



Policy & Practice Annual Report 2022



Policy & Practice
St Chad's College, Durham University

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Policy&Practice is a multidisciplinary research group based at St Chad's College, Durham University. Our full-time academics, research associates and fellows are committed to the promotion of social justice in the United Kingdom and beyond.

Policy&Practice is the banner under which this work is communicated to a wider community of interest. The College is committed to undertaking research, policy analysis and evaluation that makes a difference to the way policy makers and practitioners carry out their work, aimed ultimately at increasing the benefit gained by the people for whom they work. We do this through applied research and evaluation for a wide range of private sector organisations, independent charitable foundations, national and local government, charities and other non-profit organisations.

Our work is heavily embedded in the North of England, but we do not confine our work to this area. Several national and international studies have been undertaken over the years in continental Europe, the United States, South Africa and Japan. What we hope to do is to use our learning to help increase our scope for understanding complex social, economic and political issues and our ability to help people tackle challenges in a positive, pragmatic and effective way in new contexts.

Completed Research Projects

The structure and dynamics of the voluntary sector in Cornwall

Policy&Practice published a report on the structure and dynamics of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly. The research builds on work from the Third Sector Trends study and draws on data from a wide range of sources including the Charity Commission Register, Public Health England and the Office for National Statistics. The study was commissioned by Voluntary Sector Forum Cornwall and NHS Kernow Clinical Commissioning Group.



This report shows that Cornwall and Isles of Scilly has a large and productive VCSE sector. The sector is comprised of around 2,500 registered organisations and there may be as many as 3,250 additional small, local informal unregistered groups working under the radar of statistics.

The VCSE sector in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly has an income of about £219 million. This is drawn from a wide range of sources such as contracts to deliver public services, grants, self-generated earned income, gifts and donations, investments and subscriptions.

Organisations within the VCSE sector employ large numbers of staff. There are estimated to be over 4,500 full-time and 5,000 part-time employees – this amounts to 6,000 full-time equivalent staff. The VCSE sector comprises about 4 per cent of all employment in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly



The structure, dynamics and impact of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly

Tony Chapman
Policy&Practice
St Chad's College
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February 2022

Volunteers play a vital role in sustaining the activities of the VCSE sector – and especially so in smaller VCSE organisations. Over 70 per cent of volunteer time is delivered in small VCSE organisations (with income below £50,000). The biggest organisations (with income between £1m – £25m) only account for about 4 per cent of volunteer time.

VCSE sector activity is estimated to produce a multiplier effect of £387 million of tangible economic, fiscal and use value and £250 million of additional intangible value. It is estimated that the VCSE sector produces a ratio of 3.6 to 1 added social and economic value relative to the energy injected. The full report is available to download [here](#).

The contribution of the voluntary sector to health and wellbeing in Humber, Coast and Vale

The VCSE sector across Humber, Coast and Vale is diverse, made up of many organisations and people that deliver their services supporting a wide range of causes. The sector is a crucial element to support people with their health and wellbeing.

This report was commissioned by the NHS Humber, Coast and Vale Health and Care Partnership and the VCSE Leadership Group to understand more about the sector and how its geography and the places that make up Humber, Coast and Vale are served.

Professor Tony Chapman, from St Chad's College at Durham University has worked with the VCSE Leadership Group over the last year, completing an initial look at the size and scale of the VCSE sector, which showcased the value of the sector and contribution it can make to health and wellbeing of our people.



Following this report the group asked Tony to go further and look at how the sector is split across the area's unique geography that has a mix of urban and rural areas and a large section of coastal communities.

The findings in this report plotted the VCSE sector alongside the differences seen across Humber, Coast and Vale in terms of deprivation and health inequalities. The report provides a resource for strategists to think about the approaches to take

ensure the VCSE sector can play its role in supporting the health and wellbeing of Humber, Coast and Vale residents. The full report and a shorter summary report can be downloaded [here](#).

Telephone befriending during and beyond the coronavirus pandemic

The Bridge Project in Bradford appointed Dr Tanya Gray, Senior Research Associate in Policy&Practice to undertake a review of the pilot *Together Talks* programme.

Together Talks was devised to tackle aspects of loneliness and social isolation with volunteer telephone befrienders also supporting those individuals in recovery or experiencing domestic violence. This support allowed individuals to step away from intensive professional support towards independent lives. The pilot's distinctiveness derives from the presence of a shared outcome – agreed



with input from three specialist strands and the individual being supported. This makes *Together Talks* a highly tailored scheme, focusing in on the need of an individual, whilst at the same time actively committing to collective need.

This new approach to service delivery was forged to some extent from necessity.

Recurrent government-imposed lockdowns made it impossible to

deliver services in other ways. But the pilot programme was not devised simply as a stop-gap until things 'got back to normal'. Instead, it was anticipated that elements of the delivery approach would outlive the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. The evaluation of the programme provides clear justification for continuing with the approach post-pandemic.

This review confirms that the project has remained personal and proximate to the needs of individuals, perhaps best illustrated by one of the volunteer befriender interviews:

'The best thing is how human it has all felt, very down to earth, very real and honest and direct.'

The full report is available [here](#).

Continuing projects

Shaping the future of the Borderlands

Over the past decade, Policy&Practice academics at St Chad's College have been closely involved with strategy debates on how to support economic and social development in the Anglo-Scottish Border.

This initiative was stimulated by awareness on both sides of the border of shared opportunities arising from the establishment of a Scottish Parliament in 1999. Subsequently, the Scottish Independence Referendum in 2014 led to the Scottish government gaining new powers. This presented new challenges for politicians and business leaders in the North East of England and Cumbria who felt there may be detrimental consequences for their regions.



The Anglo-Scottish Border has, until recently, been a neglected area of British public policy. Yet it comprises 10 per cent of the UK's land mass and has a population of over 1 million people. It comprises five local authorities: Dumfries and Galloway; Scottish Borders; Northumberland; Cumbria; and Carlisle Councils (soon to become Cumberland Council).

With a shared history and cultural identity, the area is largely rural with dispersed market towns and isolated former industrial communities connected by cross-border transport links. Low rates of firm formation, low pay, outmigration, an ageing population, transport accessibility and poor broadband connectivity in the Borderlands produce policy challenges.

Policy&Practice's involvement preceded the Scottish Independence Referendum when, in 2012, the Association of North East Councils requested the Institute for Local Governance (ILG) to commission a new study: ***Borderlands: can the North East and Cumbria benefit from greater Scottish Autonomy?***

The ILG, led by Professor John Mawson was a North East-wide public sector research and knowledge exchange partnership established to access the expertise of the region's five Universities. It commissioned Professors Keith Shaw of Northumbria University and Fred Robinson and Jonathan Blackie of St Chad's College to undertake the work.

Highlighting the economic, social and environmental opportunities of cross-border collaboration the report was instrumental in the establishment of the Borderlands Partnership between the five councils. In turn it led to the commissioning by the ILG of a further report in 2015 entitled ***Developing the framework for a Borderlands strategy*** on behalf of the Partnership. This work was undertaken by Professors Jonathan Blackie, St Chad's College, Durham University; Keith Shaw, Northumbria and Frank Peck, Cumbria Universities and involved ongoing support to the Partnership Steering Group.

The programme of work's value was highlighted in the House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee report ***Our Borderlands – Our Future*** in March 2015. The initiative was praised by First Minister of Scotland, Alex Salmond and his successor Nicola Sturgeon.

Ultimately this led to the Conservative Party's election manifesto commitment to *"bring forward a Borderlands Growth Deal including all Councils on both sides of the border to help secure prosperity..."* in 2017. The deal was signed by the two governments and partnership representatives in 2021.

The partnership is now responsible for the management and implementation of this cross-border integrated programme. Worth over £350million, its aim is to deliver 5,500 jobs, expand tourism and other rural industries, improve public transport and ensure a strong place-based dimension.

In the next stage of this research and consultancy programme, Professor Mawson, now based at St Chad's College as a professorial fellow in Policy&Practice, together with colleagues from Northumbria University, will be exploring leadership and governance issues surrounding the emergence of the Inclusive Growth Deal and Partnership.

This work will form part of a two-year international research and seminar programme on the development of international cross-border partnerships supported by the Regional Studies Association.

For other news stories on the Borderlands, see: [Strengthening the wellbeing of market towns in the borderlands](#).

Third Sector Trends 2022

Third Sector Trends is *Policy&Practice's* flagship project. Established in 2008, it is the longest running research programme of its kind in the UK.

The study informs voluntary and community organisations, cooperatives, community businesses and social enterprises about the wellbeing and direction of the sector. Its results are widely used by policy makers and funding bodies.

Over 6,000 charities and social enterprises responded to the call in 2022 across England and Wales making this the largest study of the Third Sector in the UK.

Key findings:

- There are about 200,000 registered voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises in England and Wales (including registered charities, cooperatives, community benefit societies, community interest companies, community amateur sport clubs and other non-profit making registered societies and businesses).
- Micro and small organisations (with income below £50,000) constitute 63 per cent of all registered organisations but only receive 0.6 per cent of sector income. The biggest organisations (income £1million to £25million) receive 72 per cent of sector income but comprise just 5 per cent of organisations in the sector.
- The sector employs about 1.1 million people, or 3 per cent of national employment. Employees provide about 80 per cent of sector energy while regular volunteers deliver about 20 per cent of sector energy.
- There are major disparities in sector distribution regionally. For example in South West England, there are 4.2 organisations per 1,000 population compared with 2.7 in North East England. In the most affluent areas the proportion of small and micro organisations is much higher than in the poorest areas.
- There are about 4.3 million regular volunteers working for VCSE organisations who deliver 312 million hours of work annually. If this work had to be paid for, it would equal £2.9bn (if valued at the level of the national living wage) or £4.9bn if valued at 80 per cent of average wages).

The financial value of some sector activity can be measured – but much of the value of the sector's work is 'intangible'. But it is possible to give values to both types of impact. The value of the 'energy' the sector injects into society equals about £54 billion each year (that is the value of the time people put in to make things happen) – but the value added equals £191 billion or 3.2 times the injected energy.

Reflecting on the figures, Rob Williamson Chief Executive of the Community Foundation said:

"This first report clearly shows the importance of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in terms of size and employment in England and Wales. We already know the sector is the glue that holds society together by providing help and support to many in need but at a basic level it employs and pays tens of thousands of people and puts millions into local economies. Without it we would be poorer in so many ways."

Sarah Glendinning, Regional Director of the CBI said:

"Where both the private and voluntary sectors come together, both sides stand to benefit in spades. This report shows the huge value of the voluntary sector to the North East and the vital role it plays at the heart of

local communities. Ultimately the deeper and more committed the partnership between businesses and the social sector, the greater the benefits for the region."

Rhiannon Bearn, Director of Policy and Representation, North East England Chamber of Commerce said:

"Once again, this important study shows how and why economic and social impact go hand-in-hand. In the North East charities don't just offer vital services and support for our communities: they contribute a massive £1.6bn in value, creating good jobs and helping create a strong economy. With a difficult winter ahead of us all the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland's new cost of living fund will make a real difference to this vital part of our region's economy."



Third Sector Trends in England and Wales 2022: sector structure, purpose, energy and impact



The report's author, Professor Tony Chapman, St Chad's College, Durham University said:

"Where the added value generated by the voluntary sector 'lands' is hard to predict. This is because the impact of charities' work isn't always immediate. A real strength of the sector is its ability to accumulate energy and value which is produced collectively by many charities."

Keeping things ticking over in civil society often nips problems in the bud before they become critical needs. Without that support, individual needs are undermined and the strength of community ties can fray. And in times of local or national crisis, such as in the Coronavirus pandemic or the current cost-of-living challenge, the latent power of the sector can be released to tackle problems quickly and vigorously."

The first of five reports from Third Sector Trends 2022 can be found [here](#).

The second report on people in the Third Sector was published in December 2022 and is available [here](#).

All Third Sector Trends reports can be located at this web address:

<https://www.communityfoundation.org.uk/knowledge-and-leadership/third-sector-trends-research/>

Principles and pragmatism

Professor Fred Robinson has been thinking about how churches in North East England should respond to the problem of 'tainted money'. He has been asking churches about the money they receive through donations, grants, endowments and investments. How vigilant should they be about the provenance of money? How can they obtain the money they need whilst holding on to their principles?

Fred has been awarded a Leech Fellowship to look at these issues, focusing on North East England. Over the last few months, he's been talking to people from the different denominations to find out how they think about money and whether they worry about where it comes from and how 'tainted' it may be. Does it matter if it comes from sources that appear to have values that conflict with a Christian ethos?

Should they accept money from the Lottery, for example, given its association with gambling? Or from charitable trusts linked to particular business activities such as fossil fuels? Thinking of historic benefactions, what should Christian organisations say or do about money they have received in the past that was earned through the business of slavery?

You can find the most recent publication from Fred's work on this topic here, published in August 2022

by *Reform*: <https://www.stchads.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Money-Talk-piece-in-Reform-Mag-1.pdf>

This project was funded by the William Leech Research Fund, a charitable trust that supports research in the area of Christian social ethics and practical theology in North East England. The funding ends in December 2021, but Fred will be continuing the work and publishing his findings during 2022. The final report will be published early in 2023.

For further information, please contact Fred Robinson at j.f.robinson@durham.ac.uk



Metropolitanisation and 'left behind places' in France and England

John Mawson, Professorial Fellow of Policy&Practice, is to begin the next stage of research on a new French Government approach to urban development. This will involve a detailed case study of the City of Tours and its surrounding region in the Loire Valley. The research builds upon previous work which involved a comparative analysis of recent trends in urban policy in the UK and France.

French and British governments have been promoting cross-boundary, collaborative municipal partnerships. These initiatives were designed to achieve critical mass in strategic planning and the delivery of key infrastructure and public services (such as employment, housing and public transport) to their central cities and hinterlands.

In England, Mayoral Combined Authorities and in France Métropoles have been introduced to improve national productivity and growth. It is hoped that benefit will spread to more disadvantaged urban and rural communities in the wider city regions.

Policy and management developments have been assessed in a series of case studies across France, supported by a French Inter-ministerial Research Agency (including the Tours case study). The study in Tours started in 2017 involving researchers from the University of West of England, the University of Tours, and politicians, practitioners and local community representatives.

Implications were explored at a national conference in 2019 and findings were published in 2020 in *The Governance of Métropoles and city regions: territorial reforms, spatial imaginaries and new forms of cooperation*

Professor Mawson and his colleagues will be undertaking a five-year review of the effectiveness of the Tours Métropole. This will include appraisal of governance and evaluation of social and economic impact. The work will be supported by the European Union's Erasmus Programme.

Connections

Law Family Commission on Civil Society

The Law Family Commission on Civil Society, which was launched in 2020, is an ambitious programme of research into how the potential of civil society can be realised.



The Commission aimed to offer tangible ideas for policy-makers, companies, philanthropists and social sector organisations to tackle challenges that limit the achievements of civil society organisations such as charities, social enterprises and community groups.

Professor Tony Chapman, of Policy&Practice, joined the Commission's Technical Panel together with long-time colleague Rob Williamson, CEO of the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Newcastle to advise on research priorities and research methodology in 2020.

The Law Family Commission on Civil Society is hosted by Pro Bono Economics and is financially supported by Andrew Law and the Law Family Charitable Foundation.

The Commission will conclude early in 2023. Full details on its activities can be found [here](#).

Featured publications

Social policy, political economy and the social contract

Jonathan Wistow's new book *Social policy, political economy and the social contract* has been published by Policy Press. Jonathan, who is a Fellow of Policy&Practice and Associate Professor in Durham University's Department of Sociology, has produced a challenging and original study which promises to energise debates nationally and internationally on the role and efficacy of social policy.

The book has already received considerable acclaim:

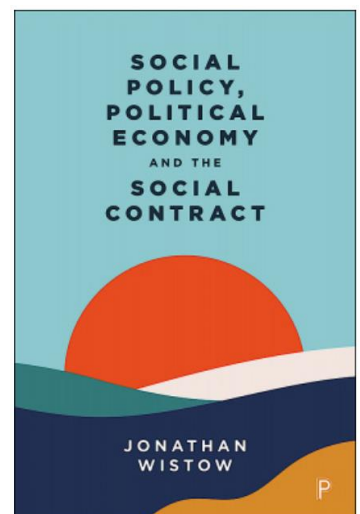
"Going beyond sticking-plaster solutions to economic and social problems, Wistow digs down to the deeper causes by examining social policy in the context of political economy."

Andrew Sayer, Lancaster University.

"In this important contribution, Jonathan Wistow shows how solutions to social crises have too often been forged while ignoring their complex structural economic and political roots. Social policy analysis, he argues, needs to be much more closely integrated into the wider question of political economy."

Andrew Lansley, author of *The Richer, The Poorer*.

Focusing on individual, intergenerational and societal outcomes related to health, place and social mobility in England, he draws



on empirical evidence to show how the social contract produces long-standing, highly patterned and inequitable consequences in these areas. Globalisation and the political economy simultaneously contribute to the extent and nature of social problems and to social policy's capacity to address them effectively.

Applying social contract theory, this book shows that society needs to take ownership of the outcomes it produces and critically interrogates the individualism inherent within the political economy.

Details on how to obtain a copy of the book can be found [here](#).

Going the distance: how Third Sector organisations work through turbulent times

There's a good deal of nervousness amongst leaders of Third Sector organisations just now about the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on their ability to meet the needs of their beneficiaries. Inevitably, these worries also make them think hard about the wellbeing of their own organisations.

Third Sector Trends has been tracking sector mood every three years since 2010. We started at a time when the impact of the 2008 financial crash was still rebounding around the economy. By 2013 government had adopted dramatic austerity policies which were tearing into local authority budgets. In 2016, the survey returned to a nation convulsed with excitement or anxiety about Brexit.

By 2019, thankfully, things were looking better in the economy and government was talking about 'levelling up' and investing heavily in 'left behind places'. But little did we know that Covid would turn everything upside down again by spring 2020. And now the big worry is the cost-of-living crisis and an uncertain economic future.



Going the Distance:
How Third Sector organisations work through turbulent times



we ended up only interviewing one, who was not suitable. So our vacancies continue. These vacancies are related to project grants and the funders are very sympathetic but the projects are unable to go ahead without the staff, which means that there is unmet service need. Very frustrating. We will be trying again in January 2023."

The voluntary sector has had to contend with its fair share of problems since the financial crash of 2008. In an in-depth study of a representative sample of 50 organisations over the last 15 years in North East England and Cumbria, Third Sector Trends has watched how charity leaders navigate their way through choppy waters.

The latest report, [Going the distance: how third sector organisations work through turbulent times](#) can be downloaded [here](#).

Can some of the most challenged areas of the UK level up?

Levelling Up the UK Economy: the need for transformative change, published by Palgrave.

Jonathan Wistow, Fellow of Policy&Practice and Luke Telford (University of York) have just published this new book on the 'levelling-up' policy debate. The official launch at the University of York is on December 14th.

The book frames the debate against a backdrop of historical analysis and looks at the shift from post-war capitalism to a post-industrial and neoliberal society which has exacerbated spatial inequalities. Using empirical evidence from Redcar & Cleveland, the authors show how social and economic policy has exposed deindustrialising areas to insecure employment, crime and anti-social behaviour. And also has produced resentments about political voice and representation.

The book has received a very positive critical reception from highly respected academics working in this field:

"This excellent book provides a powerful, critical examination of Levelling Up, and grounds its assessment within a much-needed political economy perspective. It traces the 'left behind places' problem to the nature and evolution of UK capitalism itself... This stimulating book is essential reading for all academic scholars and policymakers concerned with the UK's 'left behind places problem'."

Professor Ron Martin, Emeritus Professor of Economic Geography, University of Cambridge.

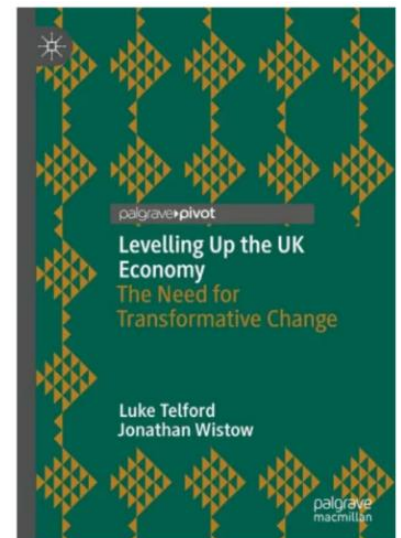
"Academics and policymakers alike need to read The UK Government's Levelling Up Agenda by Luke Telford and Jonathan Wistow. This book is the most comprehensive qualitative study available on the 'Levelling Up' chapter in the policy history of local and regional economic development. Theoretically informed, interdisciplinary, and rich in policy nuances and political insight, the authors walk us through the rise and fall of this policy narrative. Rather than just leave things there, the authors conclude by offering an ambitious alternative path for our 'left behind places'. This is social policy at its very best."

Martin Jones, Vice Chancellor and Professor of Human Geography, Staffordshire University, UK

"This is one of the most significant efforts to analyse the UK government's Levelling Up programme. Not only does it brilliantly chronicle the moral, social and economic reasons for addressing geographical inequality, but it further details the transformative changes necessary to overcome the significant barriers that people in 'left behind' locales face in terms of gaining access to well-paid, secure employment. This book is likely to garner much interest from those interested in trajectories of inequality and the implications for place, people and government policy."

Professor Julie MacLeavy, Professor of Economic Geography, University of Bristol.

If you want to get a copy of the book, click [here](#).



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