked:

Do we learn from the past or make the same mistakes and continually re-learn lessons that were evident to our regeneration forebears? Do we 'talk the community talk' prior to new regeneration schemes only to see our aspirations unravel as schemes progress? (ibid: 4)

The publication sought to be a primer in community development approaches as well as to argue that we did *not* learn; it also crystallized a concept of community infrastructure to explain the symbiotic relationship between people, places and property that I felt to be the bedrock of building resilient communities (ibid: 18) and subsequently integrated into the Trust's approach.

Emerging from the everyday practice within META of linking individuals to health services, *Workers on the Move 3: European migrant workers and health in the UK: The evidence*. (Collis et al., 2010b, 2010c) built on *Workers on the Move 2* (Collis et al., 2010a) to counter myths of 'health tourism' and understand migrant health needs. I believe it made a significant contribution to local health discourses and the first in depth analysis involving primary research with migrants. It also exemplified co-production of ideas with sympathetic health professionals, META staff and migrants.

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<sup>46</sup> Including Margaret Hodge and Gordon Brown (see Wiles et al., 2008, pp. 9, 12).

The publications' strengths were: they were rooted in everyday practice; informed by academic discourses and thoroughly researched. For Tracey, the publications contributed to the Trust's efforts to undermine dominant macro cultural discourses and create alternative micro-narratives (2012: 21). I took particular pride in the fact that a relatively small organization could mobilize internal and external resources to make such interventions, as well as deriving personal satisfaction from maintaining intellectual engagement with academic colleagues.

#### *Disseminating learning: Films and social media*

Initiated by The Asset Transfer Unit, a series of films featuring the Trust's work was commissioned to provide learning materials for policy makers and practitioners and linked to You Tube and Facebook groups. The films are presented as supporting evidence to illustrate socio-economic interventions (see Appendix i).

#### *Engaging with Government*

In 2008 I was appointed to the National Community Forum (NCF), the DCLG's Ministerial sounding board on poor communities. My most important contribution<sup>47</sup> was to advocate research, to facilitate access within Thetford, and to contribute to editorial discussions on a report on 'white poor' communities and sources of resentment to minorities (Garner et al., 2009). The research provided an important contribution to problematizing the issue, potential solutions and stimulus for further studies (Garner, 2011). However, the nuances of the report were lost in increasingly racialized political interventions and press coverage,<sup>48</sup> not least concerning the fact that many European migrants were white poor (Bates, 2011). It was a salutary lesson in how politics can trump considered discourse. If anything, the reaction to the report and the Secretary of State's focus on the 'betrayal' of the 'ignored poor' intensified anti-migrant opinion, compounding local legitimacy problems.

#### *Applying innovation: Asset counterweight strategy*

External agencies often offered to transfer 'assets' such as redundant churches, public buildings or community centres. The expectation was that a third sector organization could reduce costs and ensure viability - a chimera, as most were located in poor places, were aging and required substantial investment. Accompanied by restrictive covenants, I

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<sup>47</sup> Apart from telling a junior Minister that Labour's policy was 'accumulating not accumulative' in poor places.

<sup>48</sup> See, for instance, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1104046/Britains-betrayed-white-working-classes-believe-immigrants-receive-better-treatment.html>; <http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/2089249/White-working-class-ignored.html>;

considered most to be liabilities rather than assets. When dealing with marginal property or land and limited resources it is an uphill task to make a scheme workable, as the time, costs and creativity required are immense.

While investigating how to make a community centre viable, I suggested a scheme to knock it down, rebuild on a smaller-scale and accompany it with a housing scheme,<sup>49</sup> conceptualized as a counterweight strategy. The strategy involved a liability being transferred with land or property that could generate income to cross-subsidize the running costs and activities of community facilities. The land or property did not necessarily have to be on the same site as the more economically viable the better. Such an arrangement meant that a local authority did not have to continue with revenue support. The irony was that councils frequently cross-subsidized property within their portfolio or adopted a similar approach for housing developments, but resisted the idea of transferring income-generating land or property to underpin a third sector organization's revenue. With St John's in Mildenhall, the council was persuaded: four schemes, several years and numerous partners later, the scheme should achieve planning permission in 2012. Keystone will own two houses to rent and have the new centre.

I applied the learning to numerous asset transfer consultancy projects and attempted to influence the discourse through giving evidence to commissions, writing case studies and influencing local authorities. The work resulted in securing a £50k grant to advise third sector organizations across the region in 2010 (see Stott and Allison, 2011) and new partnerships to deliver counterweight projects.

## **5. Innovation within austerity 2010-12**

By 2009 it was apparent that the Trust's strategy was reasonably sound. Within an unforgiving context, core socio-economic projects could be sustained through trading activity and targeted grant funding. On the cusp of being able to invest more in new projects, the management team provided the capacity to innovate, take risks and make provocative interventions into national discourses. Local legitimacy had been strengthened through sustained interventions and engagement with local forums. I felt the Trust had truly become an entrepreneurial third sector organization. Then the financial world caved in.

Public austerity, coupled with a new Government that envisaged civic society providing services as the state retreated, has created opportunity and threats. Opportunities arose from public divestment of services and assets that third sector organizations could deliver

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<sup>49</sup> See <http://www.atu.org.uk/StJohns> for a summary of the scheme.

if it was financially viable to do so. Threats were a reduction of resources available to third sector organizations that primarily rely on public grants, as well as the impact of service reduction on vulnerable people and places.

Well positioned to take advantage of opportunities and not over-reliant on public monies, I advocated continued growth while continually reviewing efficiency and effectiveness. If the worst happened, the Trust could retrench and be totally sustainable, albeit with less social delivery and senior staff, including myself. As the financial crisis intensified, the Trust explored new alliances, areas of business and challenges to social policy; innovation and adaptation became a necessity rather than a choice.

### *Challenging the Big Society*

Alarmed by the aspirational but incoherent policy push for a Big Society, I persuaded funders to support a critical contribution early in the debate whereby 22 academics and practitioner authors wrote papers on a voluntary basis. Produced rapidly and on a shoestring, coordination was like herding cats and the final edit was daunting. Nationally launched<sup>50</sup> in 2011, *The Big Society Challenge* (Stott, M. 2011) was distributed to Ministers, senior politicians and ‘thought leaders’ across the UK. Received well, the book was extensively commented on in reviews and blogs. For Caan, it was ‘the most controversial book I have read in a long time’<sup>51</sup> and the Faith-based Regeneration Network added;

This has to be one of the few books which successfully draws together a range of opinion alongside a detailed and objective resource of factual information about Big Society.<sup>52</sup>

In the paper *Big Society, Poor Places*, Longhurst (an ex-staff member) and I laid out our rather jaundiced opinions of a succession of isomorphic ‘viral concepts’ and the impact on poor places. The paper provides a concise summation of my professional learning and intellectual contributions. Impassioned and somewhat polemic at times, *Big Society, Poor Places* combined informed critique with potential alternatives. It also foreshadowed a call for improved local institutions for poorer places built on long-term alliances of public, private and entrepreneurial third sector organizations that coloured my subsequent work.

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<sup>50</sup> See <http://locality.org.uk/resources/community-voices-explore-big-society-challenge-book-keystone/>

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storyCode=415407&sectioncode=26>

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.fbrn.org.uk/reading/big-society-challenge>

## *The Place Makers*

The counterweight principle, ensuring that within any transfer or cluster of transfers there is real income generation potential that can be utilized to cross-subsidize more vulnerable facilities or services, was central to the regional project ‘*The Place Makers*’. Elizabeth Truss MP wrote,

The Place Makers has been an innovative project led by Keystone which I hope will prove a useful model for local communities and groups to provide community infrastructure and services.

There are currently so many assets lying un- or underused that can be given a new lease of life by people willing to take a risk or put in new energy. The Place Makers has given assistance to local organisations in finding sustainable ways to deliver local services while providing support on the transfer of assets to communities. (Quoted in Stott and Allison, 2011: 3)

The project supported numerous groups and provided strategic advice to local authorities. It also generated significant evidence to critique policy and contribute to the burgeoning asset transfer discourse. The shift from demand (by community groups) to supply-led (public disposal within austerity) was flooding the ‘community asset marketplace’ with uneconomic property. Unrealistic ‘hyper-expectations’ by local authorities, isomorphic pressure to become asset-based social enterprises and forgetting assets are often ‘for life, not just Christmas’, all put sustainable transfers at risk ( Stott and Allison, 2011: 32).

The learning was applied to subsequent requests for advice, consultancy projects and engagement with national forums and also led to new opportunities and alliances. It illustrates the fusion of concepts, testing learning in the field and making the most of limited resources to generate innovative solutions.

### *Market shaping: Work and aspirations*

Austerity brings increased social need. I became increasingly worried about rising unemployment and the ability of local people to compete in a diminishing labour market, and also the Trust’s contribution. Approached by private sector-led consortia to deliver Government work programmes, I was concerned about colluding with increasingly punitive social policy as well as the ability to deliver at the fees offered. Building on previous practice of combining a review of the issues, research and pilots, Keystone embarked on a series of projects aimed at co-producing interventions with local people that focused on trust and relationships rather than coercion.

In *Work Matters: Work, worklessness and community: A review of the issues* (Collis et al., 2011) we sought to understand how policy impacted on poor places. From early



experiences with adult Work Clubs and Volunteer 2 Work<sup>53</sup> and primary research, *Supporting Those Furthest From the Labour Market: The Keystone Approach* (Tracey et al., 2011) and *Supporting Volunteers* (Patterson et al., 2011) were developed. The former built on my own research interests in organizational socialization (Stott, 2010) and dialogue with Paul Tracey who was undertaking a nine-month ethnographic study of Keystone. It is a clear articulation of the Trust's ethos to socio-economic interventions:

We focus in particular on supporting people at the margins of society who appear to many agencies as the 'hardest to reach', who have fallen through cracks of formal support structures, who live in the poorest communities, and who feel they have been abandoned. The approach that we have developed has proved very effective at improving the lives of this group of unemployed people.

There is no mystery to what we do. Our success is rooted in three simple principles. First, we consider our clients as individuals with distinct aspirations and expectations, who require tailored solutions. Second, we think about people at the margins as resources to be developed rather than problems to be solved. Third, we take the time to build trusting relationships that are underpinned by positive reinforcement rather than threats or sanctions. (Tracey et al., 2011: 2)

What was proposed was an alternative to prevalent 'carrot and stick' solutions to worklessness. Although more resource intensive, it resonated better with how people wished to be treated by support agencies. In effect, we tried to shape rather than respond to the market. The work club concept was 'sold' to numerous local authorities. With Suffolk County Council (SCC), school-based work clubs were developed to pilot new approaches to reduce the number of young people Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETs). SCC had invested significant resources in the past with mixed results. Further co-production with *Raising Employment Aspirations and Expectations Among Young People in Suffolk: The Aspirations Escalator Project* (Mobbs et al., 2011) led to a pilot community aspirations project combining research and multiple interventions (Leonard and Stott, 2012).

Although successful and popular, support in finding work only goes so far. The problem remains if there is little suitable work to find. With the 'magic widget' still illusive, I began to create an alliance with two counties to develop a youth employment social enterprise focused on county farm holdings, in essence creating social premium products to be sold into affluent markets.

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<sup>53</sup> Practical training in bike refurbishment within Green Ventures Bikes, coupled with the development of soft skills like time-keeping and team work.

## *Alliances*

Isomorphic pressures have pushed public and third sector organizations to adopt business practices since the 1990s and today entrepreneurialism is in vogue (Eikenberry and Kluver, 2004). The hybridization of the third sector, a ‘mix of value creation’ (Battilana et al., 2012: 9) is on the increase (c.f Billis, 2010). According to Battilana et al., the essence of the ‘hybridization movement’ ‘is a fundamental convergence and reconfiguration of the social and commercial sectors, from completely separate fields to a common space’ (ibid: 10). In the UK there is increased hybridity within the public sector as it develops new income streams through commercial projects, as well as mutuals and social enterprises to divest services. This represents a return, perhaps, to the municipal socialism (or ‘gas and water socialism’) pioneered by Birmingham in the early twentieth century (Hunt, 2004: 250). The private sector also competes in the policy pound marketplace and is not immune to isomorphic pressures to be more socially responsible (Marquis et al., 2007), or to integrate social and commercial logics (Battilana, et al., 2012). The development trust experience is that achieving hybridization is challenging and does not yet ‘offer a bold, sustainable infusion of humanitarian principles into modern capitalism’ (ibid: 11). Blurring boundaries brings the threat of increased competition for entrepreneurial third sector (as public or private driven hybrids usually have more resources at their disposal), but also the opportunity to innovate.

The SCC examples above illustrate a successful alliance to innovate and secure new resources: co-production through shared values and expertise. However, issues of trust and power remain prevalent between the public and third sectors (Stott and Longhurst, 2011: 105). Boundaries tend to be conflicted, complex and in flux. Negotiating new institutions, service or organizational forms is a considerable challenge. The distinct logics of community and commerce are ingrained. The capacity of small organizations to innovate through alliances is constrained and costs of entry high. As De Domenico et al. argue, while local authorities view social enterprises as ‘means to achieve flexibility in contracting out services’, they do not necessarily pay the ‘private sector premium’ (2009: 989), which inhibits the accumulation of surpluses. Many third sector organizations only consider alliances *within* the sector in extremis (mergers) or when pushed by state policy, such as recent infrastructure organization consortium funding. However, alongside new asset and social enterprise development I see alliance-building across sectors as a key means of delivering mission and sustainability into the future. Even unsuccessful attempts (such as a shared company for the delivery of a council’s community services) increase trust and create unsuspected opportunities. One approach is to create shared hybrids, the other is to

maximize the added value each sector can bring to shared projects with complementary objectives. For instance, a local council is investing in building a hotel or cinema complex with food outlets to regenerate a town centre. The investment will be recouped through long-term leases in the private sector. Keystone intends to deliver social value through the creation of a local food social enterprise restaurant that employs and trains young people.

### *Keystone 2012*

As the Trust approaches its tenth birthday, I believe it has made significant socio-economic interventions and engaged in institutional work in pursuit of its social justice mission.

According to Tracey:

I have conducted research on social and community enterprise since 2003, and have studied many different kinds of social venture... [in] my judgement.... Keystone has done remarkably well since its inception almost nine years ago. Indeed, it has been more successful than any other equivalent community enterprise that I have seen in the UK (what I did not appreciate before my time here is the distinctive challenges involved in rural community enterprise, which makes commercial revenue generation much harder than in urban settings).

Working in challenging circumstances in an increasingly difficult financial climate, the staff and the Board should take much satisfaction in what they have accomplished.... I have seen first-hand that Keystone is making a real difference to the community it serves.... On the commercial side, the strategy to focus in the early years on using public money to invest in assets in order (as far as possible) to achieve a degree of financial sustainability has paid dividends. Indeed, it has allowed Keystone to develop in a way that few other rural community enterprises have been able to do. (2012c: 2)

Sustainability remains a key aspect of the financial and leadership considerations in achieving that. To be able to respond to increasing social need the Trust has to secure new income amidst a perfect storm of reducing public and philanthropic grants, as well as declining demand for rental space and other services. Considerable organizational work continues in improving financial performance in addition to new projects and alliances (see the current 'transformation strategy' in KDT, 2011b). While the Board continues to invest in staff, it could retrench and weather the storm rather than take continued risks. As Tracey points out:

Keystone's success is anchored in its leadership; Keystone has a very strong senior management team with complementary skills. Keystone is somewhat vulnerable to the departure of any of them. (ibid)

Through Trustee development, devolved leadership and co-production, I have attempted to develop a succession strategy. Disentangling perceptions of personalized leadership and a degree of dependence (both personally and for others) is a challenge. As Farquhar points out, the bond is an emotional one with accompanying loss and uncertainty when broken (1994). I enjoy leading the organization and have invested considerable time and energy,

as a leader should. There is always another challenge to overcome or the time is never right to move on. I have demonstrated that Keystone is co-produced, but perceptions remain that as ‘founding’ Chief Executive my role is central to its future. This is not uncommon in small organizations, be they charities or private sector businesses, in particular, family businesses.

Succession is always traumatic for both parties if the leader is seen as particularly effective. The departing leader can feel guilty that they are leaving the organization in the lurch. The organization can feel resentful and anxious. For Farquhar, planned succession reduces the risks of emotional trauma and includes good communication and a focus on the mission and the future (ibid: 45). Ensuring that the organization can seamlessly continue its long-term mission to serve vulnerable beneficiaries has to be the overriding concern. Clearly no-one is irreplaceable, but for a serving leader to downplay their importance to an organization is not necessarily easy. Personal identity and worth is inextricably tied up with being *the* leader. I suggest that the key to succession is confidence: the confidence of Boards in their own abilities, and in the wider staff team. Furthermore, confidence needs to be engendered in key partners that succession will not disrupt services. This confidence can only be nurtured if the leader demonstrates Mintzberg’s ‘engaged management’, which puts the organization before self-interest (2004). I would hope this reflects my leadership style. On balance, I believe Keystone to be robust enough to make the transition if necessary, and its values, mission and impact sustained.

#### *Still between a rock and a hard place?*

Reflecting on the public works has brought me to the conclusion that place-oriented entrepreneurial third sector organizations are still well and truly between a rock and a hard place. On one level it is symptomatic of attempting to fuse institutional logics within a hybrid organization. As Tracey et al. argue, ‘it is a particularly complex form of institutional entrepreneurship’ as the different logics ‘may have little in common and may even be on conflict’ (2011: 60). The literature focuses on the fusion of community or social and market logics but, as Greenwood et al. (2011) argue, organizations may have to contend with *multiple* logics. I would suggest that development trusts also attempt to combine elements of a public logic, as the local state retreats and public assets such as parks and service hubs, as well as aspects of political engagement (for instance youth work) are divested. For Greenwood et al., ‘attention to how *non-market* institutions and logics might influence economic transactions has been particularly missing’ (forthcoming). This is certainly the case in the literature on entrepreneurial third sector organizations.

I prefer Kraatz's term, 'pluralistic organization', to 'hybrid'. Organizations are built on the 'fault lines' of institutional logics (2009: 71) and have the opportunity to 'develop a unique and distinctive diachronic character as they attempt to work out their (externally produced) internal tensions (ibid: 72). Pluralistic organizations have to embrace complexity, stakeholders who ascribe it with different logics and that legitimacy 'rests upon a number of distinct macro-institutional foundations' (ibid: 71). Such organizations do require pluralistic leadership drawing on management theory and practice from across the sectors, a challenge academia has yet to address.

The fault lines are becoming contested as isomorphic pressures are moving public and private actors towards becoming *virtuous organizations*, assuming the perceived virtue of the third sector. While a potential threat to the existing entrepreneurial third sector, it is not necessarily detrimental if new pluralistic organizations manage to sustain public services and are value-driven. I take issue with the assumed virtue inherent in adding 'social' or 'community' to an enterprise or in becoming a charity or Community Interest Company. Assuming the virtuous mantle does not necessarily make any organization fair, democratic or cooperative, including extant third sector organizations. Without public subsidy, I suspect new actors will experience the same tensions and sustainability issues. I also suspect leaders emerging from the public or private sector will face similar challenges to those I faced in the transition.

The key pressures on place-based third sector organizations are public austerity and increased isomorphic pressures to rescue services or buildings. Public austerity has intensified the retreat of the state from delivering universal welfare services as well as paring back statutory and ceasing many discretionary services. Public austerity adds to the impoverishment of poor people and places as public, cultural and community infrastructure declines, as well as income levels. It accelerates the decline of 'principled agents' within communities who emphasize service rather than self, in other words public servants. It also accelerates the demolition of networks and cross-logic forums that were important sites for institutional work such as regional agencies and Local Strategic Partnerships. The emergent institutional logic of the state is 'don't turn to us, sort it out yourself'. The localism agenda brings numerous 'community rights', but not necessarily the resources to apply such rights in poor places. Without the public pound to sustain activity, many third sector organizations will struggle to deliver their mission as social need increases. Many are mimicking development trusts in a turn to asset-backed income streams as the coercive pressure of public cuts intensifies. Many also face local isomorphic pressures to rescue services, as well as instinctively wanting to react to need.

For entrepreneurial third sector-based in poor places, the trauma of austerity is likely to impact on the ability to deliver a pluralistic strategy, let alone innovate. However, in the face of adversity, I believe that the institutional and organizational work to create or sustain socio-economic interventions has to be intensified. As Crutchfield and McLeod Grant argue, in ‘tumultuous times’ the real power lies in connecting the dots, collaborating, and leveraging the power of networks and relationships (2012: 7). It will require a new form of pluralistic leadership that can negotiate institutional logics, create value-driven alliances, and capitalize on sparse opportunities and experiment.

## **6. Conclusion**

This chapter has presented Keystone Development Trust as a public work. It has focused on the institutional and organizational work undertaken to develop and sustain the Trust. Using a retrospective framework it has outlined the process of critiquing and reformulating the institutional logics that frame development trusts and social enterprises; in particular tackling the tensions and paradoxes inherent in models that attempt to mix value creation. It has provided an overview and reflection on the organizational and personal journey and presented a range of evidence in support of the claim that an organization is a public work. While they are public works in their own right, the documents, publications and projects were created to fulfil organizational mission. In other words they are to understand, enhance or explain the experiences of an organization seeking to deliver holistic socio-economic impact within a challenging context. Over and above the impact on beneficiaries, Keystone as a public work has been a site of experimentation, creativity and innovation. As such, it has contributed to knowledge generation and the cumulative experience of entrepreneurial third sector organizations who occupy a precarious space. It has also contributed to discourses around social justice, the creation and maintenance of community and reconceptualization of the relationship between the state, economy and place. It has demonstrated that, to make lasting change, organizational work, institutional work and socio-economic interventions occur simultaneously. This insight will be explored further in the concluding chapter.

This chapter has also highlighted the interplay between a personal contribution through leadership and the intellectual struggle to problematize, adapt and innovate, and co-production. While I believe that organizations are co-produced, co-production requires an enabling leadership ethos and the ability to be reflexive. My substantive contribution has been to blend experience, experimentation and academic study to provide actionable insights as well as create the space for co-production. Community organization’s legitimacy and impact depends on co-production with stakeholders. Keystone as a public

work also demonstrates that co-production alliances between practitioners and academia enhance an organization's ability to learn.

Keystone is a public work in progress. Like all organizations it has continually to adapt and innovate to ensure it can fulfil its mission. The concluding chapter reflects on my professional and personal contribution as well as the theoretical framework of the mutually reinforcing organizational work, institutional work and socio-economic interventions.

## 4. Reflections on the Public Works

Preparing this submission for a professional doctorate has provided an invaluable opportunity to reflect on an organizational, professional and personal journey that has been simultaneously daunting and exciting. As a public work, Keystone has a ‘unique and distinctive diachronic character’ (Kraatz, 2009: 72) and made a sustained contribution to the wellbeing of its beneficiaries. I have demonstrated how my professional and personal development has contributed to a value-driven, co-production approach to leadership and creation of the public works. Part of the Keystone culture no doubt reflects my own ideology, idiosyncrasies and obsessions, however my overriding concern has been to create and sustain an organization that will continue to deliver social value through entrepreneurship long after its founders have moved on.

### **Making change**

The public works and reflection on them within this statement has provided evidence of the changes made through my professional practice. As Chief Executive I have facilitated change at an individual or locality level (beneficiaries), organizational level (internal and external) and field levels (the ‘movement’). For recent UNICEF visitors, the Trust exemplifies ‘courage, creativity and ability to flex.’<sup>54</sup>

Combining intellectual engagement and practice has considerably improved my awareness, leadership and impact. I would suggest that my leadership is ‘embodied’, combining values, anger directed at social injustice and a will to make a difference: emotional leadership with intrinsic motivation (Goleman, 2004). Intrinsic motivation underpins the resilience required to cope with the frustrations, setbacks and awareness that as an individual and organization you can never do enough, but never enough is better than nothing. Embodied leadership is not unique to the third sector, but it is crucial in sustaining it. As embodied leaders are often ‘dissatisfied with existing practices’ (Zietsma and McKnight 2009: 196), it also sustains institutional work as ‘most disruption and creation are conditional upon lowered investment in or disinvestment from the current institutional order’ (Voronov and Vince, 2012: 66). Embodied leaders within pluralistic organizations faced with conflicting institutional demands could acquiesce and imitate institutional models that appear to work; compromise (balance competing demands or privilege one over others); defy and challenge; or manipulate ‘to *influence* the definition of norms

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<sup>54</sup> E mail from R. Hill, Judge Business School



through active lobbying or, more radically, to *control* the source of pressure’ (Pache and Santos, 2010: 463). Although defiance and manipulation are ‘more risky for organizations which may lose institutional support in the process’ (ibid: 464), I would argue that for organizations serving marginalized communities it is an essential element of making change.

Conscious that organizations are co-produced and the personal aggrandisement may lead to enhanced job prospects, but rarely an ‘engaged management that cares’ (Mintzberg in Kleiner, 2010), I have tried to work through others and nurture talent. This is increasingly true as the organization matures and develops its own logics. To avoid the ‘forever leader’ pitfalls (Farquhar, 1994), since embarking on the Doctorate in Professional Studies I have given particular attention to internal capacity building. I was also reminded of the importance of networks, as ‘establishing influence and authority may require the activation or cultivation of networks’ (Rojas, 2010: 1276). Austerity has disrupted longstanding formal networks, but through building new alliances and judicious use of personal networks Keystone still manages to exert influence disproportionate to its size. The challenge now is to strengthen the capacity to network through Trustees and staff, as well as creating new formal networks with external partners.

Conscious that organizations can ossify into an accumulation of customs of practices or become a ‘self-licking lollipop’ (one that perpetuates itself for internal, rather than external benefit), I actively encourage self, internal and external critique. Leadership accounts often privilege unswerving confidence and decisiveness, but rarely stress doubt and uncertainty. Uncertainty has been central to the Keystone experience and doubt over the ability to operationalize the model is a fundamental driver, as this submission demonstrates.

A key role I and colleagues have played is in translating knowledge, defined by Straus et al. as:

[A] dynamic and iterative process that includes the synthesis, dissemination, exchange and ethically sound application of knowledge... a move beyond the simple dissemination of knowledge into actual use of knowledge. (2009: 165)

As Chapter 4 and the supportive evidence illustrate, knowledge translation has been integral to my approach and the Trust’s work since inception. The process has improved and intensified over time. I am particularly proud of our contributions on migration and work that have translated into effective local action. According to Tracey:

I have seen first-hand that Keystone is making a real difference to the community it serves. While it is making a strong contribution in many areas, I would point in particular to two sets of activities that are having an especially significant effect. The first is the *works clubs*. I... spoke with many of the clients, who told me that the work clubs had made a real difference to their lives. In addition to helping

people find work, the work clubs play a crucial role in helping to build confidence and self-esteem. What's more, the results have been achieved with remarkably limited resources.

Second, it is clear that *META* is offering a valuable service for migrant workers in Thetford and surrounding areas. In the interviews I conducted with *META* clients I was repeatedly told that without the support of Keystone there would no formal support in place at all for migrant workers. I realise that some in the community have questioned whether Keystone should develop services to support this particular group, but I have met some very vulnerable people who have been the victim of exploitation, and would have continued to be so were it not for interventions on the part of Keystone. (2012.c: 2)

Collaboration and co-production has proven to be an organizational strength. Cultivating a sense of ownership and the co-production of products and services, following the St Vincent de Paul example, has ensured the commitment and growth of staff. Creating co-production alliances with funders has proved to be more effective than a more traditional client/ contractor role. Although time-consuming, it has led to the design, implementation and adaptation of services that have had significant impact and are increasingly co-produced with beneficiaries.

Keystone's research and publications have demonstrated the impact of translating knowledge, not least the dissemination of alternative discourses and turning knowledge into action. Without co-production through external networks, most of the public works would not have been possible. The success of the works lies in the fusion of academic and practitioner perspectives, as well as giving a voice to vulnerable beneficiaries through local research.<sup>55</sup> Engaged scholarship is a 'collective achievement' (Van de Ven, 2007: 297) that aims to overcome the partial specialized knowledge of academics and practitioners to create knowledge co-production to tackle complex problems (ibid: 4). Embedding an engaged scholarship approach within an organization focused on *doing* has not been without challenges. Practitioner and academic worlds can be insular and self-reinforcing (op.cit). Practitioners are focused on rapidly making sense of complexity, simplifying it, finding 'answers' and action. Academics can be perceived as unduly complicating issues and offering more uncertainty than clarity. Audiences, language and outputs (for instance papers versus policy documents) are also very different. Within Keystone I have attempted to communicate the added value of engaged scholarship and create works that are theoretically informed and of practical use. Future publications will follow *Workers on the*

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<sup>55</sup> Access to such voices has been built on the trust and relationships created overtime. Keystone, given its ability to reach people and places others cannot, has also hosted numerous research projects, for instance research with migrants by: the Equalities and Human Rights Commission; Universities of East Anglia. Kent and Cambridge. This would not have been possible with Eastern European communities without trust (as well as having staff with the appropriate language skills) as many are reluctant to engage with state agencies or concerned how information may be used.

*Move 3*, which was accompanied by a separate short research briefing modelled on the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's approach.<sup>56</sup>

A further strength is the willingness to engage with contentious issues and put the organization 'over the parapet'. This is not unique, but I get the impression that it is uncommon, for third sector organizations' sustainability increasingly rests on acquiescence with public policy and the pursuit declining resources. Reflecting on this public work and the challenges ahead, a next project will be another multi-authored book, *Challenging localism: austerity, economy and community*, which aims to problematize the 'community rights' enshrined in the Localism Act 2011.<sup>57</sup>

Making change has not come without organizational and personal challenges. Legitimacy, reputation and status are organizational resources to be nurtured and protected, but are also the product of social judgements. Institutional theory has privileged organizational work in legitimacy construction, regarding stakeholder 'audiences' as passive (Bitektine, 2011: 151). In fact, social judgements can be 'a matter of life and death for an organization' (ibid: 152) as well as impacting on vulnerable beneficiaries. Social judgements are formed around the following dimensions of legitimacy: procedural (processes such as governance); consequential (outcomes); structural (morally favourable form); personal (leader's charisma); and linkages with highly legitimate external actors (ibid: 156). While conscious of the stakeholders' role in creating legitimacy, on reflection more attention needs to be given to different audience's perceptions and how they form judgements about the Trust.

### **Conceptual frameworks**

While unique and distinctive in its local context, the Trust is one of many struggling with similar issues. Far from heroic, our collective endeavours on the fault lines of institutional logics (Kraatz, 2009) are fragile and tentative, riven with paradoxes and uncertainty. Motivation for such work is partly the satisfaction of emotional needs (Voronov and Vince, 2012), such as 'feeling good about doing good', but primarily about creating new relationships between people, places and the market built on mutual aid and solidarity.

In understanding the contribution to creation of new knowledge I am mindful of Loch's concerns:

[I]mpact comes neither from building theories in back rooms (these inevitably remain dry and sterile) nor from touting experience in 'war stories' (experience often does not hold up under different circumstances or with a different person). Impact comes from combining both. (2012)

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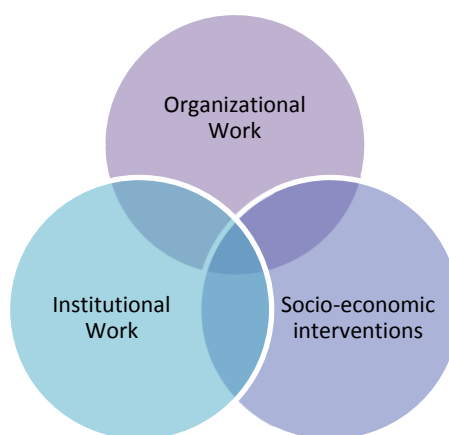
<sup>56</sup> See <http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications>

<sup>57</sup> See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/communityrights/>

What Keystone as a public work contributes is a conscious attempt to problematize, experiment, create and disseminate organizational knowledge rather than purely ‘peaches and cream’ (Pharoah et al. 2004. 29) rhetoric. One strength has been the alliances and personal engagement with academia that have tempered the ‘war stories’ and provided an external critical gaze.

Kraatz argues that ‘*individual organizations are important venues for institutional work*’ (Kraatz, 2009: 84 – author’s emphasis), however the ‘paradox of embedded agency’ remains. If institutions shape and constrain, how can actors make change (Battilana and D’Aunno, 2009)? Following Marti and Meir (2009), one approach is to understand when agency is possible and avoid ‘tilting at windmills’. I would suggest that when working on the fault lines or with stigmatized and disadvantaged communities, there is no alternative but to attempt to challenge, adapt or change institutions if the organizational mission is to be achieved.

Interrogating my Keystone experience through the conceptual lens of institutional and organizational work highlighted that my approach to social innovation combined mutually reinforcing organizational and institutional work with socio-economic interventions:



**Figure 4.1 Mutually reinforcing approach to social innovation**

Reflecting on Chapter 4, the key features of each element are outlined below:

	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples (European Migrants)</b>
<b>Organizational Work</b>	Investigate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fieldwork and research</li> </ul>
	Formulate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue with migrants</li> </ul>
	Secure internal legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform and persuade</li> </ul>
	Secure resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bend existing and bid</li> </ul>
	Deploy and manage, monitor	
	Monitor and evaluate	
<b>Institutional Work</b>	Understand	<p>Migrant institutions, impact on host community institutions; institutional conflict and potential bridges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fieldwork, dialogue and research</li> </ul>
	Challenge/ disrupt	<p>Host institutions; attitudes to migration. Migrants' attitudes towards UK institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Workers on the Move' series</li> <li>• Evidence to commissions</li> <li>• Media engagement</li> <li>• Forums and presentations</li> <li>• Direct challenge to individuals and agencies</li> <li>• Myth-busting</li> </ul>
	Bridge/shape/amend	<p>Modify discourses, locate common ground</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural interaction</li> <li>• Cultural awareness courses for agencies</li> </ul>
	Change/ create	<p>Change or create new discourses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits of migration</li> <li>• Migration as normal and routine</li> </ul>
<b>Socio-economic Interventions</b>	Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple local and regional projects for migrants</li> <li>• Integration projects</li> <li>• Ensure migrant access to services i.e. GPs</li> </ul>

**Table 4.1: Key features of mutually reinforcing work**

By incorporating the above within Boyd's OODA loop, the process looks like this;



**Figure 4.2: Process model**

The paradoxes inherent in the Trust’s work, as well as the local context, have led to sustained institutional work to achieve mission. While organizations simultaneously undertake institutional and organizational work and interventions, the Keystone experience is that action has been phased, at least initially (1-3 above). During each phase more observation, orientation and decision making occurs before further action.

Building an organization on the fault lines required intensive and simultaneous *internal* organizational and institutional work *before* embarking on coherent socio-economic interventions. For instance, organizational work took place securing resources for property development and the institutional work around challenging internal stakeholders’ norms of charitable activities. In delivering the socio-economic interventions, the institutional work became more *externally* focused. The operation of META’s advice service led to sustained disruption and challenge to community and agency attitudes to European migration.

Learning from experience, the organization then re-oriented and modified or intensified its action accordingly.

The model provides a useful explanatory framework for the processes that organizations undertake. Further observations are that, as the context becomes more complex or challenging, institutional work in particular intensifies. It also intensifies if significant resistance is encountered, such as organizational stigma and challenges to legitimacy. Such work occurs at field, environment, organizational and actor levels and is often simultaneous. I believe the model captures our organizational experience and makes a contribution to the literature.

The literature on place-based entrepreneurial third sector organizations focuses on responses to market and state failure. It often assumes that social enterprise can ameliorate failure or create alternatives through fusing logics. This is a theoretical proposition for which the evidence is far from convincing. Quite apart from the challenges resulting from the dominant tension of dual goals compounded by place, many organizations lack the resources reach on the scale necessary to make a fundamental impact. The impact tends to be localized and closely aligned with public policy and cash. This is not to decry the immense commitment and contribution to local wellbeing. Rather, it reflects the continued power of state isomorphic pressures. However, as localized pluralistic organizations negotiating multiple logics and the problems of legitimacy, governance and change (Kraatz and Block, 2008), they do provide useful sites for an improved understanding of the micro-processes of institutional pluralism. Moreover, as the state retreats and new pluralistic organizations are created in response, there is a pressing need for further research, theory building and dissemination.

Reflecting on my earlier attempts to problematize the Trust model and adapting, repairing and remodelling concepts (Boxenbaum and Rouleau, 2011), contingent 'innovative reconciliations' (De Wit and Meyer, 2004: 2004: 15) were made to the paradoxes driven by learning, belonging, organizing and performing tensions (Smith and Lewis 2011). Initially I focused on the paradoxes created by fusing market and community logics and proposed ways to reconcile them organizationally and contributed to wider discourses. In retrospect I would suggest that localized pluralistic organizations also incorporate aspects of a public logic; especially as the state retreats and isomorphic pressures to take on public services, provide space for democratic engagement or enabling networks intensify. While not necessarily a progressive or sustainable development, it does create new tensions and complexities. An outcome of this professional doctorate is a commitment to explore further the theme of local pluralistic organizations.

In summary, the institutional work literature has proved particularly useful in framing and reflecting upon experience and the creation of a mutually reinforcing model of work and interventions that captures the key processes of the development of Keystone as a public work.

### **Moving forward**

The Doctorate in Professional Studies has provided an opportunity to reflect critically on the Keystone journey, and my role in particular. Preparing the submission has allowed me to revisit our history and think critically about the choices made as we struggled with the paradoxical tensions and our social and economic impact. It has also facilitated critical reflection on the whole of my career and how my leadership style has evolved.

I feel privileged to have been given considerable scope for action over the nine years. I felt it important that Sheila Childerhouse (founding Trust Chair) and Pat Pearson (current Chair), who have had immense faith in my leadership, had an opportunity to comment on the submission. Both felt that it accurately reflects the Keystone journey and provides a timely reflexive critique on which to build future work. Pat found that the submission helped him better understand my influences and approach to leadership. Sheila suggested that I have underplayed the intense ‘fire fighting’ of the early years. While I hope I have summarized the organizational and institutional work setting up the Trust 2003-04, I believe it merits further attention. I would hope to return to the issues surrounding the foundation of organizations on the fault lines of institutional logics in subsequent work on pluralistic organizations and leadership. On re-reading the submission, Sheila added:

I am struck still by how your retrospective telling of the KDT story gives clarity and a shape that at the time was hard to see. It did feel like fire fighting! However, the fact that the organization has been sustainable is down to your leadership, the quality of which we have been immensely fortunate to have, and the strategic clarity you have brought to the Trust’s development.

You are right to comment that the academic work you have undertaken has added much to the Trust and people of the area as well as to yourself.<sup>58</sup>

I feel privileged to lead an organization that prioritizes social justice and action. In writing this submission I have realized how important it is that my values resonate with the organization I work for and to be close enough to everyday practice to see the results of our collective efforts on the lives of the people we serve. I recognize that being ‘up close and personal’ is important for my own motivation and sense of self-worth; making a difference is not purely altruistic.

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<sup>58</sup> Email dated 6/8/12.



Perhaps the most important questions that preparing this submission has raised are whether we have lived up to the expectations of our stakeholders and are doing enough. In terms of organizational longevity we have confounded our local critics. I believe, on balance, we have fulfilled our mission within the limits of the resources available. Financial austerity is impacting on the Trust's ability to meet rising needs, which is both alarming and frustrating. While I recognize that access to resources is crucial for doing more, I am driven by a sense we are never doing enough. I would suggest that what drives social innovators is this sense of inadequacy in the face of social need.

I would also suggest that in leadership *doubt* is *strength*, although certainty is what leaders are usually expected to provide. Doubt can protect individuals and organizations from complacency and hubris. It can also drive innovation, as I hope this submission has demonstrated. If anything, preparing for a Doctorate of Professional Studies has reinvigorated my motivation to engage critically with the doubt and uncertainty that pluralist organizations and leaders confront.

In the constant struggle to sustain social action, promoting an organization or a model is often of paramount importance. Practitioner and organizational stories invariably focus on success rather than uncertainty, doubt and failure. We tend to leave critiques to the academic community. While Keystone has done its fair share of self-promotion, in revisiting our work I have been struck by how the doubt and uncertainty over working the fault lines of institutional logics has created a culture of adaption and innovation as well as critique. I believe we have faced up to the 'awkward realities' (Patton, 2004: 37) and engaged in sustained internal and external discourses to problematize and learn from our and others experiences: in other words, worrying out loud. I have also been struck by how relationships with academia have enhanced the Trust's and my ability continually to reflect and adapt. I hope that this professional doctorate will provide a springboard for further engaged scholarship.

I am being considered as the first social entrepreneur in residence for the Judge Business School, University of Cambridge. If accepted, I intend to raise the profile of social innovation and entrepreneurship with the faculty and postgraduate students through contributing to teaching. I hope to organize seminars to bring practitioners and academics together to explore ideas around pluralistic organizations and the increasing need for any organization to encourage pluralistic leadership. I am also being considered as a Visiting Fellow of the Third Sector Futures initiative at the Lord Ashcroft International Business School, Anglia Ruskin University.

In conclusion, the professional doctorate has allowed me critically to reflect on my experience and provided insights into my practice and motivations, insights which I hope to explore further through academic work, as well as fuelling continual professional development. It has also led to renewed efforts to ensure Keystone Development Trust can meet the challenges ahead (including succession), continue to contest institutions which impact on beneficiaries and to contribute to practitioner and policy discourses.

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## Appendices

### **i: Public works**

The majority of the evidence submitted for assessment is in the public realm. There are number of internal reports which were originally confidential but released for submission by the Keystone's Trustees. To demonstrate the dissemination of learning and impact, the assessors also received a selection of confidential consultancy reports with the client's permission.

#### **a. Publications and documents (public)<sup>59</sup>**

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<sup>59</sup> Some reports were classified confidential at the time. The Board has given permission for release into the public realm.

Collis, A., Stott, N., Crozier R. and Martin, K. 2011. *Work Matters: Work, worklessness and community: A review of the issues*. Keystone Development Trust.  
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KDT 2006b. *What Has Keystone Done for Us?*

KDT. 2007. Annual Report 2007  
<http://www.keystonetrust.org.uk/documents/73.pdf>

KDT. 2007b. Trust Business Plan.

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<http://www.keystonetrust.org.uk/documents/74.pdf>

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*An Introduction to the Keystone Development Trust*. 2010. Asset Transfer Unit.

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*Meet Keystone Development Trust*. .2009 Asset Transfer Unit.

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Stott, N. 2006. *London Borough of Newham Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Service Review*. LBN.

Stott, N. 2008. *Northstowe Community Trust: Consultant's papers*. DTA.

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- Stott, N., Collis, A., Moore, S. and Tracey, P. 2009. *Kent Youth Gatherings and Gangs: Full report*. Kent Police.
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**ii. Supporting evidence (CD1)**

*Equalities newsletters*

*Keystone Partner updates 2006-12*

*Keystone Area Voluntary Organizations newsletters*

Press cuttings 2003-2007 (sample)

***External reports that Keystone features in or contributes to:***

Arradon, G. 2007. *On the Borderline: development trusts tackling poverty in the UK*. DTA.

Audit Commission. 2007. *Crossing Borders: Responding to the local challenges of migration*.

Commission on Integration and Cohesion. 2007a. *Our Shared Future*.

Commission on Integration and Cohesion. 2007b. *Case Studies*.

DTA. *Bonds and Bridges: A practitioner guide to community diversity*. DTA

RICS. 2011. *Land and Society Commission Report*. Royal Institute for Chartered Surveyors.

***The following are links to a sample of recent press articles and websites featuring Keystone:***

Brain, M. 2011. Big Society and localism. *Ipswich Society newsletter*

<http://www.ipswichsociety.org.uk/newsletter/dispart.php?issue=184&art=10>

Community master planning. Future Communities

<http://www.futurecommunities.net/socialdesign/193/community-master-planning-needs-be-flexible>

Gough, R. 2011. Positive signs of the Big Society in Thetford. *Thetford and Brandon Times*

<http://www.thetfordandbrandontimes.co.uk/news/positive-signs-on-the-big-society-in-thetford-1-857157>



Gough, R. 2012. Pilot project to focus on alcohol impact in Thetford. *Thetford and Brandon Times*.

[http://www.thetfordandbrandontimes.co.uk/news/pilot\\_project\\_to\\_focus\\_on\\_alcohol\\_impact\\_in\\_thetford\\_1\\_1410942](http://www.thetfordandbrandontimes.co.uk/news/pilot_project_to_focus_on_alcohol_impact_in_thetford_1_1410942)

Haugh, H. 2011. Are social enterprises being set up to fail? Lancashire Community Recycling Network.

<http://www.lancashirecrn.org/news/is-social-enterprise-being-set-up-to-fail/6/4/2011>

Haverhill Year 11 Work Club at Cambridge University.

[http://www.jbs.cam.ac.uk/news/items/2012/120322\\_aspirations.html](http://www.jbs.cam.ac.uk/news/items/2012/120322_aspirations.html)

Thetford Healthy Town. July 30 2012, *Eastern Daily Press*.

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JRF. 2011. Localism – friend or foe to infrastructure in new communities. Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

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iii. Stakeholder map

Stakeholder	Comments
<p><b><i>Charitable governance</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members</li> <li>• Trustees</li> <li>• ‘Friends of’</li> <li>• Staff</li> <li>• Charity Commission</li> <li>• Company House</li> <li>• Auditors</li> </ul>	
<p><b><i>Charitable beneficiaries</i></b></p>	<p>Across one district council area plus two partial districts in Norfolk and Suffolk</p> <p>Particular focus on communities experiencing significant disadvantage such as; social housing estates, unemployed and young people</p>
<p><b><i>Service users</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European migrants</li> <li>• Unemployed adults</li> <li>• Young people at risk of being Not in Employment, Education or Training post year 11</li> <li>• Children and families</li> <li>• Credit union</li> <li>• Community centres</li> <li>• Community organizations</li> </ul>	
<p><b><i>Customers</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenants</li> <li>• Retail (food and bikes)</li> <li>• Consultancy</li> <li>• Contracts</li> </ul>	
<p><b><i>Funders</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Philanthropic trusts</li> </ul>	<p>Funders at local, county, regional, national and European level</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lottery</li> <li>• Public bodies</li> </ul>	
<p><b><i>Public bodies</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town and parish</li> <li>• District</li> <li>• County</li> <li>• Quangos</li> <li>• Government</li> </ul>	<p>Multiple public bodies serve the charitable area and the Trust has multiple relationships with many such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being in receipt of public funds</li> <li>• Delivering contracts</li> <li>• Membership of partnership groups</li> <li>• Joint project development</li> <li>• Membership of Boards</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Third sector</i></b></p>	<p>Numerous groups serve the charitable area ( from national to a neighbourhood level) and the Trust has multiple relationships such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing grants</li> <li>• Providing non-financial support</li> <li>• Joint forums</li> <li>• Joint projects/ business development</li> <li>• Professional/sector networks</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Academic/Educational</i></b></p>	<p>Partnership work with schools, academies and universities</p>
<p><b><i>Private sector</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local business forums</li> <li>• Joint projects/ business development</li> </ul>

#### iv. Curriculum vitae

##### NEIL STOTT

- Chief Executive of one of the largest development trusts in the UK since 2003
- Senior Fellow of the Institute of Place Management (SFIPM)
- Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA)
- DProf candidate, Middlesex University
- MSt in Community Enterprise from the Judge Business School, Cambridge University (2005)

##### EMPLOYMENT

Dates	Employer	Responsibilities and achievements
March 2003-2012	Keystone Development Trust, Thetford, Norfolk	<p><b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b></p> <p>Strategic and operational management of a regeneration charity/development trust delivering; social, cultural, economic, environmental and physical regeneration in Norfolk and Suffolk.</p> <p>Key achievements; establishing the Trust, developing a business model and sustainability plan. Delivery of major capital projects, community projects and new social enterprises. Achieved 75% earned income from a baseline of 99% public funding within four years.</p>
May 2000 – March 2003	Canterbury City Council	<p><b>HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>Management of the Community Development Service including; <i>Public Safety Service</i> – Joint Council and Police community safety and anti-social behaviour team, diversity and equalities, Neighbourhood Wardens, Safer Community Partnership team. <i>Neighbourhood Development Team</i> – community regeneration, rural and coastal development, SRB 5 &amp; 6, Healthy Living, Neighbourhood centres teams. <i>Children and Youth Service</i> – Surestart, 511 (Children’s) team, Children and Youth Participation Team, Street (detached) Team, Children’s Fund Team. <i>Business and Research Unit</i> – Voluntary Sector Support Team, Parish Council support, Concessionary bus permits, community audit/visioning, community planning. Partnership, corporate and project management</p> <p>Key achievements: establishment of the Community Development Service from ‘scratch’. £9.6m external funding</p>

		secured 2000-2006. Local Government Association 'Pathfinder' status for preventative work with 5-13 year olds and families. Joint Council/Police community safety service.
1990-2000	Cambridge City Council	<b>PRINCIPAL COMMUNITY SERVICES OFFICER</b> Neighbourhood Community Development and Centres Team (including 4 community centres and 5 Joint-use school-based community centres), Race Equality Team, Youth Development Team, Racial Harassment Team, Tenant Participation and neighbourhood community planning.  Key achievements; Young Citizens Jury and innovative young person led youth participation programme, Racial Harassment Public Inquiry, community centre development programme.
1988-1990	Cambridge City Council	<b>SENIOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER</b> Neighbourhood Community Development Service  Key achievements; new community centre development, investment in priority wards, training and development of local people as community development workers.
1987-1988	Cambridge City Council	<b>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER</b> Neighbourhood work in priority ward and centre management  Key achievements – community led children and family projects culminating in the establishment of a local children's charity.
1985-1987	Contact-a-Family, London	<b>PROJECT MANAGER/ COMMUNITY WORKER</b> Families with children with special needs – development and support to projects in Lewisham and Lambeth – advice, information, events, play schemes, fundraising, parents groups.  Key achievements; innovative work with siblings, youth club integration and with parents on sex.
1984-1985	Mencap, London	<b>PROJECT MANAGER – WANDSWORTH MENCAP RELIEF CARE SCHEME</b> Community-based relief scheme for carers of children with special needs.
1984-1985	Elfrida Rathbone	<b>YOUTH WORKER</b>

	Society, Wandsworth	Part -time youth work with young people with special needs.
1984	Elfrida Rathbone Society, Wandsworth	<b>OUTREACH WORKER</b> Outreach programme from a drop-in centre for adults with learning difficulties.
1982	South Lakeland Council for Voluntary Action	<b>COMMUNITY WORKER</b> Development of an unemployed centre (placement year).
1985-1987	Elfrida Rathbone Society, Wandsworth	Management Committee member (voluntary).
1977–1979	Dr Barnardo’s, Kendal	<b>RESIDENTIAL CARE WORKER</b> Relief residential care for children and young people with severe special needs. Initially part-time voluntary work – full-time residential, post-A levels.

## EDUCATION

Institution	Qualification	Date(s)	Grade/Level
Middlesex University	DProf by Public Works	2010-2012	
School of Arts, Brunel University	PhD	2006 – in abeyance	
Judge Business School, Cambridge University	MSt in Community Enterprise	2003-2005	Masters
Anglia Ruskin University	Postgraduate Certificate in Sociology and Politics	1999-2000 (award 2003)	Postgraduate Certificate (Distinction)

Cambridge University Extra Mural	Certificate in Archaeology	1997-1999	Level 1 credits (60)
Roehampton College	Certificate in Group Work	1985-1986	Pass
Bradford University	BA (Hons) Peace Studies	1981-1984  (including work placement year)	2: 2
Van Mildert College, Durham University	Preliminary Honours in Sociology, Politics, economic history and anthropology	1979-1980	First
Heversham School, Cumbria	Advanced Level	1978	B, B, C, C
Heversham School, Cumbria	Ordinary Level	1976	10 O Levels

#### **RECENT PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP, POSITIONS AND DIRECTORSHIPS**

- Senior Fellow of the Institute of Place Management (SFIPM) 2008 onwards
- Locality ‘Ambassador’ 2012
- Chair, Thetford Healthy Town 2012
- Visiting Research Fellow of Anglia Ruskin University 2007- 2012
- Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA) – 2006 onwards
- Member of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation Community Assets Programme Advisory Network and Housing and Migration group 2009 -2011(with Hact)
- EEDA Regional Migrant Worker Executive and Advisory Group 2006 onwards
- Locality/Development Trust Association Eastern Region – Chair 2004 onwards
- Breckland Pride Board (previously the LSP) 2012
- Breckland Local Strategic Partnership – Board Member 2009-2012
- Fellow of the Inter –University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society (IUS)
- Member of the Institute of Economic Development 2005-2009
- National Community Forum (DCLG) member 2008-2010
- DTA National Policy Committee 2005-2007; National Poverty Working Group 2005-2007
- East of England Equality and Diversity Advisory Group (Learning and Skills Council) 2007-2009
- Director of HALO Development Trust, Harlow 2008

- Social Enterprise East of England – Director 2005-2008
- Social Firms East – Director 2005-2007
- Audit Commission Migrant Worker Advisory Group 2005-2006
- Local Government Association Advisor on Community Development to the Members group, joint LGA/National Voluntary Sector Forum and Central Local Partnership Sub-Group on Social Inclusion 2002-2003
- Kent Children’s Fund and Canterbury Children’s Partnership – Board Member.

### **CONSULTANCY**

- Senior Associate – ‘The Pool’ Locality
- Principal Consultant; Keystone Research and Consultancy

### **TEACHING/MENTORING**

- Ariane de Rothschild Fellowship 2011 (Judge Business School) visiting lecturer and business planning mentor
- Judge Business School MBA mentor 2009 and 2010
- Anglia Ruskin University Visiting lecturer on the BA (Social Policy) 2008-2010
- Anglia Ruskin University Visiting lecturer on the Social Enterprise Executive Education programme 2009
- University of Cambridge Management and Strategy Module on the Certificate of Continuing Education (Social Enterprise Management) 2006.

### **PUBLICATIONS**

Tracey, P. and Stott, N. Forthcoming. *Workers on the Move 4; Migration, dirty work and exploitation*. Keystone Development Trust.

Stott, N. 2011. Big Society, poor places. In M. Stott (Ed.), *The Big Society Challenge*. Keystone Development Trust.

Collis, A., Stott, N., Crozier R. and Martin, K. 2010-2011. *Work Matters: Work, worklessness and community: A review of the issues*. Keystone Development Trust.

Collis, A., Stott, N. and Ross, D. 2010. *Workers on the Move 3: European migrant workers and health in the UK*. Keystone Development Trust.

Stott, N. 2010. *Anticipating military work: digital games as a source of anticipatory socialization?* Paper presented at the 5th Annual Conference of the British International Studies Association working group on US foreign policy, Leeds University, 15 September 2010.

Collis, A., Stott, N. and Ross, D. 2010. *Workers on the Move 2: European migrant workers and health in the UK: A Review of the Issues*. Keystone Development Trust.



Stott, M, Stott, N. and Wiles, C. 2009 *Learning from the Past? Building community in New Towns and growth areas*. Keystone Development Trust.

Wiles, C., Stott, N., Holman, D. Schneider, C. and Collis, A. 2008. *Migrants on the Move; Migrant Workers, Growth and Housing in the Eastern Region*. Keystone Development Trust.

Stott, N. and Tracey, P. 2007. Between a rock and a hard place? Exploring the strategic tensions experienced by development trusts. *Journal of Finance and Management in Public Services*, 6, 3. [http://www.academia.edu/530011/Between\\_a\\_rock\\_and\\_a\\_hard\\_place\\_Exploring\\_the\\_strategic\\_tensions\\_experienced\\_by\\_development\\_trusts](http://www.academia.edu/530011/Between_a_rock_and_a_hard_place_Exploring_the_strategic_tensions_experienced_by_development_trusts)