Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Interventions: A Realist-Informed Investigation

Philip James Clegg

Student Number U1276774

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield Business School in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Enterprise

April 2021

Copyright Statement

Acknowledgements

A doctoral degree is a huge undertaking, especially when fitted around a full-time job, and like all large-scale projects, it is not possible without the help and support of others. There are many people to thank and I hope that I have captured most here.

The supervisory team for my EntD changed over the duration of my research, but all have helped and assisted me. Thank you to the whole team for your insight, knowledge, patience and support – Dr. Walter Mswaka, Prof. Gerard McElwee, Dr. Jamie Halsall and Prof. Liz Towns-Andrews.

Thank you to the five social enterprise start-up support organisations who agreed not only to participate in this study, but also to be named. They are Realistic Business Consortium (Malcolm Hall), Key Fund (Adrian Bean), SEE Ahead (Louanne Roberts), School for Social Entrepreneurs (Sue Osborne) and UnLtd (Andy Hemming). Thank you all for your time and insight.

Thank you to the 10 beneficiaries of those organisations for taking time away from your social enterprises, and for your patience with my many questions; with interviews mostly conducted online during the pandemic. Although I cannot name you here, your help and support is very much appreciated.

Thank you to three specific colleagues at the University of Huddersfield for their help and support on this journey. Catherine Brentnall - for countless discussions on all things realism. Dr. Leigh Morland for her support and advice during the latter stages of putting this thesis together, and again to Liz Towns-Andrews, for believing I would one day reach the end of this journey, when she supported me at the start, back in 2014.

Last but certainly not least, to my wife Diane and children Tom and Mia, who have put up with my many frustrations and struggles on the journey, and for Diane's patience in reading countless draft versions of this final thesis.

Abstract

This Doctor of Enterprise research is focused on the concept of social enterprise, and its increasing importance from an economic, environmental and academic perspective. Specifically, this research investigates the social enterprise start-up support landscape; its provision and typology within West Yorkshire, and the responses to accessing such interventions, from the perspective of participants. The research is explicitly linked to a social enterprise start-up unit, CASE, which acts as an extension to the current University of Huddersfield Enterprise Team services. CASE acts as a catalyst, informer, and informant, of this research.

This investigation differs to existing studies, which have focused on the provision of support to existing social enterprises, and, being institutionally driven, the perceived effectiveness from the provider's perspective. This research utilises a realist-informed theoretical and methodological approach, to gain deeper insight into what types of interventions work for whom, in what circumstances and why, within the start-up phase. Utilising qualitative realist-informed interviews, the study focuses on the support sector itself to reveal the current landscape of social enterprise start-up provision within West Yorkshire. This enables the creation of initial rough programme theories (IRPTs), reflecting the typology of available programmes and their components. These IRPTs subsequently form the basis of realist-informed interviews with current and previous participants of those programmes, to reveal a deeper insight into the effectiveness of the provision from their perspective.

Most frequently found within healthcare studies, the utilisation of a realist-informed theoretical and methodological approach, and the innovatively applied IRPTs to assist with the participant interviews, are novel within this business and entrepreneurship context. The research objectives to understand the current typology of start-up support provision within West Yorkshire, and the participants experiences of accessing that provision, conclude and contribute to the field, by providing a set of guiding principles and recommendations ***for*** the social enterprise sector, ***informed by*** the social enterprise sector.

Keywords: Social Enterprise, Start-Up, Business Support, Realist Evaluation, and Realism.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Acronyms

BSC	Big Society Capital
CIC	Community Interest Company
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
FEI	Further Education Institution
HEI	Higher Education Institution
LCT	London Co-Operative Training
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LICOM	London Industrial Common Ownership Movement
OCS	Office for Civil Society
OTS	Office of the Third Sector
RDA	Regional Development Agency
RSEN	Regional Social Enterprise Network
SEC	Social Enterprise Coalition
SEL	Social Enterprise London
SIB	Social Impact Bond
SocEnt	Social Enterprise
WHO	World Health Organisation

Conventions Used In This Thesis

For clarity, the following typographical conventions have been utilised:

- *Italic* script has been used to denote spoken words, captured during data collection interviews
- Double quotation marks have been used to identify text or direct speech extracted from video written publications and academic literature,
- Square brackets have been used to include additional words, beyond those given by an original writer or speaker, in order to clarify a given situation.
- An ellipsis alone within italic text has been used to indicate pauses/hesitation during the interview response
- An ellipsis within square brackets [...] has been used to signify that original wording contained in a given quotation has been removed.

Prologue

As a prologue to the thesis, it is perhaps helpful to have some historical context to my career to date, which has strongly influenced my decision to embark on a Doctor of Enterprise pathway, and to identify the specific purpose and objectives such a study would investigate.

My career began as a freelance classical musician, working predominantly self-employed from 1985 to 2007 in this highly competitive field. As a violinist, and principally a performer with orchestras in the UK and overseas, I did not anticipate working in any other field until an illness in 2007, and its adverse affects on my hands, ended this career.

Without understanding or realising it at the time, I applied many of the principles of enterprise education to my need to change direction, and given my understanding of 'being self-employed' and its many challenges, embarked on a second career in the field of business start-up support.

With roles in Welfare to Work programmes, Business Link Yorkshire and from 2011, the University of Huddersfield's Enterprise Team, the last decade has been devoted to enabling others to plan, launch, and develop new businesses. With a keen interest in the concept of social enterprise from my roles at Business Link Yorkshire, I have explored and developed this particular area of interest since 2012.

My credibility in the field of enterprise and entrepreneurship education has been strengthened over the last 10 years with my progression to Head of Enterprise and Entrepreneurship at the University of Huddersfield, election by national university members to a Director of Enterprise Educators UK (re-elected for a second term in 2019, and now serving as Company Secretary on the Executive Committee), and establishing various local and national networks. These include working collaboratively with Kirklees Council, Social Enterprise Yorkshire & Humber, and Third Sector Leaders, to establish the 'More Than Profit Network' in 2019; to work with regional social enterprises to better understand their needs for support and development.

It is this firmly rooted practitioner background, having empathy with the individual seeking to launch a new venture, and a desire to find and share improvements in the social enterprise start-up support landscape, which motivated me to begin this study.

Researcher's Voice

The elected voice for this research is the first person. This approach has been debated and considered at length, and the rationale for the final decision is simply that as a practitioner in the field of business start-up advice and support, my personal knowledge, skills, and understanding of the business start-up environment, is essential in bringing the research topic and objectives to fruition. Whilst this subject area may be tackled from a purely academic perspective by other authors, I feel strongly that my decade of practitioner experience, and significant network of contacts in the field, give the authenticity to the use of 'I' throughout the thesis, and also contributes to the rationale that this study is a Doctor of Enterprise, and not a pure PhD. The intended audience for this research is explored further during Chapter 1, but this provides an additional factor in my decision, due to existing credibility in the field of business start-up and social enterprise.

1 Introduction and Context[1]

1.1 Understanding the Local Context

The University of Huddersfield Enterprise Team was established in 2004, to support current students and graduates of up to 5 years, in all aspects of self-employment, freelancing and business start-up, (please see https://students.hud.ac.uk/opportunities/enterprise/ for current service provision).

Eligibility to access the service is primarily determined by nationality and visa type. British and wider EU citizens are fully eligible, but overseas students studying on a Tier 4 visa are prohibited from all self-employment activity at the time of writing. The service handles enquiries and business ideas from every School across the University and at all levels of study. This results in a diverse range of ideas being presented, requiring differing levels and types of support to assist clients and their businesses to develop.

It became apparent during my first year of employment in this role, that despite the aforementioned client and business variance, the vast majority of clients were describing ideas that were commercially motivated in nature. Very few clients were presenting what may be thought of as either a 'socially motivated' business idea, or a specific social enterprise idea, compared with commercially driven ideas. The approximate ratio at this time would be approximately 98% commercial to 2% social. Chapter 1 includes a detailed discussion of what we mean by the term social enterprise. For the sake of clarity in this introduction, it is defined here as:

'A business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than

[1] An earlier iteration of this chapter has been published within the book, Social Enterprise In The Higher Education Sector (Clegg, Towns-Andrews & Halsall, 2021)

being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners' (Department of Trade & Industry, 2002, p. 7).

From 2010 to 2012, I had been employed by Business Link Yorkshire (BLY), a Government-funded business support and guidance service, active between 1993 and 2011. The Start-Up Business Advisory Team there had included a dedicated group of specialist Social Enterprise Business Advisors to handle the large number of enquiries regionally, and so it seemed unusual that a University with such a diverse student and recent graduate population, was not reflecting a similar pro-rata level of interest and appetite. At the time of submitting this thesis, and based on HESA data for 2018/19, Table 1.1 indicates that the student population of the University of Huddersfield is comprised of the following Home (UK), EU and International (outside of the EAA) students.

Figure 1.1 University of Huddersfield Student Numbers

Originating from	Number of students
Within the UK	11,820
The European Union	465
Outside of the EEA	2205

I considered reasons for this at the time and offer the following five points as potential explanations (either individually or on combination) of this phenomenon:

1. The basic concept of Social Enterprise was not understood. This resulted in no direct enquiries from clients who may have had ideas suitable for such a model.
2. Students and graduates either considering, or already engaged in social enterprise type activities, did not feel they either needed, or could request support to develop those ideas further.
3. Students and graduates either considering or already engaged in social enterprise type activities, did not consider or understand them to be businesses. If this were the case, it would perhaps explain why they

would not consider asking for assistance from a 'business support' unit.

4. Students and graduates at the University of Huddersfield had no business ideas of a socially motivated nature.
5. The Enterprise Team was not considered by its potential client group as a viable source of help for socially motivated business ideas.

Whilst there is no current research evidence to either prove or disprove any of the above hypotheses, it would appear unlikely that any one of these explanations could be the sole reason for the lack of enquiries in this area of business start-up.

As this phenomenon was being recognised by me at the University of Huddersfield at a local level, the Social Enterprise support organisation UnLtd, was recognising this at a national level, with Universities being recognised as potential catalysts for building awareness of social enterprise, and enabling the development of eco-systems of social entrepreneurs within HEIs. This resulted in their collaboration with the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to roll out the HEFCE/UnLtd See Change Programme. This will be explained in more detail in Part 2 of the Literature Review (see chapter 3.5)

Within 6 months of embarking on the programme, the University of Huddersfield had generated 35 applications and 10 award winners. This represented a huge increase in awareness of Social Enterprise, and encouraged those pursuing a socially motivated business idea to engage with the Enterprise Team. However, whilst the University of Huddersfield felt that it had contributed to the wider programme's outputs of applications generated, awards made and awareness raised, a problem was emerging.

The Enterprise Team had significant concerns that the promised support from the SEE Change programme to the advisory team to better deal with this new type of enquiry, was lacking. During the regular networking meetings with other HEIs engaged on the programme, I realised that the University of Huddersfield was achieving more than many other programme participants in terms of successful outputs. Indeed, I was being approached by other HEIs seeking assistance with devising a suitable delivery programme in their own institution. Nonetheless, I had concerns about expanding our own programme without increasing the core skills and knowledge of the advisory team.

It became abundantly clear to myself and the wider steering group appointed to manage the engagement of the University of Huddersfield with the programme, that unless some alternative action was taken, there would potentially be two unintended outcomes as described here.

1. When the programme ended and the funding ceased, the significant work and progress achieved to date in the area of social enterprise development, would be lost.

2. There was no tangible support being offered by UnLtd to increase the Enterprise Team's levels of social enterprise specific skills and knowledge. Without some intervention to change this, the early stage social enterprises we were supporting would likely fail.

These two potential negative and unintended outcomes led to my idea to explore a sustainable and innovative solution. Through the instigation of an externally facing Social Enterprise Consultancy Unit, we could provide support to developing and existing social enterprises falling outside of the eligible student and graduate market we currently serviced, generate income for sustainability, and be a tangible example of a Social Enterprise for students and graduates. By utilising our profits after costs to enhance the support of our own students and graduates exploring social enterprise start-up, we would be creating a potentially sustainable and innovative model.

1.2 CASE: Its Purpose and Connection to this Thesis

As the HEFCE/UnLtd programme was also open to staff, I proposed an application of my own to develop a consultancy unit to address the problems being faced. This was how CASE (Create A Social Enterprise) was conceived. The intention was for it to sit as a de facto extension to the University of Huddersfield's existing Enterprise Team services, and to act as a business model to test the viability of a sustainable social enterprise specific service. It is explicitly linked to this doctoral research, by ultimately adopting any guiding principles for effective social enterprise start-up support arising within the recommendations.

Phase 1 of the CASE proposal was to increase the skills and knowledge of the Enterprise Team in specific areas of Social Enterprise Start-Up. We selected themes based on our own experience of the most common requests for advice and information from those we were supporting. These can be grouped into three distinct areas:

1. Legal Structures and Governance – With a growing number of options for social enterprises, the choice is often perceived to be overwhelming and advice is frequently requested. Worse still, it is not unusual for inappropriate decisions to be made by the client which later need to be unravelled; a time-consuming and often costly process.

2. Capturing, measuring and disseminating social impact – Having clear social aims and objectives is no longer sufficient. Social enterprises are now expected to prove that they are 'making a difference' and consequently, embedding a process to capture, measure and disseminate this from the outset is vital.

3. Business planning specifically for social enterprises – we were frequently asked if and how a Social Enterprise Business Plan should differ from a commercial business one.

Phase 2, which ran in parallel with Phase 1, focused on developing connections with specifically skilled associates and strategic partners (for example specialist Social Enterprise consultants and organisations such as the Social Audit Network, See Ahead Ltd) to co-deliver responses to both internal beneficiaries and external clients.

Once Phase 1 and 2 were complete, and in order to start to generate income from consultancy, CASE was established under the trading arm of the University of Huddersfield; University of Huddersfield Enterprises Limited.

This enabled us to offer externally facing consultancy services to a variety of clients in the following primary areas:

1. FEIs, HEIs and Student Unions who were seeking to establish an understanding of how social enterprise could fit into their existing provision of enterprise/entrepreneurship activity and support.

2. Business development services to external early stage social enterprises, voluntary groups and charities seeking to improve their current models and become more sustainable. I define early-stage here as pre-trading, and up to 12 months of trading activity.

3. Start-Up and more established social enterprises seeking assistance and direction in the area of capturing, measuring and disseminating social impact. I define ‘start-up’ here as being from 12 months of trading activity onwards and ‘established’ as beyond 3 years of trading activity.

At the time of planning and starting CASE, I could find no other HEI from the 57 institutions participating in the UnLtd SEE Change Programme that were considering this approach to achieve sustainability beyond the programme end. As such, I felt justified in thinking that this was indeed an innovative model to explore. Furthermore, I felt that the idea also offered perhaps a more significant opportunity.

The concept of developing a social enterprise consultancy unit, may also offer a research opportunity to better understand the effectiveness of social enterprise start-up support programmes. I felt that there was an opportunity to review and potentially improve external social enterprise specific business support programmes, and wanted to explore this in more detail.

This offered me the ability to explore the development of CASE at two distinct levels.

1. To create a sustainable form of social enterprise start-up support as a de facto extension to the current Enterprise Team services. This would

be devised and delivered to the ethos of a social enterprise; hence proving credibility to its internal beneficiaries and external clients.

2. To research and develop a set of guidelines on what types of social enterprise start-up support interventions work, for whom, in what circumstances and why. These guidelines could then be adopted by CASE to enable more effective start-up support in the future and shared with the wider social enterprise support community. Importantly, I wanted that model to be **informed by** the social enterprise sector and **for** the social enterprise sector.

This thesis is the output of that research and has informed the strategic development of the accompanying business plan, and CASE as a trading entity.

1.3 Introduction and Context of the Research Topic

It should be noted that this research focuses on the emergence and development of social enterprise within the UK. However, it must also be acknowledged that Social Enterprise has become increasingly important as a global concept.

The UK is regarded as a leading force in the development of Social Enterprise and it is currently (as of 2019) estimated that there are around 100,000 UK Social Enterprises contributing £60 billion to the economy and employing 1 million people, (Social Enterprise UK & Santander, 2019) Furthermore, it is social enterprises, which currently show consistent growth at a rate in excess of mainstream SME's; 52% rather than 34%, (SEUK & Santander, 2019)

The UK Government had Social Enterprise as a key policy statement during the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition (2010-2015) and gave a clear message that they wished to support the development of sustainable communities (Cabinet Office, 2013). This was built upon the foundation of the report, Building a Stronger Civil Society, which stated, "The Government is committed to ensuring that charities, social enterprises and cooperatives have a much greater role in the running of public services," (Office for Civil

Society, 2010). With the constantly changing and challenging political and economic landscape and a global context of public sector austerity, now is the time to maximise the potential social enterprise offers. Indeed the recent Labour, Coalition and now Conservative Governments have actively raised the profile of, and encouraged the development of Social Enterprises (Cabinet Office, 2006, 2010, 2011 & 2013 & Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, 2018). This comes at a time when social problems facing communities continues to increase, necessitating the need for innovative solutions. The UK government's desire however, is to see sustainable social enterprises that are *less reliant on institutional support* and placing more control, information and power of influence at a local community and council level, as described in 'Building the Big Society' (Cabinet Office, 2010). This is an important driver in the motivation, focus and intended outputs of this research.

With a European-wide drive to reduce the amount of money invested into providing effective public services, (Kay, Roy & Donaldson, 2016) especially following the economic downturn of 2008, there is a sound rationale for the UK Government's clear interest in the sector (Cabinet Office, 2006, 2010, 2011 & 2013). George Osborne (UK Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer 2010-2016) set an unprecedented target of reducing the size of the public sector from 46% to 36% of GDP over a ten-year period. An end to this austerity was heralded by Prime Minister Theresa May ahead of the 2018 budget, which revealed some easing of previous cutbacks (Treasury, 2018).

Pearce & Kay (2003, p. 5) noted that, "the world of social enterprise is changing with great speed. The pace has been at times breath-taking," acknowledging that when this was written over a decade ago, the field of social enterprise was rapidly developing and becoming ever more important as a positive force in tackling economic, social and environmental constraints and issues.

Accepting that this is indeed the case, there is surely no better time to conduct research in this field, which continues to attract increasing scholarly interest in contemporary academic literature (Macke et al, 2018). Furthermore, to ensure that my research brings not only new knowledge of how to best offer effective support to fledgling social enterprises, but to do so from a different perspective.

1.4 What We Understand by the term 'Social Enterprise'

Professor Muhammad Yunus states that, "businesses with a clear social purpose, have the power to deliver profound and sustainable change for the benefit of all" (Crainer, 2012, p. 16), but the debate into clarifying exactly what a social enterprise is, continues to attract much scholarly attention. With such a wealth of existing and emerging research and hypotheses on this seemingly elusive question, there is little wonder that many struggle with feeling comfortable and confident in finding and accepting a conclusive definition. Some examples of definitions that demonstrate the broad spectrum of opinions include:

Schofield, (2005, p. 34) points out that Social Enterprise is actually a "catch all phrase" which unsurprisingly, is unable to adequately encompass the current huge spectrum of activity sitting beneath its umbrella label.

McCall, Pearce & Ogden-Newton (2004, p. 3), called for a "clear, unambiguous definition that allows society to know not only when an organisation *is* a social enterprise, but also when it *is not*"

Peredo & McLean (2006, p. 56), ask whether it is simply the "application of sound business practices to the operation of non-profit organisations"

EMES, the social enterprise specific network of established university research centres and individual researchers, defines Social Enterprises as "organisations with an explicit aim to benefit the community, initiated by a group of citizens and in which the material interest of capital investors is subject to limits" (Defourny & Nyssens, 2006, p. 5)

Young and Lecy (2013) speak of the then very recent work by Kerlin (2013), around identifying different forms of social enterprise and creating a link to the context in which they are applied. Kerlin's proposed framework possibly goes some way to helping explain the connection between differing countries and the Social Enterprise forms commonly adopted there.

Part 1 of the literature review will explore the wide variation in definitions, differing schools of thought, and the areas of both agreement and contestation.

1.5 What We Understand by the term 'Business Support'

Unlike the term Social Enterprise, which has a dedicated academic journal (Social Enterprise Journal) and a plethora of easily accessible sources of academic literature, the term 'Business Support' is rather more elusive. There is no convenient academic journal dedicated to this subject area and sources of information often include substantial amounts of 'grey literature'. If we couple this with a Social-Enterprise-specific nuance, then we find very limited existing literature in this area. For that reason, I have researched and presented my literature review in two distinct parts; each covering one specific element of the whole research topic (see Chapters 2 and 3).

Whilst there is evident contention over what a Social Enterprise is in terms of a unified definition, there appears to be consensual agreement that Social Enterprise does offer a viable alternative business model to effectively address social problems. However, if a Social Enterprise is "first and foremost a business," (Mswaka, 2011, p. 14) then would existing and generic 'business support' programmes and interventions be sufficiently effective in assisting successful Social Enterprise start-ups, or do we need to develop sector-specific Social Enterprise Business Support programmes and interventions. Looking to the Office for Civil Society's document (Cabinet Office, 2011), it would certainly appear that the latter is considered to be most appropriate.

It might therefore be reasonable to assume, especially given the Government's (previous New Labour, the Coalition and current Conservative) support of the Social Enterprise agenda, that there would already be an existing and effective infrastructure of Social Enterprise Business Support in place. After all, Social Enterprises "cannot drive social change alone", (Seanor & Meaton, 2007) and are dependent on government policies and practices, and their development is further influenced by support agencies (Seanor & Meaton, 2007).

The reality is that an examination into the various models of support offered to social enterprises throughout the last three governments in the UK, reveals a landscape that is inconsistent, fragmented and above all else, driven from an institutional perspective. Hines (2005) finds that whilst there has been progress in the understanding of the concept of social enterprise within the various support agencies and networks, the coalface delivery of support remains problematic. Despite this fragmented and inconsistent nature of support for them, (Seanor & Meaton, 2007), there are already successful Social Enterprises trading, sustaining and delivering social impact within the UK. Seeking their guidance and insight as to what effective, social enterprise specific, business support should look like, therefore presents a valuable opportunity. Furthermore, research in this area should investigate not only what it should look like, but also and perhaps more importantly, what it should not. Taking this further and accepting that there will be widespread variation in those individuals interested in starting social enterprise, with equally diverse backgrounds, existing levels of knowledge and capabilities, I suggest that we need to move beyond an investigation into simply what works. We need to go further to a more comprehensive and in-depth investigation into what works, for whom, in what circumstances and why. It is this specific focus, which provides the background to the research to be undertaken here, and identifies an important potential opportunity for a contribution to knowledge. This will be examined more closely in the following section.

A deeper investigation into what is meant by 'Social Enterprise Business Support' its existence and efficacy in the UK is investigated further in Part 2 of the Literature Review.

1.6 Purpose, Data Collection, Objectives and Scope

1.6.1 Purpose

The purpose of this research is deceptively simple, and aims to understand what type of social enterprise start-up support interventions work, for whom, in what circumstances, and why. In establishing the core purpose, it is important to consider the word 'works' within the above statement. For the sake of clarity, 'works' is interpreted and specifically defined in the context of this research and thesis as, 'contributing positively towards the start-up of the participant's social enterprise, from the perspective of, and to the satisfaction of, the participant'.

The resulting answers will be utilised to produce a set of guidelines to assist programme developers, deliverers and policy makers, for them to consider when designing and implementing social enterprise start-up support interventions.

CASE, the social enterprise consultancy business, which is explicitly linked to this research, will utilise and benefit from these guidelines, and in doing so, will support future clients with a better contextual understanding of what interventions may be most appropriate to their needs. The conclusions and recommendations of the research will ultimately enable CASE to refine and consider its future existence and strategic direction.

Importantly, these guidelines will be ***for*** the social enterprise sector, and ***informed by*** the social enterprise sector.

1.6.2 Data Collection Approach

My data collection will be qualitative and iterative and conducted in two distinct parts. Interviews will be conducted with:

1. Key programme managers and/or deliverers of existing social enterprise start-up support programmes to understand the content and intended outcomes of their programmes
2. Programme participants who are either currently, or have in the recent past, (within the last 5 years) accessed the above social enterprise start-up support programmes,

Subsequent analysis of the participant's collective experiences will inform the development of a set of guidelines for future social enterprise start-up support interventions.

1.6.3 Research Objectives

This will be achieved by conducting research at two distinct levels.

Part 1

Firstly, by examining a number of Social Enterprise Business Start-Up support programmes available within the West Yorkshire Region, via qualitative case-study interviews to understand:

1. Examples of the types of organisations currently providing Social Enterprise Start-Up Support in the West Yorkshire Region of the UK

2. The nature of these support programmes/interventions

This will enable the formulation of a series of Initial Rough Programme Theories (IRPTs), (Wong et al, 2013) for the programmes being examined. This will then inform the research questions to be asked of the programme participants in part two of the data collection.

Part 2

The second part of the data collection is qualitative and iterative, via in-depth case study interviews of both current and previous recipients of the identified support programmes. These case studies will contribute to the research as follows:

For current participants of support interventions:

To identify which specific programme elements (if any) of their business support interventions, are positively contributing to the start-up or continuing success of their social enterprises. These interviews would seek to establish:

- What is working well for them within the programme and why?
- What potentially may work better and why?
- What (if anything) that they feel may be missing and why?

For previous participants of support interventions:

To identify on reflection, any areas which were notably absent from their support programme components, and which the respondents felt could/would have made a value adding difference to their start-up, should such advice have been readily available. These interviews would seek to establish:

- What on reflection, worked well for them within the programme and why?
- What on reflection, may have worked better, and why?
- What on reflection (if anything), was felt to be missing and why?

1.6.4 Scope of Research

The scope of the research will be defined by the following factors:

- **Location** – I have limited the scope of my primary research data collection to the West Yorkshire region, although acknowledge that some of the organisations I have engaged with, also offer/deliver support programmes outside of this region.
- **Typology** – The organisations selected cover a wide range of differing Business Support elements. They include programmes which are both general in nature, and some that are more specific in their subject matter.
- **Primary Research Interviews** – In undertaking a realist-informed investigation, it is important to understand that the data captured and analysed is significant in its depth of detail with individual candidate interviews, rather than broad in nature and interviewing large numbers of candidates.

It should be noted that as with any research, the scope of the study will have some limitations and for the sake of clarity, the primary data collection will exclude any customers, service users, and/or beneficiaries of the social enterprises in receipt of support from the five named organisations. Given that half of these start-ups are still receiving start-up support, and so may not yet have clients, and that the investigation is specifically about an individual's responses to start-up support, rather than their ability, or not, to deliver an effective service to their end users, this is an area for potential future research, but excluded from this study.

To date, support provided to fledgling and developing social enterprises has been predominantly conceived and developed from an institutional perspective, (Cabinet Office, 2006, 2010, 2011, 2013; BIS, 2011). The UK Government has recognised the rationale for supporting this rapidly developing area of business, and through the three most recent variations in Government power (New Labour, Coalition and Conservative) there has been an attempt to deliver appropriate support to these new businesses. The recent economic recession and subsequent severe Government cuts to public sector funding, has intensified the need to find a sustainable and viable alternative to the continuing social, health and welfare issues, currently being funded from a diminishing public purse. (Kay et al., 2016)

However, there has been no attempt so far to look to the sector itself for help with identifying critical areas of support and development, which are essential to any credible and effective best practice social enterprise support model. This is despite the fact that Hines (2005) identifies that social enterprises themselves value the assistance given by networking with others in the sector, and that more interactions of this sort would prove valuable.

Indeed, as discussed in more detail in the literature review of Chapter 2, the Office for Civil Society's Social Enterprise Business Support Programme (2007/8 to 2010/11) delivered a final report to the Cabinet Office, identifying a number of 'Lessons for the Future'. Lessons 1 and 2 outlined below are particularly pertinent to my research, and lend support to my argument for a sector-informed set of guidelines.

- **Lesson for the Future 1: Designing Decentralised, Flexible Programmes**

Whilst the programme provided a useful model for future support programmes, it lacked the ability to effectively share knowledge, resources and best practice between regions. This needs to change with a move to smaller Local Enterprise Partnership areas.

The creation of the guidelines proposed would enable bespoke sector-informed programmes, which once created and tested, could be replicated for participants with similar contextual circumstances and seeking similar outputs and impact.

- **Lesson for the Future 2: Include elements of Social Enterprise specialist knowledge and expertise within a mainstream service. Social Enterprise Champions should be fully engaged in the design of future business support provision.**

Whilst the report suggests that Social Enterprises can be supported in a mainstream Business Support Service, (this is contradicted by the February 2011 report, National Evaluation of the Capacity-Builders Programme conducted by Rocket Science) there is a need for more specialist Social Enterprise technical knowledge and also empathy with the motivating factors driving those starting a Social Enterprise. For this reason, it was felt that future 'generic' business support programmes targeted at Social Enterprises should be supported by Social Enterprise Champions; adding value to the design of such support.

Again, with this suggested move away from a Government-led, to a sector-informed programme, the support offered would already have been proven to have had value adding content and positive impact in the social area being addressed and for the types of participants engaging in the support interventions. Those established social enterprises already operating sustainably, would become the 'social enterprise champions' proposed in the above lesson.

It has been established through both the literature review (see Chapter 2 and 3) and also from a practitioner's perspective, of working and supporting the development of Social Enterprises that the following key issues exist:

1. Whilst the definition of Social Enterprise is heavily contested, there has been a substantial amount of research conducted here, and areas of commonality of the definition have been reached; that it is "first and foremost a business" (Mswaka, 2011, p. 14)

2. Sector-specific business support provided for Social Enterprises in the UK is currently fragmented and inconsistent. (Hines, 2005 & Seanor & Meaton, 2007)

3. Despite a clear academic research interest in social enterprise, various aspects of it remain under-researched compared to conventional commercial businesses (Doherty et al., 2009)

4. There is an agreement in principle that Social Enterprises contribute positively both socially and economically to the UK (Smallbone, Evans, Ekanem & Butters, 2001)

5. There is an agreement in principle that Social Enterprises require different types of support to mainstream commercial businesses

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is structured and organised as follows;

1.7.1 Chapter 1 Introduction and Context

Chapter 1 introduces the contextual background and reasoning for conducting the research and the relationship to CASE, the social enterprise start-up consultancy provision, explicitly linked to this research. It introduces the area of study, scope, the key issues underpinning the investigation, the research questions and the rationale behind the research. It should be noted that an earlier iteration of Chapter 1 has been published as part of a chapter within a book on social enterprise within the Higher Education sector, (Clegg, Towns-Andrews & Halsall, 2021)

1.7.2 Chapter 2 Literature Review Part 1 – Social Enterprise

Chapter 2 commences with an introduction, explanation and rationale for the approach I have taken. The literature review is then presented in two parts.

Part 1, presents a review and reflective critique of the literature on the evolution of social enterprises. Its historical development, the positioning of social enterprise in relation to the social economy, and the contested nature of Social Enterprise definitions are explored.

1.7.3 Chapter 3 Literature Review Part 2 – Business Support

Part 2 of the literature review focuses on the current understanding of the term 'Business Support,' and its relevance to Social Enterprise. Similarities and differences between this and more traditional, pure commercial business support are discussed.

1.7.4 Chapter 4 Introduction to Theory

This chapter investigates the relationship between theory, social enterprise and the methodology influencing this investigation; realist evaluation. Following a discussion around the challenges of theory and social enterprise, there is an introduction to the theoretical frameworks within realist evaluation.

1.7.5 Chapter 5 Methodology

This chapter explains the proposed methodology for the research; a realist-informed investigation based on the principles of realist evaluation. An explanation of the rationale for the data collection, the types of interview respondents being selected, and the questions posed are presented and explained.

1.7.6 Chapter 6 Analysis of Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Provision Within West Yorkshire.

This chapter presents and explains the analysis of Part 1 of the Research

Objectives; to understand who is currently providing Social Enterprise Start-Up support within West Yorkshire, and explore the nature of that support.

1.7.7 Chapter 7 Analysis of Programme Participant's Experiences of Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Interventions

This chapter presents and explains the analysis of Part 2 of the Research Objectives; to explore what aspects of Social Enterprise Start-Up support are working for whom, in what contexts and why.

1.7.8 Chapter 8 Conclusions, Recommendations, Contribution to Knowledge and Opportunities for Further Research

This chapter will present the overall conclusions and recommendations from the study. The contributions to knowledge are presented together with an outline of the opportunities for further research.

1.7.9 Chapter 9 Business Plan for CASE

This chapter presents the CASE business plan, which explores its initial positioning as a conceptual service to assess the viability of the model. It investigates the potential future opportunities for CASE; recommending a preferred pathway, which adopts the guiding principles of social enterprise start-up support, established from the research recommendations.

The next chapter, which is Part 1 of the two literature review chapters, will explore the historical context and development of social enterprise and an exploration of its contested nature and multiple definitions.

2 Literature Review Part 1 – Social Enterprise

2.1 Introduction to the Literature Reviews

As discussed in Chapter 1, the purpose of this research is to better understand what elements of social enterprise, business support programmes work, for whom, in what circumstances and why. This demonstrates clear intentions for providing research findings that are of practical benefit to those either considering social enterprise start-up, to those involved in the design and delivery of such programmes of support, and to policymakers in the field. The specific interventions I will be researching, (social enterprise, business support programmes) lend themselves to conveniently divide the literature review into two distinct parts; each reviewing literature pertinent to that specific element.

Part 1 of the literature review focuses on the term 'Social Enterprise'. Existing literature is explored to understand its historical development and definitions.

Part 2, reviews the second part of the research topic, 'Business Support'. This investigates the current literature for its meanings, scope, and definitions and whether such support when designed and delivered to potential social enterprise start-ups, is generic or more specific in nature.

Both reviews were initially approached from a narrative perspective to engage with current literature and to understand differing perspectives and opportunities to contribute. Each review was then examined more systematically, to identify and understand the emerging themes. Each literature review chapter concludes with a distilled summary of the key emerging themes, with the full analysis being available in the related appendices.

2.2 Social Enterprise Historical Development

As of 2018, the UK currently has 100,000 social enterprises, employing 2 million people, and contributing £60 billion to the UK economy. With 25% of those social enterprises being under 3 years old, and 58% of them anticipating an increase in turnover in the next 12 months, this sector should certainly be considered valuable to the UK economy, and one which is continuing to grow (Social Enterprise UK, 2018).

Although Social Enterprise as a concept has existed for a significant period of time, in particular since the industrial revolution, it has only been in the last 20 to 30 years that the development of specific academic interest in the area has been evident (Gawell, 2013; Easter & Conway Dato-on, 2015; Conway Dato-on & Kalakay, 2016). However, it should not be assumed that evidence of limited contemporary interest by academics, signifies this field as being of lesser importance. Omorede, (2014) for example, makes explicit reference to the scale and depth of positive social impact from Social Enterprise.

In order to understand the origins of Social Enterprise, another broad term, the Social Economy should be considered. It is significant to note that the emergence and subsequent development of the Social Economy, and the early examples of what we now describe as Social Enterprise, have their origins in this same Industrial Revolution period. It is therefore unsurprising that this is the area of the economy most often associated with Social Enterprise. However, a literature search for a conclusive and universally accepted definition of the Social Economy remains as elusive as that of social enterprise itself. Descriptors include:

> "[…] including all initiatives which are part of neither the public, nor private sectors" Neamtan (2002, p. 3)

> "[…] encompassing everything that sits outside the traditional private and public sectors incorporating all voluntary/community sector activity," McCall, Ogden-Newton & Pearce, (2004, p. 2)

which are focused on the 'positioning' of the social economy relative to other business sectors, and

> "[…] a collection of enterprises and associations whose guiding

> principles are ethical and moral considerations", Mendell, (2005, p. 10)

> "[…] important in promoting opportunities for, and actual activity of, voluntary groups and volunteering", Evans & Syrett, (2007, p. 61)

which focus on the ethical/moral/community-focused nature of the activities it encompasses.

Whilst clearly a heavily debated term, most researchers seem to concur that the social economy refers to the part of the economy, which is neither private, nor public sector controlled, (Haugh, 2005) and which acts as an instrument for the redistribution of wealth in market economies (Leyshon, Lee & Williams, 2003).

Moulaert and Nussbaumer, (2005, p. 2079) define it as the part of the economy which;

- Organises economic functions primarily according to the principles of democratic cooperation and reciprocity
- Guarantees a high level of equality and distribution and organises redistribution (when needed) in order to satisfy basic human needs in a sustainable manner

There are some who contest the existence of a social economy altogether; notably Barker (2002), who argues that the notion of a social economy is merely political, practical, and a convenient way of characterising certain businesses.

Laville & Nyssens (2001) and Moulaert & Ailenei, (2005) suggest that the origins of the social economy date back to the industrial revolution. This was a period marked by the rapid transformation of the working environment due to industrialisation. The resulting increase in the extremes of poverty and wealth, (Levesque, Bourque & Forgues, 2001) and harsh economic conditions, left workers and their families with little opportunity to escape exploitation and poverty, (Moulaert & Nussbaumer, 2005). Such challenging conditions saw a significant increase in philanthropic activities, in an attempt to combat increasing deprivation and so an introduction to philanthropy and its position alongside social enterprise seems appropriate here.

2.2.1 Philanthropy

The Oxford English Dictionary defines philanthropy as the, "love of mankind; the disposition, or active effort, to promote the happiness and well-being of others; practical benevolence, as expressed by the generous donation of money to good causes" (OED, 2019). It is captured more concisely as, "voluntary action for the public good," by Payton and Moody (2008, p. 28). That being the case, how this differs to charity, altruism, benevolence and indeed, the social change brought about by the activities of social enterprises, is perhaps helpful to briefly explore, whilst noting that this is not the focus of this thesis. Table 2.1 below illustrates the same OED sourced definitions in an attempt to highlight the differences.

Table 2.1 Oxford English Dictionary Sourced Definitions

Concept	Definition
Philanthropy	Love of mankind; the disposition or active effort to promote the happiness and well-being of others; practical benevolence, as expressed by the generous donation of money to good causes
Altruism	Disinterested or selfless concern for the well-being of others, esp. as a principle of action
Charity	Benevolence to one's neighbours, especially to the poor
Benevolence	Disposition to do good, desire to promote the happiness of others, kindness, generosity, charitable feeling

As discussed already, the turbulence of the Industrial Revolution had many negative side effects, including an exacerbation in the extremes of wealth and poverty. This provided an opportunity for individuals with sufficient means and motivation, to make efforts towards alleviating the hardship of those less fortunate. This is not to imply, that philanthropy originated during this period; indeed there is evidence that early philanthropic acts date back to the Tudor times, and the Reformation in England (Charities Aid Foundation, 2016). However, philanthropy at these early stages of development, was very much focused on the donor and on religious beliefs that such acts of generosity would secure the donor's place in an 'afterlife', rather than a focus on the beneficiary and societal improvements and change (Davies, 2016).

Returning to Payton and Moody's definition above, a critical word here is 'voluntary' – a 'voluntary' action for the public good. Philanthropy is very much an action with the beneficiary in mind, rather than the return of tangible benefits and rewards to the philanthropist themselves. However, the 'feel good factor,' experienced by the philanthropist can be extremely rewarding; hence an experience of mutual benefit, rather than a "one-way street" (Smith & Davidson, 2016). Furthermore, philanthropy is characterised not simply by the act of 'giving,' but rather by the end goals; the change and improvements to society that such an act enables (Davies, 2016).

Important philanthropists emerging during the 19th Century include George Peabody (1795 – 1869), George Cadbury, (1839 – 1922), and Andrew Carnegie (1835 – 1919), who share a similar transition in their lives, from successful businessmen in their respective fields, to philanthropists.

The introduction of the Friendly Society Acts of 1757 and 1797 supported the growth of philanthropic activities in the UK by regulating and safeguarding the finances of friendly societies; that is, a group of individuals joining together for mutual financial benefit and/or, a social purpose.

Examples of philanthropic interventions from this period include;

- The introduction of Sunday Schools to give the poor access to basic levels of education.
- The development of savings clubs or 'coffin clubs' for those unable to afford to pay for a dignified funeral
- The later introduction of the 'New Poor Law' in 1834 in an attempt to create a more uniform approach to supporting destitute individuals (Clark & Page, 2019).

The introduction of the Industrial and Provident Society Partnerships Act in 1852 helped to legitimise the activities of philanthropic organisations, which focused on both their core business activities, and the assistance of communities; this marked the birth of the cooperative movement.

Philanthropic activity reached a peak during the Industrial Revolution when the demands for aid from the poorest in society were greater than the provision made publicly available. Although philanthropy was concluded not to be the appropriate sole solution to providing such societal support, it did reluctantly force the hand of the state to take on more responsibility; ultimately leading to the beginnings of a welfare state provision (Davies, 2016).

There are undoubtedly some similarities between philanthropy and the activities to enable societal improvements delivered by social enterprises. The most notable similarity is that both seek to tackle the root-cause of the social problem, and to enable/empower changes to be made, rather than attempting to simply alleviate any symptoms of the problem. However, it is my view that the philanthropic act originates with a strong sense of purpose and the personal financial support of the philanthropist, whereas the impact delivered by social enterprises, results from the generation and then re-investment of profits, from an explicitly related business activity.

2.2.2 Social Enterprise

The earliest examples of what we now collectively group under the broad term of 'Social Enterprise,' would date back to this same period, with the establishment of modern day equivalents to Co-Operatives. Social Enterprise UK (2018) describes how, the origins of social enterprise in the UK can be traced back to Rochdale in the 1840's and the early formation of worker co-operatives to combat worker's conditions and lack of nourishment.

However, despite this reflected understanding of the social economy and that social enterprises have their origins in the same period, the specific term, 'social enterprise' is not mentioned until much later; in a relatively recent period of history.

The development of the UK social economy in more recent times (1980s and 1990s) has been fueled by the decline of key industries such as mining and steel (Thompson, Alvy & Lees, 2000). It was at this time that the emergence of a new European descriptor, the Third Sector, was seen. It was also acknowledged that social enterprises form a distinct, but separate sub-sector of the social economy, although some researchers (Smith, 2005) argue that such distinctions are merely semantic.

Early use of the actual terminology 'social enterprise' and 'social entrepreneurship' can be traced to Beechwood College near Leeds, from 1978. Freer Spreckley (now an International Development Consultant specialising in the Social Economy), used the term Social Enterprise for worker and community co-operatives that used the 'social accounting and audit' system which was also developed at Beechwood. However, it was to be another 20 years (1997) before Freer Spreckley and Cliff Southcombe collaborated to establish the first specialist support organisation in the UK. Social Enterprise Ltd, will be discussed later when the meaning of 'Social Enterprise Support' is analysed. According to Kerlin, (2010, p. 164) "the idea of revenue generation in the service of charitable activities is not a new one. However, the contemporary application of the term "social enterprise" is new."

The turning point in indicating a clear and explicit role for UK social enterprise was established in that same year, (1997) with the election of the New Labour Government. Following the election, the Secretary for Trade and Industry Stephen Byers, discussed it explicitly in a House of Commons debate, stating, "The government recognizes the important contribution and role that social enterprises play in the nation's economy, including helping to overcome problems of social deprivation" (Hansard, 2000).

Almost a decade later in 2009, a European funded project (Birkholzer, 2009) was undertaken and established a number of key criteria for social enterprises. These principles outlined in Table 2.2, were not deemed essential for all Social Enterprises to demonstrate; simply offering guidelines and principles to unite disparate organisations. This transformation in the prevalence and interest in social enterprise in more recent times, leads us to a closer examination of contemporary social enterprise in the next section.

Table 2.2 Criteria Unifying The Concept Of Social Enterprise (Birkholzer, 2009)

Criteria Unifying the Concept of Social Enterprise (Birkholzer, 2009)
Self-managed economic activities for primarily social, ecological, cultural, or other community-oriented objectives
Set up and carried out by voluntary commitment of citizens
Performing not of private profit, but mainly for social profit and community benefit
With organisational structures based on cooperative principles

2.3 Development of Contemporary Social Enterprise

In addition to the on-going debate of what a social enterprise actually is, there is an equally contentious debate about where it should sit within the public/private and third sector framework. In a paper on this subject, Sepulveda, (2009) notes that between 2000 and 2009, only two articles published in *Voluntas: Journal of Voluntary and Non-Profit Organisations*, explicitly mention Social Enterprise in the title. Whilst this may seem surprising, there are clearly opposing opinions on the relationship between the third sector and social enterprise. Some see a "blurring of boundaries" between not-for-profit and for-profit activity (Dart, 2004, p. 415), others see the "business like values" of social enterprise as being in opposition to voluntary and charitable values (Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004). The 2014 article (Seanor, Bull, Baines & Purcell, 2014, p. 361) describes Social Enterprise as fitting at the intersection where Public, Private and Voluntary sectors overlap.

The timeline below in Table 2.3 has been constructed with major reference to Simon Teasdale's paper, (Teasdale, 2010). This offers an overview of activities and changes relating to the development of the broad term Social Enterprise over the last 25 years.

Table 2.3 Social Enterprise: A UK Contemporary Historical Development Timeline

Date	Key Developments	Key Authors Active at this time
1994	**Social Justice: Strategies for National Renewal*, (Commission for Social Justice, 1994) considered to be a turning point in the recognition of Social Enterprise, although the term Social Enterprise not actually used within the text.	
1996	*EMES (International social enterprise research network) established	
1997	*Election of New Labour Government brings renewed enthusiasm for the exploration of Social *Enterprise benefits for the economy	
1998	*Social Enterprise London (SEL) – strategic agency for the development of Social Enterprise in London - established from the merger of London Co-Operative Training (LCT) and London Industrial Common Ownership Movement (LICOM). First agency in the UK to use the term Social Enterprise in their title	Dees
1999	*The term 'Social Enterprise' appears in Policy literature for the first time *First social enterprise courses for teachers delivered by Social Enterprise International	Prabhu

Date	Key Developments	Key Authors Active at this time
2000	*Social Enterprise Unit established in Autumn 2001 within the DTI as part of the Regions Directorate *Initial work on defining 'Social Enterprise' within DTI	Thomson, Alvy & Lees
2001	*UnLtd Founded *Creation of Social Enterprise Unit by New Labour	Smallbone, Evans, Ekanem & Butters Laville & Nyssens
2002	*Launch of Government Social Enterprise Strategy: Strategy for Success *First official UK definition of Social Enterprise from DTI [a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners] *Social Enterprise Coalition established *First accredited social enterprise courses delivered by Social Enterprise International at University of Hull	Dees, Emerson & Economy Brown Buttenheim
2003	*First estimate of number of UK Social Enterprises = 5300	Pearce Paton

Date	Key Developments	Key Authors Active at this time
2004	*Second estimate of number of UK Social Enterprises = 15,000 *Social Enterprise Unit moves to Small Business Service *Launch of the Social Enterprise Journal by Social Enterprise London	Hines
2005	*Third estimate of number of UK Social Enterprises = 55,000 (based on annual survey of small businesses) *Formation of a new legal structure, Community Interest Company (CIC) *Responsibility for Social Enterprise moves to the Cabinet Office	Hines
2006	*Social Enterprise Unit merges with Active Communities Unit to form a new Office of the Third Sector *Appointment of Minister for the Third Sector, Ed Miliband	Lyon & Ramsden Mair & Marti Peredo & McLean
2007	*Social Enterprise Journal acquired by Emerald	Chell Haugh Seanor & Meaton

Date	Key Developments	Key Authors Active at this time
2008	*Estimate of number of UK Social Enterprises = 62,000	Defourny & Nyssens Bull Thompson
2009	*UK Ministerial Summit on Social Enterprise held in March	Zahra, Gedajlovic, Neubaum & Schulman
2010	*Coalition Government formed in May 2010 *Office for Civil Society (OCS) replaces Office of the Third Sector (OTS) *Big Society Network established *First Social Impact Bond (SIB) in the UK *Launch of the Social Enterprise Mark	Kerlin Teasdale
2011	*Big Society Capital (Big Society Bank) established	Dees Ridley-Duff & Bull
2012	*UK Social Value Act passed	Haugh Crainer
2014	*Collapse of the Big Society Network	Seanor, Bull, Baines & Purcell; Omorede

Date	Key Developments	Key Authors Active at this time
2015	*Conservative Majority Government – May 2015	Sepulveda Conway
2018	*Prime Minister Theresa May hosted a roundtable for social enterprise CEOs	Doherty
2020	*Social Enterprise UK launch report on affects of COVID-19 on social enterprises	

2.4 Definitions and Characteristics

In the UK, the most widely quoted definition of a Social Enterprise is taken from the now defunct Department of Trade and Industry (2002, p. 7) and is,

"A business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners"

Other definitions, both before and after this, include:

> "[…] organisations who are independent of the state and provide services, goods and trade for a social purpose and are non-profit-distributing." (Treasury, 1999)
>
> Are "self-sustaining businesses that trade in the market place, (and) their core purpose is social and/or environmental" (Social Enterprise Coalition, 2003)
>
> "Autonomous organisations set up purposely for a clear social mission that generate their income through trade and reinvest the majority of their profit" (MacDonald & Howarth, 2018, p. 5)

These may be grouped and described as focusing on their combination of trade and purpose. Whilst others:

> "[…] combines the passion of a social mission with an image of business-like discipline" (Dees, 2011, p. 22)
>
> An "institutional animal, which is part business and part social," (Alter, 2004, p. i)
>
> A business that brings people and communities "together for economic development and social gain," (Martin and Thompson, 2010, p. 6)
>
> "The practice of combining innovation, resourcefulness and opportunity to address critical social and environmental challenges" (Said Business School, 2014)

may be grouped and described as focusing on their hybrid nature.

At the time of writing, there is still no UK-wide legal definition of a Social Enterprise, although there was a proposal (Civil Society News, 2013) that this should be as follows for Social Enterprises operating in Healthwatch Organisations of the UK.

> A charity or community interest company; or an organisation which has provisions in its constitution which ensure that it distributes less than 50 per cent of its profit to shareholders, states that it is a body carrying out activities for the benefit of the community and has clauses that require it to pass on its assets to another social enterprise if it dissolves or winds up.

However, this definition although welcomed in its attempt to offer some degree of clarification, was criticised by the Social Enterprise Mark Company's managing director, Lucy Findlay, as having: "two significant weaknesses: no requirement for independence and vagueness on 'social purpose'" (Civil Society, 2013).

Following engagement and consultation with its international members, Social Enterprise International developed the following definition:

"Business ventures that prioritise their social purpose(s), operate ethically and promote democratic ownership and governance by primary stakeholders" (SEI, 2014)

According to (Thompson, 2008), the following characteristics, which are taken from 'The Diverse World of Social Enterprises' (Thompson & Doherty, 2006), assist in the defining of a Social Enterprise:

- It has a social purpose
- It's assets and wealth are used to create community benefit
- It pursues this with (at least in part) trading activities. If it delivers services to clients that are paid for by a third party, as distinct from direct sales to a customer, this is still regarded as trading.

- Profits and surpluses are reinvested in the business and community rather than distributed to shareholders
- Employees (or members) have some role in decision making and governance
- The enterprise is held accountable to both its members and a wider community
- There is either a double or triple bottom-line paradigm with an acceptable balance of economic, social and possibly environmental returns which are audited

However, the proposition of defining social enterprises with reference to specific characteristics is not without its problems. As social enterprises are created to tackle a wide range of socio-economic issues, the characteristics they subsequently demonstrate are not necessarily uniform, consistent and readily transferable across the entire sector (Peattie & Morley, 2008). Furthermore, social enterprises themselves have differing perspectives of their own form and function; compounding the issue of achieving universal clarity (Doherty et al, 2009; Martin & Thompson, 2010).

The complex quest for a widely accepted definition becomes compounded, if we explore beyond the descriptor 'Social Enterprise.' Adding 'Social Entrepreneurship' and 'Social Entrepreneur' into the linguistic mix throws up further debate and contention. Dacin, Dacin & Matear (2010) find that the list of proffered definitions during the years 2000 to 2010 from the academic literature is extensive. This problem has been tackled most recently in an innovative approach to examining the increasing problem of definitions on social entrepreneurship within the academic field. Aliaga-Isla & Huybrechts (2018) look to clarify and "pull in" many existing scholarly definitions, rather than to "push out" and "state a novel definition."

With such a significant contribution to the economy, and yet widespread confusion and argument about a definition, the Cabinet Office decided that clarity was needed (Giotis & Hampson, 2009). With a common misunderstanding of the term social enterprise across the UK, it was felt that an "identifier" was required. This led to the development and subsequent roll out of the 'Social Enterprise Mark'; a visible logo identifying that the company awarded the mark is operating to uphold the values and ethos of a Social

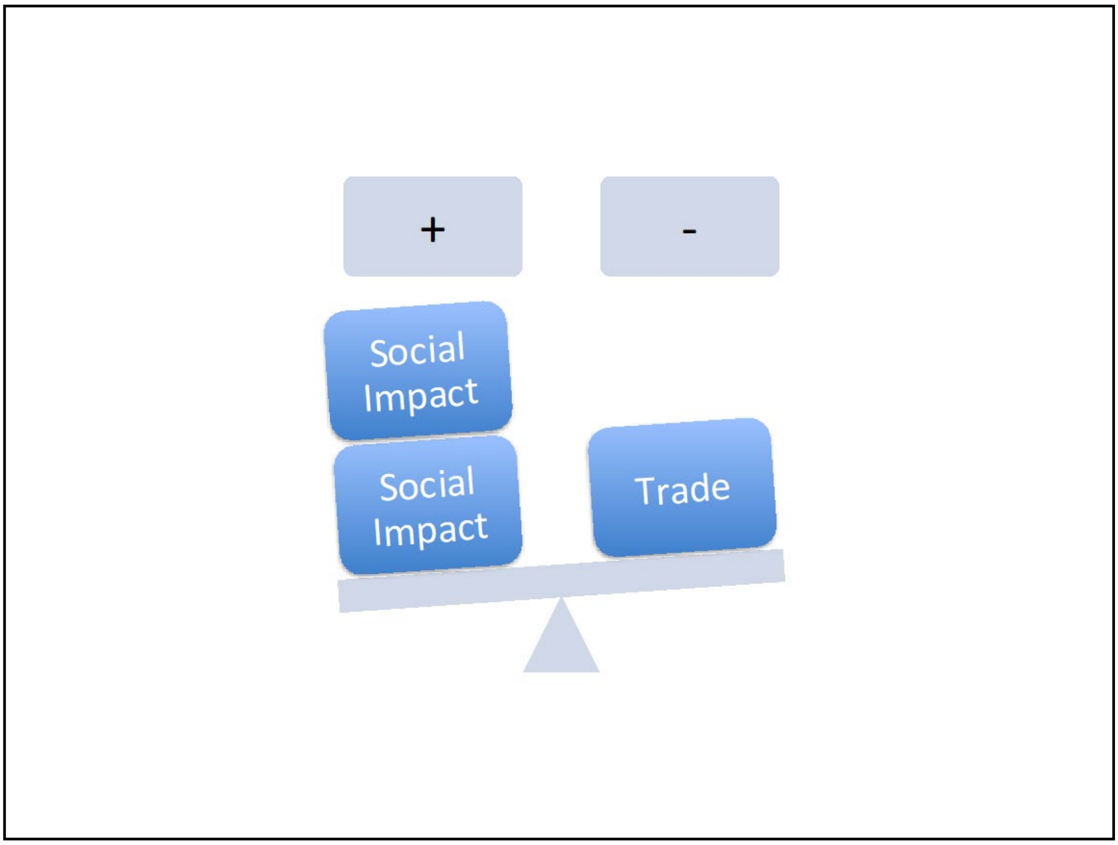
Enterprise in utilising its profits to maximise social and/or environmental impact (Ridley-Duff & Bull, 2016).

At the time of writing, the Social Enterprise Mark website shows approximately 230 organisations currently holding either the base level Social Enterprise Mark, or the enhanced Gold Mark. A further development to note is that since 2017, there have been a number of universities and colleges (11) applying for, and being successfully accredited with the mark. Sutton, McEachern & Kane (2018, p. 329) note that higher education institutions are "increasingly recognized as social enterprises themselves" in their hybrid approach to achieving financial sustainability and social value. This again demonstrates the wide-ranging interpretations of what a social enterprise is, and does. This is summarised by Teasdale (2012, p. 100) who describes the meanings of social enterprise as being "politically, culturally, historically and geographically variable."

A more in depth analysis into obtaining clarity about the many proffered definitions, reveals the emergence of two distinct schools of thought to establishing social enterprises. The first, favours delivering positive impact on the social aims and objectives ahead of trading for commercial and economic gain. The second approach sees the creation of economic wealth as a fundamental part of the social enterprises activity, and only once this is successfully underway, can the social enterprise attempt to meet its social aims and objectives.

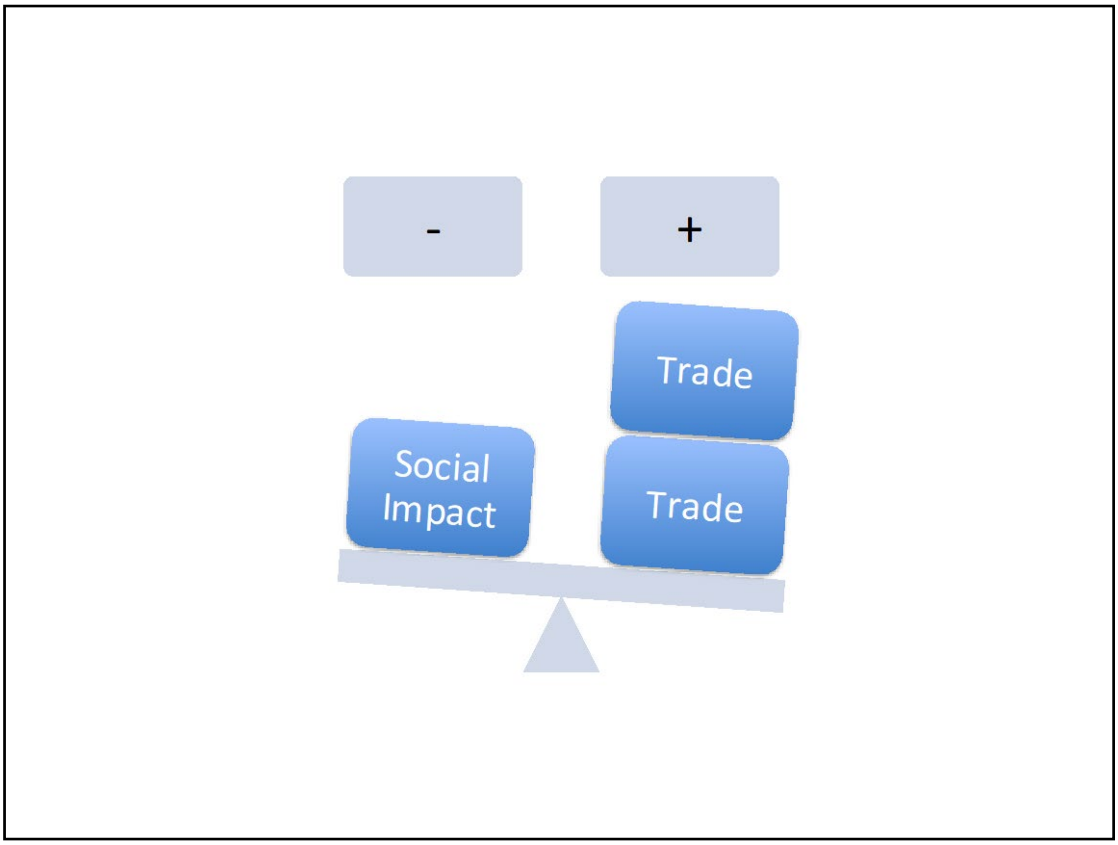
The simple diagrammatic models offered below are intended to demonstrate these two distinct approaches, and to give examples of scholars supporting each hypothesis.

Figure 2.1 Diagrammatic Representation Of A Focus On Delivering Social/Environmental Objectives



Supported by the following scholars: Prabhu (1999), Pearce (2003), Paton (2003) and Chell (2007)

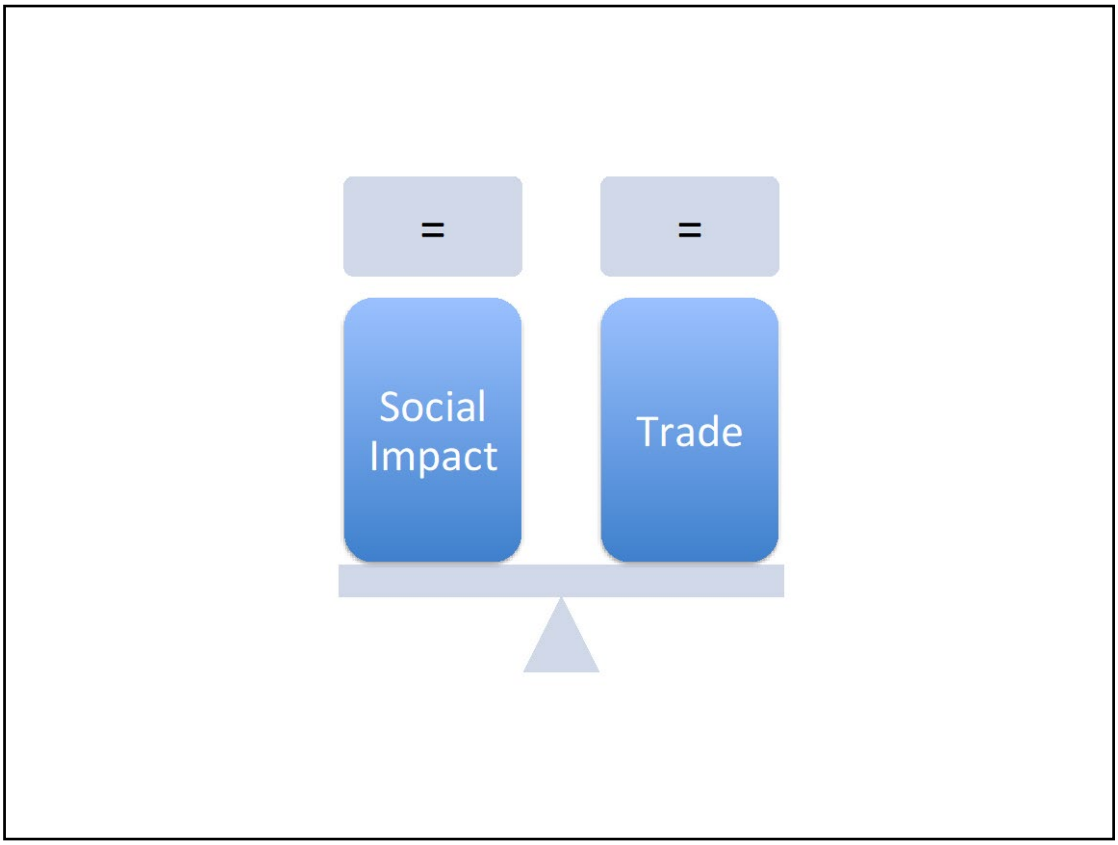
Figure 2.2 Diagrammatic Representation Of A Focus On Trading For Economic Gain



These ideas have been developed from the work of Westall (2001), Dees (2001), Marshall & Lovatt (2004), and Zahra, Gedajlovic, Neubaum & Schulman (2009).

Despite these two contrasting strategic approaches, the ultimate goal is the creation of both economic and social value, no matter which is given initial priority and focus. This remains a powerful method of combatting social and welfare issues (Alter, 2004) and is demonstrated in the final model below.

Figure 2.3 Diagrammatic Representation Of The Vision Of Balancing Economic Gain With Delivering Social/Environmental Objectives



The above definitions and contrasting approaches, show that social enterprise is a politically contested concept, and subject to many different interpretations (Choi & Majumdar, 2013). It could be envisaged as "an umbrella term for a variety of innovative and dynamic economic and social development practice" (Nicholls, 2006. p. 5), or possibly, entrepreneurship with a social purpose, (Austin, Stevenson & Wei-Skillern, 2006). The underlying theme however, is that social enterprise is first and foremost a business, dedicated in perpetuity to addressing socio-economic deprivation through enterprise (Mswaka, 2011).

These diagrams are characterised by an examination of their primary focus. The first school (S1) focuses on social return; the second school (S2), on economic return. As Figure 2.1 demonstrated, the principal exponent of the first school (dominant social return focus) is preferred by Prabhu (1999), Pearce, (2003), Paton (2003), and Chell, (2007). Chell is explicitly clear in her views that the culture and ethos of social enterprise is rooted in 'the principles of volunteering, ethical behaviour and a mission with a social cause' (Chell

2007, p. 11). Pearce, similarly argues that the list of characteristics below in Table 2.4, “should be fixed and therefore non-negotiable” (2003, p. 115)

Table 2.4 Social Enterprise S1 Characteristics - Social Return Focused Approach

Social Enterprise S1 Characteristics – Social Return Focused Approach
Non-distribution of profits to individuals
Holding assets in trust
Democratic governance
Being accountable to a constituency and community
Having a social purpose
Engaged in trading activity

Social enterprises are frequently self-defined as ‘not-for-profit’ and this in itself presents further confusion as to the nature of such businesses. If they are truly not-for-profit, the logical conclusion would be that either they are not trading at all, or that trading is limited to the extent that there will be no prospect of creating a surplus. In either scenario, there is no likelihood of achieving the sustainable creation of social return and social value. Therefore, such types of social enterprises will essentially be reliant upon grant funding to function and have little prospect of long-term independent sustainability. It is noted by Buttenheim (2002) that this conflicted descriptor (i.e. not-for-profit) is creating additional sector confusion and that the emergence of the economic focused school of thought discussed next, is the result. I propose that a more logical and rational explanation of this confusing ‘not for profit’ terminology would be that it is simply a shorthand for ‘not for traditional profit redistribution’. In other words, that rather than any profits being driven by a need to reward shareholders, those profits are driven and utilised to address the social aims and objectives of the social enterprise.

The second School of thought (S2) favouring an economic focused approach, is supported by researchers such as Westall, (2001), Dees (2002), Marshall and Lovatt, (2004), and Zahra et al. (2009). Proponents of this second school, see the generation of surplus profits (itself confirming economic viability and sustainability) as the primary focus with further characteristics outlined in Table 2.5. The resulting economic success, then facilitating the creation of social benefit and value. Strothotte and Wustenhagen (2005) comment that all enterprises seek to be economically sustainable, and social enterprises should be no different.

Table 2.5 Social Enterprise S2 Characteristics - Commercial/Economic Focused Approach

Social Enterprise S2 Characteristics – Commercial/Economic Focused Approach
Democratic governance
Delivery of commercial activities (trading)
Generation of surpluses
No distinction between for-profit, and not-for-profit models
Engaging with markets outside of the social economy

Ridley-Duff and Bull (2011, p. 103) refer to a similar notion of two distinct approaches to balancing both the social return and business elements of a social enterprise. They refer to them as those which,

“Accept globalisation and use it to advance social entrepreneurial enterprises,” and those which,

“Seek to subvert the logic of the free-market and change relationships between money, land and people”

These two schools of thought are subsequently aligned to either the ‘reformist’ or the ‘radical’ approaches preferred by Kay, Roy & Donaldson, (2016). Reformist refers to those businesses with strong social responsibility, but seeking maximum profit to re-invest in enabling social change. Whereas, radical refers to businesses with a rigorous focus on their social values and principles, to ensure that all activity brings social benefit.

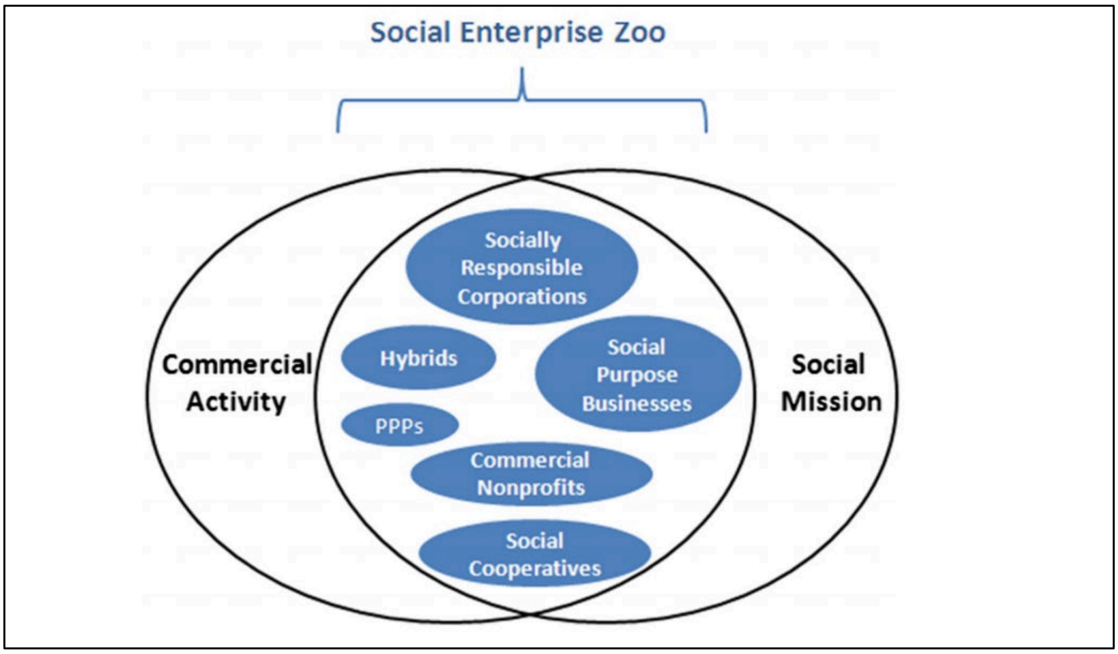
The same paper makes an interesting observation regarding the conflict and tensions that Social Enterprises have to manage during their activities to achieve both business and social objectives. Some examples are seen in Table 2.6 below, from the article published in the Social Enterprise Journal (2016).

Table 2.6 Some Of The Tensions That Have To BE Managed Within Social & Community Enterprises (Kay, Roy & Donaldson, 2016)

Managing the enterprise as a business	Vs	Running the enterprise as a means to achieve social objectives
Having a mechanism to be accountable to key stakeholders including the community	Vs	Being effective in making quick and clear decisions
Re-investing any surplus in the social enterprise to expand and develop	Vs	Using the surplus to support other, wider work in the locality e.g. donations.
Expansion of the social enterprise to become bigger and changing the original mission	Vs	Remaining small and concentrating on providing services within the locality
Recruiting people with a community development background	Vs	Recruiting people with a business background

A further development of the discussions around the balancing of sustainability and social aims and objectives is proposed by Young and Lecy (2014), and their notion of a 'social enterprise zoo'. The hypothesis is that social enterprises are far too complex and individualistic in their approaches to be categorised as a single 'animal' and that the idea of a 'social enterprise zoo' or collection of differing types of 'animals' (social enterprises) within one contextual boundary, is a much more a realistic concept. The diagram below (Figure 2.4) from their 2014 paper, indicates this central positioning between commercial activity and social mission.

Figure 2.4 The Social Enterprise Zoo (Young & Lecy, 2014)



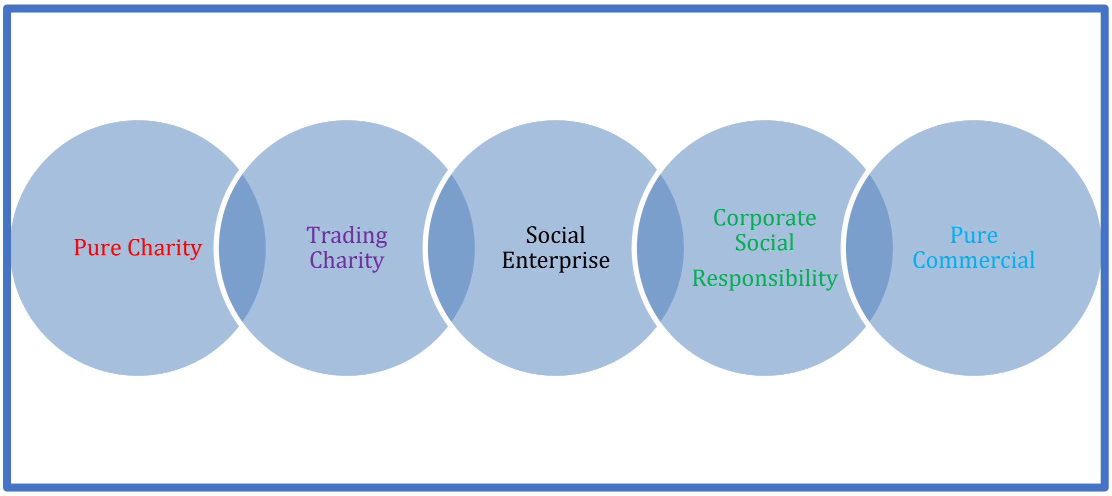
The walls of the zoo are the intersection of social purpose and commercial activity. The residents of the zoo represent various distinct forms of social enterprise (Young & Lecy, 2014)

There is another factor, which has influenced both the lack of widely accepted definitions of social enterprise, and also, where the social enterprise sector sits in the UK economy. That is, the widespread association of the model with the need to reform the struggling UK public sector, and provide sustainable and cost-effective services. (Kay et al, 2016). Such an association, as Kay points out, has 'skewed' or influenced strong perceptions about what a social enterprise is, and does.

On this point it is important to mention that social enterprises may be under increasing pressure to live up to exaggerated claims of their potential to deliver societal change. The economy needs viable solutions to social problems and for them to be delivered in a sustainable way, which demonstrates positive social impact. However, with no clarity on what they are, how they can best be supported, and what realistic impact expectations would look like, it is potentially a damaging combination of factors for the third sector (Floyd, 2013).

To further intensify the 'what is a social enterprise' debate, we could also examine its positioning on the 'enterprise spectrum' offered below in Figure 2.5 which is adapted from Alter (2007). This illustrates differing models, ranging from pure charity at one end, to pure capitalism at the other.

Figure 2.5 The Enterprise Spectrum (Adapted From Alter, 2007, p. 23)



The model includes a reference to Corporate Social Responsibility and for the purposes of this research, I refer to Carroll's definition that states that, "the social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organisations at a given point in time" (Carroll, 1979, p. 500). It can be seen from the linear diagram above there is the potential for confusion between a pure commercial business that engages in a clear and well-communicated programme of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and a true social enterprise. I have certainly found this to be the case in my work with students at the University of Huddersfield. It could be proposed that the former supports such positive contributions to societal change as a *bi-product* (emphasis added) of its success. Perhaps in some cases to justify and excuse pure capitalism in a society that is increasingly influenced by the values of businesses. Whereas the latter, has the intended positive societal change as its *raison d'etre*; with its social aims and objectives embedded into the mission and vision for the social enterprise.

With many charities trying to become more sustainable and 'business-like' in their approach, this is in effect moving them to the right on the above enterprise spectrum. Conversely, as modern-day society faces an almost bewildering amount of choice when procuring products and services, students I have worked with have commented that perhaps purely commercially driven businesses are effectively moving to the left on the spectrum, in order to increase customer attraction. This movement in positioning exacerbates the confusion and speculation of what is, and isn't, a social enterprise. These 'shifts' in positioning on the spectrum are well articulated by Kay et al (2016, p. 223) who speak about some social enterprises "down-grading the importance of their values, their priorities and the factors which make them distinctive and different" in an effort to be more business focused and compete in the capitalist market. Ironically in doing so, they then miss the opportunity to differentiate themselves, their purpose, and the potential added value they offer to a market increasingly influenced by such factors.

Developing the discussion around where social enterprise fits on the 'enterprise spectrum' further, leads to an interesting debate found in the paper by Bridge (2015). His paper offers thoughts on the relevance of enterprise education to social enterprises and draws attention to a potentially self-limiting flaw to the development of the social enterprise sector.

Linked to the acknowledged confusion around definitions of what a social enterprise is and does, he points out that if the advocates of social enterprise continue to see them as fundamentally different to commercial businesses, they may inadvertently be limiting their potential development and sustainability. If a social enterprise is first and foremost a business, "albeit with social objectives" then surely it would benefit from "an underpinning of sound business skills […] essential for the sustainability for those social enterprises" (Bridge, 2015, p 1016).

Furthermore, are business start-ups being supported towards a goal (maximizing profit for personal financial gain), which is not necessarily the destination of all entrepreneurs. The implications of this view point will clearly have an impact on how we best support the development of early stage social enterprises and Part 2 of this literature review will turn to the topic of business support.

2.5 Summary and Conclusions from Chapter 2

Having initially adopted a narrative review of the literature relating to the term Social Enterprise, I have subsequently re-examined the major articles reviewed to date, to identify any emerging and recurring themes. The full analysis can be found in Appendix 1, but the key areas that are most prominently evident are:

- The lack of a universally accepted definition
- The contested/contentious nature of Social Enterprise
- Contextual influences on Social Enterprise
- Balance between trading for profit and the creation of social value
- Where social enterprise 'fits' in the business arena
- The importance of language in describing social enterprises

Whilst many of these emerging themes are not surprising, it is particularly interesting to see the issue of 'context and social enterprise' being surfaced. This is noteworthy, as it is the importance of context that directed this research towards a realist paradigm, and the realist evaluation methodology explored further in Chapters 4 and 5.

For the purposes of this research, I offer the following working definition of social enterprise, based on the evidence from this literature review, and my work in the field as a practitioner:

> A social enterprise is first and foremost a business, being socially owned and accountable, and reinvesting its surplus to address predetermined social aims and objectives. Its trading activity contributes to sustainability, whilst a clearly articulated mission demonstrates a 'not just for profit' ethos.

Chapter 3 now follows with Part 2 of the literature review on Business Support.

3 Literature Review Part 2 – Business Support

3.1 Business Support

The following literature review section focuses on the second element of the research topic; that of Business Support. Unlike the preceding section which focused on the term 'social enterprise' and which had a clear and extensive potential source of literature, this second element is not conveniently captured and explored within a specific source or sources. Therefore this chapter focuses on the changes to UK state-funded sources during the last 20 years and addresses generalist business support and additionally, any support specifically tailored to that of social enterprises. Inevitably this has resulted in a significant number of references to, and citations of, policy documents and reports.

3.2 What is Understood By the Term 'Business Support'

Although used extensively, the term has no clear definition of the elements it may include, and as noted by Sivaev (2013, p. 907), is often "interpreted narrowly as referring to advice on the legal, financial and other practical aspects of running a business". Having worked in this field for over 10 years, my personal experience has been that the definition should be much broader, especially when supporting pre-start/early stage start-ups. It is common to find elements such as collaborative opportunities, innovation, knowledge exchange and personal development support included. Common components of Business Support initiatives and programmes can be captured under the following six themes, as described by the Centre for Cities (2013) policy briefing:

- Access to finance: to assist with access to debt/equity finance for businesses

- Funding: provision of grants for business activities that are pre-commercial, yet warrant backing for anticipated future economic benefit
- Tax reliefs and discounts: adaptations to the standard regulatory framework to incentivise businesses to yield public economic benefits
- Advice: provision of consultancy/advisory services to businesses
- Networking and collaboration: facilitating the development of new contacts and collaborative opportunities to encourage exchange of knowledge and experience
- Skills: incentivising businesses to invest in employee skills

A specific and definitive explanation of what business support looks and feels like will depend on the context to which it is both being conceived by the provider, and received by the business. The notion that the same type of intervention may be utilised by different organisations, to enable differing outcomes for differing business needs, is reported as a complexity in attributing a value to business support by BIS (2011a, p. 105). Regardless of the huge variance in business support provision and initiatives, the programmes and policies offered will inevitably fall within the framework of the aforementioned 6 thematic headings.

Having established what may sit under the heading of Business Support, it would be prudent to explain why such interventions, (or as will be discussed in Chapter 4, mechanisms) exist and the anticipated benefits to both the economy and beneficiary of such provisions. The same Centre for Cities (2013) policy briefing clearly defines three strategic aims of business support.

1. Helping businesses to grow.

Whilst some businesses may have the potential capacity to scale and grow, they may need access to specific support and advice in order for that potential to be realised. Growth specifically in social enterprises is commented on within the BIS Longitudinal Study (2011a) which highlights some of the perceived barriers specific to this sector, including their pursuance of social, environmental and economic goals, which may dilute their focus and growth potential, coupled with, an often dominant trading income with the public sector; resulting in more limited sales revenue and responsiveness to opportunities.

2. Making businesses better.

Ability or interest in scaling and growing aside, there will undoubtedly be scope for businesses to become more efficient, effective and productive; perhaps via knowledge exchange, innovation or skills development. With so many aspects of business support interventions potentially contributing to this overall objective of improvement, it is more challenging to extract an individual summative comment from the BIS Longitudinal Study (2011a) to support this from a social enterprise perspective. However, what is noteworthy from that report's executive summary is the feeling of conflict around the term social enterprise in terms of public understanding, perceived implications of reduced efficiency, and the sector's desire to be seen and understood as "proper businesses" (BIS, 2011a, p. 9).

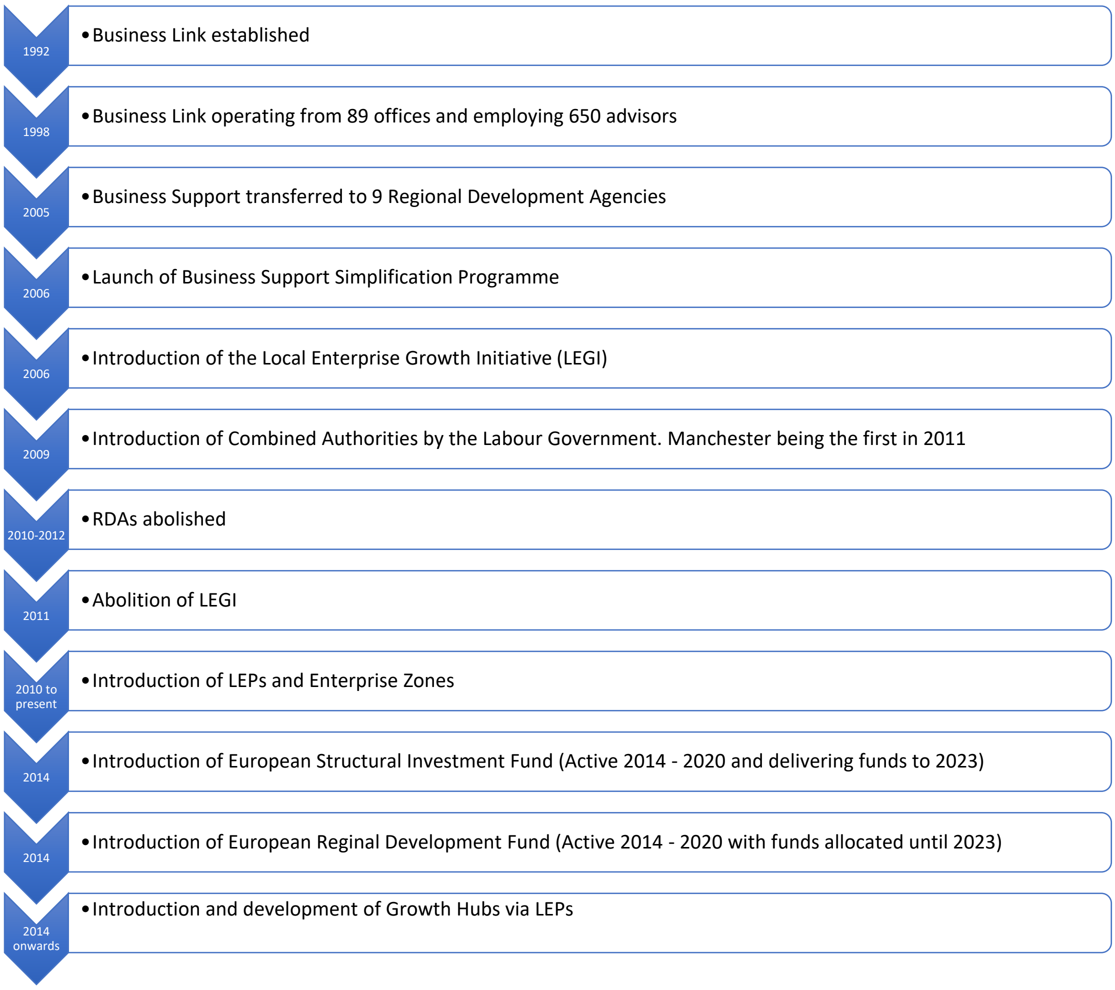
3. Increasing the number of businesses.

In order to create and sustain a healthy and growing economy, interventions to support the development of new businesses to replace those that may fail or close are evident. Support in this category therefore aims to encourage entrepreneurial behaviour and business start-up.

It is this third category, which is central to this particular area of research, in an examination of the programmes and initiatives to encourage the start-up of new social enterprises.

The diagram below in Figure 3.1 (adapted from Sivaev, 2013), gives an historical time line perspective of the changes to UK state-funded sources during the last 25 years.

Figure 3.1 Historical Contemporary Timeline of Changes to UK State-Funded Business Support Sources (Adapted from Sivaev, 2013)



This shows the transition from establishing the UK Government's Business Link Service in 1992, to its eventual abolition in 2012 when the Regional Development Agencies were disbanded, and the Local Enterprise Partnerships introduced.

3.2.1 Business Link

The Business Link initiative originated in England in 1992 under Michael Heseltine and was designed as, and initially titled, a 'One Stop Shop' for businesses to access support. Between 1992 and its eventual abolition by the Coalition Government in 2012, it was organised and delivered in a variety of formats and provided both remote, and face to face business advice for pre-start, start-up and established businesses. It hit a variety of political challenges in the rollout period, but by 1996 there were 89 Business Link partnerships delivering support and advice to around 10,000 businesses per week in England. The face-to-face service was delivered regionally and funded by the Regional Development Agencies. The effectiveness and impact of the Business Link service was assessed on a number of occasions, (Mole, Hart, Roper & Saal, 2008 & 2009) but a change of Government to the Coalition of 2010, signaled the closure of the service, leaving only a web portal and a remote telephone help desk service; the Business Link website ultimately migrating to the Gov.UK site. Physical offices and business advisors ceased operating in 2012, although there remains a similar service available in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

3.2.2 The Regional Development Agencies (RDA)

The nine RDAs were established in England in 1992 and until 2010, were responsible for the economic development of those regions. Although the RDAs were replaced by the Local Enterprise Partnerships from 2010 onwards, this was not a direct replacement as LEPs differed in their structure, funding and geographical boundaries to the preceding RDAs.

The transition period illustrated by the diagram in Figure 3.1 includes a number of models, which were influenced, by the Government parties and policies at the time. During this 20-year period there is evidence of a shift from a position of relative clarity on where businesses should seek advice on start-up, development and growth (i.e. the notion of a one-stop shop for business needs via Business Link), to the more recent situation, which is complex, fragmented and difficult to navigate, (Centre for Cities, 2013).

In 2006, the UK Government's introduction of the Business Support Simplification Programme acknowledged the overly complex nature of the number of programmes and initiatives available. It was an attempt to streamline the route for businesses seeking appropriate help and advice and to reduce over 3000 nationwide programmes and interventions down to just 100 (East Midlands Development Agency, 2008).

Following the abolition of the RDAs in 2012, the coalition Government of the time and the subsequent Conservative Government, introduced and currently support Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) as a scheme to drive economic growth. Taking the form of a partnership between local councils and local businesses, the LEPs act to determine and deliver the best courses of action to support businesses within their specific geographical regions. Initially in 2010, LEPs were proposed to replace the 9 Regional Development Agencies. As of 2018 we currently have 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships, (LEP Network, 2018) within which we find designated Enterprise Zones, delivering a myriad of services and programmes. With funds being made available from the European Regional Development Fund and European Structural Investment Fund from 2014 to 2020 (BEIS, 2020 & HCLG, 2021), with delivery and funding running to 2023, post-Brexit, this has added to the opportunities for a range of programmes and initiatives to surface. Consequently, it is perhaps little wonder that the business support opportunities are therefore complex, difficult to navigate and potentially hidden from those that may benefit from them most. The Centre for Cities Policy Briefing Document (2013) draws three conclusions below, which seem equally appropriate in 2021:

- **The business support system is extremely complex.** This makes it difficult for businesses to navigate support and complicates the analysis of any gaps.

- **A lack of an overall business support infrastructure results in inefficient delivery.** Multiple institutions are responsible for delivering support schemes with overlapping objectives and as collaboration between them is inconsistent, duplication of services and inefficient use of resources is hard to avoid.

- **The lack of both infrastructure and of visible access points complicates access to support for some businesses.** While large companies usually have capacity to keep track of the ever-changing support offer, smaller enterprises need to be guided through the current system, yet there is limited provision to do so.

Whilst the above overview is helpful, it should be recognised that this is only describing the landscape from a state-provided business support perspective. In reality, there are many private sources of support too, and businesses often turn to banks, solicitors, accountants and other professional services when requiring support and advice. Perhaps this is due to a combination of a lack of awareness of, or availability to access Governmental sources of assistance, (see section 3.6 onwards).

3.3 Social Enterprise Specific Business Support

Social Enterprise specific support infrastructures are involved in encouraging people to start up Social Enterprises (Social Enterprise UK, 2018; Smallbone, Evans, Ekanem & Butters, 2001) and aim to complement other national programmes promoting Social Entrepreneurship (Lyon & Ramsden, 2006). As already discussed, the origins of Social Enterprise date back to the 19th Century and the period of the Industrial Revolution. However, during this period and until the 20th Century, the primary focus was on addressing the social issue, rather than approaching it in a profit making and business-like manner. It is pointed out by Hines (2005) that the focus on Social Enterprise (accepting this as an umbrella term for 'organisations which trade for social purpose') (Peattie & Morley 2008; Ridley-Duff & Bull, 2011) seems to be cyclical depending on the state of the UK economy as a whole, with "a substantial amount of work done at national, regional and local government level in the 1990's" (Hines, 2005, p. 14)

However, Hines (2005) continues that according to the 1999 Treasury Report on Enterprise and Social Exclusion, Social Enterprises were "less understood and rarely promoted in a consistent way by the existing infrastructure for Business Support" (Treasury, 1999, p. 108). There was also a general "lack of awareness" by the British public of the social economy and the businesses, enterprises and organisations that form part of it (Smallbone et al, 2001; Hines, 2005). It is only in the very recent past that specific support for Social Enterprises seems to have developed as an integral part of the traditional business support systems. The Business Link Network (closed in 2012 by the coalition Government) was charged with the provision of Social Enterprise support services from 2003. Indeed the regional Business Link Yorkshire resource had a dedicated team of specialist Social Enterprise Advisors, although further specifically focused research would be required to analyse their approach and efficacy.

The New Labour Government of 1997 introduced a Social Enterprise policy, 'A Strategy for Success' in 2002 and a revision, 'Scaling New Heights' in 2006. These pledged access to a range of support to help develop Social Enterprises and Public/Private sector programmes such as Equity Plus for access to Social Enterprise finance. These developments evidenced the Government's “declining interest in the mutual system and an increasing desire to get the disadvantaged off welfare” (West, 2004).

The Labour Government (1997-2010), Coalition (2010-2015) and now Conservative Governments (2015 to present) have all continued to build on this foundation, and to recognise and promote Social Enterprise as a potential solution to the results of the recent economic downturn. (Cabinet Office, 2006, 2010, 2011 & 2013 & Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, 2018). The pace of development and discussion around this topic (both from an academic interest and policy perspective) are developing and changing so rapidly that remaining up to date is extremely challenging. (Steinerowski, 2011)

The provision of Social Enterprise Support is of course only part of the solution. The real issue to address is what that Social Enterprise Support looks like and what is actually *required* (emphasis added) by the sector. In 2002, the scale of Social Enterprises appears to be of major concern (Brown, 2002) when he (Brown) found that enterprises that are too small were simply not sustainable in the majority of cases. This finding was echoed by Seanor & Meaton (2007), who write that many Social Enterprises were not seeking growth, and that they preferred to remain small and focus on the local community needs. Conversely, Austin et al, (2006) reflected on organisations either choosing or being ‘pushed’ into growth.

Seanor & Meaton (2007) rightly pointed out that Social Enterprise is not a distinct sector and that it covers many differing models and approaches. It would perhaps be logical to suggest that the range of support on offer to effectively assist this diverse grouping, must surely be equally varied. Lyon and Ramsden (2006) stated that 3 types of Social Enterprise Support are important: Enterprise Counseling, Social Enterprise Specific Support and Sector-Specific Advice. These are summarised below with reference to the same Lyon & Ramsden, (2006) article.

Counseling/Mentoring – this relates to the on-going support relationship experienced by the Social Enterprise and its advisor. It was felt by many in this particular study that the continuity of a single advisor was key and that the advisor/client relationship developed through regular counseling/mentoring sessions was more important than specific Social Enterprise knowledge.

Social Enterprise Specific Support – this was reported as being critical at the pre-start/start-up phase due to the need for advice on issues such as legal structures, organisational values and governance. The longitudinal study of business support from BIS recognised that a "sense of not being understood" can work against the sector in effective "targeting and uptake" of business support (BIS, 2011a, p. 9). It has also been identified that support towards effective business planning was a key agenda in terms of Social Enterprise support; even if only to access funding. Dees, Emerson & Economy (2002, p. 273) states that Social Enterprise business planning creates "a clarity of direction," "strong commitment from stakeholders," and "knowledge of the market place," whilst Scott (2001, p. 62) claims that successful Social Enterprises begin with, "a sound business plan and identifying future challenges." It is later argued by Pearce, (2003, p. 9) that "Social Enterprises are not business; they are Social Enterprises. They require Social Enterprise Plans, not Business Plans."

Sector-Specific Advice – although sector-specific advisors are often approached in the first instance to give an 'inside the industry' perspective, this type of advisor is often lacking in the knowledge necessary to guide the Social Enterprise away from a reliance on grant funding. Indeed Smallbone et al (2001), Low (2006) and Spear, Cornforth & Aitkin (2007), all expressed concerns that Social Enterprises may not have the skills internally to move towards more commercial orientation. However, conversely, there is an increasing amount of critical thought, which states that the distinctive nature of Social Enterprises is threatened when they move from social to economic goals (Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Haugh & Kitson, 2007; Bull, 2008).

The report 'Good Incubation' (Nesta, 2014) offers a further contemporary insight into the support of early stage social enterprises. The term 'early stage' is not consistent across all programmes, but in the context of this research, it refers to pre-start (research and planning stages) until 12 to 18 months after the start of trading. Some programmes offer shorter or longer periods of early stage support, but beyond 24 months is generally considered to be growth support. It specifically addresses the topic of incubation and the differing approaches to the provision of both physical space, and the accompanying support infrastructure. In addressing this area, the report is transparent in acknowledging that the collective word 'incubator' is in itself potentially contentious, as there is so much variety in the overall 'package' of space and support. However, it concludes that incubation programmes can be subdivided into five broad categories as follows:

- Impact Accelerators – these are focused on offering initial seed investment to new social ventures, in exchange for an equity stake. Although not exclusively so, they tend to offer investment and support to cohorts of social entrepreneurs (in teams rather than individuals) for a fixed period of time, rather than offering an 'on demand' service.
- Social venture co-working spaces – these offer flexible and economical office space locations to early stage social entrepreneurs. By combining the collective resources of many smaller potential ventures and utilising a common workspace, the economies of scale can reduce costs and offer the added benefit of collaborative working and peer support.
- Social venture academies – programmes to help accelerate the knowledge, learning and strategic direction of new social enterprises, via individual classes and longer courses.
- Impact angel networks – individuals willing to invest in early stage ventures where they believe they will see a return on their investment both in terms of cash and societal impact.
- Social innovation competitions and prizes – there has been an emergence and growth in the number of competitions and prizes seeking to encourage and promote socially motivated business ideas.

Furthermore, the same report acknowledges that whilst social incubator programmes are relatively new, there are already some trends emerging. These trends reflect the changes and developments in both the understanding of, and perceptions about, social ventures. These refinements also include areas of specialisation; for example focusing on a particular industry or sector, or providing an enhanced and added value element of specialist support. By encouraging larger and more diverse commercially driven organisations to trade with, and support emerging social ventures, the focus on trading for sustainable income can be supported.

Whilst these broad categories give us some insight into the strategic models and foci which social incubators adopt, they do not reveal the details or the nature of the support, nor the method of delivery to clients that is offered by them.

The following section provides a further breakdown of the common sources of Social Enterprise Business Support, and the business issues/elements usually addressed by those sources in recent years.

3.4 Integrating Social Enterprise Specificity into General Business Support

The Office for Civil Society (OCS) Social Enterprise Business Support Programme ran from 2007/08 to 2010/11 and as described in the Final Report for the Cabinet Office, (Cabinet Office, 2011, p. i) "aimed to achieve sustainable improvements in the quality of business support for Social Enterprises and to increase the take-up of that support." The OCS £5.9m funded programme was delivered by the Business Link organisations throughout the English regions, and decisions on how best to allocate resources were made by the Regional Development Agencies (RDA), in consultation with the Regional Social Enterprise Network (RSEN) representatives, (Cabinet Office, 2006). The Business Link network had been required to provide specific support for those seeking to establish social enterprises since 2003, (Hines, 2005).

The same Final Report (Cabinet Office, 2011) noted a number of 'Lessons for the Future' in its Executive Summary. These came not only as a direct result of the experience of running the programme, but also following consultation with stakeholders and service-users during the final stage evaluation process. These lessons are identified and summarised below and offer a valuable starting point in achieving the aims of this current research; to establish a set of sector-informed guidelines, for Social Enterprise Support Programmes.

- **Lesson for the Future 1: Designing Decentralised, Flexible Programmes**

Whilst the programme provided a useful model for future support programmes, it lacked the ability to effectively share knowledge, resources and best practice between regions. This needs to change with a move to smaller LEP areas.

- **Lesson for the Future 2: Include elements of Social Enterprise specialist knowledge and expertise within a mainstream service. Social Enterprise Champions should be fully engaged in the design of future business support provision.**

The report suggests that Social Enterprises can be supported in a mainstream Business Support Service, although this is contradicted by the February 2011 report, *National Evaluation of the Capacity-builders Programme* conducted by Rocket Science. It is also concluded that there is a need for more specialist Social Enterprise technical knowledge and also empathy with the motivating factors driving those starting a Social Enterprise. For this reason, it was felt that future 'generic' business support programmes targeted at Social Enterprises should be supported by Social Enterprise Champions; adding value to the design of such support.

- **Lesson for the Future 3: Incorporate a feedback mechanism for customers receiving support from specialist suppliers to drive up quality and to inform customer choice**

As compulsory accreditation of suppliers may be difficult, it would be proposed that there is a move towards developing a customer feedback database to facilitate higher standards. Indeed this is something that should surely be embedded into any business support programme (and particularly one specialising in social enterprise), as the feedback would be an indication of the impact of the effectiveness of the programme.

Lesson for the Future 4: Grants should support transformational changes and loans could encourage a more commercial approach to business support amongst social enterprises

As the availability of funding is likely to diminish, then any grants that are available should have maximum transformational impact (combining social, economic and environmental factors), with a move to loan schemes for smaller social enterprises to overcome initial financial barriers. This would ensure a more business-focused attitude to applying for funding.

- **Lesson for the Future 5: Improve understanding and application of social and environmental impact measures**

There needs to be a better understanding of 'impact measurement' from both the Social Enterprises themselves in terms of Capturing, Measuring and Disseminating, but also on the part of the potential Procurers and Commissioners of Social Enterprise's services and products.

- **Lesson for the Future 6: Start-Up support needs to be local and the criteria for support through growth services should include environmental and social contributions**

As the number of Social Enterprises is likely to grow, so the need for locally delivered support will increase. However, this should not be limited to pre-start/start-up support as there will be potential value by way of social/environmental/economic impact from more established Social Enterprises with high growth potential.

- **Lesson for the Future 7: Social Enterprises value on-going support, particularly from peers. The National Network of Mentors should include a clear Social Enterprise element**

Social Enterprises expressed finding value in both peer to peer and mentoring networks to provide on-going, bespoke support. The longitudinal study from BIS echoed this ethos and stressed the preference of social enterprises to access face to face support, especially from those with sector-specific experience (BIS, 2011a). However, as 1:1 support is expensive, then Social Enterprises should be expected to contribute towards the cost of such networks (Cabinet Office, 2011).

- **Lesson for the Future 8: There is scope to encourage more on-line support, but this is not sufficient on its own**

Provision of online support makes economic sense but is unlikely to be sufficient to provide all of the support elements the Social Enterprises require and cannot fully replace the value of face-to-face support. Shaw, Shaw & Wilson (2002) found that only 12% of Social Enterprises had accessed this type of support during start-up and 8% accessed it for on-going support.

Following a change of Government in May 2010, changes were announced in the BIS report (2011) *Bigger, Better Businesses: Helping Small Firms Start, Grow and Prosper* relating to how the Government would provide information advice and guidance to businesses and in November 2011, the regional Business Links closed.

Starting in 2011, the Coalition Government of the time made a number of changes to support Social Enterprise including the introduction of the Social Value Act and proposals for the Social Investment Roadmap (Treasury, 2014).

3.5 Enterprise Agencies, Further Education Institutions & Higher Education Institutions

Again Shaw et al. (2002) found that almost a third of Social Enterprises had received some form of training although there was also evidence that many Social Enterprises had difficulty in identifying appropriate training to aid their growth and development (Smallbone et al, 2001).

Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Programmes have also offered support specifically to Social Enterprises, although this has been focused on the allocation of funds to enable programme delivery by third party organisations, rather than direct business support itself.

In 2009, UnLtd launched a HEFCE funded programme known as 'See Change' to address the potential of HEI's in supporting a new generation of Social Entrepreneurs through a range of funded initiatives (HEFCE, 2013). The relationship between the University of Huddersfield, UnLtd and CASE, was discussed in Chapter 1 – Introduction – Understanding the context of this thesis. An overview of the See Change Programme now follows.

The rationale for this programme was two-fold. Firstly, to raise awareness of what a social enterprise is and does, amongst students and staff studying and working at UK universities. Secondly, having raised awareness of the social enterprise agenda, the programme aimed to encourage students and staff who may not be attracted to purely commercially oriented business activities, to consider using their disciplinary specific skills and abilities to create innovative solutions to social problems. The programme aimed to develop an 'eco-system' of social entrepreneurs within UK universities, responding to local, national social problems. The University of Huddersfield applied to join the programme for Phase 2 and together with 55 other HEI's, commenced activity in the autumn of 2012.

The HEFCE/UnLtd See Change Programme commencing in 2012 had the following mission statement:

> To help establish an effective eco-system for the development and growth of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise activity within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in England. It will provide HEIs with a programme of financial and non-financial support to develop enterprise support structures that will make it easier for HE based social entrepreneurs to start-up and thrive.

Each engaged university had the freedom to deliver the programme, funding and support in the most appropriate manner to suit their circumstances, selecting one of the three models described below.

1. Find Model – this model was intended for HEIs with little experience in business start-up support. It required the university to identify potential award winners, but then sign-posted them to UnLtd for the funding and support.

2. Find and Fund Model – this model was for HEIs with some capacity and experience of start-up grant funding. It required the university to identify and administrate the funding application selection process, before then sign-posting award winners to UnLtd for the support element.

3. Find, Fund and Support Model – this model was for HEIs with an already well-established infrastructure of start-up business support. The expectation was that all elements of the support be delivered 'in-house' with referral to UnLtd for any specialist knowledge and

training. This was the model selected by the University of Huddersfield's Enterprise Team.

There was a common expectation and understanding that at the same time as promoting the concept of Social Enterprise to beneficiaries, the university based delivery teams would also receive appropriate training, and access to specialist knowledge and networks. This was in order to ensure that effective support was being provided to the new types of business ideas being generated by the initiative.

3.6 Public Sector Organisations

Regional Development Agencies, Councils and Local Authorities all contributed to offering Social Enterprise Support services in varying degrees around the UK with considerable support available in those areas that supported the New Labour agenda. Examples include the Change Up Programme. This was the highest percentage of support accessed at both pre-start and start-up phase with 43% and 32% respectively (Shaw et al, 2002).

3.7 Private Sector

There is evidence of support from the Private Sector, for example specialist consultants, solicitors and accountants with the latter being the most commonly accessed (Lyon & Ramsden, 2007). Evidence of high dependency on solicitors at the start-up stage is perhaps understandable given the wide range of legal status options, which can cause confusion for developing social entrepreneurs. That being said, it has been my personal experience to date that most non-specialist solicitors have little understanding or expertise themselves in advising on the most appropriate legal status for new Social Enterprise start-ups. Indeed, at what is a critical stage for a new start-up's development, wrong or misleading advice on legal status is potentially worse than no advice at all.

3.8 Banks and Financial Institutions

Interestingly, although access to finance has consistently been the main reason for Social Enterprises to seek business support, their approaches to banks for this finance and/or advice is reported as being low during both pre-start and start-up periods (Shaw et al, 2002). Applications for funding from Charitable Trusts and Regional and Local Government is much more frequent. This would reflect the sectors reliance on grant funding, which clearly has implications on sustainability following start-up. The other funding issue, (particularly from private equity funders) is the need for Social Enterprises to be able to demonstrate their impact on the community, in delivering their Social Aims and Objectives. Evidence of social return achievements to date, or embedded effective measurement tools will inevitably be required by investors to determine whether the initial investment is worthwhile and potentially impactful. (Rotheroe and Richards, 2007).

In 1980, Triodos became a sustainable bank for organisations that benefit people and/or the environment. Originating in the Netherlands and with a plan to "connect savers and investors who want to change the world for the better with entrepreneurs and sustainable companies doing just that", it further boasts that it is, "the only bank to offer sustainable integrated lending and investment opportunities for sustainable sectors in a number of European countries" (Triodos, 2018)

The British Business Bank was introduced in 2012 to act as a central institution for the promotion and delivery of state-backed equity and lending schemes. Not a traditional bank with High Street access points and direct business contact and engagement, but rather utilising existing banks to channel support and an understanding of businesses needs. From a business start-up perspective, it directs to the Start-Up Loans Company (first introduced in 2012) and other sources of financial support and advice.

3.9 Summary and Conclusions of Chapter 3 and Literature Review Conclusions

Like Chapter 2, this second part of the Literature Review was initially conducted narratively, with a subsequent re-examination of the major articles reviewed to date, to identify any emerging and recurring themes. The full analysis can be found in Appendix 2 but the key areas, which are most prominently evident in this chapter, are:

- What is meant and understood by the term, business support
- The complex, fragmented and disjointed nature of UK business support programmes
- A lack of understanding of what the social enterprise sector needs in terms of support
- Multiple reports calling for engagement with the sector itself when considering the development/evaluation of social enterprise support programmes
- Value of social enterprises to the UK economy and society

These emerging themes appear to be supportive of the purpose of this research, which is to examine and contribute to knowledge regarding the design and provision of social enterprise start-up support. This also offers a clear distinction between the nature of this research, and the earlier longitudinal study conducted to inform the BIS report on Business Support for Social Enterprises (2011a), which was not specific to start-up interventions.

When the above Chapter 3 themes are combined with a specific emerging theme from the Chapter 2 Literature Review, there appears to be supportive evidence that the proposed theoretical and methodological approach of this research, could potentially begin to address issues raised from previous reports and research. Notably;

- The importance of contextual influences on Social Enterprise
- Multiple reports calling for engagement with the sector itself when considering the development/evaluation of social enterprise support programmes

These two themes are directly related to my motivation for undertaking this research in terms of understanding from the end user's perspective, what elements of social enterprise start-up support 'work' for whom and in what circumstances and why.

Chapter 4 will now explore the theoretical approach to this research.

4 Introduction to Theory

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an introduction to philosophy and theory, and its relationship to this research and the intended methodological approach. The importance of context is explored and a conceptual research framework introduced.

4.1 The Philosophical Framework

The purpose of doctoral research is to make a valid contribution to knowledge, and to do this, we must have a clear understanding of how we, the researcher, perceive and understand what knowledge is. This research is taking a realist philosophical approach and the findings will be interpreted and explained, using a range of appropriate theories. This chapter will present a rationale for this approach and give further explanation to the term 'theory' within a realist evaluation context.

Realism is identified as, "the view that entities exist independently of being perceived, or independently of our theories about them," (Phillips, 1987, p. 205). Alternative explanations suggest that it, "sees the human agent as operating in a wider social reality, encountering experiences, opportunities and resources, and interpreting and responding to the world within particular personal, social, historical and cultural frames." (Wong et al, 2017), and that "we recognise the critical importance of participants' own interpretations of the issues researched and believe that their varying vantage points will yield different points of understanding" (Ormston et al, 2014, p. 21). These latter definitions are extremely relevant to this research as they imply that different individuals will respond in different ways to the same experiences.

Realism sits between positivist and constructivist philosophical approaches, and importantly, is distinguishable by its roots in understanding causation. The role of the realist researcher is therefore to understand and explain how and why policies and programmes which are consistent in nature and content, cause different outcomes for different people, in differing circumstances, and perhaps most importantly, why? Table 4.1 below shows my interpretation of the three aforementioned philosophical approaches and their main characteristics, (acknowledging Henn et al, 2008) and how they compare and contrast with each other.

Table 4.1 Summary Comparison Of Philosophical Approaches

Philosophical Approach	Interpretation of knowledge	Nature of analysis	Analytical approach
Positivist	Knowledge is based on what is directly observable	Predominantly quantitative	Deductive
Constructivist	Knowledge is based on meanings which are not directly observable	Predominantly qualitative	Inductive
Realist	Outcomes we observe are generated by causal mechanisms which we cannot see	Mixed methods; selected to best suit the subject matter	Abductive/retroductive

Whilst realism is selected as the philosophical position for the study, what theory or theories may inform and explain the research and its findings is covered in the following sections.

4.2 Introduction to Theory and Social Enterprise

An important aspect of this research has been to identify a theory, or theories that would:

1. Align to the increasing interest in Social Enterprise in general, and

2. Align to the focus of business support interventions, and
3. Support and provide a theoretical framework for this specific research project’s aims, objectives

This challenge is complex because although the debate around Social Enterprise, its origins, purpose, development and future potential are clearly evident, there are many contrasting and sometimes conflicting theories which are offered to support the academic interest in this field. However, Haugh (2012), provides some explanation of this conundrum as she ‘identified a perceived tension between research that is oriented towards developing theory, and that which aims to improve practice’ cited in Doherty (2018).

Whilst academic interest in economic development via entrepreneurship is clearly evident, (Wennekers & Thurik, 1999; Ganotakis, 2012; Godfrey & Hubbard, 2018), the coupling of this economic development with ‘fostering social progress’ (Mair & Marti, 2006) is relatively new, (Dees & Elias, 1998; Alvord, Brown & Letts, 2004; Argawal & Samanta, 2006; Schnorr-Backer, 2018) but definitely growing. This increasing interest in Social Enterprise has had three distinct effects as described by Haugh, 2012:

1. The emergence of a global community of Social Enterprise scholars
2. Existing and leading scholars in the fields of organisation and management have been attracted to this area of research
3. Scholars beyond organisation and management have been attracted to the field.

Haugh goes on to explain that the legitimacy of any given scholarly field is directly linked to the theories that explain and predict interest in that field, and so consequently, the ever-rising profile of Social Enterprise has created an environment ripe for theoretical advances and development. Mair & Marti, make explicit reference to the potential opportunity offered by “emergent fields of research” and the “absence of clear theoretical boundaries” (2006, pp.39-40). They go on to argue that social entrepreneurship “cannot be understood in a purely economic sense, but needs to be examined in light of the social context, and the local environment,” (p.40) further alignment to the importance of context and this research. Dart explores the connection between social enterprises, institutional theory and the concept of ‘legitimacy’; “in the institutional mind set, managers follow environmental cues to make organisations conform to social expectations. This makes our organisations legitimate, and from this legitimacy flow benefits" (2004, p.415).

Furthermore, there appears to be two distinct interpretations resulting from the correlation between the absence of a comprehensive and widely accepted social enterprise definition, and the resulting opportunities or threats this creates.

Nichols and Young, (2008) consider the blurring of boundaries between social enterprise activities and pure commercial enterprise activity as a positive environment; facilitating an exploration of how social entrepreneurship can support and interact with more established enterprise theories.

From a differing perspective Santos, (2009) suggests that the way forward in developing and furthering a better theoretical understanding is to initially clarify the boundaries and parameters of what social enterprise is. Furthermore, Santos (2009), speaks of the abundance of social enterprise definitions but that they are driven by practice, rather than theory. (Mair & Marti; 2006)

Santos goes on to explain that there is a distinct shift in motivation when it comes to social enterprise as compared to pure commercial enterprise. The latter supports existing economic theories as they have an assumed perspective of 'self-interest' and personal economic gain, whereas a social entrepreneur will exhibit a different motivational typology and hence, demonstrate a behaviour and motivation that is inconsistent with established economic theories.

Theories being explored, borrowed and developed in relation to Social Enterprise include the following:

- Neo-institutional Theory (Zucker, 1977)
- Social Action Theory (Weber, 1979)
- Structuration Theory (Giddens 1984)
- The Theory of Planned Behaviour (Aizen, 1985)
- Institutional Entrepreneurship (DiMaggio 1988)
- Network Theory (Nakagawa and Laratta 2010)
- Theory of Social Franchising (Tracey and Jarvis, 2007)
- Organisational Identity Theory (Battilana and Dorado, 2010)
- Institutional Logic Theory (Pinch and Sunley, 2015)

An initial investigation into some of these theories to determine potential alignment to this research revealed the findings in the following table.

Table 4.2 An Exploration & Summary Of Potential Supportive Theories

Theory Explored	Key Focus	Conclusion
Neo-Institutional Theory	Leading on from the work of Meyer and Rowan (1977) this new approach to institutional theory places greater emphasis on the cognitive and cultural elements of institutions and suggests greater prominence towards legitimacy rather than efficiency.	This research and proposed methodology places great significance on context, and this theory did not align with that focus
Institutional Entrepreneurship	Introduced by DiMaggio to explain how institutions arise and change.	Potentially useful to examine the values of social entrepreneurs and their newly created organisations.
Structuration Theory	Giddens work focused on the balance between structure (external forces) and agency (internal motivations)	Relevant to this research but investigating Giddens led to Weber's Social Action Theory which was felt to better align

Theory Explored	Key Focus	Conclusion
Social Action Theory	Explains the rationale behind what makes an action, a social action and the complex motivations that make individuals take action	This theory offers good alignment to the motivations of actors to engage in activities which create social value for others
Institutional Logic Theory	Institutional logic theory proposes a framework to analyse the interactions and inter-relationships between institutions, individuals and organisational actors, in an attempt to demonstrate how they are influenced and affected by their societal position (Thornton, Ocasio & Lounsbury; 2012).	This theory offered potential alignment to the research being undertaken as it looked at wider societal (contextual) factors. However, Weber's Social Action Theory was concluded to be more relevant

Despite the increased attention on Social Enterprise from practitioners, academics and policy makers alike, Haugh (2012) suggests four possible contributory factors of why theoretical developments explicitly related to this phenomenon, have been limited:

1. There is still as yet, no universally accepted definition of Social Enterprise
2. Research to date has frequently been centred on the Social Entrepreneur themselves; describing *their* qualities and perspectives

3. Although there have been many detailed research accounts of Social Enterprises, it is rare find comment within those articles relating to the development of theory.
4. Research gives an account of policy frameworks to support Social Enterprise, but there are few scholarly explanations for when, why and how such policy interventions have been adopted

However, in the context of this research, theories which have already been, and/or are being identified as potentially pertinent to Social Enterprise, really only address part of the challenge. Although Social Enterprise is clearly a key component of my investigation, Business Support Programmes is the other equally weighted element, and so theories to support an investigation into programmes and interventions for socially contingent groups must also be considered.

4.3 Introduction to Theory and Business Support

The term 'start-up business support' was identified in the literature review as covering a wide range of interventions, with a common purpose to assist participants to launch new ventures. In the case of this research, those ventures being specifically social enterprises. There was a recognition and acceptance that such support in the UK is disjointed and fragmented, coupled with a desire for a better engagement with the sector, to enable a better understanding of the needs of the sector.

Start-up support interventions are essentially programmes, or resources, which participants interact with (or not), in order to bring about the desired outcome (or not), which was imagined ahead of, and during the programme's creation and delivery. This study is seeking to better understand the effect of those varied resources on a variety of participants, and whether those anticipated positive outcomes were achieved, or not and why. Returning to the adoption of a realist philosophical approach to this research, leads to the question of whether this is also appropriate for the business start-up support element of the study.

It is evident from the discussions from this research so far that assessing the effectiveness of a programme and its mechanisms on a variety of diverse programme participants, is not a simple process. Rogers (2008) references the work of Glouberman & Zimmer (2002), which defines this scenario as either 'complicated' (a programme with many parts – mechanisms) or 'complex' (uncertain and emergent). Complicated interventions with multiple parts will challenge evaluators due to the large number of variables and limited capacity to investigate them empirically. Complex interventions however, are more challenging still, due to the non-linear path to outcomes, and unpredictable responses of participants. In this research, it is argued that Business Start-Up Support programmes are both complicated (containing multiple mechanisms) and complex (high variance in participant responses); again suggesting that a more rigorous approach to evaluation than a simple question of 'what works' is required.

Understanding that start-up support programmes are both complicated and complex interventions, and that an investigation into whether or not they work for different people and importantly why, is an equally complex task demands a very specific approach. Selecting realism as the philosophical approach offers the opportunity to investigate whether realist evaluation has the potential to contribute to this study's research objectives. The next section, explains the relationship between theories and this approach.

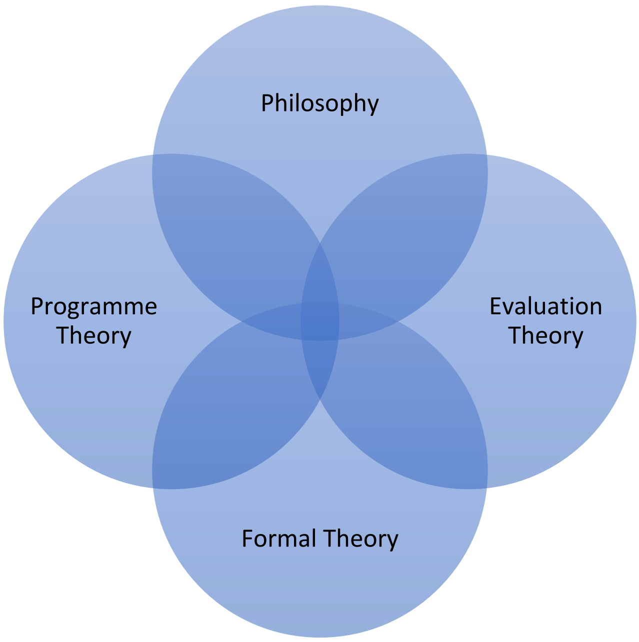
4.4 Theoretical Frameworks in Realist Evaluation

Realists believe that our ability to understand and interpret the world is filtered by our individual culture, senses and experiences (Wong et al, 2012; Westhorp, 2014). There is an increase in utilising realist evaluation and realist synthesis in the social sciences (Salter & Kothari, 2014; Tricco et al, 2016) and there are substantial contributions to such research approaches emerging from sources such as the Realist And Meta-narrative Evidence Syntheses: Evolving Standards (RAMESES I), (Wong et al, 2013) and RAMESES II (Wong et al, 2017).

Pawson and Manzano-Santaella state that, "Realist evaluation is avowedly theory-driven; it searches for and refines explanations of programme effectiveness," (2012, p.178). However, it is important to explain what is meant by 'theory-driven' and 'theory-based' in order to understand both the theoretical and methodological approach of this research.

The first important point to make is that within the methodological approach of realist evaluation, the term 'theory' has more than one meaning. (Marchal, Kegels & Van Belle, 2018). Looking to the RAMESES II Project (2017) for specific guidance on the relationship between theory and realist evaluation, the illustration below, (Figure 4.1), based on the aforementioned project, presents a summary of the different types of theory, which may be relevant to realist evaluation.

Figure 4.1 Summary Of Differing Interpretations Of 'Theory'



The most important aspect from a realist evaluation perspective is that of programme theory which is explained next.

4.4.1 Programme Theory

This is perhaps the most significant theory type when describing realist evaluation as theory-based. Again citing RAMESES II Project (2017) it is, "the description in words or diagrams of what is supposed to be done in a programme or policy (theory of action), and how and why that is expected to work (theory of change).”

Realist evaluation seeks to utilise primary data collected from the stakeholder groups, to systematically examine causation. Causation is at the epicentre of realist evaluations and in this context refers to ‘what causes what to happen’. The critical element of the study of causation in a realist evaluation however, is that realists maintain that outcomes are a result of programme mechanisms, rather than due to the programmes themselves. The difference between programmes and their mechanisms is addressed later in this section.

The term ‘middle-range theory’ should be noted and clarified under the category of ‘programme theory’. Whilst an important part of any realist evaluation, ‘middle-range theory’ is not an additional theory ‘category’ or an alternative name for one of the four variants within the diagram. Rather, Pawson and Tilley (1997) refer to Merton and accept that it relates to theories that “lie between the minor but necessary working hypotheses […] and the all-inclusive systematic efforts to develop a unified theory that will explain all the observed uniformities of social behaviour, social organisation and social change” (Merton, 1968). In other words, the term ‘middle-range theory’ is an adjective describing the level of abstraction of a theory, rather than an additional specific category or type of theory.

4.4.2 Programme Mechanisms

Programme Theory seeks to explain how a programme or intervention causes the intended or observed outcomes for its participants. (Shearn et al, 2017). Mechanisms however, are a layer deeper than the programme itself, and relate to the specific resources and facilities, which form part of the programme or intervention (Pawson & Tilley, 1997). If we take the example of a business support programme, we can place these terms into a context that is specific to my research.

Business Support Programmes typically consist of a number of resources and facilities that are included with the anticipated/intended benefit of enabling programme participants to be more likely to start-up. The assumption is that they may start-up more quickly and effectively, than without access to such resources. Examples of such resources include, workshops offering insight, knowledge and advice on specific topics, and/or the opportunity to meet with business advisors or sector specific mentors. The link between such ‘inputs’ (e.g. workshops/advice) and the anticipated ‘outputs’ (confirmed business start-up, acquisition of new skills and competencies) is referred to as Programme Theory; also known as Programme Logic (Funnel, 1997), Theory of Change (Weiss, 1998) and Theory-Driven Evaluation (Chen, 1990).

Interactions around these aforementioned resources that the participants have the opportunity to utilise and engage with (or not) are known as programme mechanisms.

The introduction of the proposition Context/Mechanism/Outcome (CMO) is central to a realist evaluation and is explained as follows.

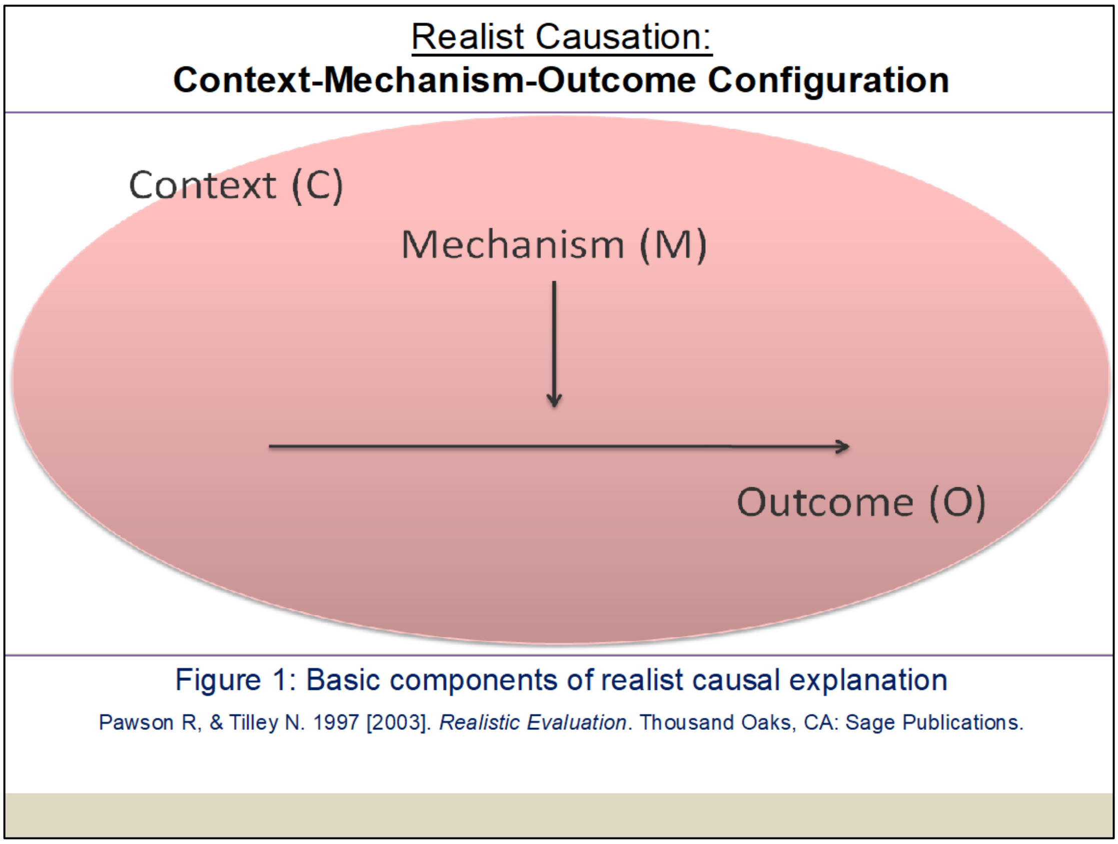
C = Context

M= Mechanism

O = Outcome

The equation C + M = O can thus be explained as “the action of a particular mechanism in a particular context, will generate a particular outcome pattern” (Pawson & Manzano-Santaella, 2012). Adopting and embedding this into the specific context of my research, I will be seeking to establish what programme mechanisms work in what contexts and why, to facilitate the desired programme outcome of starting a new social enterprise. The following figure (4.2) from Pawson & Tilley (1997) should give a diagrammatic explanation to this.

Figure 4.2 Context-Mecanism-Outcome Configuration 1



To elaborate on the diagram above, I offer the following explanation:

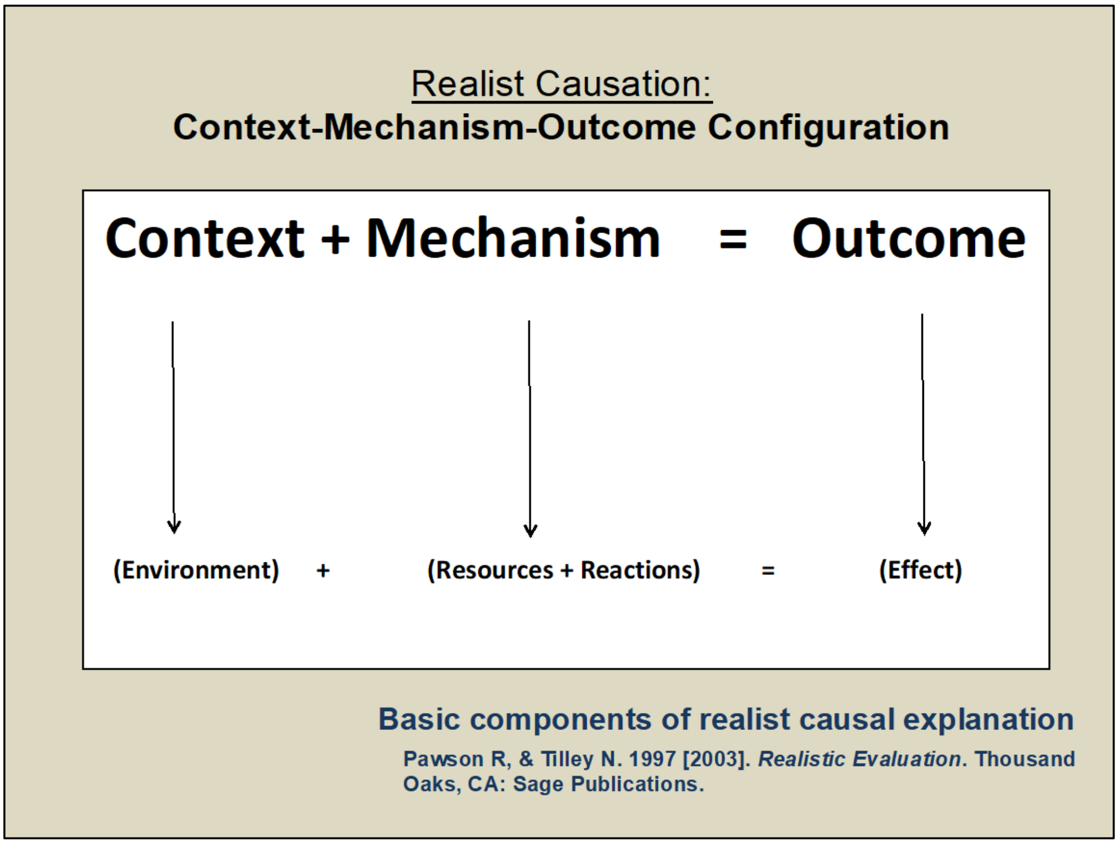
Context: In the above model, 'context' is represented by the oval – in other words, the environment within which the mechanism and outcomes play out. Examples of programme context may include factors such as cultural norms, participant's own personal characteristics, funding and/or time constraints, and any previous intermediate outcomes of the programme, which also alters the programme context.

Mechanisms: Mechanisms are cognitive. They pertain to what 'turns on' in the minds of programme participants that makes them want to participate/interact with the programme. This is how realist review differs from other types of reviews. It moves beyond synthesising 'what happened' across a given body of literature, to theorising 'why it happened' based on the reasoning of the participants. It is this understanding of participant reasoning that provides the kind of insights that can inform policy decisions. Some examples of participant reasoning mechanisms include perceiving that others are willing to be flexible and willing to let go of power, trusting, feeling empowered, perceiving the integrity of others, as well as having the desire to improve the health and living conditions of people in their communities.

Outcomes: Outcomes are either intended or unexpected (unintended), and defined as either intermediate or final. Examples of intermediate outcomes include empowerment, education, capacity building, and development of programme infrastructure. Examples of final outcomes involve improved health outcomes, increased uptake of health services and enhanced research results.

This is further demonstrated in the following diagram (Figure 4.3), also from Pawson and Tilley (1997).

Figure 4.3 Context-Mechanism-Outcome Configuration 2



If we define mechanisms as the responses and reactions of programme participants to the resources which are made available to them, then there are only a finite number of ways in which those programme participants can potentially react and respond. Positive responses may include, "feeling engaged", "feeling motivated", "feeling confident" "feeling empowered". Similarly, there would be a corresponding number of potential negative responses, for example, "feeling disengaged", and "feeling demotivated". These are all 'obvious' in the sense that they are relatable aspects of human condition which most people will have previously experienced, and therefore may perceive as 'obvious'. What is not obvious however, is how these reactions and responses are triggered by specific resources in specific contexts. It is the interaction of context and mechanism that is often more revelatory, than simply unraveling the mechanisms alone.

Furthermore, whether such programme mechanisms facilitate positive outcomes to occur (or not), is not simply based on their existence; but rather on wider contextual factors which need to be considered and understood, in order to ultimately explain causation.

This is perhaps an appropriate time to introduce and discuss the notion of retroduction and abduction, and their positioning alongside more common inductive and deductive approaches.

4.4.3 Retroduction and abduction

If deduction offers an approach where theory is tested against observational evidence to form a conclusion, and induction offers one which aims to derive a theory from observation, then an abductive approach seeks to form a conclusion from the information which is known, and a retroductive approach seeks to find a theory inspired or imagined from the evidence. The use of abductive and retroductive reasoning approaches within a realist philosophical approach is supported by Danermark et al, (2002), and further commented on by Lewis-Beck et al:

> Retroduction has been identified as overcoming the deficiencies of the logics of induction and deduction to offer causal explanation […] retroduction offers the idea of going back from below, or behind observed patterns or regularities to discover what produces them (Lewis-Beck, Bryman & Futing Lao, 2004).

Retroduction is therefore concerned with discovering generative causation.

To give a specific example and explanation to this research context, let us assume that a realist evaluation has concluded that ‘confidence’ is an important mechanism for those starting a business. It would perhaps be reasonable to accept:

1. That this is rather obvious and,

2. That ‘confidence’ is a valid mechanism across many diverse programmes, with equally varied intended outputs.

However, the critical factor here is to understand how ‘confidence’ becomes activated within the specific parameters of these programmes and within their own contexts. These additional factors are not at all obvious, and this is the approach of conducting a realist evaluation.

This should offer more clarity and support to my rationale for undertaking a realist-informed approach. The methodology should not be simply to distil ‘top-level’ mechanisms, but rather to understand that when built into the framework of socially contingent programmes, how people think and feel in relation to the programmes they are interacting with. Furthermore, it is quite often the ‘resource’ aspect of the mechanism that becomes central to understanding how different programmes work.

Continuing with the current example of developing ‘confidence’ to start a business. In triggering ‘confidence’ responses, this methodological approach would seek to understand how programmes deliver the resource of ‘feeling more confident’. Furthermore, how would that resource manifest itself within the context of starting a business, when compared to other programmes/interventions. These questions are not at all obvious and demonstrate the potential value of a realist evaluation in theorising and innovating complex and socially contingent programmes.

Realist evaluation is therefore highly effective and appropriate when the researcher wishes to explain more than simply ‘what works’ with the answer being based purely on a high incidence of the expected/anticipated outcomes. Realist evaluation goes much deeper and seeks to explain, ‘what works, for whom, in what circumstances, and why.’

4.5 The Importance of Context

In realist evaluation, the notion of context is critical to understanding an individual’s interaction with the programme mechanisms and the resulting outcomes that will be achieved. However, the extent to which we drill down into what context means to the individuals participating in a given programme, without potentially commencing a research task with unlimited parameters, is clearly important to define. Whilst acknowledging that context is far more than simple geography, there does need to be a guiding rule about which contexts a researcher should, or should not include.

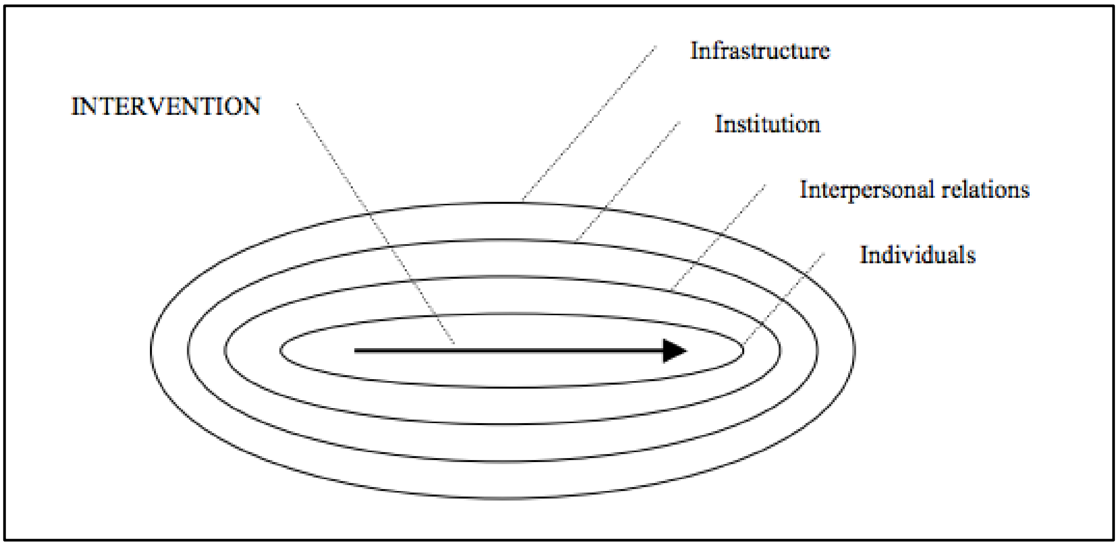
Pawson (Anderson et al, 2018) refers to the four levels of context ("the 4 I's formulation") as

> **The Individuals** – the people who take part in the programme or intervention
>
> **The Interrelationships** – the discourse and interactions between stakeholders
>
> **The Institutional** – the arrangement and interaction with the organisation into which the programme or intervention is embedded
>
> **The Infrastructure** – the wider socio-economic and cultural setting of the programme

Pawson (Anderson et al, 2018, p. 212) also states that, "the golden rule, the only rule, is to hypothesise and test those contexts of which a strong case can be made for their relevance."

The diagram below (Figure 4.4) taken from Pawson, (2006, p.32) demonstrates the differing contextual layers surrounding the intervention.

Figure 4.4 The Four 'I's of Context (Pawson, 2006, p. 32)



Looking back at the development of realist research and evaluation, its origins are rooted in the healthcare arena, where interventions (or programmes) intended to bring about positive health changes in a group of individuals, were being challenged to find ways to prove (or disprove) effectiveness in a different way to the standard randomised control design, (Ragin, 1999). The problem faced here of course, was that whilst a specific group of individuals may well be 'connected' by a common health issue, in reality, that may well be the only commonality they share. The individuals in receipt of a common healthcare intervention, are highly likely to be from a diverse range of socio-economic backgrounds and with an equally diverse set of personal circumstances. These contextual factors will of course, influence and affect their response to the intervention. Some key points were therefore acknowledged in the emerging arena of healthcare research, which are as follows:

- Healthcare systems are essentially social (due to the diverse range of individuals) and thus, complex systems (Marchal et al, 2018)

- Out of diverse social interaction, comes social action and change (Gilson et al, 2011)

- Realist evaluation was identified as an appropriate approach to deal with complex social interventions, (WHO, 2012).

If we describe the make up of such a diverse group of individuals engaged in a healthcare programme or intervention as being socially contingent, then we can see a similar scenario and pattern emerging within the scope of my research.

As discussed earlier, this study will examine a range of programmes or interventions, all of which are theoretically designed to assist with the successful start up of new social enterprises. Whilst the fundamental intentions of the programmes and their components are well meaning and intended to assist and catalyse appropriate actions to start a social enterprise, the components are not acting in isolation, and nor are they being accessed by multiple people with the exact same set of personal circumstances or 'contexts'. Pawson (2013) explains that realist evaluation is well suited to socially contingent programmes, because it examines the theory of causation and finds it to be generative in nature. That is, that causal mechanisms exist as much within the context, as within the individuals themselves. (Marchal et al, 2018). The interaction between the individuals engaged on a programme, and the resources that programme provides, does not occur in a vacuum, but within a set of diverse and potentially conflicting personal and socio-economic contexts. This again brings renewed evidence and impetus for this study to move beyond simply 'what works,' to a much more comprehensive explanation of 'what works, for whom, in what circumstances and why.'

4.6 Introduction to a Research Conceptual Framework

Planning an effective approach to this research reveals two categories of information and objectives, which are summarised by (Maxwell, 2012) as being:

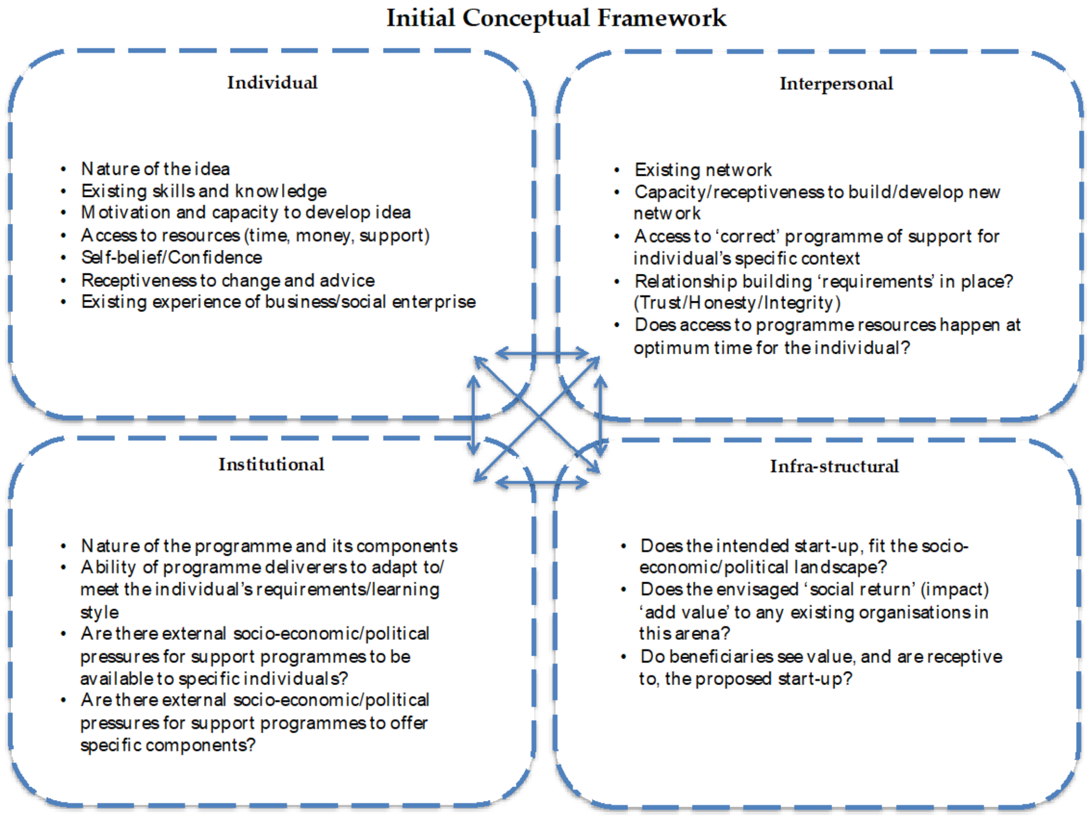
- Intellectual goals – which includes the research objectives, and answers to the research questions which are not yet known

- Conceptual framework – which includes the information which is already known, or can be considered as relevant to the study

It seems appropriate to align my existing knowledge and understanding from a practitioner's experience as a business advisor, and the overall research objectives and questions, with the proposed realist approach, in order to create an initial conceptual framework for the study. Maxwell (2012, p. 85) goes on to describe the conceptual framework as being, "your understanding of the events, settings, individuals, and processes being investigated, their interrelationships, and the relevant contextual influences on these."

The initial conceptual framework outlined below (Figure 4.5) attempts to draw these factors together, taking into account the important features of the differing levels of context according to Pawson (2006). The dotted lines around the four 'I's, represents the porous nature of context, and how factors in one contextual area, can affect, and be affected, by others.

Figure 4.5 Initial Conceptual Research Framework



Whilst realism forms the overarching philosophical approach to this research, there is often an expectation to propose a single theoretical lens for a given study, which is then used to explain its findings. Accepting the realist view that the experiences and interactions of individuals, with complicated and complex programmes will always be different, and influenced by the context of those individuals, it seems more logical that the analysis of the data will reveal alignment to a variety of theories. Maxwell (2012, p. 86) explains,

> Since no theory or model can be a complete picture of what exists, it may be desirable to have multiple theories, each helping you to understand some aspect of the phenomena you're studying (Anyon, 2009; Dressman, 2008; Maxwell, 2008, & 2009). Awareness of alternative theories can help you to avoid the "ideological hegemony" (Becker, 1986, pp. 147 – 149) of a single dominant theory, which can distort your conceptions of the things you study, as well as lead you to overlook things that don't fit this theory or alternative ways of making sense of your data.

4.7 Concerns Around this Approach

Although this research is taking a realist philosophical approach, it should be acknowledged and understood that realist evaluation and programme theory are not without criticism and tensions in the academic world. Principle concerns raised are around the perceived difficulties of conducting realist research, the implications of those difficulties relating to the complexity of the task in hand, and the resulting high level of time required (Wong, 2018). However, this argument may perhaps be exacerbated by the fact that realist evaluation is less well documented and understood by the research community. With 2017 only marking the 20th anniversary of the seminal text Realistic Evaluation, (Pawson & Tilley, 1997), the contemporary nature of this approach is clearly demonstrated.

4.8 Summary and Conclusions of Chapter 4

In conclusion, I have tried to consider the multitude of factors influencing the selection of the most appropriate philosophical, theoretical and methodological approaches to this research, data collection, and subsequent analysis. I see the major factors being:

- Selecting an appropriate research philosophy to underpin the study; realism
- An interest in pushing existing boundaries of research approaches in the field, to create new perspectives and a positive contribution to knowledge
- An interest in understanding more than just “what works” or “what worked” in terms of social enterprise business start-up support
- An understanding that context can have a major influence on an individuals response to a resource, leading to a wide variation in outcomes for different people to the same resource.
- The belief that realist evaluation has much to offer the field of enterprise and entrepreneurship education

However, I also acknowledge that this creates tensions and challenges for me as a new academic researcher, including:

- The transfer of the principles of realist evaluation to a new field by a novice researcher
- The context of theory in terms of academic research and in respect of realist evaluation
- Limitations in direct access to support in the 'authentic' utilisation of realist evaluation by experienced academics in the field during the study

This balance of both goals and challenges, has led me to conclude that this study is best described as a 'realist informed investigation' rather than a true realist evaluation. Such an approach affords me the opportunity to analyse the data collected thematically and systematically, but whilst maintaining a realist perspective and considering the much wider contextual issues of the programme participants.

In taking this approach, I decided against the explicit use of Context – Mechanism – Outcome models (CMOs; see section 4.4) within my research, although they have been included within this chapter as they are central to an explanation and understanding of a realist evaluation approach. That is not to say that the principles of this model have not been considered and utilised during both the data collection and analysis stage, but simply that I have elected not to create a series of CMO models. I believe this to be acceptable as I am still creating initial programme theories for each programme and then undertaking realist informed qualitative interviews with both current and previous participants. Indeed other researchers have also undertaken realist research without explicitly using CMOs in their work (Shearn et al, 2017).

Such an approach appears to correlate with, "the choice of data collection, and analysis methods and tools should be guided by the types of data that are needed to answer the evaluation questions, or more specifically, to test the initial programme theory in all its dimensions" (Marchal, Van Belle & Westhorp, 2017). Additional academic support and reassurance for this more flexible approach is offered by Salter & Kothari (2014, p.2) in that, "realist evaluation is not a method or a technical procedure; rather it is a logic of inquiry that attempts to answer the question, what works, for whom, in what circumstances…and why?"

The study will be informed and guided by my conceptual research framework and the next chapter will outline the methodological approach to data collection and an explanation of the background to participant selection and subsequent interviews.

Chapter 5 will now explore the methodological approach to this research

5 Methodology

5.1 Introduction

As has been previously stated in this thesis, this research examines the range of components that sit under the umbrella term of 'start-up social enterprise support' in order to contribute towards the understanding of 'what works, for whom, in what circumstances, and why' in terms of being effective in supporting their start-up.

Hence, chapter 4 explained a rationale for undertaking a realist informed investigation, and this chapter describes the logistical and methodological arrangements of the data collection required to answer the research questions posed.

5.2 The Intended Target Audience for this Research

The purpose of this research is to provide sector informed guidance on understanding what elements of social enterprise specific business support are most useful and effective to those accessing it. It is assumed that the main target audience for this research will falls into three stakeholder groups, which are:

1. Practitioners
2. Social Enterprise Start-Ups
3. Policy makers

Practitioners will include business advisors and incubation managers who are seeking practical guidance and credible knowledge, in order to enable them to provide the most effective support programmes for fledgling social enterprises. Social enterprise start-ups are those individuals currently planning, researching and engaged in a social enterprise start-up. By providing a set of guidelines to enable programme designers and deliverers to run start-up programmes that lead to a more positive experience and better outcomes for start-up social enterprises, it is hoped that policy makers will be receptive to adopting and responding to the sector informed research outputs.

Defining the primary intended audience and the benefits of this research from the outset, will assist in ensuring that the most appropriate philosophical approach, underpinning theories, and research methodology are selected to support the effectiveness and credibility of its findings.

5.3 Context Within this Research

Chapter 4 (Theoretical Underpinning) explained the importance of 'context' in realist evaluation. Additionally, the literature review (Chapter 3 – Business Support) revealed that social enterprise start-up support is fragmented and differs in both prevalence and effectiveness because:

- There is no widely accepted definition of what a Social Enterprise is, or indeed in some instances, whether they actually exist.
- Business Support (be it social enterprise specific, or generalist) is inconsistent in terms of not being offered uniformly across the UK.
- Where it is offered, the nature of that support varies hugely.
- Social Enterprise specific business support programmes where they are offered, are institutionally informed and led, rather than being informed by the experiences and knowledge of the social enterprise sector itself.

In adopting a realist informed approach to conducting this research, there are some additional factors to consider. Given that this research seeks to assess the success (or failure) of various programmes of support to prepare socially motivated businesses to start-up, a fundamental element of this research is to assess programme theory. In a realist approach, the programme of support (and its individual component parts) is not considered as the 'agent of change.' Programmes merely offer a range of resources and opportunities, bringing choices to the participant, which we refer to as mechanisms.

Those devising such programmes undoubtedly have an expectation of what the positive intended outcomes following the participant's exposure to these resources would be. However, a realist approach takes this further and explores not only how, when and why the anticipated outcomes are achieved, but also whether any unexpected and unintended outcomes occur, due to wider contextual issues. In other words, the mechanisms may change things for the better, or potentially, for the worse. This raises the question of whether all interventions are the same and whether they will always bring about the desired and anticipated outcomes; the answers respectively being no, and highly unlikely.

A realist approach sees interventions as theories incarnate and that rather than seeking to examine the effectiveness of the intervention itself, we should seek to examine the causal programme theory which is underpinning it. (Shearn, Allmark, Piercy & Hirst, 2017)

5.4 Introduction to Data Collection

Chapter 1 (section 1.6.3), outlined the research objectives for the study and established that this will be conducted at two distinct levels.

Firstly, by examining a selection of Social Enterprise Business Start-Up support programmes available within the West Yorkshire Region, via qualitative case-study interviews to understand:

1. The types of organisations currently providing Social Enterprise Start-Up Support in the West Yorkshire Region of the UK

2. The nature of these support programmes/interventions

Secondly, the outcome of this first section will then enable and inform the approach to interviews with programme participants to investigate:

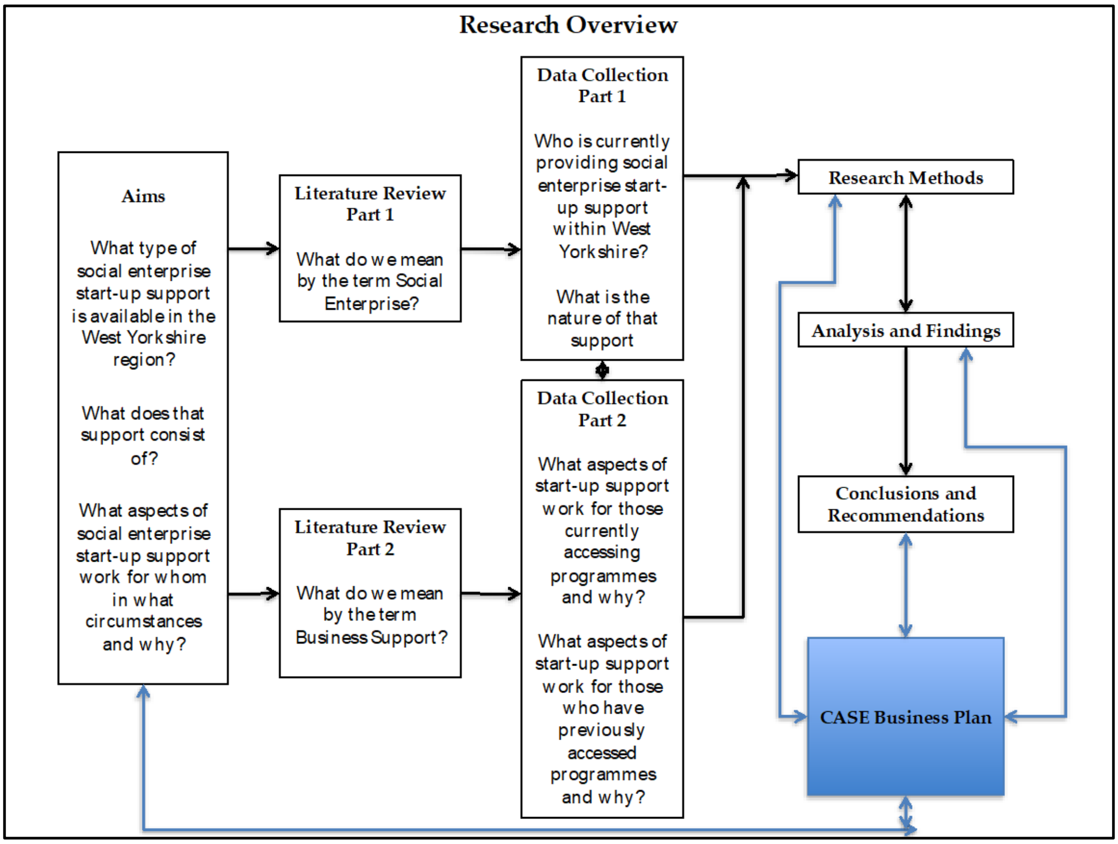
- What worked, for whom, in what circumstances, and why?

This has resulted in 15 interviews in total, comprising:

- Five social enterprise start-up support programme delivery managers
- Five current participants of the above social enterprise start-up support interventions
- Five previous participants of the above social enterprise start-up support interventions

The following diagram (Figure 5.1) presents an overview of the entire research project and its different stages, with the Business Plan for CASE being responsive at all stages to both informing and benefiting from the research.

Figure 5.1 A Diagrammatic Research Overview



The traditional qualitative approach to investigating 'what works' or 'what worked' in start-up support programmes would be to interview our selected Programme Participants about their experiences of the support they received, and to then analyse their responses in order to seek regularity and commonality in which elements of this support have been credited (in the participant's opinion) as being helpful and beneficial to their social enterprise's development.

To give a simplistic example to illustrate this point, let's consider the hypothesis that 'setting homework on a specific subject to a class for students the evening before an examination on that topic, is beneficial to contributing to a pass in the examination'. If 20/30 students subsequently pass the examination, it would perhaps be reasonable to assume that setting the homework was indeed beneficial, and that as two thirds of the class passed the examination, causation was proven.

A realist evaluator however, would look beyond simply the number of positive outcomes (examination pass marks) to prove causation, and examine the outcomes in much greater depth to reveal any potential contextual factors. Did all of the students passing the examination complete the set homework? Did any students, who completed the homework, subsequently fail the examination? If so, did the homework actually cause stress and panic the evening before, potentially contributing to a failure in the examination? In summary, the realist evaluator seeks much more than just regularity of an anticipated outcome, in order to prove causation.

An additional fundamental problem to consider here, is that exposure to such support interventions, offers no guarantee that the outcome following the intervention will be either positive, or as anticipated. This is not necessarily due to the intervention being inappropriate or ineffective, but simply because the wider contextual factors which will influence a participant's response to an intervention, are not being considered at the time of its creation.

Consequently, it is proposed that a realist informed investigation approach to data collection and interpretation, could potentially reveal more robust and useful data, than a post-positivist, or even a constructivist approach for qualitative data capture would be able to provide.

Advice on adopting a realist approach to data collection states that it is better to start with interviews of the practitioners (programme designers/deliverers), rather than interviews with the programme participants, in order to establish the initial rough programme theory, (Manzano, 2016).

Through practical experience and knowledge as a Business Advisor, I already feel well-placed to know and understand what the common and generic elements of start-up business support look like, and what additional elements are often included for those starting social ventures. This again fits well with a realist approach, which sees our own experiences and perceptions as a key component, (Marchal, Van Belle, & Westhorp, 2014).

This pre-existing knowledge, coupled with the Programme Director Set interviews will enable me to create a set of Initial Rough Programme Theories (IRPTs). These IRPTs will then inform the research questions for the programme participants.

The programme participant's data will be collected via qualitative interviews, and specifically sourced from those that are either, currently planning/starting a social enterprise, or have in the recent past (within 5 years) been supported to start up and operate in the social enterprise arena. The collected and analysed data will contribute to establishing a set of guidelines for the creation of start-up programmes ***for*** the social enterprise sector, ***informed by*** the social enterprise sector.

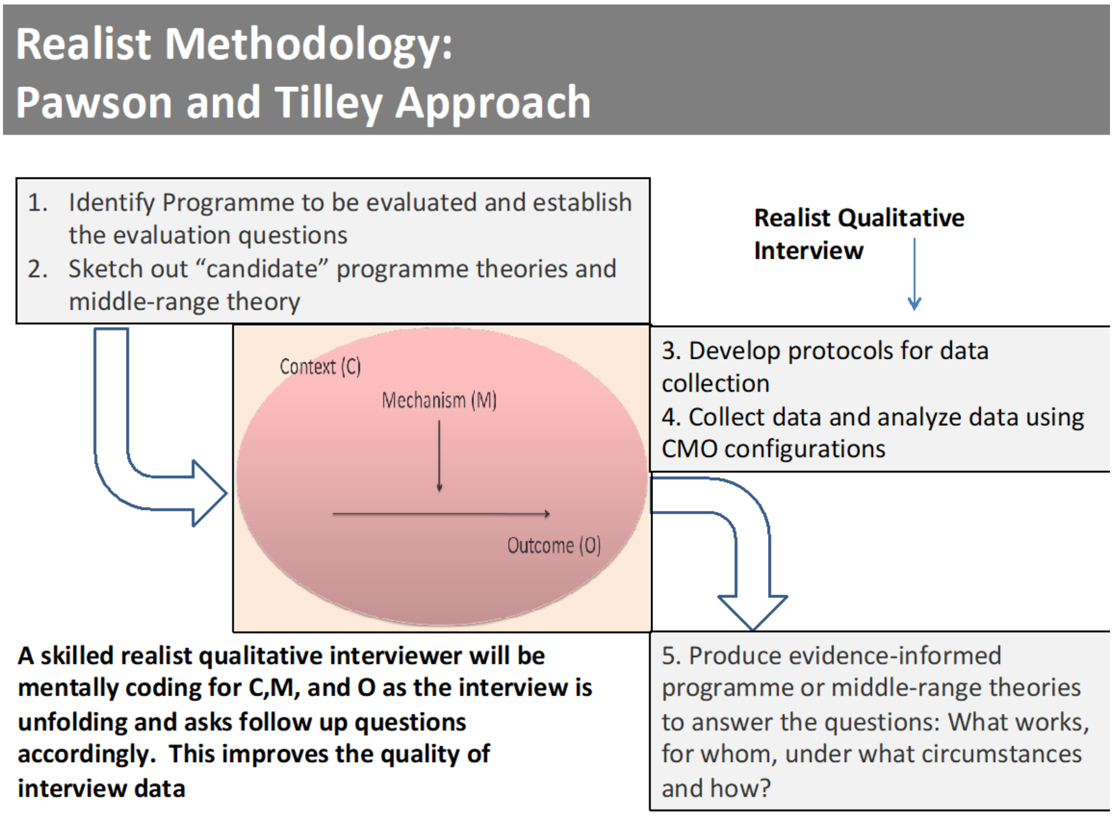
In undertaking a realist evaluation, it is important to understand that the data captured and analysed is significant in its depth of detail with individual candidate interviews, rather than being broad in nature and interviewing large numbers of candidates. Traditional qualitative data collection would suggest the optimum number of interviews should be sufficient to enable the researcher to reach 'saturation' point in the data collected, in order to establish a pattern of regularity of events/outcomes. However, the question remains as to whether causation should be assessed and proven simply by seeking regularity in the data collected from research respondents. (Sayer, 2000 & Pawson, 2006).

A realist approach differs from this, in that it seeks evidence of outcomes not through reaching saturation, but through rigour and depth of those interviews. Additionally, such interviews may be conducted in a more fragmented fashion, by returning to the interviewees repeatedly to clarify understanding. This allows for data points raised in one stakeholder interview to be cross-referenced with another stakeholder's experiences. This approach often results in a greater depth of understanding for the researcher and ultimately, a clearer direction of travel for the adoption of the lessons learned.

5.4.1 Avoiding problems in realist evaluation interviews

Whilst iterative qualitative interviews are not unique to realist evaluation, there are some specific nuances to this specific methodology that should be recognised and observed. The following diagram shown in Figure 5.2 (Jagosh, 2018), is a useful summary of the Pawson and Tilley realist evaluation approach.

Figure 5.2 Realist Methodology: Pawson & Tilley Approach



The stages involved in a realist evaluation detailed above, provide the framework for the interviews with both the programme managers (to understand the individual programme components and their theoretical outcomes) and the programme candidates, (to understand what did and did not work for them and why). The interviews need to be approached with a degree of caution in order to ensure that the researcher remains as unbiased as possible, and minimises the potential of 'steering' the candidate towards the researchers own expected answers and conclusions. As explained in Chapter 4, although my intention is not to create CMO models during my data analysis and conclusions, the methodology and fundamental approach holds true.

The CARES (Centre for Advancement in Realist Evaluation and Synthesis) training materials (Jagosh, 2018) provide some helpful advice on how this balance is achieved, and on the use of differing questioning techniques to allow the candidate to more readily share information and confirm their experiences, without risking leading the candidate to an answer which is not their own. Table 5.1 below, gives some examples of question framing.

Table 5.1 Examples Of Questions In Realist Evaluation (Jagosh, 2018)

Type of question	Approach	Purpose
Phrasing for theory testing	"There is this idea that…"	Allows you to introduce a theory to the candidate, but does so in an objective manner, allowing the candidate to agree or disagree
Retroductive questioning	"What is it about XXX that makes a difference?"	This type of questioning will enable you to draw out context or mechanism related data
Directional questioning	Forward "The next question is…" Backward "Previously, you said that…" Stationary "OK, so you are saying that…" Drill down "What is it about…?"	This allows you to continue, or change the current direction of questioning, and offers four options as indicated: forward, backwards, stationary and drilling down

Type of question	Approach	Purpose
Circular questioning	"I see, you are saying that…?"	This is a method of gaining clarity/confirmation of the candidate's intentional meaning, by your confirming or denying your understanding

5.4.2 Scope of the Research

The scope of the research has been defined by two main factors; location of the support organisations and interventions, and the typology of their support.

- **Location** – I have limited the scope of my primary research data collection to the West Yorkshire region, although acknowledge that some of the organisations engaged with, also offer and deliver support programmes outside of this region. Such instances are noted in the profiles of participating organisations in section 5.5.
- **Typology** – The organisations have been specifically selected in an attempt to reflect the wide range of differing Business Support approaches and component elements. They include programmes which are both general in nature, and some that are more specific in their subject matter. Additionally, some programmes work with clients as part of a cohort, some as individuals, and some in a combined format. An overview of each participating organisation is also included in section 5.5.

5.4.3 Interview Groups and Questions

For the sake of clarity, the data collection interviews have been conducted with two distinct groups and will be identified as follows:

Group 1 – This group consists of key staff responsible for the development of, and/or, the organisational delivery of, a number of social enterprise support programmes within West Yorkshire. These staff have been interviewed to understand the scope and focus of the programmes they offer, and to present a top-level overview of each support programme investigated. More importantly, this has informed the development of an Initial Rough Programme Theory (IRPT) for each programme delivery organisation participating in the study. The IRPTs in turn, informed the interview questions for that particular programme's participants who make up Group 2.

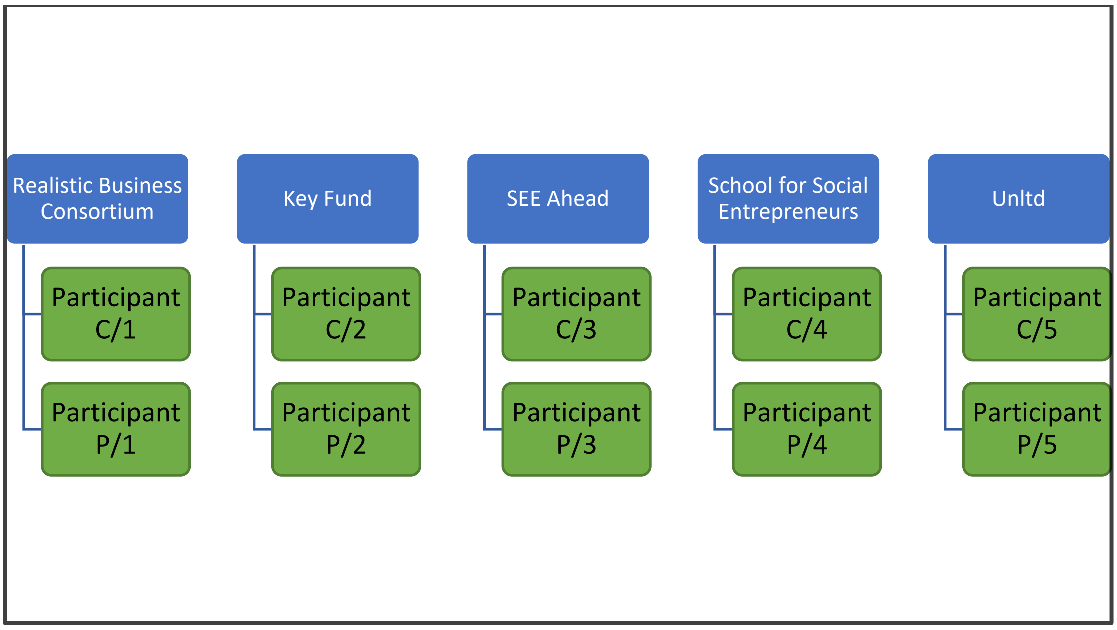
Group 2 – This group is made up of the programme participants themselves and is subdivided into two further subsets:

- **Group 2/C** – This consists of participants who are currently undertaking their programmes of social enterprise specific start-up support.
- **Group 2/P** – This consists of participants who have recently (within the last 5 years) undertaken programmes of social enterprise specific start-up support.

The identities of the programme participants remain anonymous throughout.

Figure 5.3 below gives a diagrammatic representation of the overall data collection sets.

Figure 5.3 Diagrammatic Data Collection Overview - Names Organisations & Anonymous Participants



5.4.4 Ethical Considerations and Approval

Webster, Lewis & Brown (2014, p. 78) state that "ethics should be, without doubt, at the heart of research" and as such, this study has considered the implications for all participants and tried to adhere to the principles advocated by the same authors in terms of ethical considerations, as they outline below:

- That research should be worthwhile and not make unreasonable demands on participants
- That participation in research should be based on informed consent
- That participation should be voluntary and free from coercion or pressure
- That adverse consequences of participation should be avoided, and risks of harm known
- That confidentiality and anonymity should be respected

This study explores the provision of a variety of social enterprise start-up programmes, and the responses and experiences of participants engaged on those programmes. Consequently there are two distinct groups of participants to consider from an ethical perspective; the organisations themselves, and the individual current and previous participants.

As the Part 1 of my research objectives involved gaining an understanding of who is currently providing a start-up support provision within the West Yorkshire area, it felt important to gain consent for any organisations that agreed to participate, to also agree to be named. Being able to name the five organisations that formed the basis of the study adds credibility and authenticity to the participant's commentary on the support they received, and also demonstrates the broad range of organisations and their differing approaches to start-up support selected for inclusion.

The five organisations were selected to try to be as representative as possible of such differing forms of support; ranging from 1:1 focused, consultancy type provision, to fixed cohort programme provisions for multiple beneficiaries.

All five organisations initially approached, agreed immediately to being included and also to being named within the study. Although not formally investigated as part of the study, initial conversations with organisational managers/deliverers revealed a collective opinion that the results of the study would be potentially helpful for the sector, and as such, they were keen to participate as a named organisation.

I made the decision that the second group of respondents; those who were either currently or previously in receipt of support from the named organisations, should be anonymous. Factors influencing this decision included:

- Naming the individuals did not add value to the research output, and indeed, may inhibit their willingness to speak freely about their support experiences.

- Although the participating organisations nominated and introduced potential clients to me, and therefore were aware of their own respondents, anonymising the data meant that they were gaining feedback on the nature and types of interventions offered overall, rather than a specific critique of their own programmes.

- As many respondents transpired to have had support from a number of organisations within the study, and not just the organisation making the introduction, anonymity enabled participants to compare and contrast support provisions during the interviews.

- As the study explores the impact which context has in relation to the responses to the support provision, and as an individual's context may reveal personal circumstances and information of a sensitive nature, anonymous interviews seemed most appropriate.

All respondents completed a consent form ahead of the interview which outlined the full details of the study, the intention to record interviews, the intention to either name, or anonymise, the participating organisations and individuals and their data, and how to request a withdrawal from the study.

In line with the University of Huddersfield Business School's ethics procedure, an application was submitted for review by the internal ethics committee, and feedback received from two separate academics. No interview was required to further explain the application, but two minor amendments were requested, and subsequently adopted. These were to:

- Explicitly ask for the respondent's permission to record the interview.
- To inform the respondents that the data from their interviews would be stored for 10 years.

Final ethics approval for this research on the above basis and with the requested minor amendments was granted in January 2019, and the full portfolio of Ethics documents including final approval from the University of Huddersfield Business School, can be found in Appendix 3.

5.5 Data Collection – Social Enterprise Programmes

Participating organisations

The table below presents the 5 organisations identified for potential inclusion in the research, and all agreed to participate and to being identified by name in the thesis.

Table 5.2 Participating Organisations

Organisation	Website
The Realistic Business Consortium	https://www.realisticbusiness.co/
Key Fund	https://thekeyfund.co.uk/
See Ahead	https://seeahead.co.uk/
School for Social Entrepreneurs	https://www.the-sse.org/
UnLtd	https://www.unltd.org.uk/

The organisations were selected for inclusion in the study, as both individually and collectively, they represent a varied approach to start-up support provision across the West Yorkshire region. This variety of approaches and focus offset the naturally limited number of organisations that could be included. It should be noted that whilst all programmes are delivered within the West Yorkshire region, there are some organisations, e.g. UnLtd, which also offer programmes nationally. Whilst the included programmes naturally have a degree of commonality in terms of the individual components they provide to participants, there are also some distinctive features within the collective group. Some organisations, e.g. School for Social Entrepreneurs, offer a cohort-based learning experience, whilst others, e.g. SEE Ahead, are based more on a 1:1 consultancy approach. Others favour a hybrid model, e.g. The Realistic Business Consortium, which offers both individual 1:1 consultancies, coupled with action set learning opportunities. As such, although only five organisations are included within the study, it is felt that by selecting these specific support providers, due to their individual varied nature and sub-components, I enable the research to offer a comprehensive representation of the typology of social enterprise start-up support in the West Yorkshire region.

Interviews were conducted with the director or manager of each organisation, to understand the nature of they support they offer, how that support is delivered, and what the intended and expected outcomes are for each component. Every programme director was asked the same set of questions to form a semi-structured interview, but follow up questions were used as required to gain additional clarity on the programme components utilised, and outcomes expected, from each individual organisation.

These interviews informed the creation of an initial rough programme theory model (IRPT) for each organisation, and these IRPTs were subsequently used in participant interviews to start to understand the participant's experiences of interacting (or not) with these programme resources.

The complete set of specific questions used for interviews with the Programme Directors Set can be found in Appendix 4. The following section gives a brief synopsis of each participating organisation, extracted from their respective marketing materials.

5.5.1 Social Enterprise Programmes – Organisational Overviews

The Realistic Business Consortium

The Realistic Business Consortium works with small businesses, social enterprises and small charities, providing premium business expertise, advice and support to organisations that would not ordinarily be able to access or afford such services, in the conventional market place.

Key Fund

The Key Fund is a team of like-minded individuals dedicated to supporting new enterprises, creating new jobs and re-invigorating communities. Their central mission is to provide finance; flexible loans and grant/loan packages, to help community and social enterprises to start up, become sustainable, or grow. It should be noted that as the Key Fund is a national organisation, the interview and responses in this study are from the Yorkshire office.

SEE Ahead

SEE Ahead provides comprehensive support services to organisations in the voluntary, community and faith sectors. Focusing on Social, Economic and Environmental objectives, they provide a range of empowering services - strategic direction, a governance review, knowledge of funding & finance, or commercial skills - to achieve successful results.

School for Social Entrepreneurs

Helping 1,000 people a year develop the skills, strengths and networks they need to tackle society's biggest problems, the School for Social Entrepreneurs run courses that equip people to start, scale and strengthen organisations that make a positive difference. Learning with SSE is inspiring, action-based and accessible. It should be noted that as School for Social Entrepreneurs is a national organisation, the interview and responses in this study are from the Yorkshire and North East School.

UnLtd

Since 2002, UnLtd working in partnership, have supported over 16,500 social entrepreneurs. Last year they helped more than 870,000 people to improve their lives. From starting up to scaling up, UnLtd's unique package of support and funding helps social entrepreneurs to realise their untapped potential and build a better society for all. It should be noted that as UnLtd is a national organisation, the interview and responses in this study are from the Bradford office.

5.5.2 Organisational Interviews

The interviews with the Programme Directors Set (PDS) were undertaken to inform at two distinct levels. Firstly, to capture sufficient information to address Part 1 of the overall research objectives:

1. To understand what types of organisations are currently providing Social Enterprise Start-Up Support in the West Yorkshire Region of the UK

2. To understand the nature of these support programmes/interventions

Secondly, to inform the creation of an Initial Rough Programme Theory (IRPT) for each organisation's support programme, which would then be used as a point of reference during the programme participant interviews. Consideration was given to two potential approaches to the IRPT and programme participant interactions during the subsequent interviews.

The first approach involved the creation of individual IRPTs for each organisation as outlined above, and the participant respondents would then have sight of, and make reference to, the IRPT which was specific to their programme, and resulting from their programme director's interview. The alternative approach would again begin with PDS interviews and the creation of five IRPTs as described above, however, those five IRPTs would then be distilled down to an overarching and inclusive IRPT. This master IRPT would incorporate all programme components from every organisation, and all programme participants would interact with this master IRPT.

Following due consideration to the two approaches and their relative advantages and disadvantages, and additionally engaging in consultation with other researchers utilising a realist methodology via the RAMESES (JISC group) forum, the initial methodological approach of creating and interacting with five separate IRPTs was selected for this study.

The questions presented to the five organisations were constructed to enable thematic analysis of the responses and a subsequent understanding of the varied nature of support available within the region. All five organisations received the same set of questions, although the nature of qualitative interviews meant that respondents often jumped back and forth between the specific questions; frequently providing useful responses albeit within the context of a different response. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed and a sample, fully transcribed interview extract can be found within Appendix 5.

The questions were as follows:

1. What is the overall purpose of your programme/intervention?
2. Do you have any policies/documents about how your programmes are intended to work?
3. Does you programme focus on a particular aspect of social enterprise start-up support?
4. Do you monitor how participants are responding to the interventions during the programme and if so, how?
5. Do you monitor how participants are responding to the interventions after the programme and if so, how?
6. What types of clients attend your programmes?
7. How do they apply to your programme or gain access to support?
8. Who funds the programme?
9. What does the programme/intervention consist of?
10. How long is the programme?
11. Do all participants undertake the same programme? If no, how do they differ and how and when is the differentiation in pathway decided?
12. Can components be repeated; for example if participants need additional support?
13. Do participants work with deliverers in groups or individually?
14. What does success look like to you?
15. Are there any outstanding questions you feel I should have asked you?

Following completion of the organisational interviews and ahead of the start of participant interviews, the respondent's answers were analysed with two key objectives in mind:

1. To construct a simple initial rough programme theory (IRPT) based upon the respondent's description of the structure of the support offered by that organisation. These IRPTs were subsequently used as an aide memoir during participant interviews.
2. To construct a response to Part I of the study's research objectives; to understand the nature of social enterprise start-up support provision within West Yorkshire.

Given that the focus of this part of the research was to establish the nature of social enterprise start-up support provision, but also cognisant that this would provide a contextual backdrop to Part 2 of the research objectives in understanding participant's experiences, clear parameters had to be established to inform the inclusion or exclusion of collected data from this analytical process. The key principles of those guidelines were:

- Any data relating to the specific nature of the start-up programmes, their format, their component parts, their interaction with other programmes and resources, their aims and objectives, their target audience and their anticipated outcomes for their respective clients must be included and analysed.
- Any data relating to the organisations own internal structure, its policies, political and social context, funding, and previous, current and future organisational challenges and opportunities, was excluded. The rationale for this decision was that whilst highly relevant to the individual organisation, it was considered less relevant to the experience of the individual participant. However, this data presents a clear opportunity for future research at a specific organisational level.

The five IRPT models are presented in the next section, and the interactions between programme participants and their respective IRPTs are investigated in Chapter 7.

5.5.3 Organisational Initial Rough Programme Theories

The IRPT created for each participating organisation is presented below. In each case, the first diagram represents the main programme components, broken down into respective sub-elements, as described during the PDS interviews. The second diagram repeats the main programme components, but also illustrates the intended and anticipated outcomes from the organisational perspective.

Figure 5.4 The Realistic Business Consortium IRPT

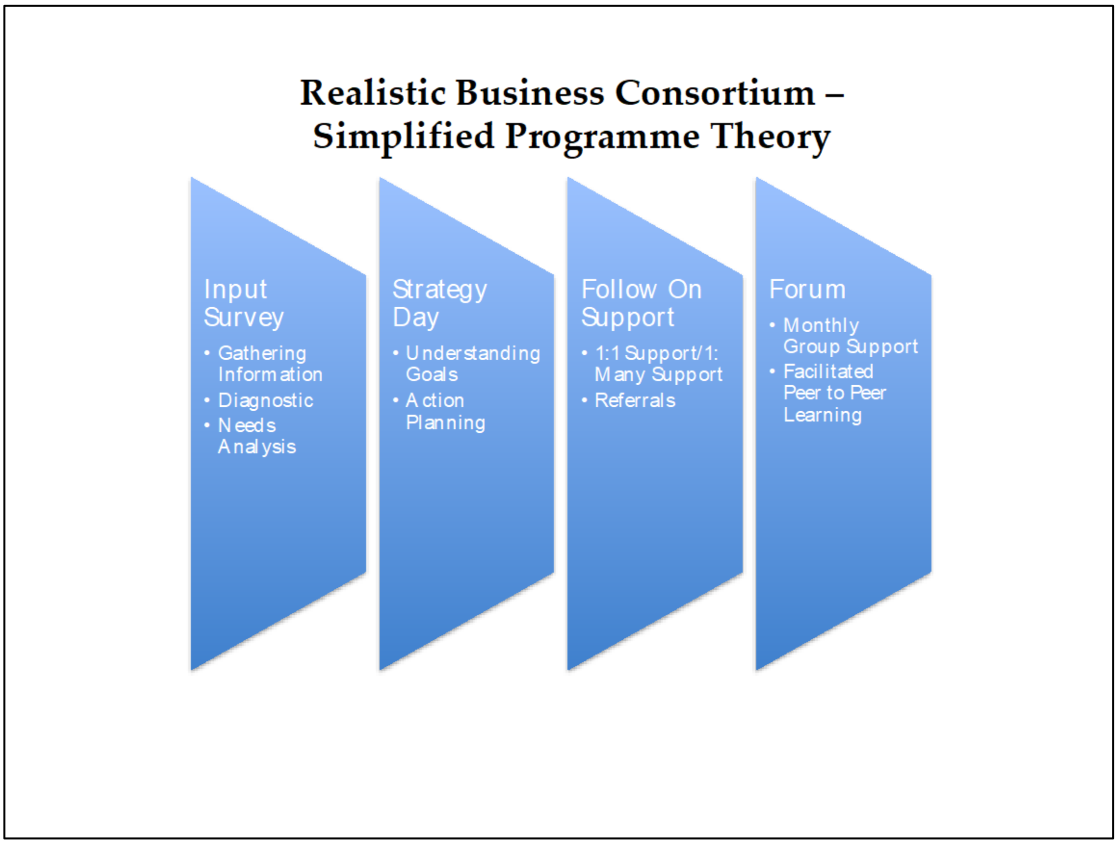


Figure 5.5 RBC Anticipated Outcomes

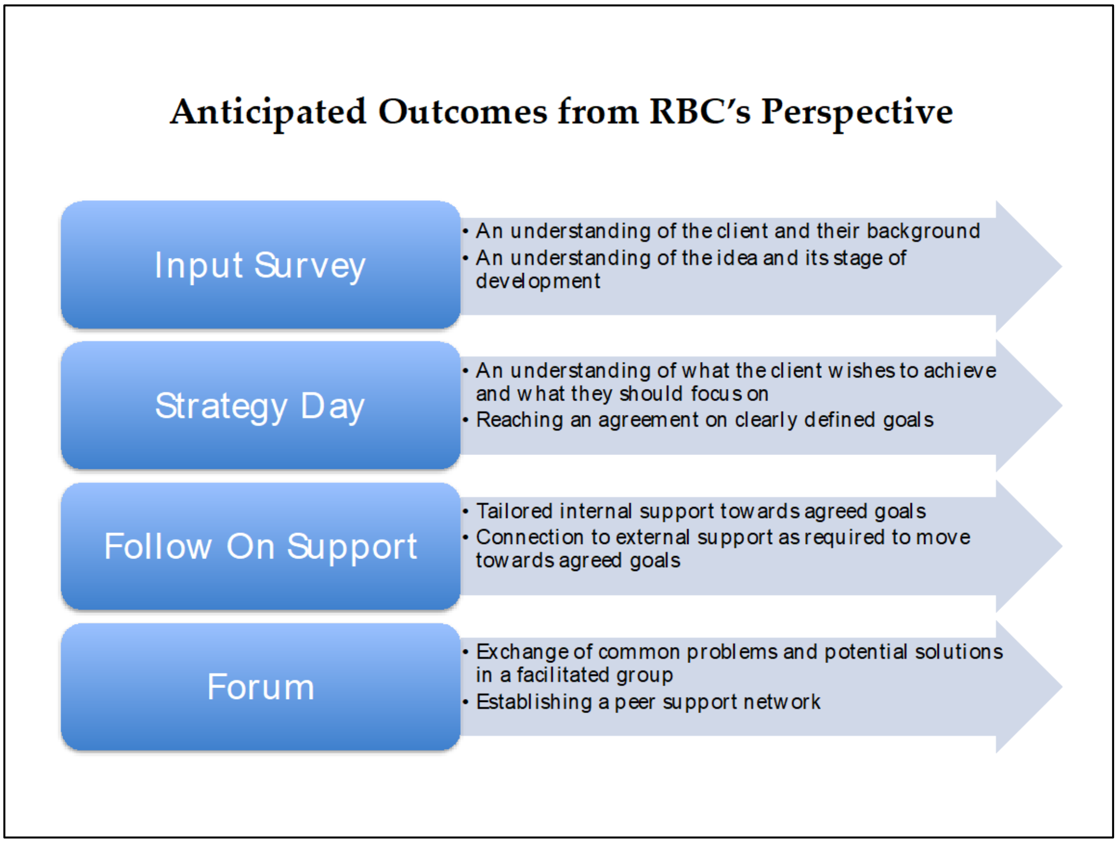


Figure 5.6 The Key Fund IRPT

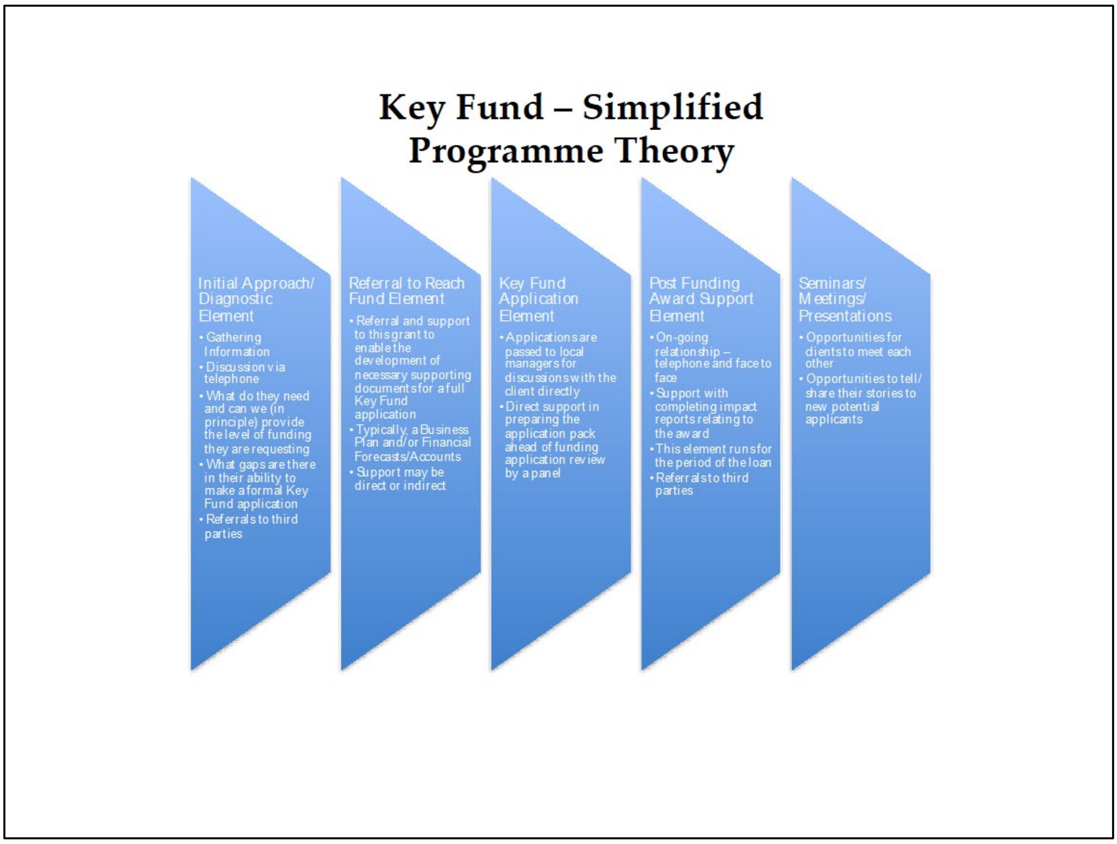


Figure 5.7 Key Fund Anticipated Outcomes

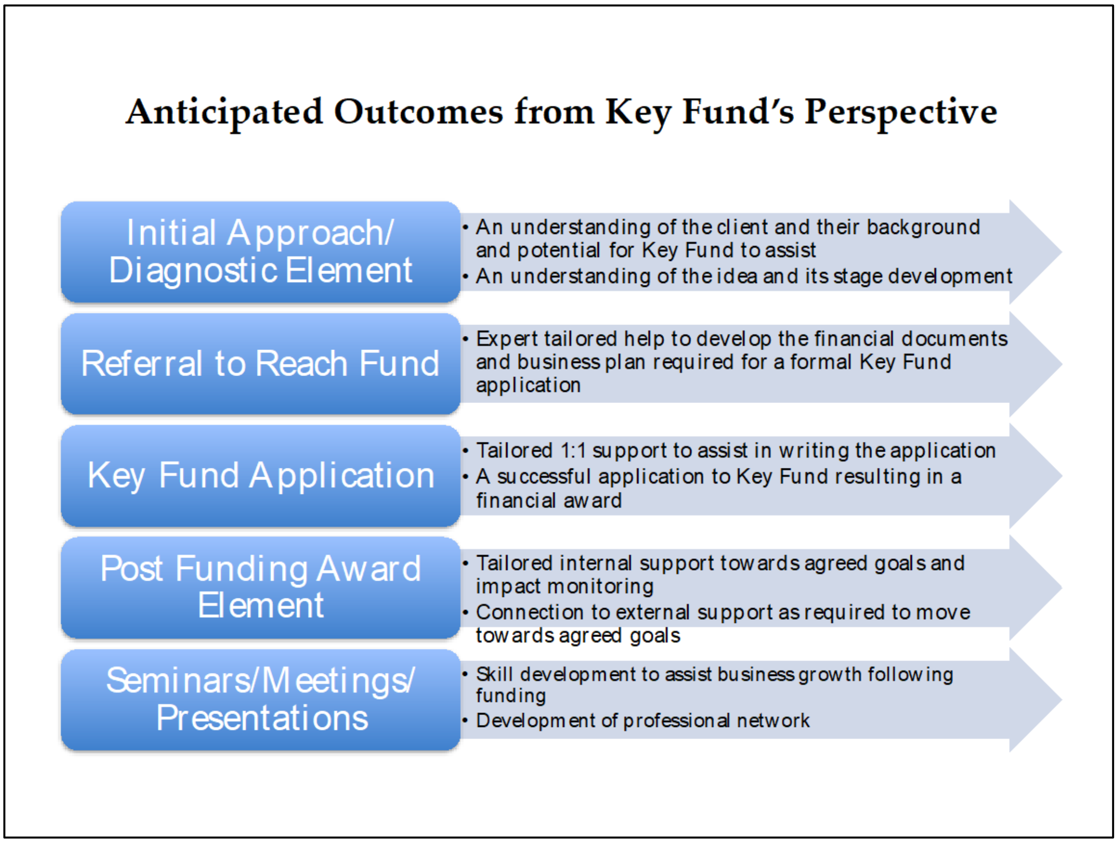


Figure 5.8 SEE Ahead IRPT

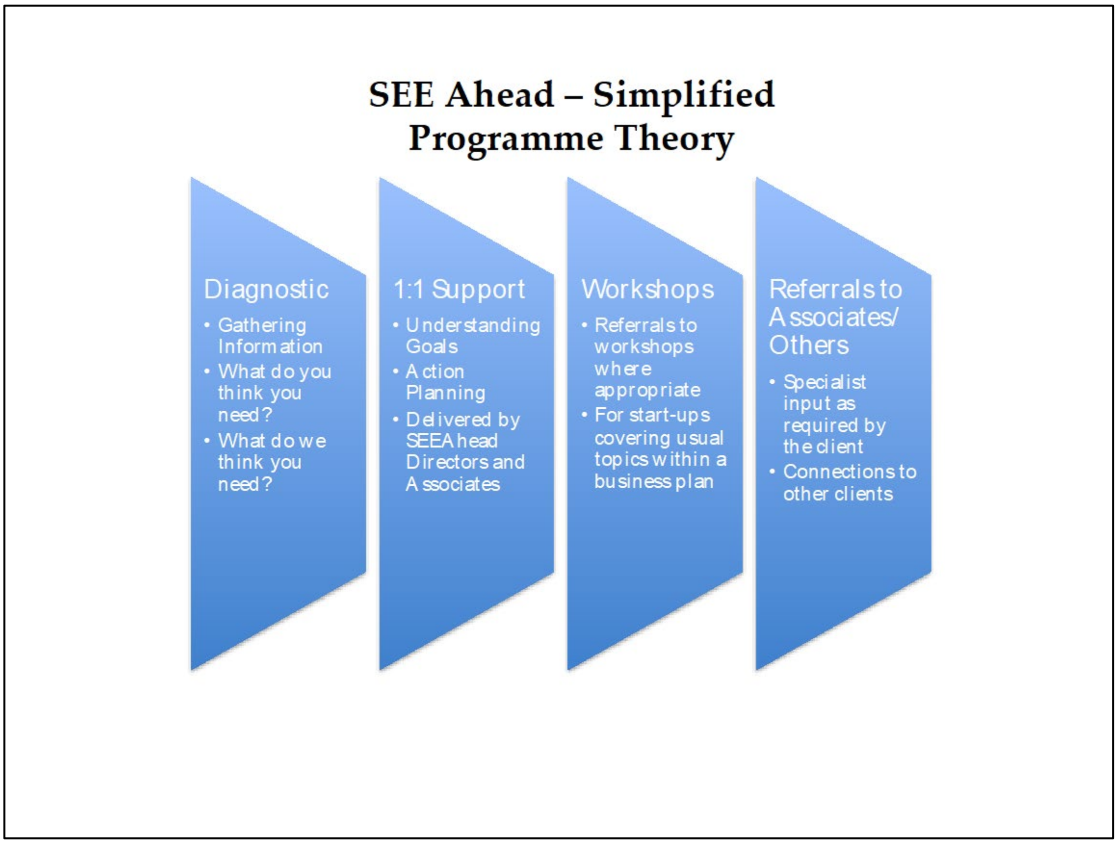


Figure 5.9 SEE Ahead Anticipated Outcomes

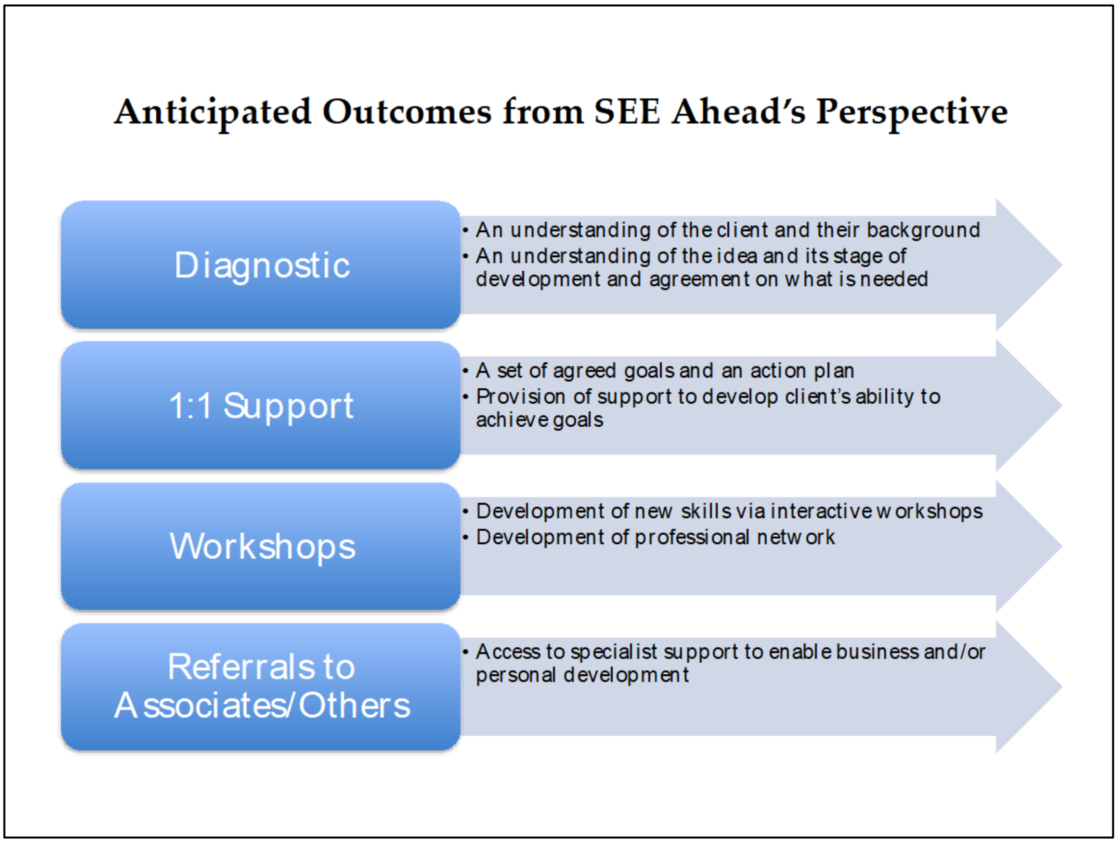


Figure 5.10 School For Social Entrepreneurs IRPT

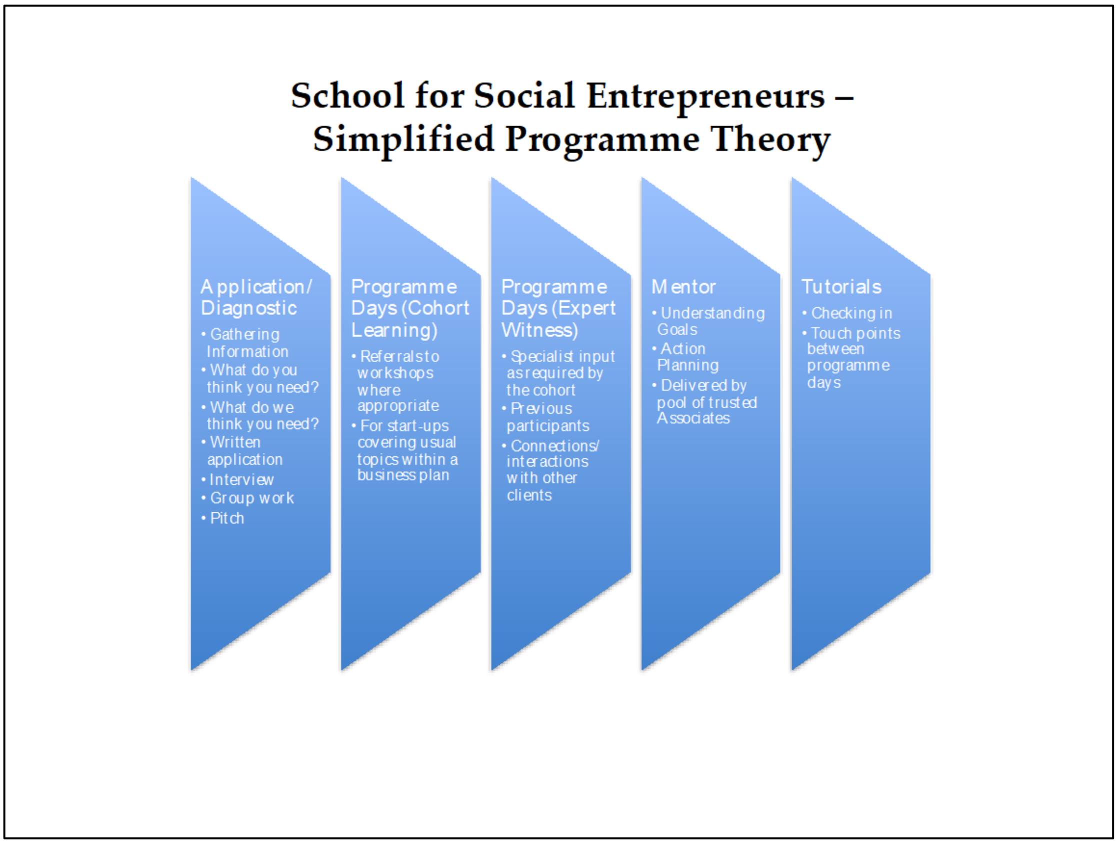


Figure 5.11 School For Social Entrepreneurs Anticipated Outcomes

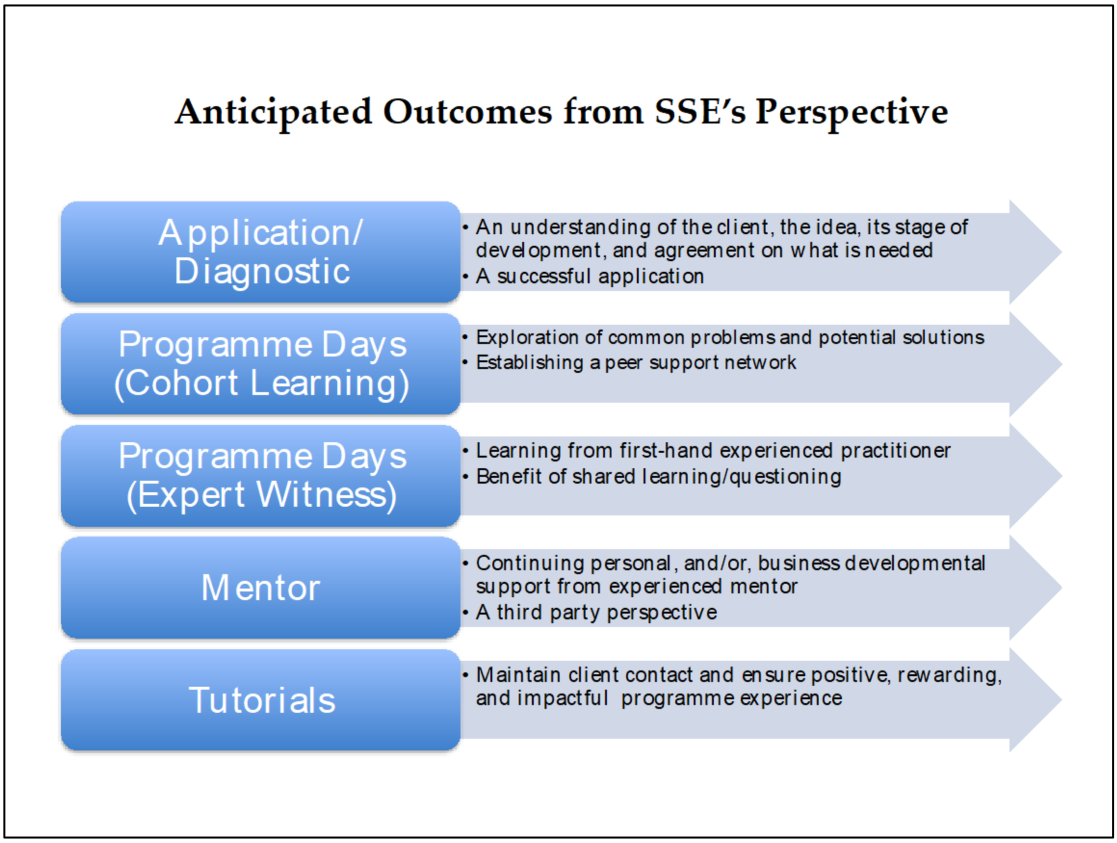


Figure 5.12 UnLtd IRPT

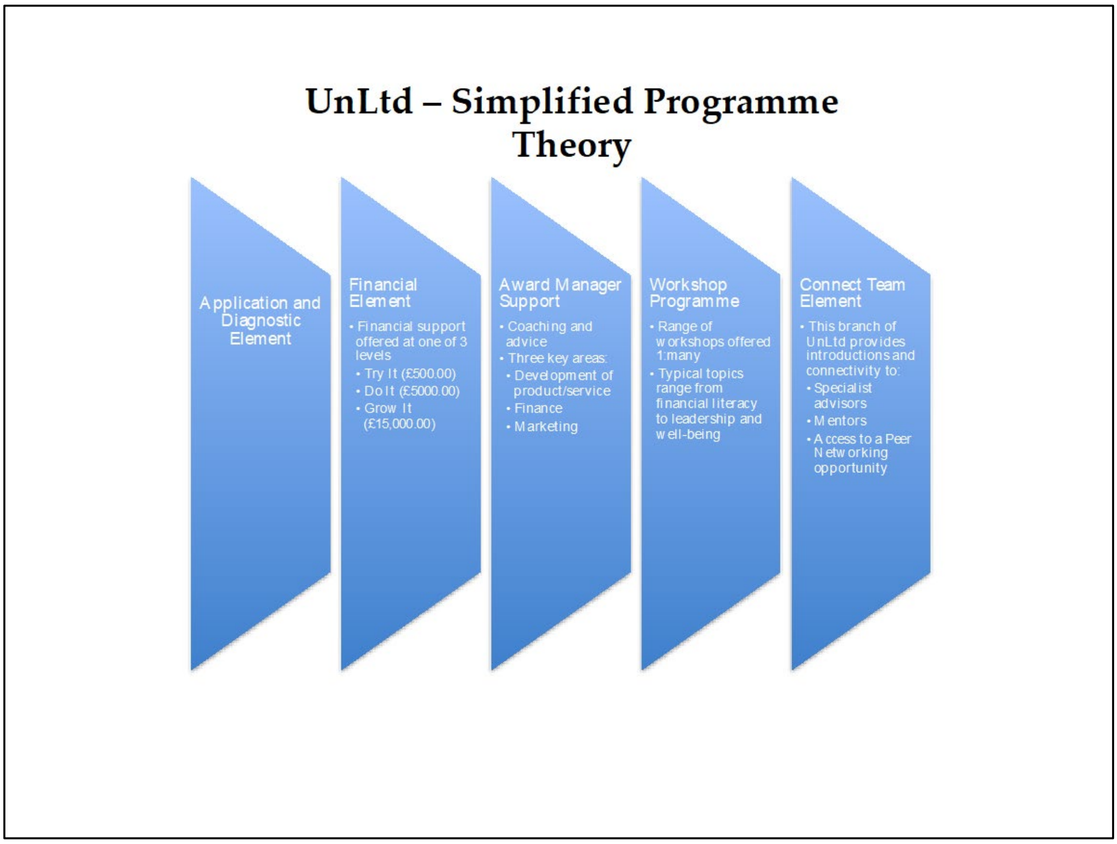
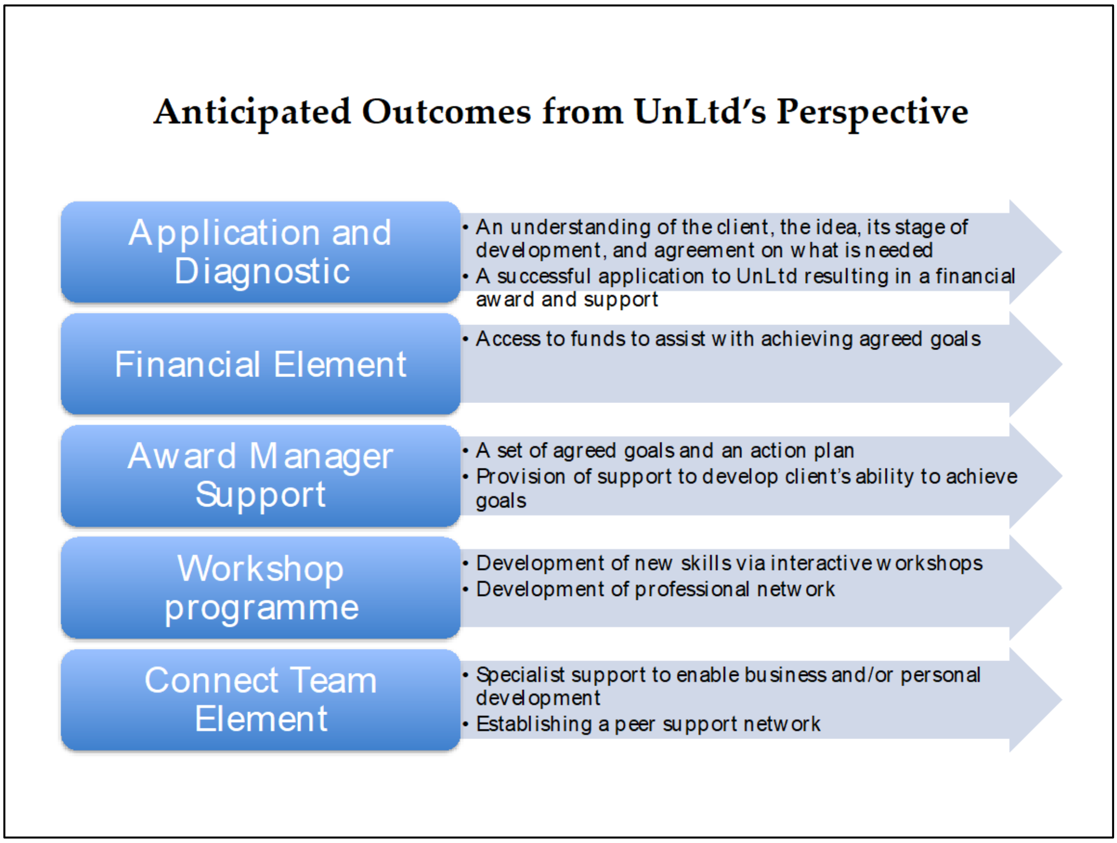


Figure 5.13 UnLtd Anticipated Outcomes



5.6 Data Collection – Programme Participants

The second part of the data collection is qualitative and iterative, via in-depth case study interviews of both current and previous recipients of the identified support programmes. The criteria for inclusion was that one participant should be currently receiving support from the organisation, and the second, should have received support previously; specifically, within the last two to four years. The rationale for including current participants was an attempt to gain participant perspective insight from start-ups actively engaged in their programme of support; gaining real time feedback on their current and live experiences. In contrast, the rationale for including a previous participant was to enable such respondents to utilise the benefit of hindsight; considering and recalling elements of support which they may have considered to have increased, or decreased in value to them, upon later reflection. With five participating organisations and two nominated clients from each, this amounted to 10 respondents in total.

Each respondent within a single cohort was given identical questions, although the questions varied slightly between the current and previous beneficiary cohorts. This difference was to encourage the previous participants to consider and recall any differences from their experiences at the time of the intervention, and now subsequently, upon reflection. These respondents have contributed to the research as follows:

For current participants of support interventions:

To identify which specific programme elements (if any) of their business support interventions, are positively contributing to the start-up or continuing success of their social enterprises. The interviews investigated:

- What is working well for them within the programme and why?
- What potentially may work better and why?
- What (if anything) that they feel may be missing and why?

For previous participants of support interventions:

To identify on reflection, any areas which were notably absent from their support programme components, and which the respondents felt could/would have made a value adding difference to their start-up, should such advice have been readily available. The interviews investigated:

- What on reflection, worked well for them within the programme and why?
- What on reflection, may have worked better, and why?
- What on reflection (if anything), was felt to be missing and why?

The process of interviewing participants began with referrals from the five organisations to provide introductions to current and previous clients. To avoid any bias or conflict of interest from my perspective, no nominated respondents were known to me in an advisory capacity prior to the interview. Whilst there was a risk that organisations may nominate clients whom they felt would give a very positive account of their experience of support from them, the organisations understood that the intended outcome of my research was not a ranking of successful support organisations, but rather an understanding of the range of reactions to differing types of support interventions. All interviews with current programme participants were conducted first, followed by interviews with those that had in the recent past, accessed the respective programmes of support.

Both sets of questions followed a similar pattern of typology, in order that an opportunity to gather respondent data linked to the key realist evaluation enquiry of, 'what, works for whom, in what circumstances, and why' could be addressed. The next section outlines the approach, rationale and questions for both sets of participants.

5.6.1 Data Collection – Typology of Questions for Current Programme Participants

In order for the research to be 'realist informed', there is a need to identify:

- What works? (Nature of the support)
- For whom? (Profile of the beneficiary)
- In what circumstances? (Context of the beneficiary and their interaction with the resources of the programme)
- Why? (This is the constant theme of enquiry that must run throughout)

Consequently, questions were devised to address these 4 key areas.

General (This contributed to CONTEXT and PROFILE information)**:**

1. Male/Female
2. Age Range (using a scale e.g. 18 – 30, 30 – 40 etc.)
3. Are you starting this venture alone or with a business partner?
4. Have you had previous experience of starting/running a business?
5. Have you had previous experience of starting/running a social enterprise?
6. Are you starting this venture by choice or as a reaction to specific circumstances?

Support Specific Questions (This contributed partially to 'WHAT WORKS' and "CONTEXT"):

1. Why did you access start-up support?
2. What type of support did you feel you needed?
3. How did you find that support?
4. Was it just this support organisation you benefitted from, or did you go to others?
5. If so, which others and why?

Programme Specific Questions (This contributed to understanding "WHAT WORKS "and "WHY"):

The IRPT diagrams created following interviews with the respective organisational directors, were shared with the participants whilst responding to the questions within section 3. These diagrams acted as a reminder of the programme components, what they offered to participants, and what (from an organisational perspective) the intended outcomes were.

The following questions were then discussed with synchronous access to the respective IRPT.

1. What is working best for you here and why?
2. What has worked least for you here and why?
3. Do you feel that anything is missing from this support and why?
4. Do you feel that you have accessed this support at the right time and why?

5. Are you learning more from the programme and its deliverers, or from the other participants, and why?
6. Is there anything else I should know about the support you are receiving and how it has helped/hindered and why?

5.6.2 Data Collection – Typology of Questions for Previous Programme Participants

The same principles and approach were applied to the interviews with previous programme participants, as those outlined for current participants, however, there were some inevitable changes to the specific questions asked, in order to benefit from this group of respondent's ability to reflect on their previous support, and to benefit from the advantages of hindsight.

As outlined below, the questions within the General and Support Specific sections were largely the same as for the current participants. The Programme Specific questions were however adapted and nuanced, to encourage reflection and contribute additional important data relating to the participants experience.

General (This contributed to CONTEXT and PROFILE information):

1. Male/Female
2. Age Range (use a scale e.g. 18 – 30, 30 – 40 etc.)
3. Did you start your venture alone or with a business partner?
4. Had you had previous experience of starting/running a business?
5. Had you had previous experience of starting/running a social enterprise?
6. Did you start your venture by choice or as a reaction to specific circumstances?

Support Specific Questions (This contributed partially to 'WHAT WORKS' and "CONTEXT"):

1. Why did you access start-up support?
2. What type of support did you feel you needed?
3. How did you find that support?
4. Was it just this support organisation you benefitted from, or did you go to others?

5. If so, which others and why?

Programme Specific Questions (This contributed to understanding "WHAT WORKS "and "WHY"):

These respondents also had synchronous access to the respective IRPT during this part of the interview.

1. What worked best for you at the time and why?
2. What worked least for you at the time and why?
3. Do you feel that anything became more valuable/relevant to you following the end of the programme and why?
4. Do you feel that anything became less valuable/relevant to you following the end of the programme and why?
5. Do you feel that on reflection anything was missing from the support you received and why?
6. Do you feel that you accessed the support at the right time and why?
7. Did you learn more from the programme and its deliverers, or from the other participants, and why?
8. Is there anything else I should know about the support you are receiving and how it has helped/hindered and why?

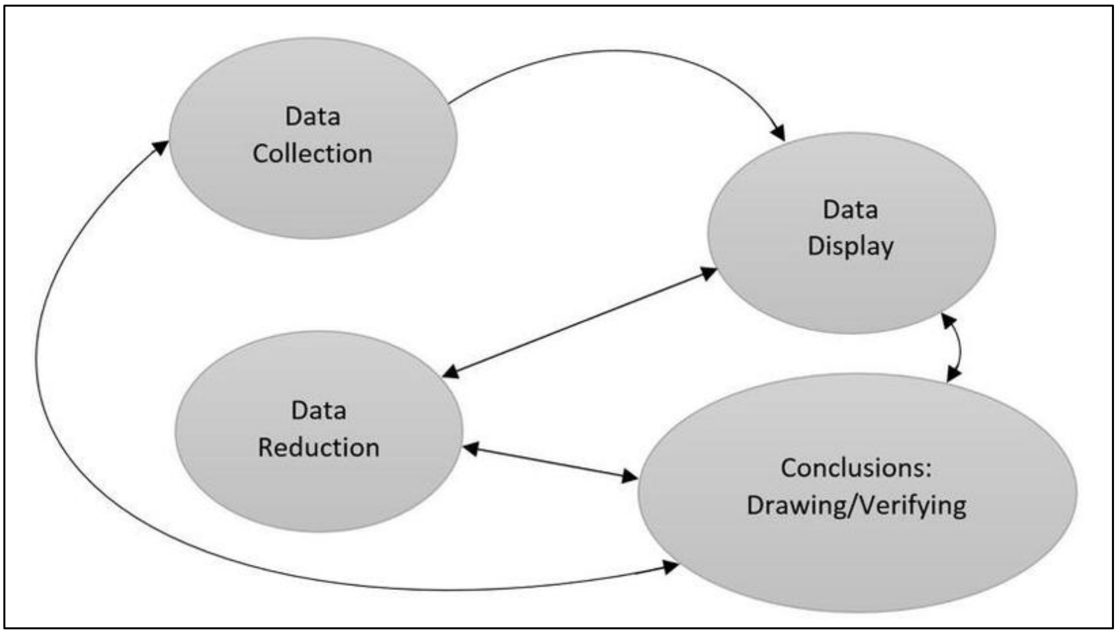
5.7 Working with the Data

All interviews with participants were recorded and subsequently transcribed. I elected to undertake the transcribing myself, and to work manually with the data rather than using analytical software programmes, as I felt it was important for me to be interacting with the data to gain a better understanding of the respondent's thoughts and comments.

The majority of the data collected and analysed was qualitative. The very limited amount of quantitative data (Group 1 Questions), was gathered to better understand the current and previous participant's contextual factors, rather than to specifically address the research questions. Thus, this study is considered to be qualitative in nature.

Due to the open question nature of the majority of the interviews, substantive responses were received which required a logical and consistent approach in analysis. Miles and Huberman (1994) provide a helpful framework for this task, which is presented in the diagram below (See Figure 5.14).

Figure 5.14 Components Of Data Analysis: Interactive Model (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 12)



To illustrate the relevance of the above model to my specific research, I will use a specific example of a component of business support, which is explored within the study; networking opportunities. The process of data analysis can be broken into three stages according to Miles & Huberman; reflected above as data collection, data display and data reduction. The collection aspect is self-explanatory and details of who formed part of the study have already been provided. Using my specific example to illustrate the model, data collection in this case would be the collection of all data relating to the topic of 'networking opportunities' in the broadest sense. This is perhaps an obvious first stage, but the remaining stages do warrant further explanation.

Data reduction according to Miles and Huberman (1994, p.10), "refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written-up field notes, or transcriptions." This can take the form of examining the data and extracting and grouping samples from the text, which are of a similar theme and grouping together as part of a coding process. In that sense it becomes a part of the analytical process, rather than a distinct and separate procedure, and I use the term coding here as defined by Bogdan and Biklen (2003) as a process to separate thematically similar data from the transcription as a whole. Returning to my specific example, we can 'reduce' the amount of data relating to 'networking opportunities' from potential multiple categories, (i.e. internal networking, external networking, networking facilitated by the support organisation, networking occurring organically through workshops, networking occurring spontaneously and my chance etc.), to one or two broader categories. In the case of this example, I 'reduced' the data to 'internal' (within the confines of the supporting organisation's programme), and external, (outside of the supporting organisation's formal programme framework).

Returning to Miles and Huberman (1994, p.11) they define data display as, "an organised, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action." In other words, deciding on an appropriate framework to present the data and enable a clear and systematic method of drawing conclusions. This process is again an integral part of data analysis, rather than a discreet and separate activity. Again, returning to my specific example of 'networking,' I then utilised a coded framework to organise and 'display' the relevant data, to enable the analysis, (this can be seen and reviewed in detail within Appendix 6, p. 399-403). As demonstrated in figure 5.14 above, in reality, the relationships between data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing, form a virtuous circle with activity flowing in all directions, rather than a series of individual stages and separate processes.

5.7.1 Validity and Reliability

As outlined during the methodology chapter, this research is conducted with two specific data sets to enable me to address the research questions. The first data set comprises 5 organisations, which provide social enterprise start-up support within the West Yorkshire region, and the rationale for their inclusion has already been outlined in section 5.5. They are considered credible providers of such support interventions due to their individual and collective experience and outcomes and outputs achieved by their clients emerging from their programmes. As such, they are considered to offer a valid and reliable source of data for this aspect of the study.

The second data set consists of one current, and one previous beneficiary from each support organisation; resulting in 10 programme participants overall. With clear parameters established with each support organisation of the qualifying criteria for a current and previous beneficiary, (see section 5.6), the support organisations made appropriate introductions. Nominated participants had no current personal or commercial relationship with me as the researcher, and all participants had clear guidelines on the research project and expectations. As such, the threshold of considering the 10 individuals as a valid and reliable source of data was established.

Chapter 4 has outlined the approach to finding a suitable theoretical perspective to review the collected data, and Chapter 5 has proposed a realist-informed approach to the methodology. The final section of this chapter presents the approach and structure of the analysis of the data, and with all of the above factors taken into consideration, it is concluded that both the data, and the approach to collection and analysis can be considered to be both reliable and valid.

5.8 Chapter 5 Summary and Conclusions

Chapter five has provided an overview of the methodological approach to data collection in this research, including the importance of context in a realist informed investigation and the intended audience for the findings. An explanation of the rationale and approach to the participant interviews was presented, together with the initial rough programme theories from each of the participating organisations' support offer. An overview of the approach to data handling was presented, together with the model for a systematic approach to data reduction and presentation.

5.9 Introduction to the Analytical Approach and Structure of Chapter 6 and Chapter 7

The research objectives of this thesis fall into two distinct categories:

1. Firstly to understand who is offering social enterprise start-up support within the West Yorkshire area, and to understand the nature of that support.

2. The second research objective is to investigate how different types of participants engage and benefit (or not) from these programmes in their journey towards starting a social enterprise.

Details of the specific research questions which enable me to answer these objectives have been clearly presented in Chapter 5, and the data captured via a series of interviews; firstly with the programme directors of five contrasting programmes of support, and secondly, with ten participants of those programmes.

In considering an appropriate approach to the analysis of data, three important factors were considered, in order to meet the overall aims and objectives of the study:

1. It was both helpful and necessary to establish the current nature, context, and eco-system of social enterprise start-up support available within the West Yorkshire region, ahead of selecting potential participating organisations and in turn, their clients for inclusion in this study. This aspect of the research addresses Part 1 of the research aims and objectives, to understand who is providing such support in West Yorkshire, and the nature of that support

2. This research is undertaken with a realist philosophical approach and specifically, considers and utilises the realist evaluation methodologies emerging during the last twenty years from the foundational work of Pawson and Tilley. As such, it is important that this 'realist informed investigation' is aligned with the guidelines and emerging field of realist evaluation, in order to both answer the overarching research objectives, and to contribute to the emerging body of realist-focused academic literature.

3. To be cognisant of the original motivation for undertaking this research, and to acknowledge the differences in approach and output of a Doctor of

Enterprise, as opposed to a PhD pathway. The ultimate aim of this research is to provide a set of guidelines and principles which future programme creators, deliverers and policy makers can utilise, to improve their understanding of what types of social enterprise start-up support interventions work, for whom in what circumstances and why. To achieve this objective from the significant amount of data collected, may result in focusing on a smaller number of specific common components of start-up support, and the resulting experiences of participants, rather than scrutinising less common features simply for the sake of analysing and reporting all findings.

With the above factors in mind and acknowledging the two distinct parts to the research and its findings, the analysis has been presented within two separate chapters; one relating to each research objective. They will be organised, approached and presented as follows.

Chapter 6 – Analysis of Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Provision Within West Yorkshire.

This chapter investigates the nature of the selected start-up programmes, their focus, intended participant audience, and intended outcomes. The use of thematic analysis distils the data to a number of key themes to reveal both commonality and differences across the data set of contrasting range of programmes.

Chapter 7 – Analysis of Programme Participants Experience of Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Interventions.

This chapter examines current and previous programme participants' experiences of the five organisations investigated. Thematic analysis of the most common components of support, coupled with investigating the impact of context upon participants' responses to those mechanisms, should enable the findings to form the basis of helpful guidelines. These will subsequently inform and assist managers, deliverers and practitioners in the development of future social enterprise start-up support interventions.

6 Analysis of Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Provision Within West Yorkshire

6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the analysis of the interviews with the five participating providers of social enterprise start-up support. The selected organisations and their rationale for inclusion were introduced in Chapter 5 (Methodology), but for convenience, they are presented again in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1 Participating Support Organisations

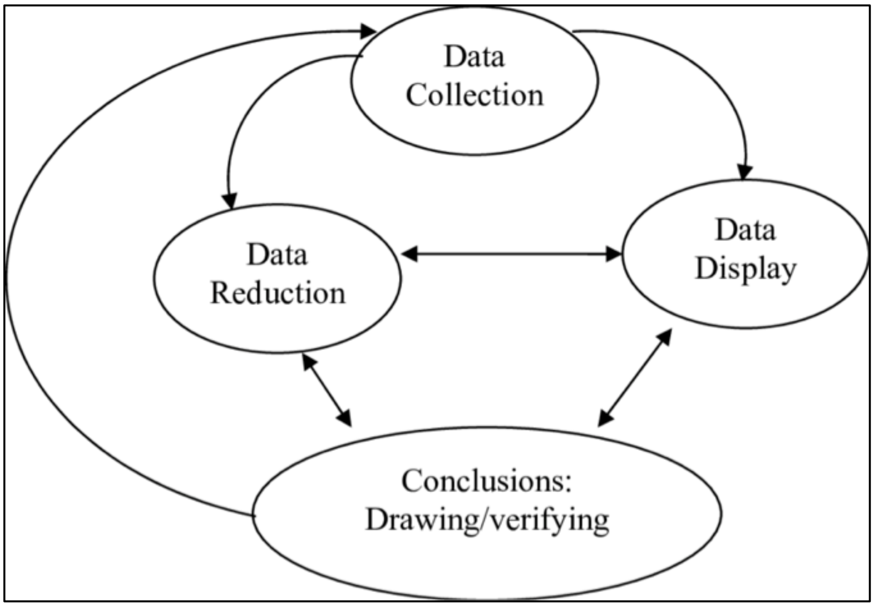
Organisation	Website
The Realistic Business Consortium	https://www.realisticbusiness.co/
Key Fund	https://thekeyfund.co.uk/
See Ahead	https://seeahead.co.uk/
School for Social Entrepreneurs	https://www.the-sse.org/
UnLtd	https://www.unltd.org.uk/

It should be noted that where organisations also operate nationally (e.g. Key Fund, School for Social Entrepreneurs and UnLtd), the interviews were conducted with representatives from the offices with responsibility for the provision of their support within West Yorkshire. This is to align with the geographical scope of the research and also to acknowledge that regional providers may offer differing interventions and focus in other geographical areas. The next section presents an overview of the adopted thematic approach to the analysis of the included data set.

6.2 Thematic Analysis

The process of the data analysis for this part of the research is summarised within the following diagram (see Figure 6.1) from Miles & Huberman (1994).

Figure 6.1 Components Of Data Analysis: Interactive Model (Miles & Huberman, 1994)



Following the transcription of the interviews, I searched for and noted common themes and reference points, utilising a colour coding system to group together similar topics or programme components, emerging from the five interviews. Moving between this coding activity (data reduction) and collation of quotes from the respondents (data display), enabled me to create a draft thematic template and to subsequently consider whether each emerging theme was suitably relevant to the Part 1 research aims, to be worthy of inclusion.

This iterative process revealed a significant number of potential themes, but these were reduced further; either by combining closely related topics to form an over-arching theme, or eliminated, as they were considered less aligned to the research aims. Specific examples of such decisions include for example, networking within the parameters of the programme's deliverers and participants, and networking externally and beyond the programme. This offered an opportunity to utilise 'reduction' and create an overall inclusive theme of networking. An example of data/thematic exclusion is the commentary around the future development opportunities of the organisations. Whilst highly relevant to the individual organisations, this study is investigating participant's interactions with the current programmes of support, rather than investigating the potential future development of specific support organisations and the subsequent impact on the start-up support eco-system.

The final coded framework revealed 10 themes, which are outlined in the table shown below in Table 6.2. Each theme can be identified as being a component of one of three support programme categories; programme typology, programme components, and programme analytics.

Table 6.2 Support Programme Categories & Emerging Themes

Support Programme Categories	Emerging Theme From Coding Phase	Location of Analysis
Programme Typology	Overall programme purpose	Chapter 6.3.1
	Programme duration/intensity	Chapter 6.3.2
	In-house skill-set/focus	Chapter 6.3.3
Programme Components	1:1 Advisor support	Chapter 6.4.1
	Workshops (1:many)	Chapter 6.4.2
	Networking (Internal/External)	Chapter 6.4.3
	Referrals to third party organisations	Chapter 6.4.4
Programme Analytics	Definition of success from the organisation's perspective	Chapter 6.5.1
	Impact monitoring	Chapter 6.5.2
	Respondent identified weaknesses and gaps in provision	Chapter 6.5.3

The subsequent sections of this chapter will present the following four points of reference to the analysis:

- The thematic definition and the rationale for its inclusion
- Specific commentary on this theme from participating organisations,
- The overall findings from this theme, and
- The significance of the findings in relation to the existing literature.

The full coded thematic analysis can be found in Appendix 6.

6.3 Programme Typology

6.3.1 Programme Typology Theme One – Overall Programme Purpose

Each organisation was given the opportunity to define the overall purpose of their programme or intervention, and to make reference to any existing organisational documentation if appropriate and helpful. The rationale for the questions and emerging theme was two-fold. Firstly to contribute to an understanding of the typology and nature of the support organisations, and secondly, to assist in subsequently understanding whether or not, the participant's experiences of the programmes aligned with the organisational expectations.

Within this overall theme, there were a number of sub-themes that emerged from the interviews. The first sub-theme related to the organisations being 'client focused' and that interventions were made in accordance with the participants at a personalised level, rather than having a generic format that was applied to all who approached that organisation. The Realistic Business Consortium commented:

> *"It's very much to help our clients achieve whatever outcomes they want to achieve from our interactions. People naturally assume that it's growth of their particular organisation, but it isn't necessarily so" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)*

"Whatever the outcome that particular organisation wants, then we will do our best to try and achieve that. So it will be different for every client that we actually meet" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)

These are interesting statements from the providers who are clearly focused on providing a customer focused intervention, in line with their client's own aims and objectives. However, those client goals are not necessarily aligning exactly with the best practice strategic aims of effective business support, which was presented by the Centre for Cities report (2013) in the literature review. It is also interesting to consider these statements from the perspective of the relationship, which exists between the organisation and the client. Even at a macro-level of relationship, (i.e. the entire support organisation to client), there is a sense of the value of that relationship. Lyon and Ramsden (2006) speak about the importance of a continuous and stable relationship between a client and mentor/advisor, which also supports the clear customer focused approach we see in the above quotations.

This sub-theme also revealed a strong sense of purpose in ensuring that the support offered, aligned well with both the ambitions and goals of the participant, and the nuanced support, which that organisation specialised in. Specific quotation examples here included:

"Our job is to get them to a point where they can apply to us and we can then provide them the finance that they need. That's always been our role" (Key Fund Interview, 2019)

"So I think the top line is, our overall purpose is to make organisations/businesses sustainable and we work with people to achieve that, rather than doing it for them" (SEE Ahead Interview, 2019)

A second sub-theme related to the consideration of both sustainability and impact of the proposed social enterprises and the need for support to emphasise the need to balance both the desire to address the social problem, with a need to be sustainable. Specific quotations from the organisational cohort included:

"I guess ultimately, it is to see social impact delivered" (Key Fund Interview, 2019)

"It's very much, business support to help organisations be sustainable" (SEE Ahead Interview, 2019)

"We're buying social impact and the future of social impact through investing in people" (UnLtd Interview, 2019)

The desire for clients to create social enterprises that are sustainable, does partially align with the Centre for Cities (2013) final strategic objective for business support. The report calls for action to increase the number of businesses starting up, and whilst not specifically discussing social enterprises, or sustainability, there is a clear relationship here. If social enterprises are first and foremost businesses, and given that starting a business is relatively easy, it is the focus on sustaining that start-up which brings the biggest challenge.

The final sub-theme related to the educational development of participants and we start to see some overlap/alignment with the theme relating to duration and intensity of the programme (see theme 3). Commentary related to enabling participants to become more knowledgeable and subsequently more resilient in their futures and specific quotations included:

"So our focus has always been, cohort based learning – it's about bringing together social entrepreneurs and we talk very much about action learning. So this is trying to take people into a much more sort of action focused style of learning" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019)

"Our purpose is the educational development of social entrepreneurs" (UnLtd Interview, 2019)

The second strategic aim for business support identified by the Centre for Cities (2013) report, focuses on 'making businesses better' with a clear call for businesses and their owners to become more effective and knowledgeable. The above quotations and this emerging theme is well aligned to that report.

When questioned about their overall organisational purpose, the respondents all revealed a strong sense of being client-focused, with a consideration of both social impact and the need to assist the participants to consider and be sustainable. Whilst the nature of the programme (group cohort, or 1:1 based) revealed differences in educational style, the collective aim of personal development and assisting clients to achieving their goals and ambitions, remained a constant.

6.3.2 Programme Typology Theme Two – Programme Duration/Intensity

Discussions around the duration and intensity of each organisational programme revealed that this was either bespoke to the client; as found in consultancy type interventions such as those of the Realistic Business Consortium and SEE Ahead.

The Realistic Business Consortium commented that,

> *"It's bespoke to the client. I work with one on a retained NED [non-executive director] basis. Others, go off and do their own thing and if that's what they want to do then that's fine, but they know that we are available whenever they need us" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019).*

SEE Ahead reported that it was always,

> *"Very different with each organisation" (SEE Ahead Interview, 2019)*

Alternatively, it was dictated by the programme type or purpose with organisations such as UnLtd, School for Social Entrepreneurs and Key Fund where they reported:

> *"It depends on the term over which we've lent them [the money]. So as I've said, it could be twelve months between my first discussion with a client and them actually coming to us for the money. So it's whatever time scale takes" (Key Fund Interview, 2019).*

"We do a mix, but our 'bread and butter' programmes tend to be 6 to 12 months long, and then we find that that's a good amount of time to really work with people on that action-learning journey" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019).

The nature of the cohort approach and focus of the School for Social Entrepreneurs programme is perhaps best aligned to what the Nesta 'Good Incubation' report (2014) referred to as social venture academies.

"For the 'Do It' and 'Grow It' awards it's 12 months, and for the 'Try It' award, it's 6 months" (UnLtd Interview, 2019)

Linking back to findings from the literature review, the differentiation in support programmes in terms of both duration and intensity is echoed in Nesta's 'Good Incubation' report (Nesta, 2014), which also found variations in these areas. However, it did suggest that any support being offered beyond 24 months after the start of trading, should be considered growth support, rather than a start-up intervention.

6.3.3 Programme Typology Theme Three – In-House Skill Set/Focus

This theme related to the specific knowledge, skills and abilities of each organisation's internal delivery team, and/or, the particular aspect of start-up support the organisation's programme focused on. When defining what is meant by the 'internal delivery team', and to accommodate the different business models adopted by the five organisations, this includes delivery by people who founded, manage/direct, are employed by, or contracted by, the organisation in question.

To give specific examples, the Realistic Business Consortium has three directors with complementary backgrounds as evidenced by the interview statements below:

"I come from a finance background, but also a coach – I'm an accredited coach as well."

"[…] brings marketing, advertising and sales expertise. Also websites."

"[…] is a management consultant but from a recruitment background. So he's generally on the strategic planning side of things; he takes the lead on that" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)

Similarly, SEE Ahead has three lead directors and then a number of associates who also deliver support. The internal team speak about being 'generalists' rather than 'specialists' in regard to the support offered, although they do have specific areas of interest and focus internally too:

"We always say that we are generalists, rather than specialists."

"[…] is very into Social Impact, so will do anything relating to Social Impact."

"I'm the marketing lead for SEEAhead, so I will do anything around marketing or new business focus" (SEE Ahead Interview, 2019)

However, the associate model also enables them to outsource to particular specialist advisors as required by the client they are supporting.

Finally within this particular theme, there is the consideration of whether the programme itself is broad and covering many aspects of start-up support, or whether there is a more focused and defined remit. Four of the five programmes could be described as broad, but Key Fund has a specific emphasis on access to finance. That's not to say that they don't provide wrap-around support to the client too in order to enable them to credibly apply for finance; but nonetheless, the primary focus is financial:

"Well it's access to finance"

"It's actually getting them to a point where they can look at finance" (Key Fund Interview, 2019).

There is an interesting point to note emerging from the interviews, the nature of the five organisations taking part in the study and the literature review's examination of Lyon and Ramsden (2006) focus on 'social enterprise specific support'. The report highlighted the critical need for support to be available with a clear social enterprise focus, and yet many of the component parts of a social enterprise, and the history and background context of advisors within the five support providing organisations, was often grounded in, or related to, more traditional commercial business activity.

6.4 Programme Components

6.4.1 Programme Components – Theme One – One:One Advisor Support

Whilst the purpose and frequency of personalised 1:1 business advisor support varied, it was a common component across all five programmes, and yielded a significant amount of data from the interview process. The Centre for Cities report (2013) also found that the provision of advisory services to businesses was a key theme of the generic term, business support. Many organisations referred to the 1:1 meetings as being part of an initial analysis, understanding, or diagnosis of client issues as seen in the following quotations:

"We would first of all use an Input Survey. We take that away, we analyse it, and we form that into a plan for a full day strategy meeting which we'll hold with the client" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)

"A new client we would have an initial meeting with them … and that first meeting would be very much diagnostic" (SEE Ahead Interview, 2019)

"We do quite a lot of diagnostic work in terms of understanding where people's strengths and weaknesses are" (UnLtd Interview, 2019)

There was another area of commonality in referring to working on a 1:1 basis within a coaching or mentoring context; sometimes with advisors from within the organisation, and sometimes with externally sourced 'associate' colleagues. Examples from the data set included:

"We find that we also need to offer things like the 1:1 coaching" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)

"Could we send somebody out and try to help in a particular aspect? Make contact with this client and let's arrange to go out and see them" (Key Fund Interview, 2019)

"There's 1:1 support from the mentors, and then we do as part of that application process, check in with people about their sort of access requirements" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019)

"Most of our contact would be personal between the Award Manager (who is trained as a coach) and the client. It's a 1:1 relationship. It is a support relationship" (UnLtd Interview, 2019)

The common thread emerging from all of the interviews around this type of advisor/client support, was its face-to-face nature and importance of the resulting 'relationship' formed between both parties. Lyon and Ramsden (2006) also stressed the importance of this support relationship between advisor and client. The OCS Social Enterprise Business Support Improvement Programme's Final Report (Cabinet Office, 2011) highlighted a number of lessons for the future including acknowledging that there was scope for more online support, but in isolation, this would be insufficient. Nine years on, there is still a clear preference and need for a more personalised approach.

There was frequent reference to the willingness of the organisation to help and assist the client as much as possible and by considering any specific needs the client may have; even if that meant adapting or changing the nature of the support. For example, School for Social Entrepreneurs mentioned the issues around accessibility and ensuring that adaptations are made as and when necessary. They commented that:

> *"There's 1:1 support from the mentors, and then we do as part of that application process, check in with people about their sort of access requirements" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019).*

They went on to explain about a specific case where their usual cohort approach to delivery had to be adapted in order to enable the client to learn and develop according to their specific circumstances:

> *"We had somebody work with them 1:1 all the way through – because that was what they needed in order to access the programme" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019).*

Finally within this theme, there was an overarching sense of relationship and rapport being established between the clients and the support organisation and a sense of mutual trust and respect. Sometimes this was expressed directly in quotations, for example:

> *"It's very much a relationship" and "all of the clients we have are quite likely to pick up the phone and talk to us whenever they need us" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)*

When it was not expressed in a convenient direct quotation, there was still a clear sense of mutual respect and trust between the support organisation and their client, during the interview process.

6.4.2 Programme Components – Theme Two– Workshops, 1:Many

Discussions around workshops revealed both commonality and differences across the five organisations. If we define a workshop as, 'the enabling of discussions around business related topics, to facilitate learning', then this type of intervention was present in some form, throughout all five organisations. This is unsurprising, as the literature review revealed an important aspect of business support was the provision of help and guidance on key topics such as business planning. (Dees, Emerson & Economy; 2002 and Lyons & Ramsden; 2006). However, the interviews did reveal some differences in the approach adopted by individual organisations.

Key Fund spoke about the awareness raising activities they do in a workshop format which enables potential clients to understand what support is available and how they would access this:

> *"I do lots of talks. I've been in Leeds this morning doing a presentation to a group. I'm in Manchester tomorrow, doing a full day thing at a much bigger event. So we're out and about talking to people all the time…to try and demystify, and try and make organisations and groups aware of what is available to the." (Key Fund Interview, 2019)*

The need to sign post individuals and guide clients through the confusing landscape of business start-up support opportunities was also clearly highlighted in the Centre for Cities report (2013) which highlighted the complex nature, overall lack of infrastructure, and hidden access points to business support services.

SEE Ahead explained that they both write and deliver a number of workshops; sometimes on behalf of other organisations and more recently, under their own name:

> *"We also deliver them for UnLtd. We write them and deliver it, but we do it under the UnLtd umbrella."*

"This is the first time that we've actually put workshops on under our own heading and we market them too. An example would be, 'What Difference Do You Make?' – 'Can you prove what difference your organisation makes, can you demonstrate the community impact?'" (SEE Ahead Interview, 2019)

Here we see an alignment to the suggestions from the OCS (2011) Final Report, which calls for an improved understanding and application of social and environmental impact measurements.

For the cohort-based School for Social Entrepreneurs, the workshops formed either an integral part of the programme, during what they describe as 'programme days' when the whole cohort meet each month:

"The way the programme day works is that we have an expert in the morning, who comes and talks very much to that topic of the day" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019)

Or within the same organisation, they may spot a common need across many participants and then deliver a workshop-based intervention to assist with supporting that area of development:

"Support around business planning, or leadership, or marketing, so we run shorter – 1, 2 day workshops" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019)

There were some workshop topics that recurred frequently during the interview process; business planning, business finance, sales and marketing and leadership were often mentioned, as here with UnLtd:

"We have a workshop programme, which offers kind of what I call technical support and input around a range of things from managing cash flow and finances through to things like, leadership" (UnLtd Interview, 2019)

Finally, there were a couple of organisations which offered a variant on the more common workshop format, and those activities might fall somewhere between a typical workshop structure, and a form of internal networking, coupled with learning. The Realistic Business Consortium and the School for Social Entrepreneurs fell into this 'variant' category and it is worth understanding their respective offers.

Firstly, the Realistic Business Consortium runs a Forum for all of its clients on a monthly basis. They described this opportunity in their own words during the interview:

> *"So we hold a Realistic Business Forum every month and all of our clients are invited to that Forum, and it's a method by which we facilitate peer to peer support… The beauty of the Forum is that we write to all our clients with a formal invitation every month…So they will all have a chance to respond if they are going through a particular issue at the minute" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)*

They went on to describe the logistical arrangements and that they felt this was something different to other support opportunities being offered by other organisations, and with tangible benefits to attendees:

> *"It's a physical meeting. We have a meeting room at Weetwood Hall at the moment, which we rent on a month-to-month basis; the second Tuesday of every month and every client that we know is invited to come between 9.30 and 12.30 and partake… We feel that the Forum is something that no one else is offering and we've seen real, real benefit for the people that come. And the people that come regularly, have acknowledged the value of coming, and you get the same 3 or 4 people that come to every one; or virtually every one" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)*

Although my research was limited to five diverse organisations within West Yorkshire, and so there is no evidence to confirm that the Forum is a unique offer from the Realistic Business Consortium, it was certainly a point of difference amongst the sample group. It aligns well to the OCS (Cabinet Office, 2011) report, which advocated the value and appreciation of peer to peer learning, but actually goes beyond that, in facilitating that peer to peer approach; thereby offering a mechanism to avoid potential bad advice, or misdirection by well-meaning peers.

The School for Social Entrepreneurs mentioned a support opportunity, which was also distinctive to others; partly due to the language used and partly due to the cohort structure of this particular programme. They spoke about the opportunity for a cohort to form smaller breakout groups to enable and facilitate learning on specific topics:

> *"So action-learning sets have always been a key part of our programmes. We find it very successful to bring those smaller groups of people together and actually those are the groups which often have longevity after the programme" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019)*

They described the frequency of such interventions as being 3 or 4 times over the programme. Given that their programmes typically last for 12 months, this is less frequently than the RBC's Forum, but still a significant learning and development opportunity.

6.4.3 Programme Components – Theme Three – Networking

Networking was a significant theme emerging from the organisational interviews and within this analysis context, I am merging two forms of networking; aligning with the data reduction component of Miles and Huberman's Qualitative Data Analysis Framework (1996). Firstly, the natural occurrence of, and/or, the facilitation of, networking within the support organisation and its participants; we can refer to this as Internal Networking. Secondly, the active facilitation of, and/or, occurrences of, connections with people and organisations outside of the support organisation and their participants; we can refer to this collectively as External Networking.

6.4.3.1 Internal Networking

The Realistic Business Consortium's Forum, and the School for Social Entrepreneurs' Action Learning Sets were both mentioned within the previous workshop theme, but as discussed, in reality these support opportunities straddle the themes of both 'workshop' and 'internal networking' as the clients are invited to participate in facilitated peer-to-peer learning.

The notion of peer-to-peer connections (internal networking) and the resulting support network that is created for organisational participants was common across the interviewed organisations and commentary on this theme included:

> *"We also get clients to come along and present when we're [Key Fund, are] presenting. So it's 'hear it from the peer…warts and all!' which is quite powerful" (Key Fund Interview, 2019)*

> *"So at our graduation events, a lot of our students will talk about what they have learned from their peers" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019)*

> *"We do peer networking events and get people together" (UnLtd Interview, 2019)*

This commonality across programmes aligned well with the OCS Final Report (Cabinet Office, 2011), which stressed the value social enterprises find in on-going support, particularly from peers.

An interesting comment, which highlights the different support organisation's understanding and positioning of their roles, came from the UnLtd interview. Whilst acknowledging the value of the networks its participants would build, and also providing the opportunities for that to happen, they very much placed the agency of those network-building activities with the participant:

> *"It's not for us to connect people. People have to build their own relationships. I think people see value in coming to those things [workshops and events] because they meet people. Generally people have a really nice time and meet other folk and are quite energised by hearing from people" (UnLtd Interview, 2019)*

In contrast, other organisations actively tried to foster network connections by actively making introductions/connections where they saw potential synergy. This aligns well with the call for both sector-specific, and social enterprise specific advice identified by Lyons and Ramsden (2006) and acknowledging that there is value in having access to a wide range of support opportunities. For example:

> *"I think, oh that person can really help that person. So I do very much feel that my job is joining people together" (SEE Ahead Interview, 2019)*

> *[A client may be] "going through a particular issue, and that issue had already been experienced with one of our other clients. So we put them in touch with each other" (Realistic Business Consortium, 2019)*

> *"Why don't you go and visit this person who has been through our programme a couple of years ago?" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019)*

The School for Social Entrepreneurs also made reference to the developmental work they are undertaking to better enable internal networking opportunities across their regional programmes:

"We're in the process of creating, a sort of CRM system that they [SSE students] can all access. So they can go on and say 'who else is working in homelessness?' or 'who else is working in Rotherham?'" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019)

If successful, this pan-UK database could significantly improve connectivity between social enterprises addressing similar aims and objectives, and foster more collaborative opportunities. A small, but perhaps significant step towards a less fragmented network of start-up support, which was identified in the Centre for Cities Report, (2013).

6.4.3.2 External Networking

Moving to external networking opportunities, this sub-theme covered the development, facilitation, and interactions between one organisation's support offer and its clients, and those that fall outside of those boundaries. The organisations revealed a sense of community across the social enterprise support spectrum; further demonstrating the ethos of the client being of utmost importance. Key Fund captured this both effectively and succinctly here:

"In the Third Sector, all organisations like Key Fund, smaller and bigger, we work together for the benefit of the client. We are not selfish about our own bit of business" (Key Fund Interview, 2019)

There was also evidence of the support organisations interacting with each other to develop new opportunities as a result of their own learning and development. During the interview with the Realistic Business Consortium, when speaking about the client's benefitting from their Forum, they stated:

"We would like to offer it [the Forum] to social enterprises that we don't deal with on a regular basis. So we've talked to the School for Social Entrepreneurs to see if we could do one for their graduates that come through. We even got together with SEEAhead and the School for Social Entrepreneurs, and a couple of other

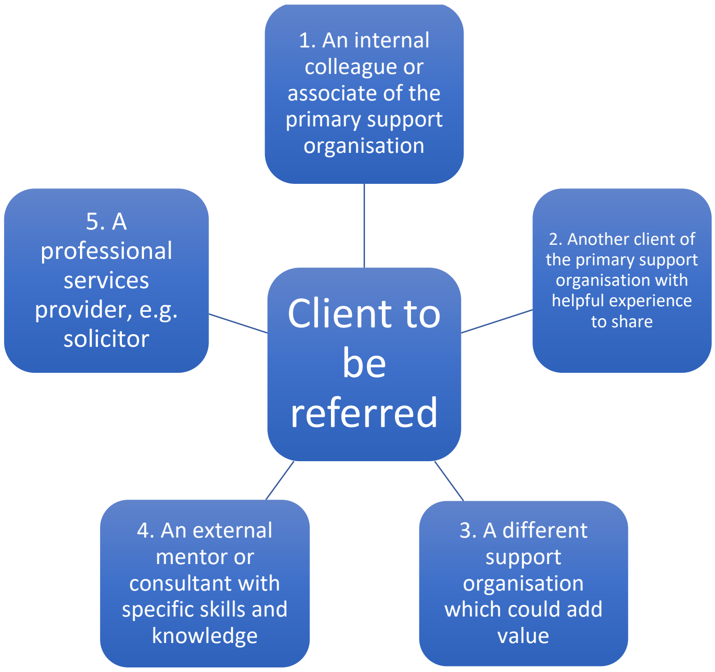
organisations that we know, to see if we could do one regionally" (Realistic Business Consortium, 2019)

Such activities, coupled with a willingness for cross-organisational discussion and collaboration, demonstrates a sector which understands the need to simplify and maximise value from the current confusing landscape, and provide a more refined and cohesive support service; all key findings which emerged from the Chapter 3 literature review.

6.4.4 Programme Components – Theme Four– Referrals

All interviewed organisations discussed the importance and frequency of referrals. To define 'referral' in the context being discussed, the following diagram (Figure 6.2) presents a summative reference point; highlighting 5 typical client referral destinations.

Figure 6.2 Common Referral Destinations



6.4.4.1 Destination 1 – Internal colleagues and associates

Some organisations are using the associate model to both enhance their client experience, and to grow their own capacity and diversity of service. For example, SEE Ahead commented:

> *"We work with others; what we term as associates, to deliver the specialist stuff. So things like HR, Marketing, Social Impact, that kind of thing, will be done by associates. It's probably the last couple of years that we've come to use the associate model. And it's really opened the doors for us. We've become much more stable as an organisation, and been able to offer a wider range of things" (SEE Ahead Interview, 2019)*

The recurring theme of developing a relationship with a known advisor, or advisors, appeared paramount to the client's learning and development as the resulting rapport, trust, and mutual understanding of aims and objectives facilitated the development of the start-up social enterprise (Lyon & Ramsden, 2006 and Cabinet Office, 2011).

6.4.4.2 Destination 2 – Another client of the primary support organisation

Referring one client to another (not within the immediate 'reach' of each other) was cited as a way to help clients to grow their own networks, and learn from peers that have existing experience of dealing with a similar problem or barrier, and/or, who are on a similar development pathway. For example:

> *"We'll introduce them to other clients, to talk through and share issues... because they've been through it too?" (Key Fund Interview, 2019)*

6.4.4.3 Destination 3 – A different support organisation which could add value

Although already partially captured during an earlier theme, (client typology and sector) it is important to acknowledge that sometimes, an organisation may recognise that they are not best placed to assist a particular client, and that a referral to another support organisation may be in the client's best interests:

> *"If we don't feel that we particularly can help, or if there's a lack of chemistry, or if we feel that another organisation such as SSE or SEEAhead, are better equipped to help them progress, then we will direct them there" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)*

6.4.4.4 Destination 4 – An external mentor or consultant with specific skills/knowledge

Examples highlighting this thematic destination included organisations recognising their own skill set, and where external specialist input is required. The Realistic Business Consortium stated:

> *"We do have friends and consultants who work with social impact, because none of us are social impact measurement experts. So we'll introduce" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)*

And UnLtd discussed the relationships they have with external organisation in this respect:

> *"We connect people to mentors, connect people to – we have a number of contracts and relationships with larger corporates who will offer a range of different things to us through the year at different times" (UnLtd Interview, 2019)*

The OCS Final Report (Cabinet Office, 2011) had highlighted a need and value to the use of mentors and suggested the National Network of Mentors (now http://www.mentorsme.co.uk/) should include a clear social enterprise element. A search of that database for the Yorkshire Region at time of writing revealed no clear evidence of this other than an option offered from UnLtd Connect.

6.4.4.5 Destination 5 – Professional services

Both the Realistic Business Consortium and Key Fund discussed the relationships they have developed in these areas, to benefit their clients as required:

"We have a solicitor who we're working with at the minute, and he's been particularly useful to some of our clients as well. So, we do make those connections where it's appropriate to do so" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)

"Sometimes it's introducing them to…we'll call them professional advisors…somebody who can do that work for them" (Key Fund Interview, 2019)

Within the literature review, Lyon and Ramsden (2006) noted an early stage high dependency on legal services although from a practitioner's perspective, it is interesting to note that relatively few solicitors appear to have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the social enterprise sector and the myriad of legal structures.

Throughout the organisational interviews, there was a recurring theme of a willingness and need for collaboration in order to be effective. The School for Social Entrepreneurs captured this those well:

"What I sort of want to emphasise is that we are a real collaborator and so we are really keen – the sector is growing and growing – we know what we do well, but we're also very respectful of what others do well. So where we can't take people onto our programmes, we will absolutely signpost as much as possible – and I know that works the other way- but I think I've alluded to that as we were talking" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019)

6.5 Programme Analytics

6.5.1 Programme Analytics – Theme One – Definitions of Success from the Organisation's Perspective

This final section of thematic analysis focused on the analytical aspects of the support organisations programmes and interventions, starting with their individual definitions of what success looked like for them.

Without exception, this definition of success was very much focused around the clients they support achieving and sustaining their goals and ambitions, rather than being about the success of the support organisation itself. Specific comments and references to this were numerous throughout different aspects of the organisational interview with some specific examples presented below:

> *"The results for us are in the success of our clients. Absolutely no doubt about it" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)*

> *"Just reiterating really that it's the clients and it's the social impact that is important" (Key Fund Interview, 2019)*

> *"But there's also that 'warm glow' knowing we're doing a good job and the thank you emails that we get" (SEE Ahead Interview, 2019)*

> *"So actually it's about working with an individual, and seeing that person thrive – both in terms of developing business skills, but developing emotional resilience or whatever it might be that they need to do" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019)*

> *"I'd like to see people who have learned a great deal through the process, and are still creating social change. But I want those people to prosper. You know that's really what I want…I want them to prosper" (UnLtd Interview, 2019)*

If we compare this to the findings from the literature review and the objective aims and objectives of the provision of business support, there is both alignment and a point of difference evident here. If business support is fundamentally provided to address the three major areas below extracted from the Centre for Cities 2013 report, then the interviewed organisations are clearly aligned here.

1. Help businesses to grow,
2. Make businesses better, and
3. Increase the number of businesses (Centre for Cities, 2013)

The five organisations are motivated and inspired by the success of the clients they support. However, there is also clear evidence that these five organisations also care deeply about the creation of social value and social impact, and the personal growth and development of the clients themselves, and not just the social enterprises they are developing.

6.5.2 Programme Analytics – Theme Two – Impact Monitoring

In terms of impact monitoring, there was a clear correlation between organisations who utilised external/public funding to deliver or all of their programmes and interventions, and those that were commercially driven and/or, not accountable to a third party. Where external funding was utilised, then impact monitoring was an essential element of the support provision to enable clear accountability and value add when evidencing the organisation's impact to a third party.

Examples of this were common from all but the Realistic Business Consortium, as all of the other support organisations were either fully, or partially accountable to a third party:

> *"We start off with a baseline. And that baseline for a new organisation will be naught. Or for an existing organisation it will be whatever they are delivering at the moment. To see if we can see incremental growth (if that's the correct word) of what they are doing as a result of us putting the finance in. That's how we tend to do it" (Key Fund Interview, 2019)*

"The ones that are externally funded, where we have formal monitoring and evaluation to complete – yes" (SEE Ahead Interview, 2019)

"So as you might expect, we do quite a lot of impact data collection. We do... surveys go out to all of the students...so we do a baseline, mid and exit [survey]. And that's something that's done nationally with every student with every programme and we have core outcomes that we're then using certain indicators to assess against" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019)

"There's an oversight element to the 1:1 contact with the Award Manager. Because we stage payments, they aren't allowed to draw down a second, or third, or fourth payment until they've accounted for the previous money. There's an element that if they've said they're going to do a plan that's going to require A, B, C, D, and they haven't done A, then we're not going to give them the money for B" (UnLtd Interview, 2019)

In contrast, where there is no accountability externally (either fully, in the case of the Realistic Business Consortium, or partially, as in the case of SEE Ahead private clients) the impact monitoring was absent:

"No. We don't have any formal monitoring of progress made. I guess we just rely on the feedback of the client and the results that the guys have, and the organisations have" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)

"The ones that are externally funded, where we have formal monitoring and evaluation to complete – yes. The others, probably not" (SEE Ahead Interview, 2019)

The Realistic Business Consortium went on to explain why they considered this to be an advantage and preference to their service delivery:

"I think this is the reason that we don't particularly want to go for funding ourselves, because if we did that, we'd be working to someone else's tune to a degree. But also, we'd need to provide this sort of more formal evidence. We don't feel that we want to do that" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)

Looking to the literature review and Lesson 3 of the Cabinet Office's report of 2011 (Cabinet Office, 2011, p. iv), there was a recommendation that feedback mechanisms become embedded in all business start-up programmes; particularly those working with social enterprises, to ensure both impact and effectiveness of the programme. Although this is not happening in all of the organisations interviewed here, there was no evidence that this was in any way being omitted to avoid accountability; rather that it was simply not required by a third party.

6.5.3 Programme Analytics – Theme Three – Respondent Identified Weaknesses and Gaps in Provision

This final section within the programme analytics field, revealed a theme around support weaknesses and/or, gaps in provision, as identified by the respondents from the included organisations. Whilst not directly questioned on this subject during the interviews, many of the organisation's representatives volunteered information relating to this theme. It occurred in two differing contexts; either highlighting weaknesses and gaps in their respective client's skillset or abilities, or, as an observation of the challenges to start-up support provision generally.

Each organisation offered unprompted and insightful observations regarding the clients they work with. Often, this related to the pressure of time constraints and being effective in utilising what time they have:

"Because they've just been under the cosh, trying to deliver, trying to obtain sales, trying to get funding. And they don't often, put their head above the parapet, or start to take some time out to think" (Realistic Business Consortium Interview, 2019)

"Sometimes it's about getting the students to make sure that they do, do that. [Follow up with support opportunities]" (School for Social Entrepreneurs Interview, 2019)

Sometimes it related to being aware of support opportunities and other organisations, or that the opportunities were not a good fit for those needing help:

"There's a lack of awareness often as to what is available. And also nervousness... reluctance if you like…to borrow money. And I think sometimes it's because they're fearful that they've got a personal liability – which they've not. They might think they have to provide personal security – which they don't. Or it's just a general nervousness" (Key Fund Interview, 2019)

"The free support that's out there is aimed at high growth business, as always. And you don't get high growth social enterprises. Even now, what 7…8 years on? I still miss Business Link and the support we could give" (SEE Ahead Interview, 2019)

Finally, there were interesting comments relating to the financial implications of effective service delivery and also, the need to be accessible to all:

"It's like everything is massively oversubscribed. And I'd love to see something like that again [Business Link]. The Third Sector is always neglected" (SEE Ahead Interview, 2019)

"One of the things we do is manage scarcity and it's the scarcity of our own resources to give away I would like to see a lot of our attention go into that end, into people who traditionally haven't had opportunities. Some people in our society have access to opportunities through their families and through their networks

and other people simply don't. Class is an issue, race is an issue" (UnLtd Interview, 2019)

All of these comments extracted from the interviewed organisations, echo and concur with the findings from the literature review, which clearly highlighted the complex and fragmented nature of support, and a lack of awareness of support opportunities from the sector (Shaw et. al., 2002; Smallbone et. al., 2001 & Centre for Cities, 2013).

6.6 Summary and Conclusions of Chapter 6

In Chapter 1, the two distinct parts of my Research Objectives were presented (please see 1.6, Purpose, Objectives and Scope), and this chapter has responded to Part 1 of those objectives, reiterated here:

Research Objectives Part 1

Examining a number of Social Enterprise Business Start-Up support programmes available within the West Yorkshire Region, via qualitative case-study interviews to understand:

1. Examples of the types of organisations currently providing Social Enterprise Start-Up Support in the West Yorkshire Region of the UK

2. The nature of these support programmes/interventions

Specifically, this chapter has explored the nature of Social Enterprise Start-Up support in the West Yorkshire region, via 5 contrasting programmes. It should be understood that this group represents a sample of the current provision, and that other providers and programmes are available and may offer alternative support opportunities within the region.

From the sample explored within this study, there are some aspects of support common to all programmes, and others that are found less frequently or in only isolated cases. The following table (Table 6.3) summarises the most prominent subcomponents of the investigated programmes, and highlights which elements are found where.

The definition of the word 'integral' within this table merits explanation. It is used to highlight an embedded feature of a particular programme, rather than a potential opportunity. For example, the component 'Integral Cohort Learning Element', refers to the provision of an embedded cohort learning element as part of that organisations' programme of support, rather than the theoretical opportunity to engage in peer-to-peer learning as a result of networking opportunities.

Table 6.3 Summary Of The Investigated West Yorkshire Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Programme's Most Common Subcomponents

Common Subcomponents	Realistic Business Consortium	Key Fund	SEE Ahead	School for Social Entrepreneurs	UnLtd
Formal application	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
Assessment of client needs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1:1 Support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Integral Cohort Learning	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Integral Workshops	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
Integral Funding	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
Integral Mentor	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
External Referrals	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The cohort learning opportunities embedded within the Realistic Business Consortium's and School for Social Entrepreneur's programmes warrant further clarification and differentiation. Both organisations offer an embedded form of this type of support activity, but the interviews with each organisation revealed an important difference.

In the case of the School for Social Entrepreneurs, a cohort of learners is recruited to a programme and all participants undertake learning opportunities as a group, with activities such as workshops, action learning sets and hearing from guest speakers. The group experience this collectively over a 12-month period and a supportive and close network is often established with the group of participants. This creates a closed group, which will remain constant in terms of numbers and participants, over the fixed duration of the programme.

In the case of the Realistic Business Consortium, their Forum is a facilitated and supported peer-to-peer, cohort learning opportunity, to which all clients of the organisation are invited. This creates an open group, which may potentially reduce or increase in size over a given period of time, and include new and departing members.

Having investigated the nature of social enterprise start-up support via these five organisations, Chapter 7 now presents a response to Part 2 of the research objectives. It presents and analyses how a group of participants responded to these programme components, to better understand from the participant's perspective, what works for whom, in what contexts, and why.

7 Analysis of Programme Participant's Experiences of Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Interventions

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to respond to Part 2 of my overall research objectives and its ultimate purpose. The purpose is to understand what components of social enterprise start-up support interventions work for whom, in what contexts and why. It was established in Chapter 1, (p.33), that 'works' was interpreted and specifically defined in the context of this research and thesis as, 'contributing positively towards the start-up of the participant's social enterprise, from the perspective of, and to the satisfaction of, the participant'.

To investigate what social enterprise start-up support interventions work for whom, in what contexts and why, each participating support organisation was asked to nominate two participants each. This created two cohorts of respondents as shown below in Table 7.1, and as the identities of those participants are redacted; they are identified by the codes outlined within the same table throughout the analysis.

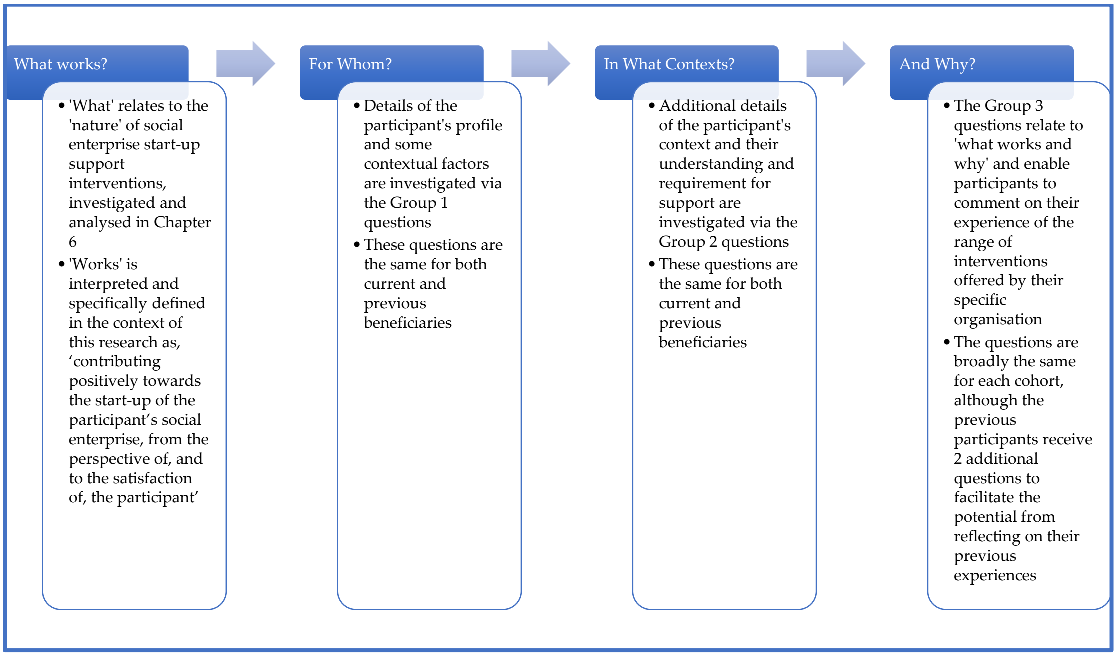
Table 7.1 Codes For Organisational Beneficiaries

Support Organisation	Current Beneficiary of Start-Up Support – Identity Code	Previous Beneficiary of Start-Up Support – Identity Code
Realistic Business Consortium	RCB 1	RCB 2
Key Fund	KF 1	KF 2
SEE Ahead	SA 1	SA 2
School for Social Entrepreneurs	SSE 1	SSE 2
UnLtd	UL 1	UL 2

7.2 Analytical Approach

The questions presented to the ten respondents were each divided into three sections; constructed to align with the 'realist informed' nature of the study in investigating what works, for whom, in what circumstances and why. The model below (see Figure 7.1) is offered to clarify how the data collected and analysed, specifically relates to this key research statement.

Figure 7.1 Model Clarifying 'What Works, For Whom, In What Circumstances, And Why?' Within The Context Of This Research



The interviews were recorded and then transcribed and a sample, fully transcribed interview extract from each cohort can be found within Appendix 7 and 8. The following tables (Tables, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4) present the three groups of questions offered to each cohort.

Table 7.2 Group 1 - General Questions - Cohort 1 & 2

Group 1 - General Questions for Current and Previous Participants
1. Male/Female? 2. Age Range (using a scale e.g. 18 – 30, 30 – 40 etc.)? 3. Are you starting this venture alone or with a business partner? 4. Have you had previous experience of starting/running a business? 5. Have you had previous experience of starting/running a social enterprise? 6. Are you starting this venture by choice or as a reaction to specific circumstances?

Question 2 of first group asked for the age of the participant. This was recorded as part of a date-range category, rather than an exact age for the respondent, and the categories presented were as follows:

Table 7.3 Respondent's Age Group Categories

Category	Age Range
G1	18 - 30
G2	31 - 40
G3	41 - 50
G4	51 - 60
G5	61 - 70
G6	71 +

Table 7.4 Group 2 - Support-Specific Questions - Cohort 1 & 2

Group 2 - Support-Specific Questions for Current and Previous Participants
1. Why did you access start-up support? 2. What type of support did you feel you needed? 3. How did you find that support? 4. Was it just this support organisation you benefitted from, or did you go to others? 5. If so, which others and why?

As the tables above demonstrate, Group 1 and 2 questions were identical for both cohorts, but the variation of the Group 3 questions is highlighted by the comparison table (Table 7.5); enabling an understanding of both the similarities and differences.

Table 7.5 Group 3 - Programme-Specific Questions - Cohort 1 & 2 Comparison

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Group 3 - Programme-Specific Questions</th></tr>
<tr><th>Current Participants</th><th>Previous Participants</th></tr>
<tr><td>1. What is working best for you here and why?
2. What has worked least for you here and why?
3. Do you feel that anything is missing from this support and why?
4. Do you feel that you have accessed this support at the right time and why?
5. Are you learning more from the programme and its deliverers, or from the other participants, and why?
6. Is there anything else I should know about the support you are receiving and how it has helped/hindered and why?</td><td>1. What worked best for you at the time and why?
2. What worked least for you at the time and why?
3. Do you feel that anything became more valuable/relevant to you following the end of the programme and why?
4. Do you feel that anything became less valuable/relevant to you following the end of the programme and why?
5. Do you feel that on reflection anything was missing from the support you received and why?
6. Do you feel that you accessed the support at the right time and why?
7. Did you learn more from the programme and its deliverers, or from the other participants, and why?
8. Is there anything else I should know about the support you are receiving and how it has helped/hindered and why?</td></tr>
</table>

7.3 Approaches to Data Analysis

Due to the differing nature of the questions within this part of the research, the approach to data analysis utilised two methods. Group 1 questions were predominantly quantitative in nature, yielding factual information relating to the profile of the respondents. Only the final question required some additional analysis in relation to potential themes around the motivation of start-up. The analysis of the Group 1 questions from each participant cohort is presented in section 7.5.

Questions in Groups 2 and 3 for both cohorts was much more qualitative in nature, and as such, the data was analysed thematically utilising the same methodology as described in Chapter 6.3 to reveal a number of emerging themes which were identified and coded. The analysis of Group 2 and Group 3 questions from each participant cohort is presented in section 7.6 and 7.7, respectively.

The most significant emerging themes and conclusions drawn from each group of questions are then presented in Chapter 8 as a summative format of future recommendations for social enterprise start-up support interventions. These recommendations are importantly informed by the social enterprise sector, for the social enterprise sector.

7.4 Analysis of Group 1 Questions

The responses to group one questions are presented below; individually from each cohort in Tables 7.6 and 7.7, and then collectively in Table 7.8.

Table 7.6 Table Showing Responses To Group 1 Questions - Current Participants

Questions	RCB1	KF1	SA1	SSE1	UL1	Totals
Male/Female?	Male	Female	Female	Male	Male	Male = 3 Female = 2
Age Group?	G2	G2	G5	G4	G4	G2 = 2 G4 = 2 G5 = 1
Alone/With Business Partner (BP)?	Delivery alone but with 2 x BP	2 BP	Alone	1 BP	Started Alone, now with 2 x BP	Alone = 1 Business Partners = 4
Started/Run A Business Previously?	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes = 2 No = 3
Started/Run A Social Enterprise Previously?	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes = 1 No = 4
Starting By Choice/Reaction To Specific Circumstances (SC)?	SC	Both	SC	Choice	Both	Choice = 1 Specific Circumstances = 2 Both = 2

Table 7.7 Table Showing Responses To Group 1 Questions - Previous Participants

Questions	RCB2	KF2	SA2	SSE2	UL2	Totals
Male/Female?	Male	Male	Female	Female	Female	Male = 2 Female = 3
Age Group?	G4	G4	G4	G3	G4	G3 = 1 G4 = 4
Alone/With Business Partner (BP)?	With BP	With BP	With BP	With BP	With BP	With Business Partners = 5
Started/Run A Business Previously?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes = 4 No = 1
Started/Run A Social Enterprise Previously?	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes = 1 No = 4
Starting By Choice/Reaction To Specific Circumstances (SC)?	Choice	SC	SC	SC	Both	Choice = 1 Specific Circumstances = 3 Both = 1

Table 7.8 Table Showing Responses To Group 1 Questions - Current & Previous Participants Combined

Questions	Totals
Male/Female?	Male = 5 Female = 5
Age Group?	G2 = 2 G3 = 1 G4 = 6 G5 = 1
Alone/With Business Partner?	Alone = 1 With Business Partners = 9
Started/Run A Business Previously?	Yes = 6 No = 4
Started/Run A Social Enterprise Previously?	Yes = 2 No = 8
Starting By Choice/Reaction To Circumstances?	Choice = 2 Specific Circumstances = 5 Both = 3

7.4.1 Group 1 Questions Analysis: Summary and Conclusions

In summary, the study collected responses from an equal number of male and female start-up founders, aged between 31 and 70, with the majority of participants being in the 41 – 60 age bracket. The equal male/female founder numbers do not align with the most recent Yorkshire and Humber State of Social Enterprise Report which found only 29% of organisational leaders to be female, although the ages of the respondents does fit with the findings of this same report which showed that 45% of founders were aged 45 - 64 (Social Enterprise UK, 2019).

The participant data revealed that 90% had either started the social venture with a business partner, or had a business partner join the venture within the support period. Whilst 60% of respondents had had previous experience in running a business, only 20% had specific previous experience of running a social enterprise, which may partially account for the dominant themes emerging from later questions, relating to the need for skills development and acquisition of specific knowledge.

When asked whether the start-up ventures were being pursued by choice, or as a reaction to a specific set of circumstances, 80% reported that their venture was either a reaction to specific circumstances alone, or a combination of choice and specific circumstances. Many respondents gave a detailed account of the background to their venture and whilst these narratives were outside of the remit of this particular study, they align well to the notion of Weber's Social Action Theory, explored in Chapter 4 as a potential theory to underpin this research, and defined as, "when the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to the act, and when that act takes account of the behaviour of others and is thereby oriented in its course" (Weber, 1975, p. 142). These motivational factors certainly offer the opportunity for further and separate research.

7.5 Analysis of Group 2 Questions

The second group of questions (identical for both cohorts) aimed to discover some further contextual factors from the respondents and their understanding of, and requirement for, specific start-up support interventions. The approach to data analysis was again thematic; as used during earlier data analysis. The responses were initially reviewed from the two separate cohorts, and then combined and reduced to find appropriate themes for each specific question. The full coded analysis can be found within Appendix 9, but each question and its final corresponding themes are presented next.

7.5.1 Analysis of Group 2 Questions – Question 1

The first question asked why respondents had decided to access start-up support for their new venture. Two main themes emerged from the analysis of this data and a further two themes revealed additional motivations for seeking support.

7.5.1.1 Theme 1 – Lack of Business Skills/Feelings of Self-Doubt

The most cited reason for accessing support (cited by 6 of the 10 respondents) related to feelings of self-doubt, lack of confidence, and the perceived lack of specific skills and business acumen. Comments included:

> *"Lack of business acumen" (RBC 1, 2019)*

> *"I am risk averse" (RBC 1, 2019)*

> *"I didn't see myself as an entrepreneur" (RBC 1, 2019)*

> *"Because I haven't got a business brain" (SA 1, 2020)*

> *"I don't like administrative detail" (SA 1, 2020)*

> *"Someone with current business landscape knowledge" (SA 2, 2020)*

"Because I didn't feel I knew enough to do it on my own. I needed a sounding board to help with evaluating ideas. Someone with current business landscape knowledge" (SA 2, 2019)

The self-recognition of the need for specific business skills by the participant could be considered a positive, as the first step to addressing a problem is perhaps understanding of its existence. As the Cabinet Office Report of 2011 had found that the "value of business support needed to be better recognised within the [social enterprise] sector," (Cabinet Office, 2011, p. iv), this may represent progress.

7.5.1.2 Theme 2 – Access to Finance

This was the second most cited reason for accessing start-up support with related responses from half of the participants interviewed, which included:

"I needed access to finance" (KF 1, 2020)

"I needed funding for essential equipment" (UL 1, 2020)

"To seek investment to develop a new project which needed a specific employee and some equipment" (KF 2, 2020)

"I was looking for funding" (SSE 2, 2020)

"I was looking for funding" (UL 2, 2020)

Given that the BIS report of 2011 on business support for social enterprises cited that access to finance was the biggest barrier to growth for social enterprises, (BIS, 2011a, p. 97) and that Cabinet Office report of the same year (Cabinet Office, 2011, p. v) flagged the likely decrease in the amount of grant funding available, this theme is both unsurprising and concerning in the apparent same position a decade on.

7.5.1.3 Additional Themes

Two further themes were identified within this first question's responses. The first revealed that two participants (one from each cohort) liked the idea of accessing a package of support. It may be that this was due to one or both of the above themes (lack of specific skills, and/or, access to finance), although this was not specified by either respondent, who stated:

> *"I liked the idea of support package [mentor, grant, academic support]" (SSE 1, 2020)*

> *"Help and support in running a social enterprise" (UL 2, 2020)*

The second minor theme was perhaps notable due to its 'minor' status. Despite the clear direction of social enterprises needing to be more business-like, and to seek sustainability via trading activity, only one respondent referred to a desire to move towards a more sustainable future in their rationale for seeking support:

> *"The help from Realistic Business Consortium came later in our journey; at a time when we wanted to move from seeking grant funding, to developing new channels about earned income" (RBC 2, 2020)*

Interestingly, this social enterprise (RBC 2) had already begun their start-up journey without support, and perhaps it was this 'maturity' that enabled them to see the need for sustainability more clearly than other, earlier stage participants:

7.5.2 Analysis of Group 2 Questions – Question 2

The second question asked participants what type of start-up support they felt they needed at the time of seeking help. This question revealed three main themes and again, a collection of more minor themes in terms of number of respondents.

7.5.2.1 Theme 1 – Access to Specific Knowledge

The dominant themes emerging from this question aligned with those from question 1, and the rationale for seeking support in the first instance. Most prominent was a cluster of reasons associated with seeking specific knowledge and skills, with a notable sub-theme requiring advice and clarity on legal structure and governance. Respondent's cited:

> *"I needed the pathway to getting it set up. I had no idea what to do; I had no idea at all. I just knew I wanted to do it" (SA 1, 2020)*

> *"We wanted specific help with starting to develop new products" (RBC 2, 2020)*

> *"Logistics and who to target and how to start to open doors for discussions regarding the new product" (SA 2, 2020)*

> *"Ensuring we could articulate our mission and creating profit with a purpose" (UL 2, 2020)*

> *"To understand the difference between running a commercial and a social venture" (UL 2, 2020)*

> *"Legal structure" (SA 2, 2020)*

"Also a legal structure to support our business because at the time it was just a campaign" (SSE 2, 2020)

Whilst there is some alignment here with the previous responses regarding business skills under Group 1 questions, the respondents in this area focused more on issues that were specific to social enterprises, rather than businesses in general. Returning again to the Cabinet Office report of 2011, the findings there specifically included the fact that support, "needs to include sufficient specialism to be credible to the sector and responsive to social enterprise needs" (Cabinet Office, 2011, p. iii). The participants within this research are wholeheartedly agreeing in their specific requests.

7.5.2.2 Theme 2 – Financial

The second most prominent theme was associated with financial advice and support and from this perspective, respondent's cited:

"It was financial support, but also advice because they gave us a lot of information too. So it was support in advice, as well as in finance" (KF 1, 2020)

"It was financial support I needed to buy specific equipment" (UL 1, 2020)

"It was investment to grow and develop that we were seeking and we were quite wary of traditional banks. KF provided support and understanding of our plans too" (KF 2, 2020)

"Funding" (SSE 2, 2020)

Again the theme of finance is prominent but not specifically in respect of grant funding. Investment and debt finance is also required and requested. This perhaps does indicate that social enterprises are considering themselves to be more business-like, and aware of the scarcity of grant funding. However, the theme of "wanting to be understood" (BIS, 2011a, p. 9), returns with a reticence towards traditional banks and lending.

7.5.2.3 Theme 3 – Other Reasons

The remaining responses from this question revealed a theme around being unsure/uncertain of what help and assistance was needed, but also, what was available and a feeling that by seeking and being connected to others going through a similar experience, may help and direct their own development.

> *"Not a clue! No idea whatsoever! At that first instance, it was taking whatever you could get" (RBC 1, 2019)*

> *"I had no idea what to do, I had no idea at all. I just knew I wanted to do it" (SA 1, 2020)*

> *"It was the package of support again, but also being with other like-minded people. And to be honest, that's been the best bit" [the cohort], (SSE 1, 2020)*

The value and importance of peer-to-peer exchanges are prominent throughout the participant interviews and recognised within many of the Government Reports on social enterprise and general business support (BIS, 2011a; Cabinet Office, 2011; BIS 2011).

7.5.3 Analysis of Group 2 Questions – Question 3

This question investigated how participants had located the start-up support programme they had accessed in terms of becoming aware of its existence and potential to assist. The question revealed four themes as follows.

7.5.3.1 Theme 1 – Referral Process

The two most cited routes of finding support were either via a referral process, or by pure chance; so with no method at all. There was also an instance reported were the referral was made following a chance encounter with a third party. From a referral's perspective, respondent's cited:

> *"And then a referral from a chance meeting" (KF 1, 2020)*

> *"It was a referral process that led me to them" (UL 1, 2020)*

> *"It was initially a referral from someone I knew that had also worked with UnLtd" (UL 2, 2020)*

> *"It was via a referral route" (SA 1, 2020)*

The referral route does align with the investigation and analysis into the providers of start-up support, which found the sector to be well connected and aware of other programmes and providers.

7.5.3.2 Theme 2 – By chance/Serendipity

Those participants who found support entirely by chance, did give differing accounts of how that serendipitous connection occurred.

> *"A lot of luck and being in the right place at the right time. But also telling my story to as many people as possible, building a relationship" (RBC 1, 2019)*

> *"It was purely by chance" (KF 1, 2020)*

> *"It was purely by a chance meeting via the local CVS" (SSE 2, 2020)*

> *"It was by seeing an online opportunity that just popped up" (SSE 1, 2020)*

Given that the literature review of business support revealed a landscape that remains complex and fragmented, these 'connections by chance' are perhaps unsurprising.

7.5.3.3 Theme 3 – Already Connected

Two respondents accounted for their work with a specific organisation as they were already connected by some existing interaction:

> *"We had previously worked with Malcolm via the Reach Fund in pulling together a business plan. So via a referral from the Reach Fund" (RBC 2, 2020)*

> *"We were already connected to Key Fund and they understood what we do" (KF 2, 2020)*

Again, given an understanding of the landscape, perhaps the decision of a participant to remain with an existing and established contact, is unsurprising.

7.5.3.4 Theme 4 - Research

The final theme and very much in the minority, was an instance of specific research by the respondent themselves, to find a source of support they felt would align well with their needs:

> *"I read about SEEAhead and felt that we might work well together. I knew I needed someone that understood the social enterprise agenda" (SA 2, 2020)*

These rather haphazard approaches to finding effective support for something so important does, unfortunately, align well with the findings from the literature review of Chapter 3, which concluded that support for business start-ups in the UK is complex, fragmented and disjointed.

7.5.4 Analysis of Group 2 Questions – Question 4

Question 4 asked whether respondents had sought assistance from other organisations, besides the one being accounted for during their interview. Seven of the ten respondents had indeed approached other organisations at some stage and reported as follows.

> *"I have been supported by other organisations, but the process has been quite organic and developed through a lot of networking with people" (RBC 1, 2019)*

> *"Yes, I was also supported by UnLtd" (SA 1, 2020)*

"I didn't Google 'support for social enterprises' but once you start attending things, you stumble upon more help" (SSE 1, 2020)

"Yes, I also worked with Participate Projects in Bradford" (UL 1, 2020)

"Yes, we went to others" (RBC 2, 2020)

"Yes we did approach others" (SA 2, 2020)

"Not at the same time but did subsequently go to others" (UL 2, 2020)

Of the three respondents who didn't seek or access additional support, two gave further clarification for that decision.

"Other than traditional finance lenders, this is the only support organisation we worked with" (KF 1, 2020)

"We explored another couple of options, but we always knew we wanted to access Key Fund for support" (KF 2, 2020)

The decision to remain with an organisation that was already proving helpful perhaps aligns with the findings from the BIS longitudinal study (2011a) which cautioned about a, "sense of 'not being understood' which can work against the social enterprise sector in the targeting and uptake of business support" (BIS, 2011a, p. 9).

7.5.5 Analysis of Group 2 Questions – Question 5

This final question links to the previous in mapping which additional support organisations were approached by the 70% of respondents within the study. Their responses were segmented to reveal those that sought help from other organisations within the research group, and those outside. The table below (Table 7.9) presents the findings.

Table 7.9 Additional Organisations Approached For Support

Question	Within this research's organisation group	Outside of this research's organisation group
If other support organisations were approached for help, which others and why?	*"Yes, I was also supported by UnLtd"* (SA 1, 2020)	*"Other than traditional finance lenders, this is the only support organisation we worked with"* (KF 1, 2020)
	"Key Fund and UnLtd" (RBC 2, 2020)	*"Yes, I also worked with Participate Projects in Bradford"* (UL 1, 2020)
	"The specific initiative via UnLtd, was for a project in the South West, which gave us some funding and the ability to start to develop the social model and start to develop" (RBC 2, 2020)	*"The Reach Fund via Key Fund enabled us to develop our business plan"* (RBC 2, 2020)
	"Also accessed financial support from Key Fund because an essential piece of equipment died and needed to be replaced" (SA 2, 2020)	*"More traditional lenders"* (KF 2, 2020)

	"The School for Social Entrepreneurs" (UL 2, 2020)	*"Voluntary Action Leeds because I had worked with them in the past" (SA 2, 2020)* *"The Cranfield Trust have been amazing with mentors" (UL 2, 2020)*

The fact that 70% of the participants interviewed also accessed support elsewhere ties into the conclusions drawn from the support interview organisations (see p. 173) who commented about the problem of the landscape being complex and fragmented (Shaw et. al., 2002: Smallbone et al., 2001 & Centre for Cities, 2013), and consequently, that participants are seeking advice and support from multiple sources. However, when such organisations speak about the need to "manage scarcity" (*UnLtd Interview 2019*) and that "everything is massively oversubscribed", (*SEE Ahead Interview,* 2019) there is an opportunity to investigate this issue further in future research.

7.5.6 Group 2 Questions Analysis: Summary and Conclusions

The Group 2 questions enabled an understanding of the motivation of respondents to seek start-up support, the nature of the support they were seeking, and how they located providers of such programmes and interventions. The summative table below (Table 7.10) illustrates the major and minor themes emerging from this data set, together with conclusions drawn from these responses.

Table 7.10 Summary & Conclusions From Group 2 Questions

Question	Major Themes	Minor Themes	Conclusions Drawn
Why did you access social enterprise start-up support?	1. Feelings of self-doubt, lack of confidence and perceived lack of specific skills and business acumen 2. To gain access to finance	1. Noticeable in being a minority theme (only one respondent) was a desire to become more sustainable	Confirmation that basic business skills and access to finance are consistent requirements, but also opportunities to include support and assistance in self-reflection and personal development to tackle self-doubt and limited confidence
What type of support did you feel you needed?	1. Access to specific knowledge and advice 2. Access to finance	1. Although less dominant, there was a clear message regarding uncertainty of what advice and support respondents needed and would benefit from 2. Furthermore, uncertainty on what support and advice was available to them	Direct correlation to question 1 in terms of business skills and financial literacy, but is there an opportunity to combat uncertainty of what support and advice is required via improved diagnostic work, ahead of access to programmes
How did you locate that support?	1. By a process of referral from a third party 2. By chance/serendipity	1. Noticeable in being a minority response (only one respondent), self-guided research to locate support	Despite repeated calls for greater clarity on the availability and nature business support, it still remains uncertain and fragmented

Question	Major Themes	Minor Themes	Conclusions Drawn
Did you access support from other organisations?	70% of respondents had sought and received advice and support from organisations other than the organisation they were being interviewed about	A minority response (one respondent) indicated certainty about who they wanted to approach for support	Once within a support programme or intervention, there is frequent movement between such programmes and providers. Although demonstrating interconnectivity and collaboration, might it indicate no single provider offers a comprehensive package

7.6 Analysis of Group 3 Questions

The approach to interview during the Group 3 questions was different to the initial two sections, as this process afforded the opportunity for revealing how different participants experienced and benefited from (or not), specific types of interventions. In all cases, the participants were provided with a copy of the Initial Rough Programme Theory (IRPT) pertinent to their specific programme of support, which was created during the interviews with their respective organisation. Having sight of the IRPT during the interview process, enabled the participant to consider their responses to the questions with direct relation to the specific interventions they had accessed; the IRPT acting as both a reminder and prompt of the differing programme elements which they had had access to. In all cases, regardless of how many elements appeared in the original IRPT model for each organisation, an additional open-ended option ('Other') was added for any additional and valuable responses from participants, which didn't directly fit within the original model.

In the case of all 10 interviews, the data was analysed by observing the following three principles:

1. Considering each question and noting the participant's choice of which element(s) of the IRPT (now numbered for ease of reference), felt most appropriate to the question posed.

2. Direct quotes were extracted from the transcribed interview to support this selection for each question.

3. The current and previous beneficiaries responses are (where possible) presented alongside each other for ease of comparison.

The following sections present that analysis for each programme, and each Group 3 question.

7.6.1 The Realistic Business Consortium

The diagram below (Figure 7.2) shows the IRPT model shared with the participants of the Realistic Business Consortium's support, with the addition of a 'catch-all' option.

Figure 7.2 Initial Rough Programme Theory Shared With RBC Participants

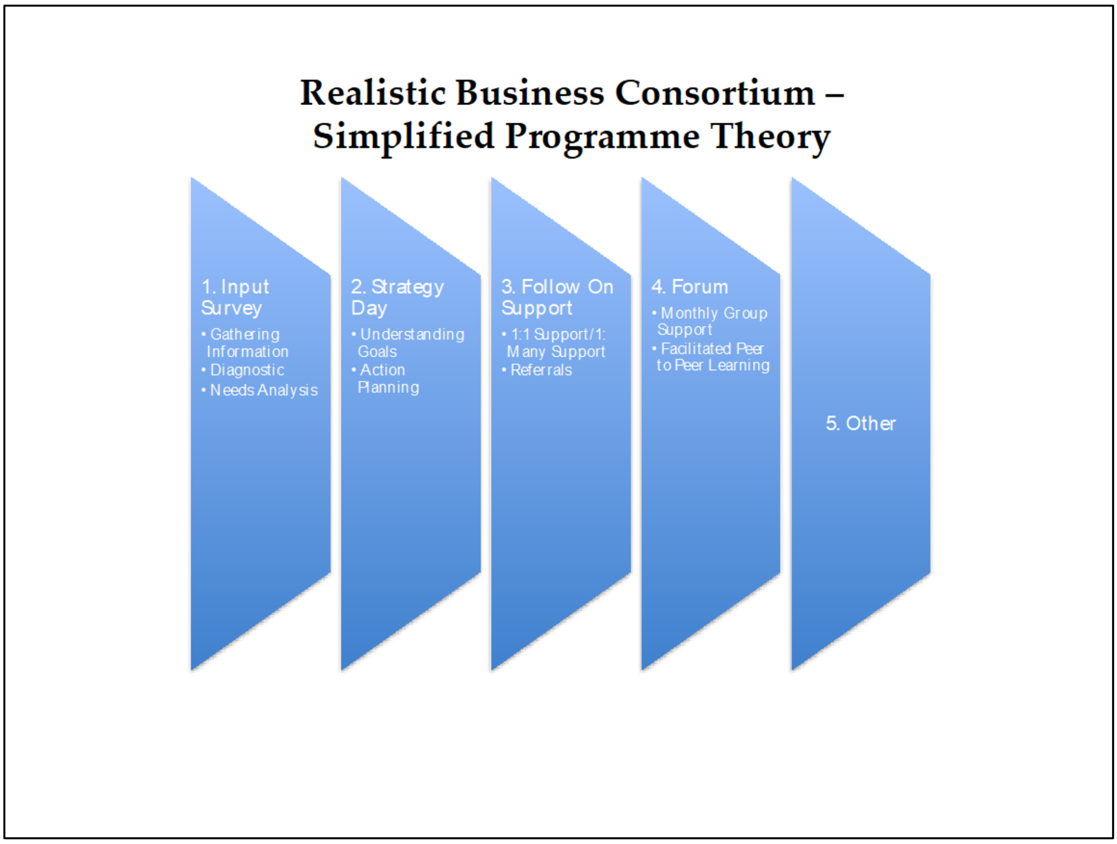


Table 7.11 Question 1: What Is Working (Worked) Best For You At The Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: RBC 1, 2019	Previous Beneficiary: RBC 2, 2020
1. The Input Survey *"Those initial meetings were critical. Do you know...my business model and blueprint is complex. It works within a*	**1. The Input Survey** *"Well I think the Input Survey…because in a way, the other things…the Input Survey I would say that part of that was*

complex kind of eco-system. And one of the reasons this works as well is because they [RBC] know the business so well…and there's understanding. And without that…their inputs can't be as helpful as they have been. They need to know my business inside and out, and the way I've always…well…the way I treat them now whether I knew it at the time or not…is that they basically work for me in the way that a non-exec board would. You know I don't have a lot of expertise…I don't have a wide range of Directors"	*also informing the applications for the Reach Fund. So I think that was very much working with Malcolm and thinking right, well there's this pot of money…what are the bits that we want to try and achieve out of it? Let's break that down and really we came up with a specification almost on the back of that, which was our application. So, that was very much phone calls and ideas bouncing around a bid. So in a way, that was very much like an Input Survey I think – you know…that process"*
4. The Forum *"I think it's a combination of peer to peer learning…with oversight? And I don't know how to describe that oversight. Do you know I think that also there's a danger that if peer-to-peer mentoring isn't directed, and isn't managed…facilitated. If that's not facilitated accurately and you don't have confidence in the facilitators…there's a real danger that that either becomes a waste of time…or you get lots of conflicting…and conflicting advice isn't a bad thing…but it could go round in circles. And so I think again, for me, peer to peer support like that only works with excellent facilitation"* *"I think what I'm trying to get to there is*	**3. Follow On Support – Referrals** *"RBC did refer us initially to a Chartered Accountant who helped us structure our own management accounts. And Malcolm actually also did put a mini tender together to find us a new accountant, which included a component of transforming us…migrating us onto a cloud-based accounting system. So you could say that was RBC did that for us to find those partners"*

that there's a balance between direct facilitation and allowing just to reflect on your own business, with people that are invested…but that are neutral" *"So facilitation is important…again I think it comes down to I think people/personalities and selection of businesses that are there. I very much feel a genuine passion for other people's businesses there. The relationships work really well there. There's really strong advice, and different views and a lot of…the make up of the people there compliments and supports each other by widening your views. And I don't think you would get that if it were just a general open-door policy...so that's important. I think the stability of the businesses that's there is important"*	
5. Other *"For me I think what I'm trying to get to is, it's the periphery things and it's the things that sit in between these [programme components], that make it really effective"*	

There was agreement from both clients of the Realistic Business Consortium that the initial meetings and discussions that comprise the Input Survey were particularly beneficial:

> *"So they [RBC]…I believe they know my business as well as, if not better, than anybody else" (RBC 1, 2019)*

"So it was identifying the bits that were missing. We already had core elements of the product...if you like. But we knew [from the discussions with RBC] we were missing these components" (RBC 2, 2020)

Specifically, both parties referred to the supporting organisation's developing relationship with them, and their understanding of their thoughts and ideas, which were critical to their on-going support; a point echoed in the Office for Civil Service Report which stated, "social enterprises are more likely than mainstream businesses to access more intensive support from a business adviser," (Cabinet Office, 2011, p. v).

Table 7.12 Question 2: What Is Working (Worked) Least For You At The Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: RBC 1, 2019	Previous Beneficiary: RBC 2, 2020
2. Strategy Day – Action Planning *'The Action Plan to me initially, wasn't a well-used document. It just became a set of lists that I didn't refer to or do anything with, until I'd kind of got some more skills through the Forum to prioritise that in the right way"*	**3. Follow On Support – Referrals** *"I suppose I didn't realise right at the time because it seemed to be an important component, but the Chartered Accountant, who spent quite a lot of time creating new spread sheets for us, in the end, that hasn't been used at all. That was a bit of a waste of time in hindsight. But that's in hindsight – at the time, it felt as if we needed it; but it transpired that we just didn't need it. And that's because really the way we were migrating into the cloud-based accounting system – we just didn't need – we didn't need to reframe what we had already, to start doing it. "*

	"Well actually I tell a lie because for the application for the Reach Fund, we did need to produce Balance Sheets and a P & L Forecast that we could adjust. And actually and so I'm wrong there. We did actually need some of that component, in order to complete the application for the funding. So I'm not quite right. It was over-engineered!"
4. The Forum *"I think one of the difficult stages was that growth stage [for the RBC] when there were new participants coming in every week to the Forum, so there's was sometimes a lot of repetitive time in that early stage. That was quite frustrating. As I say, that then becomes minimal because you've got stability for a group which turns out to be a positive and again like we said, we need that background"*	
5. Other *"I think, I mean I'd be clutching at straws now…but another negative for me is a little bit location wise. It would be nice if there were Realistic Business Consortiums running in Leeds, Bradford, Halifax…for me. Because again I think…that's not just in terms of travel time…that's in terms of your building a local network where your business is. The network that I'm building with the*	

RBC…their networks are in Leeds because that's where they're based. If there was a similar programme in Halifax, I would potentially hope that brought more direct local benefits"	

Some interesting points emerged from this second question. RBC 1 had previously reported the Forum as being of great value, but also identified a weakness in its provision here. However, that was largely due to this client accessing support during the early stages of the RBC's existence. Presumably, with an on-going and active client list, this initial instability in the Forum would be less problematic.

RBC 2, reported limited value from the referral to an external Chartered Accountant, however, it was also acknowledged that the client should take some responsibility for any misunderstanding, as they had not necessarily kept the RBC updated on their intentions:

> *"We knew we were going to do that though [migrate to cloud accounting]. So I think there's a bit of learning …probably on both sides…which I haven't necessarily fed back to Malcolm [the RBC] actually on that" (RBC 2, 2020)*

Finally, although acknowledged by RBC 1 as a minor point, the criticality of location is discussed and again, acknowledges the fragmented nature of support being offered in the UK (Shaw et. al., 2002: Smallbone et al., 2001 & Centre for Cities, 2013).

Table 7.13 Question 3: Do You Feel That Anything Became More Valuable/Relevant To You Following The End Of The Programme?

Question for Previous Beneficiary Only: RBC 2, 2020
3. Follow On Support – 1:1 Support
"In a way, the most important thing they did ironically, is the actual Sales and Marketing plan they came up with. It was only when I saw it laid out and articulated, from a traditional Sales and Marketing point of view, I realised that it was exactly

what we didn't want. And honestly, that was incredibly helpful" *"But it was only when I saw that Sales and Marketing plan, which was from a very traditional Sales and Marketing background – which I could understand in a way why they were putting that together; did I realise that actually, Direct Marketing, and what I knew from the past, was exactly what we needed. And I wouldn't have got to that, without seeing what they came up with"*

It was interesting to hear from RBC 2, regarding being presented with the 'wrong' support opportunity:

> *"I think that I've found…I often need to…the way I work best is to react off of something's put in front of me, I can immediately…it gives me something to counter off of. And so I couldn't have got to what I think is the right result, without having seen that" (RBC 2, 2020)*

Despite an apparent negative situation, it transpired not only to have had an overall positive benefit in enabling a better option to be realised, but also that a point of learning emerged from the experience for the participant too. This particular example is a further example of the complexity of interventions and learning experiences packaged within a perhaps inadequate overall term of 'business support' discussed in Chapter 3 (Centre for Cities, 2013).

Table 7.14 Question 4: Do You Feel That Anything Became Less Valuable/Relevant To You Following The End Of The Programme & Why?

Question for Previous Beneficiary Only: RBC 2, 2020
3. Follow On Support – Referral

"I suppose it would be that additional work that the Chartered Accountant did. That would have been the bit that I thought it was…I did genuinely think it was all useful at the time, but it was only in hindsight that actually, we haven't used any of that. And literally I was just thinking about it the other day and thinking about, gosh I spent an awful lot of time with that guy looking over lots and lots of spread sheets, and we haven't used it at all"

RBC 2 went on to explain why this intervention had less value and relevance to them than was initially envisaged:

> *"At one point we thought we were going to be migrating all the data from there, into the cloud. But actually when we got to looking at how you migrate to the cloud, they don't want any of that. All they want are our transactions"* (RBC 2, 2020)

This was a situation which was unknown at the time of the support, due to the participant's limited knowledge of what was and wasn't required for a transition to cloud accounting. In that sense, it is important to acknowledge that this was not a failing at the time of the support intervention.

Table 7.15 Question 5: Do You Feel That (On Reflection) Anything Is (Was) Missing From The Support You Are Receiving (Received) & Why?

Current Beneficiary: RBC 1, 2019	Previous Beneficiary: RBC 2, 2020
No *"No I think maybe because I'm really searching for something…there was nothing clearly missing for me"*	**No** *"No…I don't think so...no"*

Table 7.16 Question 6: Do You Feel That You Accessed Support At The Right Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: RBC 1, 2019	Previous Beneficiary: RBC 2, 2020
Yes	**Yes**
"Yes. It certainly came along at the right time, I'm just wondering would it have benefitted me earlier. It didn't exist earlier but I'm still thinking if it would. Do you know I think this would have benefitted me even from day one. Yes. So if I could have had this earlier, yes absolutely I would have done" *"It would have allowed me to test and scrutinise and refine those thoughts a lot quicker"*	*"Yes I think we did... they were a really good fit for us at that time when we really needed something tangible that we knew we needed to get from A to B"*
Why?	**Why?**
"I think this is again the value that I put in the individuals – their [RBC's] level of expertise, their kind of critical thinking towards things"	*"It was at the right time because we sort of identified…it was a bit of a light bulb moment that…well, this is what we could be developing, in order to create a new model for developing earned income strand"*

Table 7.17 Question 7: Are (Did) You Learn More From The Programme And Its Deliverers, Or From The Other Participants & Why?

Current Beneficiary: RBC 1, 2019	Previous Beneficiary: RBC 2, 2020
The deliverers *"Just because again, of expertise and [their] experience in different fields, where I've got no expertise. So obviously there's a massive sort of contrast there"*	**The deliverers** *"We didn't interact with others. So I don't think that's relevant"*

RBC 2 elected not to interact with the Forum, which had proven so valuable to RBC 1. This point was raised and they responded:

> *"You know, I think when our time's limited, I think the sort of Forums and Events we attend, you know…there are so many different things we could attend. And I think in terms of meeting other start-up businesses, or people who are going through change at the moment, I think we've sort of 'been there, seen it, done it'" (RBC 2, 2020)*

They acknowledged that this preference could be attributed to their previous and existing knowledge of business start-up and so perhaps an important contextual factor when offering support to 'experienced' start-ups, and something that would perhaps not emerge if the support was simply provided online, rather than blended as outlined in Lesson 8 from the OCS report (Cabinet Office, 2011).

Table 7.18 Question 8: Is There Anything Else I Should Know About The Support You Are Receiving And How It Has Helped/Hindered & Why?

Current Beneficiary: RBC 1, 2019	Previous Beneficiary: RBC 2, 2020
"I don't know whether I mentioned this earlier, but I think trust, is a really important one. And I think that links all of the things that I've been saying. Going back to maybe who makes more impact, because I trust and believe in their [RBC's] abilities and their knowledge. But also what goes hand in hand with that is morals and values. So, as a non-profit community with very clear values that we want to uphold, working with the Realistic Business Consortium has been a really good fit"	*"The thing that struck me most was Malcolm in particular has been really helpful for us, on not just the core stuff that we talked about. Previously there was some helping with the business...earlier business plan. Also we had some governance issues we had to overcome in order to trigger Sport England funding, which independently of this, he just helped us with"*

Clear reference again here from both participants of the importance of having an on-going relationship with, and trust and respect of, the advisors providing face-to-face support (BIS, 2011a, p. 11)

7.6.2 Key Fund

The diagram below (Figure 7.3) shows the IRPT model shared with the participants of Key Fund's support, with the addition of a 'catch-all' option.

Figure 7.3 Initial Rough Programme Theory Shared With Key Fund Participants

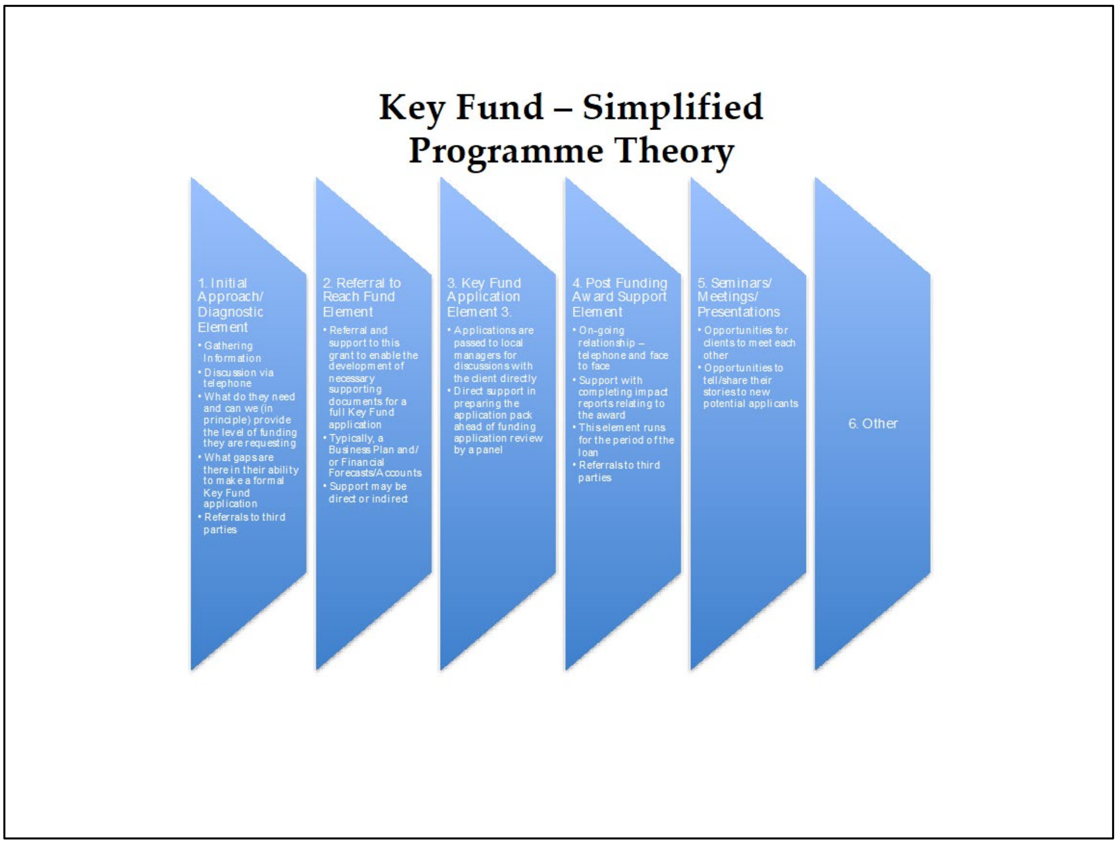


Table 7.19 Question 1: What Is Working (Worked) Best For You At The Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: KF 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: KF 2, 2020
4. Post-Funding Award Support *"Well at the minute, it would be the post-funding support element. The on-going relationship with them and knowing that I can ring them up… A daft*	**4. Post-Funding Award Support** *"I think the flexibility was massive basically. Our investment came from something called the Northern Impact Fund, but Key Fund were very flexible in*

question…and they'll answer it, if you know what I mean? Or they'll say, I don't know the answer to that, but I think I know somebody that does" *"The most valuable bit is that post award support. Because it doesn't just stop when you get the money. There's a heck of a lot of hard work still going into it"*	*the way that they were able to offer the finance"* *"So it was that flexibility and you know, you don't need me to tell you, the fact that trying to go to a bank or trying to ring somebody at a call center in a bank, that level of support is simply not available for organisations like us"* *"They [Key Fund] get organisations like us, and they get the different challenges that organisations like us face"*

As with other participants, the strong sense of the organisation and their advisors understanding the social enterprise, and the trusting and personal supportive relationship developed over time, was clearly evident throughout these interviews, as described here by KF 1:

> *"We have like a key-person…Karen. Errm…she also lives locally and has worked in the area so she understands us really well…and she'll just message me…or say…I'm just busy but I'll get back to you in an hour. It's …it's…they're just there all the time...if I need them. Yes, Karen…she's fantastic" (KF 1, 2020)*

This is just one of many great examples of the powerful relationship between advisor and client; aligning well with the findings from the Cabinet Office Report which discussed that, "advisors should be able to demonstrate empathy with their [the client's] social and environmental aims, communicate in an accessible language, and have the ability to inspire, motivate, and enthuse their customers" (Cabinet Office, 2011, p. iii).

Table 7.20 Question 2: What Is Working (Worked) Least For You At The Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: KF 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: KF 2, 2020
4. Post-Funding Award Support	**3. Key Fund Application Element**
"Errm…I don't think that there was anything that was less helpful, but possibly in the same spot – the post funding award spot – it would have been useful to know what the monitoring side of things"	*"I suppose looking back and the criticism that I would have had at that time if you had of asked me, would have been that, you know, they are asking for a heck of a lot of paperwork here and cash flow forecast in real fine detail to ask us to demonstrate what the social impact would be"*
"I mean it's not a massive thing…but it would have been more helpful to say...every quarter, we're going to need this sort of stuff from you…and this information. And then I could have been doing it as we went along"	*"At the time that would have been deemed a criticism from me possibly, but looking back I think that's totally justifiable, and it probably made us think more about the programme, about whether the investment was actually right, about whether you know, we are going to create both the bottom lines of the impact and the profitability longer term"*

An interesting point raised by KF 1, that for her as an extremely organised person revealed during the interview, having more granular detail of the reporting needs would have helped:

"Maybe there could have been a fact sheet of these are the kind of things, that we're going to be asking you for…I mean it's not the end of the world, but it would have been a time saver for me" (KF 1, 2020)

The initial criticism from KF 2 regarding the rigorous application process, was now tempered with the added benefit of hindsight. Perhaps there is an improvement opportunity here, to better explain the rationale at the time of application, for this required level of detail; especially given the response to the next question and the long-term value of that detail.

Table 7.21 Question 3: Do You Feel That Anything Became More Valuable/Relevant To You Following The End Of The Programme?

Question for Previous Beneficiary Only: KF 2, 2020
3. Key Fund Application Element *"Yes, at the time I was thinking - Oh another bit of information you've had, another bit of information required etc. - but looking back it's been really good preparation for moving forward…and that process that we went through helped us further down the line"* *"So yes, I think it has done us a good service in the long term, but I wouldn't have said that in 2016 probably"*

Such insights are examples of turning to the sector itself, and specifically the participants accessing the support programmes on offer, can inform improvements and refinements (Hines, 2005).

Table 7.22 Question 4: Do You Feel That Anything Became Less Valuable/Relevant To You Following The End Of The Programme & Why?

Question for Previous Beneficiary Only: KF 2, 2020
No *"I don't think there was anything that was wasted in there really, you know, that we didn't need to do, say looking back we probably needed to do all the things, go through all the stages that we went through, so there's nothing I can think of in that one to be honest"*

Table 7.23 Question 5: Do You Feel That (On Reflection) Anything Is (Was) Missing From The Support You Are Receiving (Received) & Why?

Current Beneficiary: KF 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: KF 2, 2020
No *"No. No…I don't think there is. Because anything I've ever wanted or needed, I've been able to pick up the phone and they're just there all the time. So no, at the minute, I don't think there is anything that I'm missing from them"*	**Yes** *"I suppose for me it always comes back to... because this is the bit that I've had to learn fairly quickly over the last few years… the finances really, the cash flow forecasting"* *"If I'd maybe had access to workshops at that time I might be more confident now"*

KF 1 felt that there was nothing specifically missing, but acknowledged during the interview that this was again because of the quality of the relationship with the advisor and their pro-active support:

"And you build up…it's not just a voice on the end of a phone either. Because she came and looked round as well – when we were in the process of buying it. Saw the horrendous state it was in…because it had been empty for a couple of years. And then she's been back and had another look. She seems genuinely enthusiastic and interested about what, what we're doing" (KF 1, 2020)

KF 2 revealed their particular weakness on finances, but when questioned in more depth, they indicated a strong preference for this to be provided on a 1:1 basis, rather than 1:many via workshops, as is most often the delivery method with such support:

"If I could have, you know a couple of hours with somebody on a one-to-one basis, you know really starting from scratch and assuming I know nothing, that would be brilliant in my mind" (KF 2, 2020)

This is further evidence of the value and demand for face-to-face 1:1 support, rather than online, and/or workshop interventions outlined in the BIS report fo 2011 (BIS, 2011a).

Table 7.24 Question 6: Do You Feel That You Accessed Support At The Right Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: KF 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: KF 2, 2020
Yes *"Yes, it was definitely the right time for us; in a business sense and I think in an economic sense as well, even with everything that's going on right now [Covid-19], it was definitely the right time for us"*	**Yes** *"Absolutely. I would say this is one of the things again that Key Fund do really well"* *"It feels very logical all the way through the process and again I think, different to what a traditional commercial lender would do"*

Table 7.25 Question 7: Are (Did) You Learn More From The Programme And Its Deliverers, Or From The Other Participants & Why?

Current Beneficiary: KF 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: KF 2, 2020
Deliverers *“Yes I’ve learned a huge amount”* *“I haven’t had much contact with other Key Fund recipients to be fair”*	**Both** *“Right, I am going to sit on the fence with that one because I find value in both, you know well… the person, or the people from Key Fund definitely had skills that were different to my skill set and added a lot”* *“I’ve been on lots of different social enterprise programmes and that is probably where I have done most of my learning, you know, similar organisations in a room who are facing similar challenges”*

In the case of KF 1, there had been little interaction with other participants in order to be able to comment. KF 2 on the other hand, had accessed other Social Enterprise programmes of support (in addition to Key Fund) and so had had a greater opportunity to network and find benefit in peer to peer learning. This discussion was expanded to see whether KF 2 felt there would be value in a specific peer-to-peer learning opportunity in the Key Fund programme. The answer revealed an interesting synergy with the RBC’s Forum:

> *“Yes it would, but there is a “but” in there as well. The “but” is that they would have to be at a similar stage because it would be a waste of time… I’ve been on some training where there are some start-ups in the room with people who have been going*

ten years and it doesn't work in that instance, people asking questions that are not relevant to each other, it would have to be a carefully thought out group of a small cohort, four or five let's say who were definite… similar in looking for the next level of investment, been operating for the same number of years that type of thing, and then I think it would be really useful, because you could throw everything out there and you know ask some questions that you forget on a one-to-one basis, some questions that you don't even know you've got at that stage at that moment in time, so I think that would be brilliant if they could facilitate something like that" (KF 2, 2020).

It appears that KF2 is recognising the potential value of a facilitated peer-to-peer network, (Cabinet Office, 2011, p. ix) but also recognising that this only reaches optimum potential when the members of such a group are united by the age and stage of their respective ventures.

Table 7.26 Question 8: Is There Anything Else I Should Know About The Support You Are Receiving And How It Has Helped/Hindered & Why?

Current Beneficiary: KF 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: KF 2, 2020
No *"Other than just that the support and the genuine interest that they do, but obviously I've mentioned that. No I can't think of anything else"*	**No** *"I think [that] is why we keep going back to Key Fund and why that relationship has continued to flourish"*

7.6.3 SEE Ahead

The diagram below (Figure 7.4) shows the IRPT model shared with the participants of SEE Ahead's support, with the addition of a 'catch-all' option.

Figure 7.4 Initial Rough Programme Theory Shared With SEE Ahead Participants

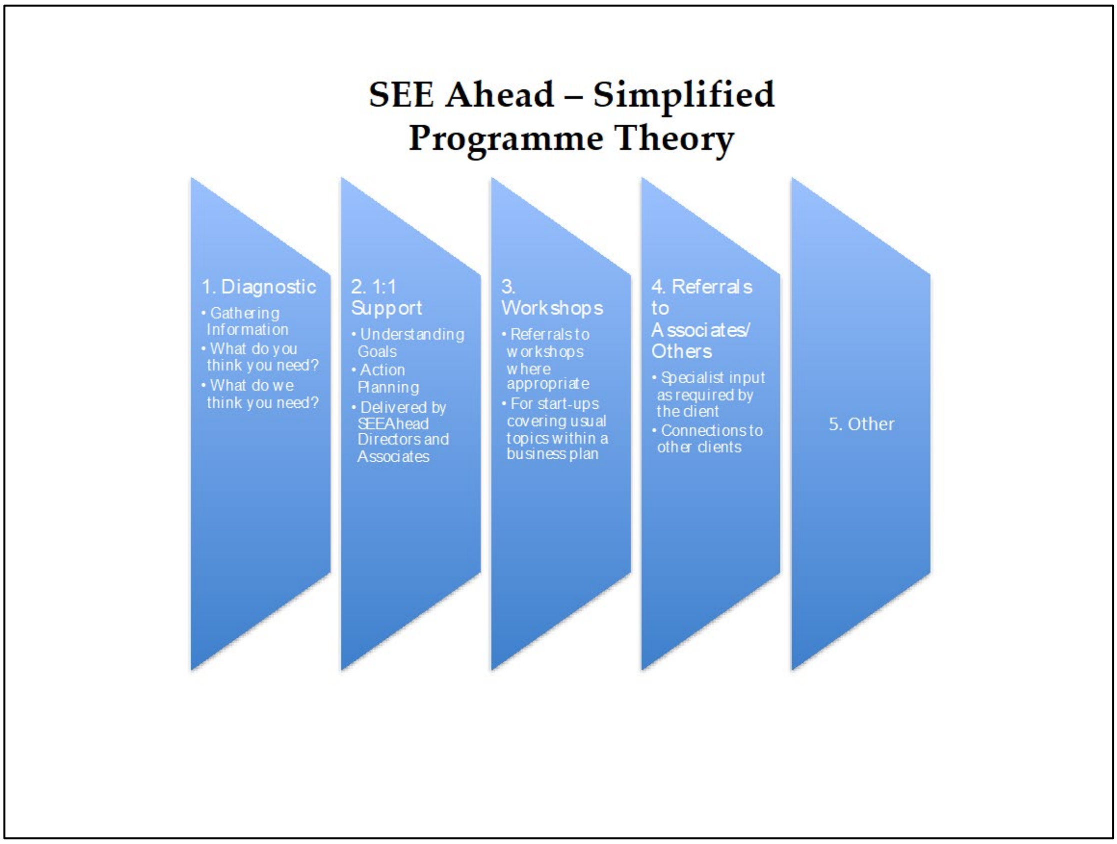


Table 7.27 Question 1: What Is Working (Worked) Best For You At The Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: SA 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: SA 2, 2020
2. 1:1 Support *"Previously, it was this [pointing to Diagnostic]…it was the diagnostic. At*	**1. The Diagnostic** *"OK, so I would say the initial diagnostic was really useful, because it not only*

the moment, errm...it's both of these…the [1:1] support and the referrals to associates and others. That's been very, very useful" *"This is why 1:1 support works. Because it's that personal…sort of…errm…am I being too hard headed? Am I being too soft? SEEAhead, after the 1:1s...they get it. They understand exactly what it is"*	*checked what our own thinking was, but it threw some curve balls in there as well, which was really important, which is what I wanted… things that you'd not thought about"*
4. Referrals to Associates/Others *"SEE Ahead has been able to introduce me to others who might benefit from my work. There's a synergy between us. And that has been really helpful and it's been really helpful going to meetings with them as well. To keep…to sort of see…because they've taken part in those introductions. And to sort of see…bring it back to the business bit again"*	**2. The 1:1 Support** *"The one to one support for me particularly, I think, as a CEO can be seen as sort of a lonely place"* *"So, the kind of unpicking ideas is fantastic and giving you things that you had not even thought about considering, but then helping you put it into reality is the key"*

SA 1 raised a valuable point related to the 1:1 support; going beyond the more obvious business development aspects, and more towards the personal growth and development required to run a business and exposing a potential gap in current provision:

> *"1:1 support is really important and I think it's through that 1:1 support, that I've been able to adjust psychologically…because this is the thing that there's no training*

on…and that is the psychological aspect of seeing yourself as a business person" (SA 1, 2020)

SA 2, further echoed the this far, unanimous value of a personal relationship with the advisor:

"SEE Ahead was very much that…they take time to find out about you as well and then it [the relationship] sort of flows really" (SA 2, 2020)

This demonstrates further alignment with the recurring theme of the advisor/client relationship and its importance in enabling progress and development (Cabinet Office, 2011, p. iii).

Table 7.28 Question 2: What Is Working (Worked) Least For You At The Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: SA 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: SA 2, 2020
3. Workshops *"Workshops. Because they can't be specific. They have to...obviously…there's various different people there...and so they can't be…sort of specific…so there's some things that seem sort of relevant, and other things that don't"*	**Nothing** *"I'm trying to think. I can't particularly think of anything"*

In addition to SA 1's thoughts on the natural limitations of workshops and their specificity, they did go on to see the value from an increase in their network as a result of attendance; another link to networking and peer-to-peer support (Cabinet Office, 2011, p. ix). However, there are still some potential drawbacks to being exposed to other start-ups, if you are perhaps less confident in your own rate and course of progress:

> *"That's not to say that I haven't benefitted from them. And also, benefitted from meeting other people. Errm...but sometimes it can be scary as well because you also…you hear about people that are further on than you...and it can bash your confidence a bit" (SA 1, 2020)*

The honesty in this interview also revealed another perception of 'weakness' when comparing oneself to others within a workshop setting:

> *"And I suppose to be honest as well for me it was just jealousy sometimes that they've got a partner…that they weren't doing all…doing it all on your own is very, very hard. And not having anybody to sort of bounce ideas about…I mean I've got my Trustees. But you don't want to bother them too much with everything. So…yeh…there's was a sort of thing...Oh, I wish I had a partner" (SA 1, 2020)*

It is interesting to understand this participant's feeling of loss and weakness in not having a business partner to discuss things with. Whilst at face value, this is understandable, when working with start-ups with two or more partners, the conflict and tensions often arising from such a scenario, often outweighs any potential benefits. However, this is observational/anecdotal from working in the sector, rather than a specific finding from this study.

Table 7.29 Question 3: Do You Feel That Anything Became More Valuable/Relevant To You Following The End Of The Programme?

Question for Previous Beneficiary Only: SA 2, 2020
4. Referrals to Others/Associates *"I think the biggest thing for me was that it gave us confidence to go "OK, do you know what we can actually do this" and enabled us to expand it and grow and feel*

confident really…so the kind of referral and the end bit is now the most important bit to us, because we've already covered the other bits"

Table 7.30 Question 4: Do You Feel That Anything Became Less Valuable/Relevant To You Following The End Of The Programme & Why?

Question for Previous Beneficiary Only: SA 2, 2020
"No, because I think if we hadn't had that grounding we wouldn't have felt confident to be able to do some of the other stuff to be honest" *"We don't need the one to one input on the structure bit anymore because we've got a pretty good handle on that now, because of that work…so nothing particularly, it was kind of… kind of a foundation really"*

Table 7.31 Question 5: Do You Feel That (On Reflection) Anything Is (Was) Missing From The Support You Are Receiving (Received) & Why?

Current Beneficiary: SA 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: SA 2, 2020
5. Other	**4. Referrals to Associates/Others**
"Errm…You see it's not their job to do it, but it would be nice for someone to sort of say...sometimes when there's something difficult…to sort of say...'This is the way to go. That's what you need to do'" *"The psychological shift. Yes. That's it. That is definitely something that is…errm…it's there…you know it's there that they're supporting you and saying...'oh yeah…you can do…' But yeah, the sort of…the psychological support I think. The psychological*	*"Not particularly. The only thing I would say, and like you say hindsight is a really useful thing, isn't it?"* *"The only thing I would say, although I wouldn't have known that at the time I don't think, was to have had the links to other people earlier"* *"It would have been quite useful to have those links earlier, because you get a bit scared about contacting people when*

support…And you do feel as if you've got to sort of say, 'right I'm dealing with it.' And sometimes, to be able to say, 'Do you know what, I think I'm just...loosing it for a while'"	*you're not already there because you think you should have a done deal. But reflecting back now, having spoken to people, you don't necessarily have to have a done deal when you go to people because you can talk over ideas and actually tweak things"*

SA 1 mentioned two important points here. Firstly, that whilst accepting that an advisor is there to provide best practice advice, rather than direct instruction, sometimes, the latter would seem preferable. They also returned to an earlier point during this question – identifying some support with what they described as the 'psychological shift' in moving towards being 'in business'. On pressing this further to discover how they felt this 'gap' in provision might be most effectively delivered, (1:1 or workshop). Further strengthening the value placed on 1:1 support (BIS, 2011a), they stated:

> *"No because there are workshops that you can do in learning to be more resilient…errm…errm…and…I think the 1:1 is better… and actually I feel I am quite resilient...you know…I am quite resilient. So I think the 1:1 would work better…because it could be specific" (SA 1, 2020)*

SA 2's ability to reflect and look back critically revealed a potential opportunity to have made use of contacts, had introductions been made earlier. However, another recurring theme is evident again here, in that would they have had the confidence to take that action at the time, or not:

> *"I may or may not have felt confident at the time to be able to reach out, you know… you sort of have to reflect, how confident were we at that time, but I would have had a choice to" (SA 2, 2020)*

Perhaps it is also important to acknowledge what we don't know from this scenario as described by the participant; whether the advisor made a judgment call on when to make such contacts available to the client, based on their perceptions and understanding of the client and their needs at that time.

Table 7.32 Question 6: Do You Feel That You Accessed Support At The Right Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: SA 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: SA 2, 2020
Yes *"Absolutely. Yes. Because…well, because of the changes that I've gone through and it's [the support] been there"*	**Yes** *"Yes, perfect time because we just had the stuff and it had been sat there like a month, and so this came up and it felt like 'wow OK this is fantastic, let's just do it'"* *"So the timing was perfect from our point of view"*

Table 7.33 Question 7: Are (Did) You Learn More From The Programme And Its Deliverers, Or From The Other Participants & Why?

Current Beneficiary: SA 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: SA 2, 2020
Programme Deliverers *"SEE Ahead. Because SEE Ahead is keeping me focused. And working with the other organisations you can think…ooh we can do this or we can do that…you know, it's up to you to sort of …do that…navigate that yourselves…but…errm…the SEEAhead*	**Programme Deliverers** *"It was the programme quite honestly, because I didn't do too much of the other workshops because… say we were sort of… we got on the right track and we thought, you know rather than do it we are just going to get stuck into this and actually have a go now"*

is specific…it's focused"	

SA 1 considered this question from the perspective of their own start-up, which is very specific and specialised in nature:

> *"They [other more generic start-ups] are too different and if we were similar, then we would be in competition" (SA 1, 2020)*

Whilst they could see that for a more generic start-up, there may be benefits in sharing advice/ideas with peers; for them, they felt that this was not the case due to their specific context, perhaps demonstrating that whilst there is a general value placed on the opportunity for peer-to-peer learning (Cabinet Office, 2011), it does have its limitations.

Table 7.34 Question 8: Is There Anything Else I Should Know About The Support You Are Receiving And How It Has Helped/Hindered & Why?

Current Beneficiary: SA 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: SA 2, 2020
5. Other *"I think maybe, I could have done with a kick up the backside a bit more…[laughing] And I think that I hid that sometimes in the early days…when I wasn't as far on as…as…as I was making out…[Someone] to drive you forward. To say, 'come on…you know…get on the horse'"* *"And maybe sometimes as well, how to approach people and networking"*	**5. Other** *"It always felt like a support thing for me… it was a kind of you know, very much a partnership thing which was a really positive experience"* *"It's very much an ethical thing with this programme as well you know, I mean I know it's a business but it's that kind of we are all there to support each other and everybody should be able to succeed, rather than being competitive and that's the important thing about the whole SEE*

	Ahead thing, it's about not being competitive, it's about being able to support each other and there's a place for everybody and we just have to find it"

SA 1's second point on how best to approach others led to a request to expand on what at first seemed to be generic networking skills:

> *"That corporate language sort of thing. How do you do it? I've tended to actually, just be myself. And that's actually usually worked well, because everybody's said I come across as passionate. So...I think that's probably OK. But…errm…but yeh, just how to…how to have a short, sharp, 'this is what I'm offering, this is the value' errm…get in touch…Getting the message clear and quick and to the right person, and…also in some way, making sure that they're going to respond" (SA 1, 2020)*

They went on to clarify that this potential 'gap' in support was more specific than that, and perhaps more akin to the ability to 'pitch'.

7.6.4 School for Social Entrepreneurs

The diagram below (Figure 7.5) shows the IRPT model shared with the participants of the School for Social Entrepreneur's support, with the addition of a 'catch-all' option.

Figure 7.5 Initial Rough Programme Theory Shared With School For Social Entrepreneurs Participants

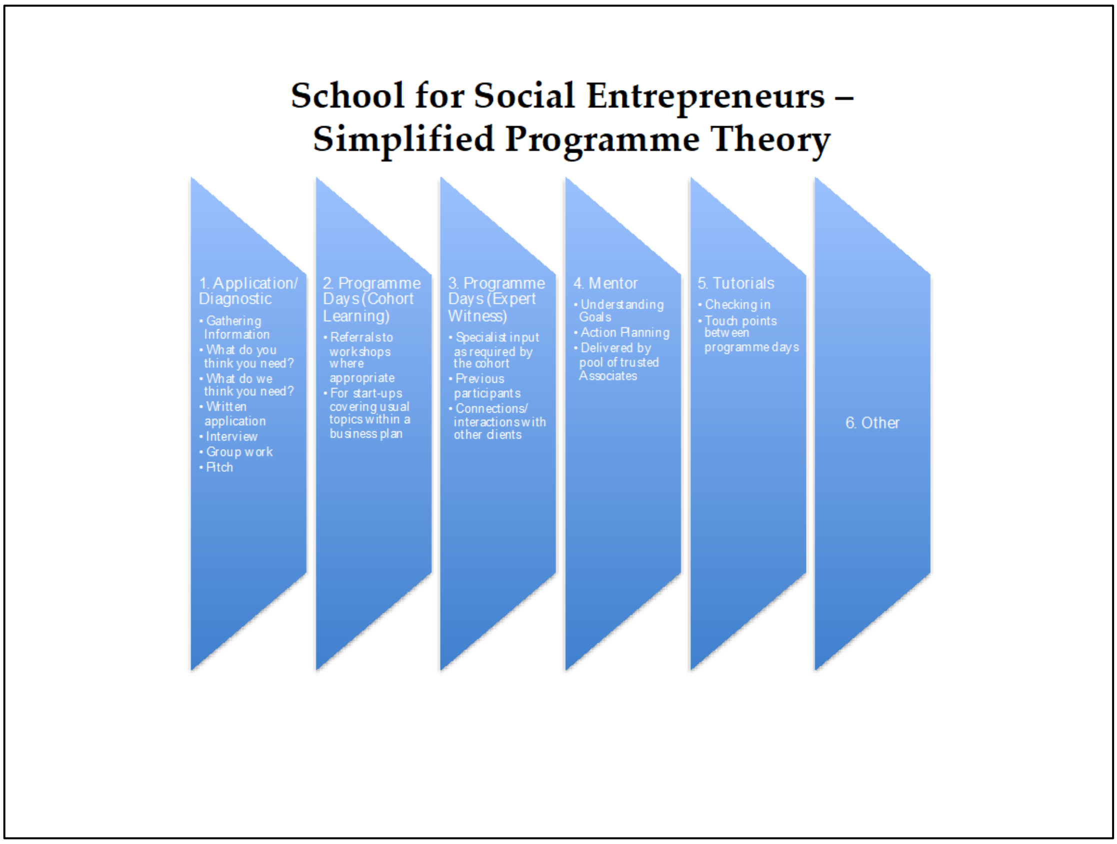


Table 7.35 Question 1: What Is Working (Worked) Best For You At The Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: SSE 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: SSE 2, 2020
3. Programme Days - Cohort Learning *"It was really the cohort learning. You know"* *"So the cohort learning was useful…the opportunity to ask questions. As much as anything. The opportunity to talk to someone and say…well what do I do in this context? What haven't I thought about?"*	**1. Application Process** *The application process helped to define the reason why you were going for support, so I found that useful.* *The application was helpful for refine and define; the reasons why you were seeking support and [it] was a very supportive process.*
	3. Programme Days – Cohort Interactions *"The most useful, I found was from the other members of the cohort and obviously the cohort leaders…They became like your social enterprise family"* *"The fact that you were with other like-minded people, you learned as much from them in the coffee break, and discussions, as you did really from everything else"*

SSE 1 and 2 agreed that the cohort-learning element had particular value, and their explanations echo previous participant's responses around peer-to-peer support (Cabinet Office, 2011).

SSE 2 added the application process itself to the elements which had particular value and cited the opportunity to "refine and define" their idea which is an insightful response for a start-up.

Table 7.36 Question 2: What Is Working (Worked) Least For You At The Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: SSE 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: SSE 2, 2020
4. Mentor *"The Mentor [laughing]. That was a definite!"* *"I had really good expectations. He was…a…errm…personal finance director for [a major bank]. You know, when you talk to him…really nice chap. Made the effort. Sounded really, really positive"* *"What I hoped from a mentor…was for someone to be a bit more of a 'pain in the arse'! That's what I need. I need someone to be far more...'have you done this?' 'Have you done that?'"* *"I suppose part of it is difficult for the mentor and mentee…does the mentee keep on pestering and I'll use that word quite deliberately…pestering. Am I pestering when I get in contact? If you*	**2. Programme Days – Action Learning Sets** *"The action learning didn't particularly work well for me"* ***Researcher: Can I ask why?*** *"I think the quality of the facilitation, really"* *"The quality of the facilitation of the group. For some people in the cohort - in other groups because obviously we have small action learning groups - it was a useful space. But for our group, due to lots of reasons, the main one being the quality of the facilitation, didn't work so well, so they became quite laborious"*

were my mentor and I was contacting...you've got…as a mentor…got to be very 'arms wide' and say, it's not pestering. I might be busy. I might not be able to get back to you straight away. But contact me. And I didn't feel like that"	***Researcher: So I think what you're saying is, it was not so much the group – the people you were with - but more how it was facilitated. Is that right?*** *"Yes, exactly"*

SSE 1's response about having a mentor and the success (or not) of that relationship was not isolated across the participant's data set in this respect. The feedback was not that mentors were specifically and consistently unsuccessful, but rather that these are difficult relationships to foster and that the task in ensuring a successful pairing of mentor and mentee should not be underestimated:

> *"It was no 'loggerheads' it wasn't anything like that. I think the difficulty is…is…matching the…nature of the mentees and the nature of the mentors...because different mentees will want, different things and the same as the mentors will want different things. You know…if only it's a regular phone call or call in" (SSE 1, 2020)*

Whilst asking SSE 1 for more possibilities of why they felt this had been unsuccessful, the participant explained that they were one of a limited number of people in that particular cohort who were not immediately assigned a mentor at the start of the programme. This meant that he didn't meet them right at the start in a face-to-face setting. He speculated whether or not this was a contributing factor:

> *"So whether the ones it was successful with, were the ones who got a mentor and had a sit down in a room and a chat…that kind of thing…I don't know? So I don't know if that was the reason…or…as I say…he seemed to want to be a mentor for what I perceived to be the right reasons" (SSE 1, 2020)*

SSE 2's response was very specific to the 'action learning' part of the specific programme days. It transpired on deeper questioning that the problem was not so much with the group, or the principle of action learning as a mechanism, but rather the specific facilitation of this participant's group:

> ***Researcher: Can I dig a bit deeper? Do you think...if you were to give that facilitator some advice, what...how would it have been improved?***

> *"I think the facilitator was very newly qualified at it and so did it very much, 'by the book' and it felt very much like you were being facilitated by the book – as opposed to being listened to, and being a bit flexible" (SSE 2, 2020)*

Whilst this may well have been an isolated occurrence of a participant feeling that a developmental opportunity was somewhat limited by a less-experienced facilitator, it does further demonstrate the impact (positive and/or negative) which an advisor can have on a client, and the importance of their ability to "inspire, enthuse and motivate," those they support (Cabinet Office, 2011, p. iii).

Table 7.37 Question 3: Do You Feel That Anything Became More Valuable/Relevant To You Following The End Of The Programme And Why?

Question for Previous Beneficiary Only: SSE 2, 2020
"I think Sue and Dina's [programme deliverer's] commitment to on-going...to an on-going relationship with you after...like I'm still in contact with Sue and Dina now. And I go back to do 'Expert Witness' for them, for the next cohort" *"So that's been really useful to me, to check in with them and to ask advice 4 years on. So that's the most useful at the moment"*

Table 7.38 Do You Feel That Anything Became Less Valuable/Relevant To You Following The End Of The Programme & Why?

Question for Previous Beneficiary Only: SSE 2, 2020
"The mentor was quite interesting at the time, but didn't have any life after the programme. So the mentor relationship, I guess, that now Sue and Dina have that relationship with me. But no, the mentor. It was fine…you know it was quite interesting at the time, but it didn't really go anywhere"

This is another occurrence of a mentor being highlighted, and the difficulty in arranging an effective pairing:

> *"I ended up starting a LinkedIn page, on his recommendation which has been really useful, but, it felt like I was doing a lot of work to present to him, to get nothing back really. I didn't appreciate having to do work as such that I didn't thinks was that useful to me at the time" (SSE 2, 2020)*

To be clear this was not an altogether negative experience, and the potential value of mentors was highlighted in Lesson for the Future 7, within the Cabinet Office Report (2011), but there were issues here in terms of expectations and usefulness of input:

Table 7.39 Question 5: Do You Feel That (On Reflection) Anything Is (Was) Missing From The Support You Are Receiving (Received) & Why?

Current Beneficiary: SSE 1, 2020	**Previous Beneficiary: SSE 2, 2020**
A positive mentor/mentee relationship *"The mentor…but the things that were most interesting, far outweighed the fact that the mentor thing didn't work out*	**Specific Access To Funding Training** *"Maybe some specific input on fund raising. I mean we had lots…we had funding sessions, but maybe some specific help in compiling a list of funders to go to. You have access to like the Directory*

anyway"	*of Social Change, which costs a lot of money to get access, so maybe a session on that? Very specific…so you can look at a funding strategy…That would have been quite practical and helpful"*

SSE 1 returned to the topic of the mentor, as this had been a less successful experience for them, but equally commented that the benefits of other aspects of the programme off-set this deficiency.

SSE 2's response is very specific but the question is whether there is an opportunity to draw out this detail at the time of the intervention, rather than with hindsight.

Table 7.40 Question 6: Do You Feel That You Accessed Support At The Right Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: SSE 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: SSE 2, 2020
Yes *"Yes. I certainly do… It was just the right time. Enough to make me sit here thinking, right OK…when is the application for the Trade Up [next stage of support]"*	**Yes** *"Yes it was. Because we'd started our campaign…I don't know, maybe 8 months before and not only did it give you the financial security – in terms of being able to buy bits and pieces – buy a …maybe buy a computer…buy yourself some time…because it gave you the small grant. But also it gave you access to others going through that process, and it gave you access to expert witnesses and obviously the whole SSE network. So for us it was a good time because the idea had been formed, but we were struggling to understand what structure our campaign would move on to"*

Table 7.41 Question 7: Are (Did) You Learn More From The Programme And Its Deliverers, Or From The Other Participants & Why?

Current Beneficiary: SSE 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: SSE 2, 2020
Participants	**Both**
"I think the SSE are very good at enabling you to have the conversations with each other… and to learn where you are, in comparison to others. To sometimes be inspired by others"	*"That's hard isn't it? I'd say maybe 60/40. Or maybe it's half and half?"* *"They were complementary"*

SSE 1 spoke at length about the value of the cohort learning again, and the action learning sets; stating that they would still value access to such a group today:

> *"If someone said well what are you missing most…I miss going there for one day a month" (SSE 1, 2020)*

SSE 2 also spoke further about the value of the cohort, prompting a more detailed interaction about programmes that have such an element, and programmes which don't:

> *"Oh no. I really think that that was a huge bonus. I think they [the other participants] are all the same, but at different times in their journey, and the struggles that they were having, you could talk through and learn something about your own situation as well. And it's useful to objectify some issues that they were going through that you might have gone through, or were going to go through, and talk about their problems and their issues with you. And you can then work things out for yourself. So it was really, really, useful. And not just being*

together, but in working things out together, and sharing frustrations and successes. It was a very nice process. Very productive" (SSE 2, 2020)

As their response clearly revealed, there was no doubt in their mind that the cohort itself (and the peer-to-peer learning it enabled) was of immense value to their learning opportunity (Cabinet Office, 2011).

Table 7.42 Question 8: Is There Anything Else I Should Know About The Support You Are Receiving And How It Has Helped/Hindered & Why?

Current Beneficiary: SSE 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: SSE 2, 2020
Relevance is important *"I must admit that half of our expert sessions were great and the other half, were boring because they didn't interest me"*	**Excellent** *"So…overall…I think it was…excellent"*
Proximity of delivery *"They now have the meetings in York…which would have been a hell of a lot easier than getting to Leeds for 9:30. So nice and close"*	

7.6.5 UnLtd

The diagram below (Figure 7.6) shows the IRPT model shared with the participants of UnLtd's support, with the addition of a 'catch-all' option.

Figure 7.6 Initial Rough Programme Theory Shared With UnLtd Participants

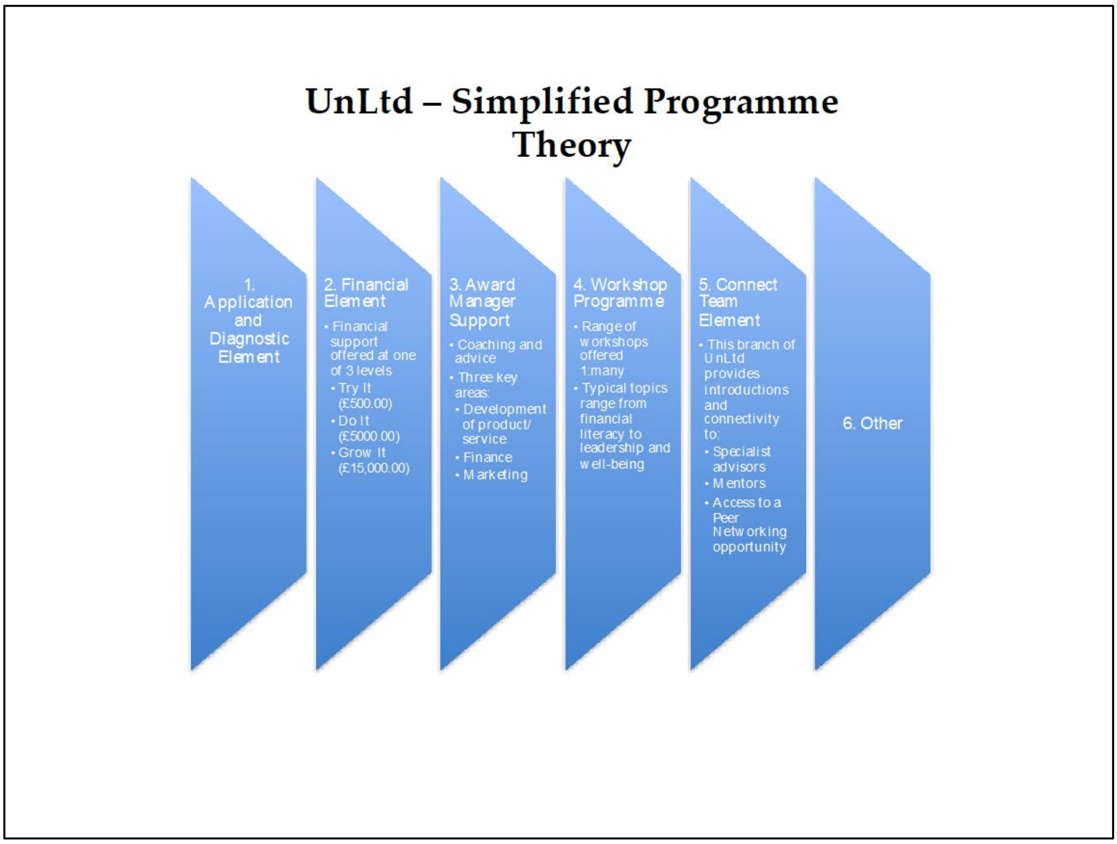


Table 7.43 Question 1: What Is Working (Worked) Best For You At The Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: UL 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: UL 2, 2020
3. Award Manager Support *"The award manager who managed it, Ahmed…now he has been supportive throughout"*	**3. Award Manager Support** *"I think, [for] me at the… meeting the award manager, meeting Ashley in the first place was really useful to help contextualise what the offer was and you know, as we've said, new to social enterprises, new to this sort of support*

"You build up the trust and they give you the support"	*and actually errm, you know, sort of talking about what we did and errm, and what was on offer was really helpful in terms of helping me to pick out the bits that I felt would be useful, so the financial…the sort of… the key areas"*

UL 1, immediately spoke about the support and personal relationship established between him and the Award Manager. This recurring theme of trust and the importance of a relationship has been evident in so many interviews. Further discussions also revealed another common theme; that of flexibility in the delivery of support. UL 1 when speaking about the often-irregular rate of progress and need to draw down funds explained:

> *"They've realised, that you know things hadn't taken off as you would have liked initially, but they've worked with us to say right well let's just spread it out a bit further and use it as you need it sort of thing, not as we want you to have it" (UL 1, 2020)*

UL 2's response was interesting from the perspective that they acknowledged the change they felt in understanding the value from the support:

> *"Well when I applied, I think, I thought I don't care about the rest of it, just give me the money, errm, until I accessed the rest of it and realised, errm, how errm, how useful, and sort of… I suppose in hindsight, transformational those following aspects were" (UL 2, 2020)*

Their initial feeling at the time was that the grant funding was the key element; and that the rest was unimportant. However, having met the Award Manager and started to understand the non-financial value of the other elements of support; this changed their understanding, and further reflects the many sub-components under the umbrella 'business support' term (Centre for Cities, 2013).

Table 7.44 Question 2: What Is Working (Worked) Least For You At The Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: UL 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: UL 2, 2020
4. Workshop Programme *"The workshop programme. I went to about 5 or 6 of them which… and they were very good whilst they were there"* *"But since, there hasn't been a lot of workshop content"*	**4. Workshop Programme** *"Some of the workshops. It's so hard for them, isn't it errm, to provide…there's a group of 10 people or more, you know, and you're providing a workshop that each person is taking something different from and you know, errm, it's… and so that's a useful journey for an individual to pick out the bits, cherry pick the bits which adapt and to make it bespoke to you"*

UL 1's rationale for selecting the workshops here was less to do with their feelings of the value they offered:

> *"I'm a great believer in accepting anything that anybody can offer in training is worth going to" (UL 1, 2020)*

Rather that they experienced cancellations of the workshops and then a decline in their availability:

> *"There doesn't seem to have been… this is maybe 12 months ago, since then many workshops available" (UL 1, 2020)*

UL 2, also acknowledged the value of some of the workshops, but commented as other respondents have previously, that the generic nature of a workshop naturally limits its relevance to everyone:

> *"Some of the workshops, you know…were completely irrelevant [to me], errm, but that's, you know, that's just the way you learn, isn't it" (UL 2, 2020)*

However, in this instance, it appears that the ability to acknowledge this and to still engage despite such limitations, may ultimately depend on an individuals levels of tolerance, linking back to the need to understand the value and importance of context when exploring whether or not an intervention or programme is considered to 'work' (Pawson & Tilley, 1997).

Table 7.45 Question 3: Do You Feel That Anything Became More Valuable/Relevant To You Following The End Of The Programme?

Question for Previous Beneficiary Only: UL 2, 2020
5. Connect Team Element – Access To Peer Networking *"Yes, errm, the access to peer networking"*

UL 2, explained that a small network had been started by several recipients of UnLtd's support, and that the network (still maintained at the date of interview) continued to deliver value to its members:

> *"From the very first UnLtd thing that I did, I can't even remember when that was, quite a way…a group of us around West Yorkshire…meet up sort of a couple of times a year, moan about how difficult it all is, but it's actually really nice little open group, (as it turns out, all women… but well that just happened), and have sort of just developed really good networks and support, and even errm, probably opportunities as a result of our sort of friendships have evolved" (UL 2, 2020)*

Although appearing as an aside and incidental comment, the reference to having an opportunity to openly discuss and acknowledge how challenging it is to start a social enterprise, is another recurring theme:

> *"Moan about how difficult it all is" (UL 2, 2020)*

Table 7.46 Question 4: Do You Feel That Anything Became Less Valuable/Relevant To You Following The End Of The Programme & Why?

Question for Previous Beneficiary Only: UL 2, 2020
6. Other – Work Relating To Social Value *"Yes, there was…So, we did quite a lot of work, as an example, we did quite a lot of work around sort of social value"*

As a practitioner myself working with social enterprise start-ups and understanding the expectation to demonstrate social value to stakeholders, I found this response particularly interesting, and asked for further details regarding their response:

> *"It was all about statistics and statistical analysis and data gathering, which was great, but my cynical head at the time thought, I don't know about this, you know…how is 5 respondents a good… how can you manipulate that data to be valuable? That's not working for me, surely, you know, it needs to be more robust than that?" (UL 2, 2020)*

They went on to acknowledge that the theory of understanding and capturing social value was helpful, but that an understanding of how to do this was vital:

> *"So from getting completely sucked in to trying to think about our social value and working out all these ways to, you know, gather data...actually we've completely*

simplified that right down and have used, a theory of change model and based our questionnaires and our feedback on three key questions, and that was, it was, that was a really good journey to go on" (UL 2, 2020)

This learning process was acknowledged as being helpful, but also very time consuming:

"It was sort of a good foundation, but I could have saved myself quite a lot of brain ache and time, but you know, you have to go… there's a few false leads always, aren't there?" (UL 2, 2020)

Whilst this is a single response of a personal experience of social value training, it does perhaps provide an opportunity to review how such training is provided and the importance of an appropriate methodology, to suit specific social ventures. It is also worth highlighting that despite the literature around the importance of understanding, capturing and reporting social impact is clear (Cabinet Office, 2011), there was little mention of it from the participants interviewed.

Table 7.47 Question 5: Do You Feel That (On Reflection) Anything Is (Was) Missing From The Support You Are Receiving (Received) & Why?

Current Beneficiary: UL 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: UL 2, 2020
No *"No, I don't think so because what they've done is provided us with £3,000 enabling me to buy a range of products and materials to use in the workshop and you know, and as I say Ahmed's given a good service... he's come and gone through things with me… highly delighted"*	**Possibly** *"I think… because it was up to us, we chose to develop are little peer group, but errm, I think with the SSE programme, there is time within the programme to develop those groups. Does that make sense? It's not meant to sound like a critique, it's just a little bit of an observation"*

UL 2's response benefits from some additional context here in that at the time of the UnLtd support, as an independent and motivated individual, they had no problem with instigating peer to peer networking 'outside' of the direct delivery of the programme. With the benefit of hindsight and additionally, having participated in the School for Social Entrepreneur's Programme which embeds that process within the support, they can see the difference in that approach:

Researcher – So, I think what you're saying is that, on reflection, the missing element was that whilst there was the opportunity for peer networking, you had to grasp that and make it happen yourself, rather than it being embedded in the programme? Is that right?

"Yes" (UL 2, 2020)

As this added value for them, might this be essential for some clients, which relates back to the importance of understanding context (Pawson & Tilley, 1997).

Table 7.48 Question 6: Do You Feel That You Accessed Support At The Right Time & Why?

Current Beneficiary: UL 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: UL 2, 2020
Yes *"Yes, I do, yes. Having worked with them now it's put maybe us in a good place to say…to go back and say let's look at other things we can do in the future"*	**Yes** *"Yes I do…I think it was bang on the right time because, errm, I was I suppose a bit lost in how to move forward"* *"It was absolutely at the right time and errm, gave confidence and ideas and just a little bit of a... just someone realising… telling you that what you're doing, is a good thing"*

UL 2 went on to explain the added value of having a third party's perspective on your idea:

> *"It's invaluable, because you operate in your own little bubble and you know, it could be completely unviable and you're never ever going do more than what you are doing, and that wasn't…my ambition was always to grow it"* (UL 2, 2020)

The opportunity and value in utilising an advisor to plan and 'imagine' future potential or differing scenarios, ahead of actually implementing them, is again frequently evidenced.

Table 7.49 Question 7: Are (Did) You Learn More From The Programme And Its Deliverers, Or From The Other Participants & Why?

Current Beneficiary: UL 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: UL 2, 2020
Both *"The workshops were good and relevant, you know, about cash flow, data protection… and relevant things and it was good that other people from other walks of life were there and dealt with their problems/issues that they had"* *"It's always good to hear other people's, you know, difficulties… somebody may have been through that problem before"*	**Both** *"I'd say 50:50 really"* *"So like the leadership workshops and the wellbeing workshops that we did, errm, were about the person who led them but …what made them and what they encouraged and drew out was about other people's experiences… so if those people hadn't been in the room that… it would just be...it wouldn't have been what it was, if that makes sense?* *"It's not just about… you don't operate*

	on your own, do you in that situation?"

This offers further alignment to the sector placing value on the opportunity to network and engage in peer-to-peer learning and discussion (Cabinet Office, 2011).

Table 7.50 Question 8: Is There Anything Else I Should Know About The Support You Are Receiving And How It Has Helped/Hindered & Why?

Current Beneficiary: UL 1, 2020	Previous Beneficiary: UL 2, 2020
No *"No, I don't think… it's worked, you know. I'd rather have had the £5,000 than the £3,000, but you know they were oversubscribed, and I can understand that. They've done what they said they were going to do. They've enabled us to do it over a longer period. No, I've no issues I don't think"*	**Yes** *"Something that I observed afterwards…you become a bit of an addict, a learning addict or a, or a, errm, sort of workshop addict, and you want to do more and more and more, and actually, you know, you bob along to something and your think, I did already know that, I did know that"*

UL 2, started to consider whether there was a refinement opportunity within their feelings of becoming 'addicted to learning' and on further discussion, they felt it was balancing when there is a genuine need for support and learning as that is delivering new knowledge, and when it is more about confidence and reassurance that they already know and understand what is being offered:

> *"It was more about confidence than needing to know that, because, we were already doing that, but I didn't realise. So, the question to myself then is 'What would help you not do that?' [Attend things unnecessarily]…You know you could save a bit of time" (UL 2, 2020)*

It appeared that UL 2 was seeking some sort of clarification or affirmation, on what they already know, and what they still need to learn. They recalled being asked to speak about their start-up experiences to others, and being concerned that they actually had any helpful knowledge to share:

> *"I'm not sure what I know, but of course I'll sit down and have a cup of tea with them and we can chat…But actually once I started talking to them and they started asking questions, I had loads to offer and to give them…to share with them and pointers and things…So, it's about that, it's about sort of helping to draw out what you do know…and to realise that" (UL 2, 2020)*

If this was a potential refinement opportunity for a programme of support, I asked how UL 2 felt that would be included or presented to participants:

> ***Researcher – Might this be part of the initial diagnosis. If the diagnostic element, you know, when they first meet you… Do you think that might be adapted to draw out more...more of what you already know?***

> *"Yes, yes, that might be the place to do it. Absolutely, yes" (UL 2, 2020)*

7.6.6 Group 3 Questions Analysis: Summary and Conclusions

The Group 3 questions enabled an opportunity to investigate and better understand, a range of participant's experiences and opinions, regarding the different aspects of start-up support interventions; hence contributing to the research objective of what works for whom in what circumstances and why. The summative table below (Table 7.51) illustrates the emerging themes of this data set, together with conclusions drawn from these responses. In order to simplify and summarise these respondent's comments succinctly across five different programmes, wherever possible, I have attempted to refine the language used to reflect areas of parity. For example, whilst The Realistic Business Consortium clients may refer to 'Follow On Support', Key

Fund clients may refer to "Post Funding Support' and UnLtd clients may refer to 'Award Manager Support', all are indicating 1:1 business support and advice.

Table 7.51 Summary & Conclusions From Group 3 Questions

Question and Organisation	Current Participant	Previous Participant	Conclusions Drawn
What is working/worked best for you here and why?	**RBC1** Analysis and Diagnosis of Support Needs The Forum (i.e. facilitated peer to peer learning) **KF1** 1:1 Business Support **SA1** 1:1 Business Support Referrals **SSE1**	**RBC2** Analysis and Diagnosis of Support Needs Referrals **KF2** 1:1 Business Support **SA2** Analysis and Diagnosis of Support Needs 1:1 Business Support **SSE2**	When reflecting on the detail within respondent's comments, three elements dominated their responses. These are detailed below, together with resulting conclusions. **1:1 Business Support** *The clear benefits of an on-going 1:1 relationship which is founded on mutual trust and respect *The personal and personalised nature of the help provided via this mechanism *The value of the time/opportunity to work through ideas and problems,

	Cohort Learning **UL1** 1:1 Business Support	The application process Cohort Learning **UL2** 1:1 Business Support	specific to the individual client **Analysis and Diagnosis of Support Needs** *This was deemed critical in client and advisor understanding each other and their needs *An essential component to refine and define what type of support is required **Cohort Learning** *Whether an integral part of the specific programme accessed (i.e. SSE), or gained via more informal peer networking or wider sector interactions, the benefits of sharing the start-up journey and interacting with, and learning from, others was rated highly

Question and Organisation	Current Participant	Previous Participant	Conclusions Drawn
What is working/worked least for you here and why?	**RBC1** Action Planning **KF1** Monitoring requirements **SA1** Workshops **SSE1** The Mentor **UL1** Workshops	**RBC2** Referrals **KF2** The application process **SA2** Nothing **SSE2** Action Learning Sets **UL2** Workshops	When reflecting on the detail within respondent's comments, one element dominated the responses here **Workshops** *The contributing factors to identifying workshops as a weaker element of support enabled the following conclusions to be drawn: *The unavoidable lack of specificity which is possible in a 1:many setting reduces their appeal and benefit in providing the support required *A lack of availability of appropriate and relevant workshop content, or at least, availability locally

			*In constructing an intervention intended to deliver widespread benefits to differing clients, there is danger that its resulting impact is low for everyone
Do you feel that anything became more valuable/relevant to you after your support ended and why?	Not applicable as unable to comment whilst still being supported	**RBC2** 1:1 Business Support **KF2** The application process **SA2** Referrals to others **SSE2** The commitment of the programme deliverers **UL2** Access to a peer network	It is interesting to note here that the value of specific components of support which were identified as becoming more valuable with the benefit of hindsight, has good correlation with the earlier responses from question 1, what elements of support were working best. This cross-correlation leads to concluding that from the recipient's perspective, 1:1 business support, a mechanism for better understanding the client and their needs, and access to a network, are vital components of support

Question and Organisation	Current Participant	Previous Participant	Conclusions Drawn
Do you feel that anything became less valuable/relevant to you after your support ended and why?	Not applicable as unable to comment whilst still being supported	**RBC2** Referrals **KF2** No **SA2** No **SSE2** The mentor **UL2** Social value training	RBC2 citing 'referrals' is perhaps slightly misleading within this section as it is not the opportunity for referrals being criticised here, but rather a perceived unnecessary referral specific to this individual The significance of the mentor being mentioned in this context is more noteworthy, highlighted in the section below, and certainly worthy of future considerations The mention of social value training is certainly worth exploring as there was limited commentary on the topic of social value across the study, and here it is being offered as a decreasingly valuable component of support. Reviewing the specific details emerging from this interview, I would conclude that it was not

			suggesting irrelevance in the topic of social impact, but rather in the specific approach experienced by this client. It appears there is an opportunity for a broader and more widespread understanding of social impact and its specific significance to social enterprises.
Do you feel that anything is/was missing from your support and why?	**RBC1** No **KF1** No **SA1** Support in adapting to running a social enterprise (the psychological shift in mind set)	**RBC2** No **KF2** Basic financial literacy support **SA2** Earlier referrals to externals	Whilst the two finance-related issues raised here were clearly important to the individuals, I believe the mentor and mind-set adaptation present more significant opportunities for future refinement. **Mentor/Mentee Relationships** The mentor was mentioned here in this context not because it was missing, but rather because the relationship and its benefits were not as positive as expected.

	SSE1 A positive mentor/mentee relationship **UL1** No	**SSE2** Support in fund raising **UL2** A peer networking group	Whilst there was a desire on the client's part to have a mentor, and good will on the mentor's part to help, I would conclude that matching mentor and mentee requires careful consideration and possible monitoring to ensure positive outcomes. **Change in mind-set** This is a significant finding in that it supports the need for a broader definition of the term business support, but also the significance of the transformation required when an individual starts a new venture. Supporting that transformation to business owner is not simply about new skills and knowledge, it's also about self-belief, resilience and attitude to risk.

Question and Organisation	Current Participant	Previous Participant	Conclusions Drawn
Do you feel that you have/did access support at the right time and why?	**RBC1** Yes **KF1** Yes **SA1** Yes **SSE1** Yes **UL1** Yes	**RBC2** Yes **KF2** Yes **SA2** Yes **SSE2** Yes **UL2** Yes	Reflecting on these responses (100% concurrence that it was the right time to access support) I feel that the question was perhaps weak. Realistically, none of the respondents could know what it may have been like to access the support at an earlier or later stage than they actually did, and so with the benefit of hindsight, I would replace this question
Do you feel that you are learning/learned more from the programme deliverers, or the other participants and why?	**RBC1** The deliverers	**RBC2** The deliverers	Whilst the dominant response here is the programme deliverers, it is important to note that participants citing either just the

	KF1 The deliverers **SA1** The deliverers **SSE1** The other participants **UL1** The deliverers	**KF2** Both **SA2** The deliverers **SSE2** Both **UL2** Both	participants, or both deliverers and participants, are noting the recurring theme and appreciated value of peer learning, which has frequently surfaced from other areas of this research
Is there anything else I should know about the support you are receiving/have received?	**RBC1** The importance of trust in the advisor/client relationship **KF1** No	**RBC2** The great value of a pivotal advisor/individual to support you **KF2** No	Notable themes and lessons for the future emerging here were: *The recurring importance of trust and respect between client and advisor *The significance of the value and benefits a successful

	SA1 I think I sometimes needed to be told to 'just get on with it!' **SSE1** How important receiving support which is 'relevant' to an individual's needs **UL1** No	**SA2** How positive the overall support experience was **SSE2** It was excellent **UL2** That you can become 'addicted to learning' to the point where you attend sessions on topics you are already competent in	client/advisor relationship brings *The recurring theme of a need for 'relevant' help and support, rather than generalised assistance *The need to identify exactly what is needed for the individual client to ensure focus in accessing appropriate support

7.7 Summary and Conclusions of Chapter 7

In Chapter 1, the two distinct parts of my Research Objectives were presented (please see 1.6, Purpose, Objectives and Scope), and this chapter has responded to Part 2 of those objectives, reiterated here:

Research Objectives Part 2

The second part of the data collection is qualitative and iterative, via in-depth case study interviews of both current and previous recipients of the identified support programmes. These case studies will contribute to the research as follows:

For current participants of support interventions

To identify which specific programme elements (if any) of their business support interventions, are positively contributing to the start-up or continuing success of their social enterprises. These interviews would seek to establish:

- What is working well for them within the programme and why?
- What potentially may work better and why?
- What (if anything) that they feel may be missing and why?

For previous participants of support interventions

To identify on reflection, any areas which were notably absent from their support programme components, and which the respondents felt could/would have made a value adding difference to their start-up, should such advice have been readily available. These interviews would seek to establish:

- What on reflection, worked well for them within the programme and why?
- What on reflection, may have worked better, and why?
- What on reflection (if anything), was felt to be missing and why?

Specifically, this chapter has enabled an increased understanding of differing types of social entrepreneurs, their varying contexts, and what types of social enterprise start-up support interventions work[2] from their perspective, and why.

Chapter 8 will now present the most significant emerging themes from Chapters 6 and 7, in order to:

- Address Parts 1 and 2 of the Research Objectives established in Chapter 1.6
- Provide a summative table of future recommendations for social enterprise start-up support interventions.

These recommendations are importantly informed by the social enterprise sector, and for the social enterprise sector.

[2] For the sake of clarity, 'works' has been interpreted and specifically defined in the context of this research and thesis as, 'contributing positively towards the start-up of the participant's social enterprise, from the perspective of, and to the satisfaction of, the participant'.

8 Chapter 8

8.1 Introduction to Chapter 8

Chapter 1 established the overall purpose of this research, and the objectives it would seek to address. Its purpose was presented as being deceptively simple; seeking to understand what type of social enterprise start-up support interventions work, for whom, in what circumstances, and why. In establishing this core purpose, importance was placed on the consideration and definition of the word 'works' within that statement. For the sake of clarity, 'works' has been interpreted and specifically defined in the context of this research and thesis as, 'contributing positively towards the start-up of the participant's social enterprise, from the perspective of, and to the satisfaction of, the participant'.

Having defined the purpose of the study, the research objectives were presented and articulated in two distinct parts as follows, with each part being investigated, analysed and presented in Chapters 6 and 7 respectively.

Research Objectives - Part 1

Firstly, by examining a number of Social Enterprise Business Start-Up support programmes available within the West Yorkshire Region, via qualitative case-study interviews to understand:

- Examples of the types of organisations currently providing Social Enterprise Start-Up Support in the West Yorkshire Region of the UK
- The nature of these support programmes/interventions

Research Objectives - Part 2

The second part of the data collection was qualitative and iterative, via in-depth case study interviews of both current and previous recipients of the identified support programmes from Part 1 of the research objectives. Those case studies enabled a better understanding of how a variety of participants responded to those interventions, with the cohort of respondents being made up of both current and previous clients of the support organisations. The objectives were to specifically understand:

For current participants of support interventions:

Identifying which specific programme elements (if any) of their business support interventions, positively contributed to the start-up or continuing success of their social enterprises, by asking:

- What is working well for them within the programme and why?
- What potentially may work better and why?
- What (if anything) that they feel may be missing and why?

For previous participants of support interventions:

Identifying on reflection, any areas which were notably absent from their support programme components, and which the respondents felt could/would have made a value adding difference to their start-up, should such advice have been readily available, by asking:

- What on reflection, worked well for them within the programme and why?
- What on reflection, may have worked better, and why?
- What on reflection (if anything), was felt to be missing and why?

This current chapter draws on the analysis and presentation of the data within Chapters 6 and 7, which in turn addresses the collective research objectives in a summative format, to reflect the overall investigation and present the studies conclusions. These conclusions inform both the recommendations for the sector and also to inform the explicitly connected business plan and consultancy unit, CASE, with the business plan being found in Chapter 9. Finally I present my considered outline of how this research has both contributed to existing knowledge, and, revealed opportunities for further and future research.

8.2 Limitations and Considerations Regarding the Research Objectives

8.2.1 Support Organisations

There will inevitably be limitations on the scope and reach of any research project, and whilst this study and this particular objective was geographically limited to West Yorkshire, clearly not every organisation offering any aspect of social enterprise start-up support within this area could be included. Indeed, as the literature review revealed in Chapter 3, the business support sector remains complex, fragmented and disjointed, further restricting the possibility of a totally comprehensive account of all providers. Given this context, the decision was taken to attempt to investigate a limited number, but varied typology of, start-up support organisations, to reveal an overall representation of the varied social enterprise start-up support programmes and interventions.

As this research was undertaken as a Doctor of Enterprise pathway, there is an explicit link to the accompanying innovation to the Enterprise Team's services and the consultancy unit CASE, which was established to run alongside, and as a vehicle for this research. Consequently, it may be argued that if CASE is explicitly linked to this Doctor of Enterprise research, then why does CASE not feature as a Support Organisation, and consequently, its clients as participants within the scope of this research. The decision to exclude this approach here is based on the following four significant factors:

1. CASE was not a participating organisation in the study, but rather came to fruition as a mechanism to instigate this research; provide a vehicle for testing a social enterprise model of working within the University of Huddersfield's

existing Enterprise Team, and to facilitate an increased awareness of social enterprise within the student and recent graduate population.

2. As CASE did not exist at the outset of this research, and tested its externally facing consultancy model for only a limited period during my research journey, it could not provide both current and previous clients for the Part 2 research objectives. Additionally, those external clients were not seeking start-up support and assistance; they were already trading social enterprises seeking strategic direction and advice on social impact activity.

3. As the start-up support communities accessing the services of CASE are current students and recent graduates, there would be a conflict of interest in their inclusion in the study. This is because it would be very difficult for me to mitigate against unconscious bias with clients I have a duty of care towards, as an employee of the University of Huddersfield.

4. CASE was developed as an opportunity to work collaboratively within the existing social enterprise start-up support eco-system, rather than to be perceived or to act as a competitor to existing provision.

8.2.2 Participants of Start-Up Support

The previous section acknowledged limitations with regards to the organisations included in the study; similarly, there are also limitations to consider regarding the participants.

This part of the study has been focused on developing an increased understanding of the start-up support interventions, on a range of participants, and their effectiveness (or not) from the participant's perspective. Ahead of the conclusions and recommendations from the research, I would like to present some potential problematic areas in terms of bias, and fair representation, and the attempts I have made to mitigate and justify the approach and methodology used.

An unbiased representation of programme participants

It was acknowledged in Chapter 6 and this current section, that whilst the five sample organisations were not an exhaustive representation of every start-up support provider within West Yorkshire, reasonable attempts had been made to justify the selected participants, in demonstrating an overview of differing organisations and programmes within the region. Moving now to considering the range of participants included in the study, it may be helpful to reiterate the selection process adopted, but also to address any potential concerns around bias.

Two programme participants were interviewed from each of the five support organisations. In each case, the organisation provided an introduction to their clients who met the following criteria:

- One current participant of social enterprise start-up support. A client currently engaged in a programme of support with that organisation.
- One previous recipient of social enterprise start-up support. This required a client who had previously accessed a start-up support programme/intervention with the corresponding organisation, within the last 2 to 4 years.

There was the opportunity for potential bias here in that the support organisation could theoretically provide an introduction to a client, or clients, whom they felt would likely provide a highly positive account of their experiences, which may not then provide a fair representation of overall participant experience. Whilst this is to an extent a valid argument, I offer two mitigating factors here to propose that this was not in actual fact, the case.

Firstly, during Part 1 of the research, when initially speaking to support organisations that may potentially be included within the study, it was stressed that the purpose of the study was not to conduct an investigation to potentially rank, and/or, criticise, the support interventions being offered, and/or, their respective organisations. Rather to surface potential opportunities to improve future support programmes for future participants, and to provide helpful insights for the range of providers. Each support organisation recognised the potential benefits not only to themselves individually, but for all participants and providers within the sector. From this perspective, there would be nothing to gain by providing introductions only to clients whom they felt would provide only positive accounts.

Secondly, the reality of the interviews with the range of participants did indeed correlate with what may be considered an unbiased cross-section of clients. Specifically, they did report freely and without hesitation, both positive and negative details about their personal experiences of support, which suggests that their selection was as a result of meeting the criteria, rather than being due to their anticipated responses.

Number of participants

Another potential criticism and area of concern may be that the number of participants interviewed, was a small sample size and therefore not wholly representative of the total potential community and their collective opinions. Whilst there will always be the opportunity to consider how this may be improved, the decision on sample size was aligned to the theoretical and methodological approach of this study. As discussed in Chapter 5 (see section 5.4 Introduction to Data Collection), within the realist paradigm and specifically realist evaluation, more focus is placed on the depth of the interview process with participants, and the anticipated resulting deeper insights, rather than on the breadth of a larger data set, and a rationale focused on achieving saturation, in order to draw conclusions. In considering the nature of the study and the attempts to surface deeper insights and understanding from participant's personal contexts and experiences of the respective programmes, a smaller sample size and more rigorous interview process, better aligned with the research objectives.

This does of course leave an opportunity for further research, which may take a different theoretical and methodological approach, work with larger numbers of participants, and contribute additional and differing insights to a future study.

Exclusion of CASE and its clients

For the avoidance of repetition, the rationale and decision to exclude CASE, as a support organisation, and its clients as participants was presented previously in section 8.2.1 (Support Organisations).

8.3 Conclusions Drawn from the Research Objectives

This section presents the conclusions that can be drawn from the overarching research objects. Those objectives investigated:

- The organisations offering social enterprise start-up support in West Yorkshire
- The nature of those programmes
- The participant's experiences and responses to accessing those same start-up support programmes.

Conclusions concerning the support organisations are presented first in section XXX, followed by participant conclusions in section YYY.

8.2.3 Support Organisations & Conclusions

The five organisations selected (see Table 8.1), are examples of the types of organisations currently providing social enterprise start-up support within West Yorkshire. They were specifically chosen to maximise the opportunity to reveal and represent the existing diversity within the social enterprise start-up support eco-system; in turn, enabling the opportunity to understand the nature of such support.

Table 8.1 Participating Support Organisations

Organisation	Website
The Realistic Business Consortium	https://www.realisticbusiness.co/
Key Fund	https://thekeyfund.co.uk/
See Ahead	https://seeahead.co.uk/
School for Social Entrepreneurs	https://www.the-sse.org/
UnLtd	https://www.unltd.org.uk/

The nature of these support programmes/interventions

The programme providers investigated and presented in Table 8.1, individually, and/or collectively, include the following distinguishing features within their provision of support:

- Programmes and interventions delivered both locally and regionally
- Programmes and interventions delivered both regionally and nationally
- Programmes designed to be accessed by an individual, or as part of a learning cohort
- Programmes with specific and predetermined delivery time frames
- Bespoke packages of support delivered specifically for an individual client, and of no predetermined duration
- Support from providers with a specific focus, for example access to finance
- Support which is generalist in nature, but supplemented by other providers and associates

If it can be accepted that these five organisations, specifically selected for the study due to their diverse nature and offer, is a reasonable and fair cross-section of the start-up support opportunities within West Yorkshire, there is clearly an abundance of support possibilities, but perhaps still no progress in terms of clarity or suitability for the end user.

Furthermore, if we overlay the more granular detail of what each of these five organisations deliver in terms of support programme components (see Table 8.2 below), the possibilities and permutations of support options increases still further.

Table 8.2 Summary Of The Investigated West Yorkshire Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Programme's Most Common Subcomponents

Common Subcomponents	Realistic Business Consortium	Key Fund	SEE Ahead	School for Social Entrepreneurs	UnLtd
Formal application	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
Assessment of client needs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1:1 Support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Integral Cohort Learning	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Integral Workshops	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
Integral Funding	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓

Common Subcomponents	Realistic Business Consortium	Key Fund	SEE Ahead	School for Social Entrepreneurs	UnLtd
Integral Mentor	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
External Referrals	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

This is represented in the following summative table, combining typology of organisation, delivery style, geographical scope and programme components of the five organisations within this study (see Table 8.3).

Table 8.3 Summary Of The 5 Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Organisation's Programmes, Scope, Typology & Components

	Formal Application	Assessment of client needs	1:1 Support	Integral Cohort Learning	Integral W'shops	Integral Funding	Integral Mentor	External Referrals	Local &/or Regional	Regional &/or National	Fixed time scale	Specific focus
Realistic Business Consortium	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Key Fund	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓①	✗	✓③
SEE Ahead	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
School for Social Entrepreneurs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓①	✓②	✓③
UnLtd	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓①	✓②	✗

Notes to clarify:

① Where support organisations have coverage beyond a single location, the information reported here and discussed during the organisational interviews, is specific to their interventions in West Yorkshire. Programme details and components delivered by the same organisation, but in a different location, may vary.

② These organisations offer a variety of interventions, some of which have a predetermined duration.

③ All organisations offered a variety of support interventions, but these had a principle focus. In the case of Key Fund, it is access to finance. For the School for Social Entrepreneurs, it is the focus on the social entrepreneur, rather than the social enterprise.

The above tables, together with interviews with the organisations participating in the study, enabled the following three support organisation conclusions to be drawn.

8.2.3.1 Support Organisation Conclusion 1 - Interconnectivity between programmes

It was clear from the organisational interviews that a mutual knowledge and respect exists between the differing providers, about their counterpart's existence, support offer, and suitability to differing types of clients. Providers indicated that referrals are made to their counterparts when they felt that a different organisation may offer a more suitable programme for a particular client, or where they are unable to accommodate a client onto a programme with limited provision. However, the study also revealed that despite programme providers often overlapping in their support typology, programme participants frequently moved between support organisations, to gain further support. Although this study did not investigate this further, there is an opportunity for future research to better understand the client's motivation for this action, the extent of any duplication of support from the additional provider, and the benefit (or not) of that duplication.

Within this study, 70% of the participants had accessed additional support from other providers. Given that providers also revealed a need to "manage scarcity" (UnLtd, 2020) in terms of support infrastructure, the question has to be asked whether it is justifiable for one client to access multiple programmes, whilst another may be unable to access any support at all, or is this a justifiable situation as it enables the most promising people and ideas the greatest support opportunities. Whilst this question would need additional and further research to be able to provide an answer, there does seem to be a potential opportunity for a future refinement in the allocation of support interventions.

8.2.3.2 Support Organisation Conclusion 2 - Impact of programmes

Although not explicitly linked to the previous section on potential overlap of support provision, the overarching agenda of monitoring the impact of business support will inevitably play a part in better understanding any areas for future improvement. I learned from this study that the decision to monitor, and/or, report impact on the beneficiary's access and responses to start-up support interventions, was directly dependent on the provider's responsibility, and/or requirement, to collect and report such data. In turn, this responsibility and/or requirement, was influenced by the primary funding source of the programme. Where external funding was utilised, then impact monitoring was an essential element of the support provision, to enable clear accountability and value add, when evidencing the organisation's impact to a third party. As a practitioner in the field, I can understand a decision not to undertake such activity if this is not required, as the time saved can be justified in terms of a greater investment of that time in supporting clients. However, I feel that there is the opportunity for a compromise to be reached here, in attempting to both maximise the investment of time in clients, but also to potentially benefit from the feedback in the longer term, and thus deliver a more effective programme of support. Revisiting Lesson 3 of the Cabinet Office's report of 2011 (Cabinet Office, 2011, p. iv), (which stated that a feedback mechanism for customers receiving support from specialist suppliers should be incorporated in order to drive up quality and to inform customer choice), we are now a decade on from this recommendation, but the amount of progress towards this goal remains unclear.

8.2.3.3 Support Organisation Conclusion 3 - Clarity of the support landscape

The literature review on the business support landscape for social enterprise start-up, concluded that the provision was complex, fragmented and disjointed, making it very difficult for those requiring support to understand what is available and what they may specifically need in order to progress from their current position. Positively, this investigation has confirmed that the support organisations interviewed are both familiar with other support organisations' offers, and demonstrate a proactive commitment to directing and referring clients (and/or potential clients) to other providers to ensure they are appropriately assisted. However, from the client's perspective, especially a client with limited, or no knowledge of the sector and its networks, finding and gaining access to appropriate support remains an elusive goal. Action to provide a local/regional identification and mapping solution to this long-term problem of navigating the business support landscape, would potentially provide multiple benefits, including:

- A reduction in the same clients accessing multiple programmes and duplicating common components
- Some clients receiving little and/or, no support
- An increase in the number of start-ups supported and consequential programme impact

8.2.4 **Participants of Start-Up Support Conclusions**

As previously discussed, the nature of realist informed research is to surface deeper insights and understanding of a respondent's experiences of a given mechanism, given their specific context. Consequently, (as evidenced within Chapter 7) the interviews revealed significantly more insights than the initial established research objectives. However, in drawing conclusions from this study, I will now focus on these specific key areas and combine the responses and insights from both current and previous participants of support interventions, to address each participant-focused research objective.

8.2.4.1 Participants of Support - Question 1

Participants, depending on their current or previous status were interviewed to understand their perspectives on the following:

- What is working well for them within the programme and why?
- What on reflection, worked well for them within the programme and why?

In drawing together answers and conclusions to this specific research objective, any participant responses related to this question, but provided at other points during their interview were also considered, and where appropriate, included. These responses contributed to, and revealed three dominant elements that are outlined below.

1:1 Business Support - The clear benefits of an on-going 1:1 relationship, which is founded on mutual trust and respect, and the personal and personalised nature of the help provided via this mechanism was deemed essential. Participants placed great value on both the time and opportunity to work through ideas and problems, specific to the individual client.

Analysis and Diagnosis of Support Needs - This was deemed critical in terms of the client and advisor developing a mutual understanding of each other and the client's specific needs, and formed an essential component to both refine and define what type of support is required.

Cohort Learning - Whether an integral part of the specific programme accessed (e.g. School for Social Entrepreneurs), or gained via more informal peer networking or wider sector interactions, the benefits of sharing the start-up journey and interacting with, and learning from, others was rated highly.

Furthermore, by reviewing and including the participant's responses to question 2 and their reflection of any subsequent increase in value and benefit from support interventions, there is good correlation with the earlier responses above from question 1.

This cross-correlation leads me to conclude that from the recipient's perspective, 1:1 business support, a mechanism for better understanding the client's individual and specific needs, and access to a network, are all considered by participants to be vital components of social enterprise start-up support.

8.2.4.2 Participants of Support – Question 2

Aligning with the preceding section, participants, depending on their current or previous status, were interviewed to understand their perspectives on the following:

- What potentially may work better and why?

- What on reflection, may have worked better, and why?

When reflecting on the detail within respondent's comments to question 2, a single element dominated participant's responses here; workshops.

Workshops - The identification of workshops as a weaker element of support was drawn from a number of contributing factors. Firstly, the unavoidable lack of specificity, which is both practical and possible in a 1:many setting, reduces their appeal and benefit in providing the support required by a variety of participants. Respondents commented on **a** lack of availability of appropriate and relevant workshop content, or at least, availability locally. Finally, there was concern that **i**n constructing an intervention intended to deliver widespread benefits to differing clients, there is danger that its resulting impact is low for everyone.

The opportunity to gather data from previous participants with the ability to consider any subsequent decrease in importance/value of support provided, expands this list of participant perceived weaker support areas, and two further areas emerged from this question as follows.

Provision of a mentor and the quality of that relationship – It emerged during the interviews that in some programmes, a mentor was provided and that this was considered an opportunity for added value and learning. However, there were instances of the mentor/mentee relationship being disappointing and the benefits not as positive as expected or anticipated by the participant. Whilst there was a desire on the participant's part to have a mentor, and good will on the mentor's part to help, I would suggest that matching mentor and mentee requires careful consideration and possible monitoring to ensure positive outcomes for all.

Support in the area of social value - The mention of social value training is certainly worth exploring, as there was such limited commentary on the topic of social value across the study, and in this context, it was offered as a component of support, which the participant found to be of decreasing value subsequently. Reviewing the specific details emerging from that interview, I would conclude that it was not suggesting that the topic of social impact/social value was irrelevant to social enterprises in general, but rather that the specific approach and support opportunity experienced by this participant, was not significantly relevant to them. It appears there is an opportunity for a broader and more widespread understanding of social impact and its specific significance and value to social enterprises

8.2.4.3 Participants of Support – Question 3

Finally, and again aligning with preceding approaches, participants, depending on their current or previous status were interviewed to understand their perspectives on the following:

- What (if anything) that they feel may be missing and why?
- What on reflection (if anything), was felt to be missing and why?

When reflecting on the detail within respondent's comments to question 3, two areas of support were mentioned as follows.

Mentor/Mentee Relationships - The mentor was mentioned here in this context not because it was missing, but rather because the relationship and its benefits were not as positive as expected. The appetite for a mentor was mentioned in the preceding section, but again, the real value is dependent on successful matching of mentor and mentee.

Change in mind-set - This was a significant finding in that it supports the need for a broader definition of the term 'business support', and also the significance of the transformation required when an individual begins a journey towards a new business start-up; especially if this is the first time the participant has launched a new venture. Supporting that transformation to business owner is not simply about new skills and knowledge, it's also about growing and managing self-belief, resilience and managing attitudes to risk.

8.3 Recommendations for the Future

In drawing this research to a close, the following two tables present the sector informed guidelines I both imagined and anticipated may potentially be the final output of my investigation. A refinement and development from that original concept, is that the study has enabled me to present some recommendations not only for the providers of social enterprise start-up support, but also to potential future social entrepreneurs, who are considering seeking access to such support. Importantly however, my initial motivation of providing guidelines ***fo***r the social enterprise sector, ***informed by*** the social enterprise sector, subsists.

8.3.1 Sector-Informed Research Recommendations for Providers of Social Enterprise Start-Up Support

The following table (Table 8.4) draws together the conclusions from this study and presents a series of topics/areas of consideration, followed by a series of recommendations to support providers in refining and developing, future social enterprise start-up support interventions

Table 8.4 Sector-Informed Research Recommendations For Providers Of Social Enterprise Start-Up Support

Area of focus/consideration: 1:1 Business support Perhaps unsurprisingly, the clear benefits of an on-going 1:1 relationship, which is founded on mutual trust and respect, and the personal and personalised nature of the help provided via this mechanism was deemed essential by participants, who placed great value on both the time and opportunity to work through ideas and problems, specific to their individual needs. **Recommendation to providers:** Whilst costly from both an economic and investment of time perspective, this is considered a high priority area for recipients of support. With limited time and resources available, it is inevitable that support organisations have to consider ways to reduce their outgoings, but this research reiterated the

unequivocal value and benefit of 1:1 support from the participant's perspective, suggesting that this is not an area to consider as a potential reduction in provision.
Area of focus/consideration: Analysis and diagnosis of support needs The initial process of gathering information from a client to develop a mutual understanding of the client's specific needs, the nature of support available from a particular provider, and an opportunity to diagnose initial client needs, was considered by both participants and providers, as an essential support component to refine and define what type of support is required. **Recommendation to providers:** All providers within the study included some form of initial information gathering and needs assessment. Some providers utilised formal application processes to access programmes, whilst others used initial appointments to gather this type of information more informally. However, there is a potential opportunity to share best practice here between providers, to better understand the most effective methods of this process, and ultimately, ensure that the client is accessing the correct programme of support, and if so, that the time invested will be utilised effectively.
Area of focus/consideration: Cohort learning/ network building opportunity Regardless of the way in which 'networking' and/or, 'shared learning' opportunities were presented and experienced, the benefits of sharing the start-up journey and interacting with, and learning from, others was rated highly by participants. **Recommendation to providers:** Some programme providers embed this type of experience within the programme (for example the School for Social Entrepreneurs), whilst others facilitate such an experience via introductions to other clients, and/or, wider networks. The research suggests that having this embedded within the

programme, enabled participants to extract additional value, and especially so, when such shared-learning experiences were facilitated by experienced advisors, to ensure the peer-learning opportunity is maximised and digressions from the topic at hand, and/or, potential occurrences of well-intended, but unhelpful guidance offered by peers. Programme providers not offering such an opportunity, would benefit from reviewing the components offered by the School for Social Entrepreneurs, and in particular, the 'Forum', utilised by the Realistic Business Consortium, to inspire future programme revisions.
Area of focus/consideration: Workshops Workshops were identified by participants as a weaker element of support due to their: • Their unavoidable lack of specificity • Availability of appropriate and relevant workshop content (at least, availability locally) • Concern that, **i**n constructing an intervention intended to deliver widespread benefits to differing clients, there is danger that its resulting impact is in reality, lower for everyone. **Recommendation to providers:** With evidence that some participants were booking workshop places irrespective of content and their needs, some are accessing workshops repeatedly due to moving between different programmes and providers, and some providers are planning workshop delivery, but with little or no take-up of places offered, there is a clear opportunity to collaborate more here. Providers are already demonstrating positive awareness of each other's programmes within the area, and actively refer clients onwards when there is the possibility of a better outcome. With this existing reciprocity in place, it appears that there is an opportunity for creating and delivering a cross-provider, regional programme of workshops, with shared resources and costs.

I fully appreciate that this may in reality, prove extremely difficult to implement due to the differing sources of funding from differing providers, and the raft of administrative restrictions and factors that would complicate, and potentially eliminate this recommendation as being possible. Given this understanding of how the sector works, but not wanting to ignore the findings from the study, the compromise on this may be to better support clients in their selection and uptake of workshop places.

Perhaps a dual approach of a more comprehensive description of workshop content, intended audience, benefits of attending, and learning outcomes, may assist participants to make more informed choices about workshops. This can be coupled with support from the 1:1 advisor on suitability and needs, arising from the initial diagnosis.

Area of focus/consideration: Provision of a mentor

The opportunity to access a mentor was provided within some programmes, and this was considered by both provider and client, to afford the opportunity to add value and learning to the support provision. However, there were instances of the mentor/mentee relationship being disappointing, and the benefits not as positive as expected or anticipated by the participant.

Recommendation to providers:

Whilst there was clear evidence of a desire on the participant's part to have access to a mentor, and good will on the mentor's part to help, the matching of mentor and mentee requires careful consideration and subsequent monitoring, to ensure positive outcomes for all. Points for consideration emerging from the interviews include:

- A common understanding of the parameters and mutual expectations of the mentor/mentee relationship
- That the mentor and mentee are matched via a systematic process to ensure that a positive working relationship can be formed, built on a foundation of trust and respect
- That the mentor is familiar with the differences in motivation and strategic approach to a social venture, and the nature of the social entrepreneur and their focus on addressing the social problem; often initially ahead of income generation.

Area of focus/consideration: Support around social value The topic of social value training arose only once during this study, and in that instance, it was within the context of something thought to have had a decreasing amount of importance/value, after the programme had ended. The combination of such an isolated occurrence of this topic, together with essentially negative feedback, on an area which is considered to be a key aspect of social enterprises seemed unusual, and so worthy of inclusion here. **Recommendation to providers:** Reviewing the specific details emerging from that interview, I would conclude that it was not suggesting that the topic of social impact/social value was irrelevant to social enterprises in general, but rather that the specific approach and support opportunity experienced by this participant, was not considered to be of significant relevance to them. It appears there is therefore an opportunity for a broader and more widespread explanation and understanding of social value/impact, introductions to a variety of methodologies, and its specific significance to social enterprises.
Area of focus/consideration: Change in mind set A significant finding from the research was a call for support in the 'change in mindset' required when making the transition to becoming the founder of a new venture. This not only identifies a current gap in provision, but also supports the need for a broader definition of the term 'business support'. **Recommendation to providers:** Supporting that transformation to business owner is not simply about new skills and knowledge, it's also about growing and managing self-belief, resilience and managing attitudes to risk, but can this be taught and if so, what would be the most effective medium. The respondent suggested that this needed to form part of the 1:1 support offer, rather than via a workshop; mainly due to the aforementioned limitations of workshop effectiveness. Whilst there was an acceptance that

facilitated cohort learning on this topic may add some value, the opportunity for the participant to be totally open and honest about their concerns and any difficulties, would most likely require the secure environment of a 1:1 intervention, with a trusted and respected advisor. Contextually, this will likely be required more frequently for first time founders.

Area of focus/consideration: Monitoring impact

The study revealed that the decision to monitor, and/or, report impact on the beneficiary's access and responses to start-up support interventions, was directly related to a provider's responsibility, and/or requirement, to collect and report such data back to the primary funder of the programme. Where external funding was utilised, then impact monitoring was an essential element of the support provision, to enable clear accountability and value add when evidencing the organisation's impact to a third party. However, in the cases where external funding was not enabling the delivery of support, post-support monitoring to understand future impact was not evident.

Recommendation to providers:

As a practitioner in the field, I can understand a decision not to undertake such activity if it is not explicitly required. Not least because the time saved can be justified in view of a greater investment of that time in directly supporting clients. However, I feel that there is the opportunity for a compromise to be reached here, in attempting to both maximise the investment of time in clients, but also to potentially benefit from the feedback in the longer term to refine and improve programmes and their delivery. I would go further and suggest that whilst post-support surveys are undoubtedly better than no collection of feedback at all, often the most important details and potentially transformational feedback occurs via discussions, and with the benefit of some 'space' between the support intervention, and the collecting of that information.

From this research, the opportunity to speak with a smaller sample group, but on a 1:1 basis, revealed far greater insights than I have previously gained from post-intervention surveys. This would suggest that the opportunity to test the

value of small scale, post-intervention interviews, might add value to both provider and participant.

8.3.2 Sector-Informed Research Recommendations for Participants of Social Enterprise Start-Up Support

The following table (Table 8.5) draws together the conclusions from this study and presents a series of topics/areas of consideration, followed by a series of recommendations to support potential social entrepreneurs in their consideration of, and application to, future social enterprise start-up support.

Table 8.5 Sector-Informed Research Recommendations For Participants Of Social Enterprise Start-Up Support

Area of focus/consideration: Nature of the business support landscape
The literature review on the business support landscape for social enterprise start-ups, concluded that the provision was complex, fragmented and disjointed, making it very difficult for those requiring support to understand what is available, and what they may specifically need in order to progress from their current position.
Recommendation to participants:
Positively, this investigation also confirmed that the support organisations interviewed are both familiar with other support organisations' offers, and demonstrate a proactive commitment to directing and referring clients (and/or potential clients) to other providers, to ensure they are most appropriately assisted. As providers vary in their support offer and (where applicable) areas of specialisation, it would be advisable for a client seeking initial support to consider speaking to a variety of providers to:
• Better understand their offers, and

- Hear from a variety of perspectives what providers feel may be beneficial for them, ahead of committing to a programme of support

Although this may seem counter-intuitive to the notion that initially finding suitable support is tricky, due to the complexity/fragmented nature of the landscape, the fact that such interconnectivity between providers exists, should assist with onward referrals for additional discussions and perspectives, once an initial source of potential help is discovered.

Area of focus/consideration: Accessing multiple programmes

Continuing from the previous recommendation, the study also revealed that despite programme providers often overlapping in their support typology, programme participants frequently moved between support organisations, to gain further support. Although this study did not investigate this phenomenon further, it is reasonable to assume that this would result in the unnecessary duplication of some support elements.

Recommendation to participants:

Again, as revealed in the previous recommendation, we understand from the study that a mutual knowledge and respect exists between the differing providers, about their counterpart's existence, support offer, and suitability to differing types of clients. In seeking initial discussions with perspective support organisations, it would be beneficial for clients to also discuss the provider's thoughts and ideas about the most suitable support provision for them; thus enabling more effective referrals, and minimising future support duplication.

If a participant is seeking follow-on support having already exited a previous programme, a similar discussion with the new provider about why you are specifically seeking additional support, and the opportunity to identify any gaps in knowledge, may help to reduce unnecessary duplication.

Area of focus/consideration: Understanding own needs

This was deemed critical in terms of the client and advisor developing a mutual understanding of each other, and the client's specific needs, and formed an essential component to both refine and define what type of support is required.

Recommendation to participants:

Given that the study revealed the huge benefits gained from an effective working relationship, built on a foundation of trust and common understanding of needs and direction, there is a responsibility here for the participant, as well as the advisor, in being open and honest about their current levels of knowledge, skills and confidence in relation to their venture.

Whilst the role of the advisor is to help surface the needs of the client, they do have to rely on their clients being candid about both existing knowledge and skills, and their understanding and abilities to work with new concepts and skills, in order to support effectively.

Area of focus/consideration: Reporting impact of support

As a practitioner in the field, it is understandable that providers will prioritise spending additional time with their clients, ahead of collecting and reporting impact on the support provided. The research revealed that this becomes an area of increased priority for the provider, if they are required to report such progress to an external funder. However, receiving and analysing participant feedback can potentially unlock future benefits via refinements in support and approach.

Recommendation to participants:

As a current or previous participant of social enterprise start-up support interventions, you have the opportunity to positively contribute to the improvement and scope of future programmes, by providing honest feedback on any support programmes/interventions accessed, and also, thoughts and ideas for future improvements. Whether you are directly approached by a provider or not, your future progress, reflections on your support, and ideas for future refinements are valuable and important to the sector, so please do seek opportunities to share them with advisors and providers. As the study revealed that valuable thoughts and ideas relating to your support often surface some time after the programme has ended, your provider would

welcome such feedback, at any point.
Area of focus/consideration: Workshops Workshops delivered on a 1:many basis are a common style of intervention used to support pre-start/early stage businesses and social enterprises. There are positive outcomes from accessing such interventions, not least the ability to interact with, and learn from other participants and their emerging questions. However, there are limitations with the workshop format and this study revealed: • A lack of availability of appropriate and relevant workshop content, or at least, availability locally. • In constructing an intervention intended to deliver widespread benefits to differing clients, there is danger that its resulting impact is low for everyone. **Recommendation to participants:** Given the above benefits and limitations, participants are advised to: • Discuss and consider the relevance of a proposed workshop in relation to your specific needs, with an advisor who is aware of your specific circumstances and context • Given resource limitations, ask questions of the provider in relation to its content and the information and/or skills you hope to develop as a result of attending, to ensure they are aligned. • Always advise providers of any change in your ability to attend as the place can often be utilised by someone else • When attending a workshop, utilise the opportunity to interact with not only the presenter, but other attendees to share learning and develop your future network.
Area of focus/consideration: Mentors During the study, participants revealed a positive appetite to access a mentor, and an assumption of a positive learning and development opportunity and outcome. Whilst I am sure that this is indeed true of many cases of mentor/mentee opportunities, the study did also reveal that in some cases, the

relationship and its benefits were not as positive as expected.

Recommendation to participants:

To complement the recommendation to providers in this area, it seems prudent to draw attention to potential participants that whilst this opportunity may indeed bring tangible benefits to both parties, you are entering into a very personal relationship with an unknown third party, and as such, it is worth offering some guidelines to maximising value, and minimising potential problems. Points to consider for clients:

- Invest some time in learning about the background of the mentor, and sharing your hopes and aspirations for the relationship with them
- Agree some simple rules of engagement (preferably with the help of your support provider) to ensure that you and the mentor have a clear understanding of expectations from the relationship
- Be open and honest with both the mentor, and the support organisation regarding any concerns you may have, in order to find mutually agreeable resolutions.

8.4 Contribution to Knowledge

Having addressed the purpose, scope and research objectives of this investigation into social enterprise start-up support interventions, I would offer the following four distinct areas as being a new contribution towards existing knowledge:

1. The resulting analysis and this thesis enabled a better understanding of the differing types of social enterprise start-up support programmes being offered in West Yorkshire, and the nature of that support.
2. The provision of some guiding principles for both providers and recipients of social enterprise start-up support interventions ***for*** the social enterprise sector, and informed ***by*** the social enterprise sector.

3. The format of a Doctor of Enterprise pathway, which has enabled the explicit linking of an extension to the University of Huddersfield's Enterprise Team services, (CASE), to inform and respond to the research output of this study. The Enterprise Team will now implement these recommendations when supporting potential social entrepreneurs.

4. The research utilised a realist informed methodology within entrepreneurship education to better understand what types of social enterprise start-up support interventions are working for whom, in what circumstances and why. Whilst I am aware of a current doctoral study in progress within the field of enterprise education utilising a realist informed methodology, I can as yet, find no evidence of its use within entrepreneurship education or business support.

In presenting these specific areas of contribution to existing studies, I feel that I am fulfilling a significant component of doctoral research; that of a contribution to new knowledge.

8.5 Future Research Opportunities

Throughout this thesis and programme of research, opportunities have been recognised and identified for potential future and further research. I have subsequently extracted these opportunities from their respective chapters of this thesis, and present them below in Table 8.6 as a summary of future research potential, arising from this specific study.

Table 8.6 Identified Areas For Future Research Arising From This Study & Their Respective Locations Within This Thesis For Context

Opportunity #1 – Chapter 1, 1.6 - Scope of Research
Context: The purpose of this research was to understand who is providing social enterprise start-up support within West Yorkshire, the nature of that support, and then to investigate a number of participant's experiences and thoughts on those interventions. The investigation did not extend to gaining feedback on subsequent end users of those social enterprise's products and services.

Quotation from this thesis: "Given that half of these start-ups are still receiving start-up support, and so may not yet have clients, and that the investigation is specifically about an individual's responses to start-up support, rather than their ability, or not, to deliver an effective service to their end users, this is an area for potential future research, but excluded from this study."
Opportunity #2 – Chapter 6, 6.2 – Analytical approach
Context: During interviews with the delivery organisations' programme managers, details emerged regarding not only the typology of support offered to their clients, but also details relating to internal policy, and/or, strategic direction. As this study is specifically relating to the types of interventions offered to participants, and their subsequent responses to those interventions, internal matters were excluded from the study. **Quotation from this thesis:** "Any data relating to the organisations own internal structure, its policies, political and social context, funding, and previous, current and future organisational challenges and opportunities, was excluded. The rationale for this decision was that whilst highly relevant to the individual organisation, it was considered less relevant to the experience of the individual participant. However, this data presents a clear opportunity for future research at a specific organisational level."
Opportunity #3 – Chapter 7, 7.5.1 - Group 1 Questions Analysis: Summary and Conclusions
Context: During analysis of the Group 1 participant questions, 80% of respondent's spoke about the significance of their start-up venture and an incident or set of personal circumstances, which contributed to their motivation to start a social enterprise. Whilst the high motivational factor was noted, the specific details of these narratives were excluded from this study, leaving a future research opportunity; potentially using social action theory as the theoretical lens.

Quotation from this thesis: "Many respondents gave a detailed account of the background to their venture and whilst these narratives were outside of the remit of this particular study, they align well to the notion of Weber's Social Action Theory, explored in Chapter 4 as a potential theory to underpin this research, and defined as, "when the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to the act, and when that act takes account of the behaviour of others and is thereby oriented in its course." (Weber, 1975, p. 142). These motivational factors certainly offer the opportunity for further and separate research."
Opportunity #4 – Chapter 8, 8.2 – Interconnectivity between programmes
Context: The study revealed a high incidence of participants accessing previous, and/or, further support, from additional providers which raises the question of whether further investigation may reveal opportunities to further refine programmes, and/or, minimize duplication of services. **Quotation from this thesis:** "Despite programme providers often overlapping in their support typology, programme participants frequently moved between support organisations, to gain further support. Although this study did not investigate this further, there is an opportunity for future research to better understand the client's motivation for this action, the extent of any duplication of support from the additional provider, and the benefit (or not) of that duplication."
Opportunity #5 – Chapter 8, 8.2 – Interconnectivity between programmes
Context: Further to the previous opportunity for additional research. If a high percentage of participants (70% in this study) are accessing additional support from other organisations, and with the knowledge that resources for support are limited, is this phenomenon enabling the most viable ideas to surface and flourish, or excluding the potential opportunity for others. **Quotation from this thesis:** "Given that providers also revealed a need to "manage scarcity" (UnLtd,

2020) in terms of support infrastructure, the question has to be asked whether it is justifiable for one client to access multiple programmes, whilst another may be unable to access any support at all, or is this a justifiable situation as it enables the most promising people and ideas the greatest support opportunities. Whilst this question would need additional and further research to be able to provide an answer, there does seem to be a potential opportunity for a future refinement in the allocation of support interventions.”
Opportunity #6 – Chapter 8, 8.3 – Number of participants
Context: This study was informed by a realist evaluation methodology, and as such, focused on a smaller number of respondents, but with a greater depth of questioning to surface the participant’s responses. However, there may be value in undertaking a similar study, but with a different theoretical and methodological approach, to work with a larger data set of participants. **Quotation from this thesis:** “In considering the nature of the study and the attempts to surface deeper insights and understanding from participant’s personal contexts and experiences of the respective programmes, a smaller sample size and more rigorous interview process, better aligned with the research objectives. This does of course leave an opportunity for further research, which may take a different theoretical and methodological approach, work with larger numbers of participants, and contribute additional and differing insights to a future study.”
Opportunity #7 – Chapter 9, - CASE Business Plan, 5 - History
Context: The output of this research has been to establish a set of guiding principles for both social enterprise start-up support providers and participants. However, there is now an opportunity for a further piece of longitudinal research to attempt to assess the impact of CASE/The Enterprise Team, (and/or others) adopting these guidelines.

Quotation from this thesis: "A set of guiding principles has been established in Chapter 8 of this thesis. These principles will be adopted by CASE, and shared with other social enterprise start-up support organisations, to improve the beneficiaries' experiences. The impact of adopting these guidelines as part of the approach to social enterprise start-up support programmes, could form the basis for further and future research."

In considering the opportunities for further research and maintaining the focus on improving and refining the landscape for social enterprise start-up support, I would recommend prioritising three of the seven identified areas as follows:

1. Opportunity #4 - Interconnectivity Between Programmes 1
Investigate the high incidence of participants accessing previous, and/or, further support, from additional providers in an attempt to reveal opportunities to further refine programmes, and/or, minimize duplication of services

2. Opportunity #5 - Interconnectivity Between Programmes 2

Given that a high percentage of participants (70% in this study) are accessing additional support from other organisations, and with the knowledge that resources for support are limited, is this phenomenon enabling the most viable ideas to surface and flourish, or excluding the potential opportunity for others.

3. Opportunity #7 – Longitudinal Study Of Guideline Adoption

Having established a set of guiding principles for both social enterprise start-up support providers and participants, investigate the impact of CASE/The Enterprise Team, (and/or others) adopting these guidelines.

This chapter has presented the overall conclusions and recommendations from the study, outlined its contribution to new knowledge, and summarised several areas of potential future research, arising from this current investigation. Chapter 9 follows, and contains the business plan for CASE, which is explicitly linked to this thesis and research. The concept of this social enterprise focused extension to the Enterprise Team's services at the University of Huddersfield, was the foundation and catalyst to instigating this research, and consequently, this thesis has been both an informant of, and informed by, CASE.

9 The CASE Business Plan

CASE: Create A Social Enterprise

Business Plan

Philip Clegg

Head of Enterprise & Entrepreneurship

The Enterprise Hub

3M Buckley Innovation Centre

Firth Street

Huddersfield

HD1 3DB

Tel: 01484 473921

Mob: 07702 960977

Email: case@hud.ac.uk

Twitter: @CASEFuture

9.1 Executive Summary

The initial idea for creating CASE emerged as a potential staff application and response to the HEFCE/UnLtd See Change Programme, which the University of Huddersfield participated in as one of 53 partner universities. With positive outcomes within the University of Huddersfield's eligible stakeholder group for this programme, but no prospects of sustainability beyond the HEFCE funded period, CASE offered an opportunity to test a new business model of support for social enterprises and social entrepreneurs. With approval for the creation of CASE internally from the Directorate of Research and Enterprise, and externally from the See Change programme, CASE also offered a research opportunity to explore potential areas of development and improvement in social enterprise start-up support programmes and interventions.

CASE was initially created as an extension to the University's Enterprise Team services, operating under the trading arm, University of Huddersfield Enterprises Ltd. The potential for CASE to explore and service a market need of social enterprise support on a commercial basis, returning any surplus to the internal beneficiaries (i.e. students and recent graduates) was one distinct opportunity. However, the explicitly linked Doctor of Enterprise research offered an additional and potentially more impactful opportunity, in exploring the range and efficacy of start-up support interventions offered to social entrepreneurs. Especially given the wide range of social enterprise founders, and their personal needs and contexts. Thus CASE had the opportunity to exist and contribute to new knowledge at two distinct levels, as both a service provider and a vehicle for research.

From a consultancy perspective, a test-trading period was created to ascertain whether CASE could attract potential commercial clients and generate a surplus. This period ran for eleven months during 2014/15 and serviced eight commercial clients. This activity generated a surplus, which was used in accordance with its social aims and objectives. From a research perspective, the linked Doctor of Enterprise research has run for the last 6 years with an anticipated submission date of April 2021. The conclusions and recommendations from Chapter 8 of the thesis, have provided some suggested guidelines for social enterprise start-up support interventions. These guidelines will now be adopted by CASE, and provide an opportunity to share this contribution to knowledge with the wider social enterprise community.

Following completion of the Doctor of Enterprise research programme, the future pathway of CASE will be considered. A decision will be made as to whether it remains active as an extension to, or separate entity from, the Enterprise Team, or whether CASE will have at that point fulfilled its purpose, and cease trading. In the latter scenario, the Enterprise Team itself will incorporate and adopt the services and research recommendations. Arguments for both potential outcomes of CASE are presented and discussed within this plan.

9.2 Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

To establish an 'enterprise for all' ethos across the University of Huddersfield campus; engaging the entire student, staff and graduate community in breaking down barriers to an understanding of, and engaging in, social enterprise activity.

Mission

To provide a diverse range of innovative and engaging enterprise activities, both inside and outside of the curriculum, to increase an understanding and awareness of the potential of Social Enterprise.

Values

CASE is currently an extension to the services of the Enterprise Team based in the 3M Buckley Innovation Centre. The Enterprise Team sits within the Directorate of Research and Enterprise of the University of Huddersfield and as such, adopts and reflects the overall values of the institution which states: we will work as a ***team*** to provide an ***excellent*** service to all of the ***communities*** we support

9.3 Social Aims

- To provide a sustainable source of innovative and effective support services for pre-start and early-stage start-up social entrepreneurs at the University of Huddersfield

- To engage with a diverse range of students, graduates and staff across the different Schools of the University of Huddersfield to increase an understanding and awareness of social enterprise

- To encourage enterprise activities and entrepreneurial thinking; bringing an 'enterprise for all' ethos to the University of Huddersfield community

9.4 Social Impact

In its infancy, CASE developed an association with The Social Audit Network and subsequently, has both promoted to others, and utilised itself, the SAN, Prove Improve, Account methodology. Social Audit and Accounting is a recognised methodology of investigating and reporting on social impact and social aims and objectives, by assessing the activities undertaken and seeking qualitative feedback from a range of stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Dependent upon the strategic direction CASE takes after completion of the research period, there is an opportunity to conduct a programme of evaluation, to assess the impact of the business to date and identify specific areas for future development. The evaluation could include an exploration of changes in perception of, and attitude towards Social Enterprises amongst students and recent graduates; case studies of knowledge transfer within both client groups (internal beneficiary and external commercial), and an evaluation of cumulative social return on investment.

The following table presents a summary of notable impact to date, captured during the test-trade period (2014 – 2015) of CASE.

Table 9.1 Notable Impact From CASE Activity - 2014-2015

Activity Type	Location & Date	Numbers
Several in curriculum sessions delivered at the University of Huddersfield to students, on a variety of Social Enterprise topics across the Schools – raising awareness and increasing knowledge	University of Huddersfield on multiple dates between 2014-15	Approximately 250 students
Session for the University of Huddersfield's Teaching and Learning Institute (TALI)	University of Huddersfield TALI Conference 2014	20 Staff
Workshop on 'Measuring Social Impact'	International Enterprise Educators Conference at Newcastle University in 2014	40 delegates from UK, EU and International HEIs
1:1 Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Clients	University of Huddersfield, 2014 to date	33 Clients – Students and recent graduates
Major 'What is a Social Enterprise?' Event	University of Huddersfield 2015	80 Student Delegates
Income generating consultation for external Social Enterprises to prove the concept and viability of CASE as a vehicle for income generation	CASE operating from the University of Huddersfield	8 commercial clients

Activity Type	Location & Date	Numbers
Introduction to Social Enterprise workshop	Graduate Entrepreneurship Project Boot Camp 2014 and 2015	30 delegates per year
Delivery of 'Introduction to Social Impact Measurement' workshop	International Summit on Social Innovation in Omsk, Russia. 2014	65 delegates
Delivery of 'Next Steps in Measuring Social Impact' workshop and panelist in round-table discussion on 'Social Enterprise Best Practice'	International Forum on Social Innovation in Omsk, Russia. 2015	700 delegates plus TV/radio and press coverage
Facilitation of a pilot regional, 'Embedding Effective Social Enterprise Support in HEI' forum to facilitate the identification of what is needed to develop more effective support, from those working within this sector	2014	20 delegates

Total reach to individuals to promote Social Enterprise and increase knowledge and understanding = approximately **1276 individuals reached + multi-media coverage.**

9.5 History

Following successful engagement with UnLtd's See Change Programme and consequently raising the profile of Social Entrepreneurship at the University of Huddersfield, I was determined to prototype and evaluate, a sustainable and on-going form of Social Enterprise support for students and graduates. To offer an, 'all round' approach to enterprise education and provide effective support to an, 'alternatively motivated' enterprising student/graduate was seen as essential, and CASE was conceived as an innovative way to achieve these objectives.

An important feature of CASE is that it operates to the ethos of a Social Enterprise itself; trading its services externally to generate income, and utilising the surplus to deliver support internally to students and graduates at the University of Huddersfield free of charge, as part of its social return. It is anticipated that a sustainable and renewable 'Proof of Concept' pot of funding for internal social entrepreneur beneficiaries to access could be created, subject to the number fee paying clients being serviced by the trading arm. By operating in this way, the CASE consultancy service will not be solely reliant on external funding to generate and maintain activity. Moreover, demonstrating its own Social Enterprise credibility to its clients and beneficiaries.

This associated Doctor of Enterprise research verified that externally, the current offer of Social Enterprise Business Support is fragmented and difficult to locate and access. Additionally, the support offered is frequently conceived in isolation from the recipients, and written and delivered by advisors not fully comprehending the nature and complexity of the issues, which affect the ability for a new Social Enterprise to effectively plan and survive the start-up period.

To address this issue and produce more effective support for such businesses, the output of the research (an improved understanding of what types of support interventions work for whom, in what circumstances and why), will underpin and drive the direction of CASE. By utilising a realist informed methodology to interview both current and previous beneficiaries of social enterprise start-up support, and analysing the findings to better understand what works for different types of clients, a set of guiding principles has been established in Chapter 8 of this thesis. These principles will be adopted by CASE, and shared with other social enterprise start-up support organisations, to improve the beneficiaries' experiences.

The impact of adopting these guidelines as part of the approach to social enterprise start-up support programmes, could form the basis for further and future research.

CASE currently provides a valuable extension to the Enterprise Team service, which delivers pre-start and start-up support to predominantly commercially driven ideas from the students and graduates of the university. Initial engagement with the HEFCE/UnLtd programme allowed us to start to promote an understanding of Social Enterprise, which led to a significant increase in enquiries from students and staff seeking support and funding.

I feel that we have already made real progress towards achieving the desired objective to begin to create an eco-system for social entrepreneurs within this university. In the preceding years we have typically had only 1 or 2 enquiries each year that would fit a social enterprise model, but during the HEFCE/UnLtd delivery period, we successfully attracted in excess of 30 credible enquiries in just 8 months, and awarded £30k to 10 new social entrepreneurs. CASE addresses a need to provide on-going and sustainable support to both existing and new social entrepreneurs here at the University of Huddersfield.

I have experienced first-hand how rewarding and beneficial to the wider community the development of social enterprises can be, and feel passionately that the results achieved to date are not ended prematurely, once the partnership with UnLtd comes to a close. It would be a great pity and a lost opportunity if we do not find a way to continue everything we have achieved to date. In a nutshell, we intend to create a social enterprise to support our social entrepreneurs.

CASE will challenge the notion that Social Enterprises are quasi-charity organizations. The business will increase awareness of the socially ethical business model as a valid and viable commercial alternative and in doing so; will raise awareness and knowledge of Social Enterprise

9.6 The Service

The services offered by CASE fall into a number of categories but the important and innovative feature is that CASE operates to a Social Enterprise business model itself; trading externally to generate income and then providing social return internally, to the University of Huddersfield's students and graduates. The model was tested and developed initially as a trading entity under the University of Huddersfield's trading arm, University of Huddersfield Enterprises Ltd. Its potential to move to a full company spinout offers further advantages, but is still under review and discussed in section 10, Prospects.

9.6.1 Trading Activities (to generate income)

The types of services offered to generate income for CASE can be subdivided into two distinct types of opportunities as summarised below. The first being internal trading opportunities within the University, and the second, being outward facing to external clients.

- Embedding in the Curriculum – cross charging for events held within University Schools to raise the profile of enterprise – particularly in Schools who at the time of the launch of CASE had lesser enterprise engagement such as Human and Health Science and Education and Professional Development
- Support for external Social Enterprise and Community Groups – specialising in impact measurement and strategic planning

9.6.2 Social Return Activity (to utilise the reinvested surplus)

The examples given below summarise the ways in which any surplus remaining following trading activity from CASE, has been utilised internally to benefit the students and graduates of the University of Huddersfield.

- On Campus events to raise the profile of Social Enterprise within the student, staff and graduate communities
- 1:1 Social Enterprise Start-Up Support via the Enterprise Team
- Innovative approach to PGR students regarding assessing and pitching the potential impact of their research

- Subsidising existing start-up grant funding specifically for Social Entrepreneurs

CASE provides an innovative approach to supporting enterprise education (and social enterprise specifically) by approaching the programme of support in a new way, which is summarised within the following three points below.

1. The model itself will benefit from and adopt the guiding principles on effective social enterprise start-up support emerging from this research. By operating to the ethos of a Social Enterprise (and considering the future potential for spinning out as such) it demonstrates a 'practice what we preach' model, and demonstrates credibility with the clients it supports.

2. The workshops and events delivered on campus assist with a multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary approach to enterprise education. This has been found to encourage students from subject areas previously considered as 'low take-up area' for enterprise education (for example History, Social Work) gain an enterprise/entrepreneurship perspective and focus as part of their course.

3. CASE will provide services to two core groups:

    I. Staff, students, and graduates (up to 5 years from graduation) of the University of Huddersfield,

    II. External clients will initially be sourced from existing Social Enterprises, HEI, FEI, and Student Unions. The income generated from working with external clients will allow CASE to test the viability of the proposed business model to provide a sustainable source of income for social enterprise start-up support, and to adopt the emerging guidelines on best practice from the associated doctoral research.

9.7 Markets and Market Strategy

9.7.1 Market Research

The demand for a credible and professional Enterprise Team service extension; to assist students and graduates who wish to explore a socially motivated business idea, in addition to those seeking support for commercially driven ideas, became clearly apparent during the initial engagement period of the HEFCE/UnLtd See Change Programme.

Until this initiative was launched in October 2013, there were very few, if any, students/recent graduates presenting business ideas with a social purpose to the Enterprise Team at the University of Huddersfield.

Whilst the Vision of the See Change Programme; 'to establish an eco-system of Social Enterprise within HEIs' was laudable, it quickly became clear that UnLtd were unable to offer the necessary support and training to the HEI's involved in the programme, to enable them to become credible and importantly, self-sustaining, in providing the support necessary to aspiring Social Entrepreneurs.

It rapidly became apparent that however hard we worked to engage students from this new 'pool' of enterprising individuals, unless we could:

1. Support their very specific social enterprise business support needs

2. Find a way of ensuring continuity of such a service after the limited period of HEFCE/UnLtd Funding expired,

then we would see an end to the support of socially motivated ideas as soon as the programme ended.

This is where the idea of launching CASE came from; to create a self-sustainable form of Social Enterprise Business Support at the University of Huddersfield.

However, the Vision went beyond supporting our own students and graduates, and beyond giving the beneficiaries what *we* as business advisors *thought* they needed.

My research confirmed that specific and dedicated Social Enterprise Business Support is fragmented and inconsistent in the UK. Even within the pool of 56 HEIs engaged in the See Change Programme, there was great variation in the individual institutions ability to engage with the Programme, and deliver appropriate support to their students.

The market potential this offered to CASE was viewed in two distinct ways:

1. As CASE had quickly demonstrated credibility and was successful in gaining maximum impact from the first round of funding, and also in a subsequent round of further funding; paid for by those HEIs who were unable to utilise their initial funding. This offered us a secondary market opportunity; the ability to support other HEIs and FEIs who were struggling to develop a successful Social Enterprise support culture, as they began to ask for our advice.

2. To utilise the research being conducted via the EntD to better understand what types of social enterprise start-up support activities work for whom, in what circumstances and why, so that any emerging recommendations could be adopted by CASE, and disseminated to appropriate stakeholders via a set of guiding principles. These principles would be ***for*** the social enterprise sector, and informed ***by*** the social enterprise sector.

During the test-trading period (2014-2015), a tertiary market opportunity was also emerging. If I documented the often 'slow and difficult' journey to date, in establishing a new, self-sustaining service within an HEI, I could potentially produce a 'How to…' guide. This could help others benefit from our experiences to date, and this could potentially be marketed to HEIs and FEIs to expedite the process elsewhere.

9.7.2 The Market

<u>Number of HEIs and FEIs in UK:</u>

143 Higher Education Institutions. Sourced from Statista and accurate in 2018.

https://www.statista.com/statistics/915603/universities-in-the-united-kingdom-uk/

244 Further Education Colleges in England. Sourced from the Association of Colleges (AOC) and accurate in 2018/19 https://www.aoc.co.uk/about-colleges/research-and-stats/key-further-education-statistics

Number of HEI Student Unions within the UK:

Approximately 142. Sourced from The Student Times.

https://www.studenttimes.org/students-unions-list-of-student-unions/

Number of Social Enterprises in UK:

As of 2018, the UK currently has 100,000 social enterprises, employing 2 million people, and contributing £60 billion to the UK economy. Retrieved from https://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/faqs/what-is-the-history-of-social-enterprise on 03/11/18

9.7.3 Beneficiaries

CASE, operating as a de facto extension to the Enterprise Team, provides a free Social Enterprise Support Service to the students and recent graduates (up to and including 5 years after Graduation) of the University of Huddersfield.

Total FTE student population known at the time of thesis submission and accurate as of 2018/19 = 14,490 (Sourced from HESA)

9.7.4 Marketing Plan

As CASE currently sits under the University of Huddersfield Enterprise Limited, (the University's trading arm), it benefits from the brand association, which the University has already established, and the credibility of being a source of excellence.

This being the case, there has been no need to date to actively promote the services of CASE externally, as current clients have either been sourced from the founder's existing contacts, or, clients have approached the University of Huddersfield for support in this area, and have been subsequently referred to CASE directly.

CASE featured as a webpage on the University's website under the category of Social Enterprise between February 2014 and January 2015. During this short period, 8 commercial clients approached the unit for advice and support and all were serviced. There was an additional opportunity to work collaboratively with Kirklees Council on a programme to raise awareness of Social Enterprise across the region. CASE issued a proposal valued at £10,000.00 to deliver multiple social impact workshops as part of that initiative, which was accepted. However, the funder later retracted the planned support programme, and so the workshops were not delivered.

Due to the existing capacity of the Enterprise Team and the desire to utilise CASE simply as a method of testing the principles of a sustainable support provision, the web link was taken down and no further clients sought after this initial trial period, having proven the concept of the service provision.

9.7.5 Competition

Part 1 of this research project established who is currently providing social enterprise start-up support opportunities within West Yorkshire, and the nature of that support. These findings were analysed and summarised in Chapter 6. Rather than CASE being set up as a potential direct competitor to these and other service providers, the idea was always to work in partnership with other organisations, and to contribute to the existing social enterprise eco-system.

During the proof of concept phase of CASE working with its initial external clients, I worked closely with SEE Ahead on the opportunity to offer such a service, and they kindly agreed to support the wider research by becoming one of the five organisations forming the basis of the research. Indeed all of the five organisations approached to participate in the research, were given an overview of the principles of CASE and its longer-term objectives, which was welcomed by all of the organisations.

The ultimate goal of CASE has always been to create a mechanism for the wider research investigation (to understand what types of social enterprise start-up support interventions work for whom in what circumstances, and why), so that the findings could be of value to all support organisations. That being the case, it was never the intention that CASE should be established as, nor considered to be, a direct competitor in the market place. Instead, CASE was created to act as an experimental business model, to create an opportunity for the research, and to be an adopter of the guidelines that form the research output. It is therefore anticipated that any organisations providing a social enterprise start-up support programme, would be beneficiaries of, and potential collaborative partners with CASE, rather than competitors of CASE.

9.7.6 Collaborative Partners

During the doctoral research, I worked with five external organisations currently servicing social enterprise start-up clients in the West Yorkshire region as indicated in Table 9.2 below.

Table 9.2 External Social Enterprise Support Organisations Interviewed

Organisation	Website
The Realistic Business Consortium	https://www.realisticbusiness.co/
Key Fund	https://thekeyfund.co.uk/
See Ahead	https://seeahead.co.uk/
School for Social Entrepreneurs	https://www.the-sse.org/
UnLtd	https://www.unltd.org.uk/

Given their generosity and enthusiasm to support this research, the intended outcomes and the collaborative nature of services provided by CASE, it is reasonable to assume that these organisations would be happy to work in partnership; either formally or informally.

These specific organisations as described in Chapter 6, were selected in an attempt to be representative of as broad a range of support opportunities for social enterprises as possible, given that the study could not include every provider, even within a finite geographical area. During Chapter 6 of the thesis, an analysis of the nature of support these providers offered was summarised; revealing areas of commonality and difference.

In order to function as a collaborative partner alongside any existing provision, it is important to recognise the existing support infrastructure and the individual provider's areas of strength and focus, and to consider whether there are any gaps in current provision to enable CASE to also offer a valid contribution to the social enterprise start-up support eco-system.

9.7.7 Point of Difference

Having explored the start-up support offer from these five providers and considered their own particular areas of specialist knowledge and focus, there does appear to be an opportunity for CASE to add value and work collaboratively. No single organisation currently offers specialist help and support in the field of social impact. Many of the programmes investigated incorporate this into their programmes, and either deliver an overview via workshops, or utilise referrals to specialist consultants in the field if and when required. However, no organisation interviewed offered this as an area of specialisation, or point of difference.

As part of my own CPD, I undertook training and skills development in two distinct forms of social impact measurement. They were Social Audit and Accounting, with training provided by the Social Audit Network (SAN, http://www.socialauditnetwork.org.uk/), and Social Return On Investment, with training and development provided by SROI Network (as was, now Social Value UK, https://www.socialvalueuk.org).

These two complementary models of social impact investigation provide a strong foundation for either assisting existing social enterprises to reflect and report their existing impact, and/or, for new and emerging social enterprises to embed the necessary processes to enable social impact reporting to be undertaken as part of their everyday activities.

Regardless of the future developmental pathway which CASE itself subsequently follows (see section 10, Prospects), this knowledge and support can be disseminated to any social enterprise clients accessing the support of the Enterprise Team, as an impactful and useful addition to the team's in-house expertise.

9.7.8 Pricing & Sales

Although CASE experienced a demand for its services from external fee paying clients during the test-trading period, the cost of its services is an important consideration for commercial clients. With CASE operating on a consultancy business model within the University of Huddersfield's trading arm, the overheads, and the top-slice contribution to the University Research Fund, are significant. This means that the charges for its services are consequently higher than those offered by many independent consultants. With a significant number of other opportunities for support being provided in the region, many with a funding award element, rather than an access to support opportunity cost, the price of its services will undoubtedly be a significant factor in being able to attract commercial clients.

In light of these circumstances, it seems more likely that a typical CASE external client would be a more established social enterprise seeking support to develop or add value to its existing operation, rather than an early stage, or pre-start client accessing start-up support.

These assumptions were verified from the initial enquiries and subsequent clients serviced by CASE, which were all beyond the start-up phase and most frequently, seeking strategic growth support and/or, guidance on social impact collection, assessment, and dissemination.

9.8 Research and Development

The business model for CASE was continuously reviewed and developed alongside the explicitly linked, Doctor of Enterprise research. The initial test-trading period with external clients took place in 2014-15, which was relatively early in the research journey, given that this was a part-time research degree, conducted over a period of 6 years.

It is interesting to reflect that at the outset of the project, the intended goal was to utilise a medium of case study interviews from existing successful Social Enterprises, together with a comparison of different elements of Social Enterprise Business Support Programmes, both within the UK and overseas. CASE was then envisaged to utilise these findings to design an innovative, best practice model, to ensure effective and timely support is available for social entrepreneurs.

However, as a result of the learning during the research journey, the opportunity to investigate existing provision via a realist informed methodology, and understanding that no mechanism works for everyone in all contexts, the output and goal was redefined. By establishing a set of guiding principles as a result of the research project, to better understand what type of interventions (mechanisms) work for whom and in what circumstances; the research output is more valuable. Such findings are helpful across all programme designers, deliverers and policy makers, and do not require existing programmes to be redefined. Rather, the research enables providers to consider the types of clients they are working with, in order to consider adaptations in their existing programme delivery, to enable more positive outcomes and experiences for their clients. Thus greater potential impact from the research becomes possible.

9.9 Basis of Operation

CASE is currently operating to a Social Enterprise ethos, via a consultancy business model established under the University of Huddersfield Enterprise Limited trading arm. Any income generated is subject to an initial 'top slice' which is contributed to the University's Research Fund, and any remaining profit after costs of operation is reinvested to increase the range and diversity of support available for those students and graduates exploring a Social Enterprise idea. This model was utilised during the active period of CASE's initial trading activity and the Cash Flow account in section 13, reflects that activity.

Future decisions on the basis of operation will be dependent on the model of further development adopted, with the potential opportunities being presented and explored in section 10, Prospects. Depending on the preferred direction following completion of this research, CASE may either continue to operate under UHEL, explore a spinout opportunity, or cease trading having satisfied its purpose.

9.10 Prospects

CASE was established as an experimental business model to service internal and external clients, and to act as a catalyst for the wider research aims and objectives of this Doctor of Enterprise submission. Now the initial research period is completed and some guiding principles for start-up social enterprise support interventions have been established *for* the social enterprise sector, and informed *by* the social enterprise sector, there are two possible opportunities for the future of CASE:

1. Remain active as an extension to the current Enterprise Team services and seek opportunities for development and growth. This option may or may not then lead to a full spinout.

2. The Enterprise Team adopts the guiding principles from the research output for supporting social enterprise start-ups, but CASE and its external trading activity ceases.

Regardless of which scenario above is pursued, the opportunity to promote the research, its benefits to the social enterprise community, and start-up programme developers and deliverers remains open. There are additional opportunities for the conclusions and recommendations to lead to further research, and/or, to influence future social enterprise start-up programmes and policy.

9.11 Principal Risks and Problems

Each of the above strategic directional opportunities will present a different risk/benefit profile, and so the following SWOT analyses shown in Tables 9.3 and 9.4, are based on the two potential future directions.

Table 9.3 SWOT Assuming Continuance of CASE Trading Activity

Strengths	Weaknesses
*Income generation opportunity for the Enterprise Team *Opportunity to utilise surplus to benefit students and graduates *Innovative model and area of strength for the university and Enterprise Team services *Easier to demonstrate adoption of research informed guidelines	*Demand on resources and capacity issues assuming similar demand as during the test trade period *Services expensive for external clients due to top-slice load to fees *Due to top-slice and need to grow team to run CASE, large client numbers required to generate sufficient surplus
Opportunities	**Threats**
*Grow the team utilising income generated to overcome resource issues *An 'active' trading entity for the generation of impact case studies and action research *Recognition for positive contribution to the field of social enterprise start-up support *Demonstrable social impact	*Maintaining balance of clients/services for socially/commercially driven clients *External partners and associates perceive service as a competitive threat, rather than a collaborative ally *Growth of team requires future stability in income levels to enable new roles to be made permanent

Table 9.4 SWOT Assuming Cessation of CASE Trading Activity

Strengths	Weaknesses
*No resource issues for continuation of CASE *Utilise clear 'non-competitive' status to strengthen partner/associate links	*Loss of innovative model and point of difference to other Universities *Loss of income generation and potential surplus and resulting impact
Opportunities	**Threats**
*Utilise time save from running CASE, to focus on publishing opportunities associated with the research *Recognition for positive contribution to the field of social enterprise start-up support	*Enterprise Team potentially perceived as less credible and influential in the social enterprise arena

Should the continuance of CASE as a trading entity be the preferred option, then considerations have been made as to the potential future impact and opportunities which CASE may create. The following impact diagrams in Figures 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3, provide a projected potential social impact map over future years.

Figure 9.1 Future CASE Impact Map - Up To 2 Years After Start Of Trading

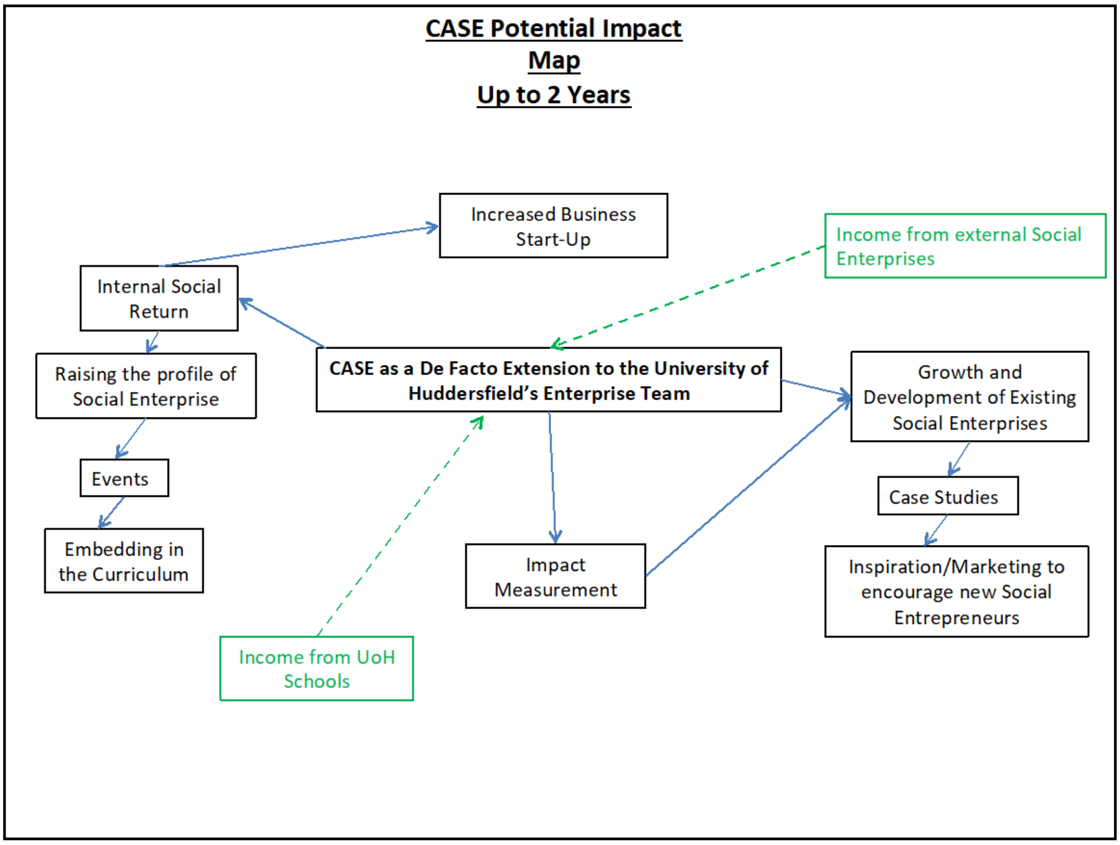


Figure 9.2 Future CASE Impact Map - 2 To 5 Years After Start Of Trading

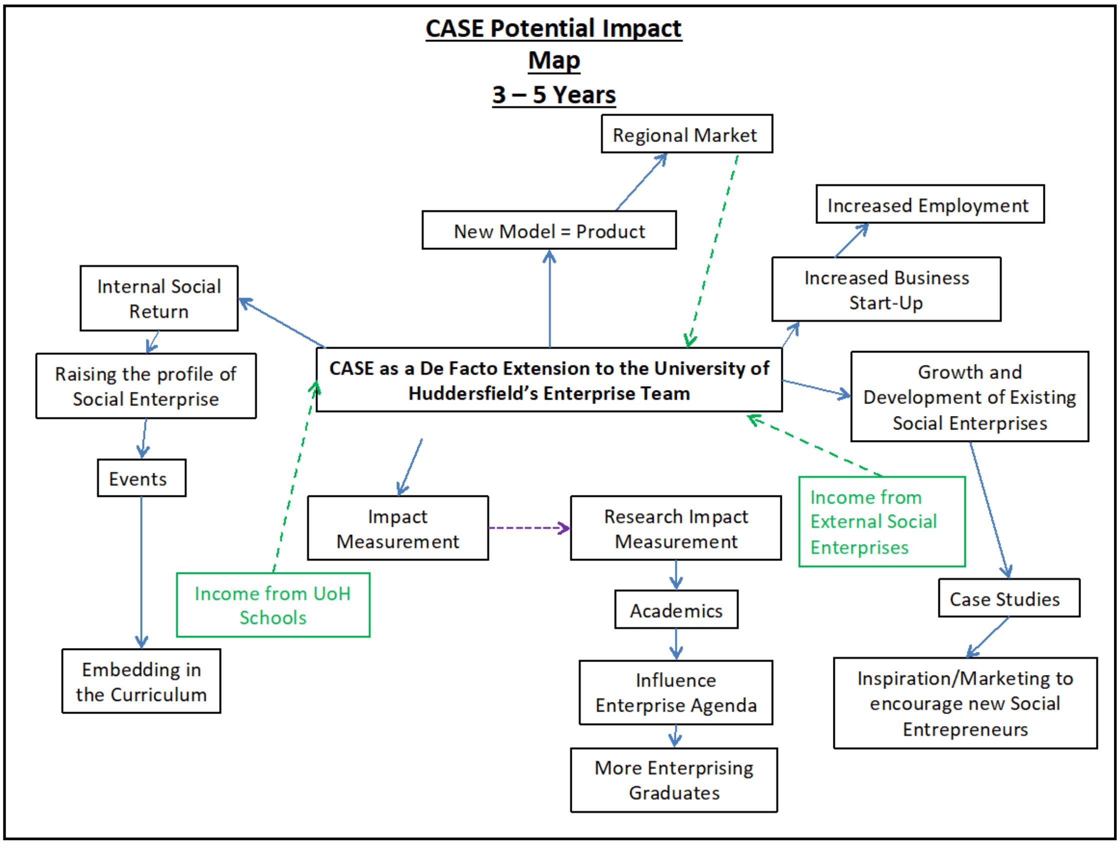
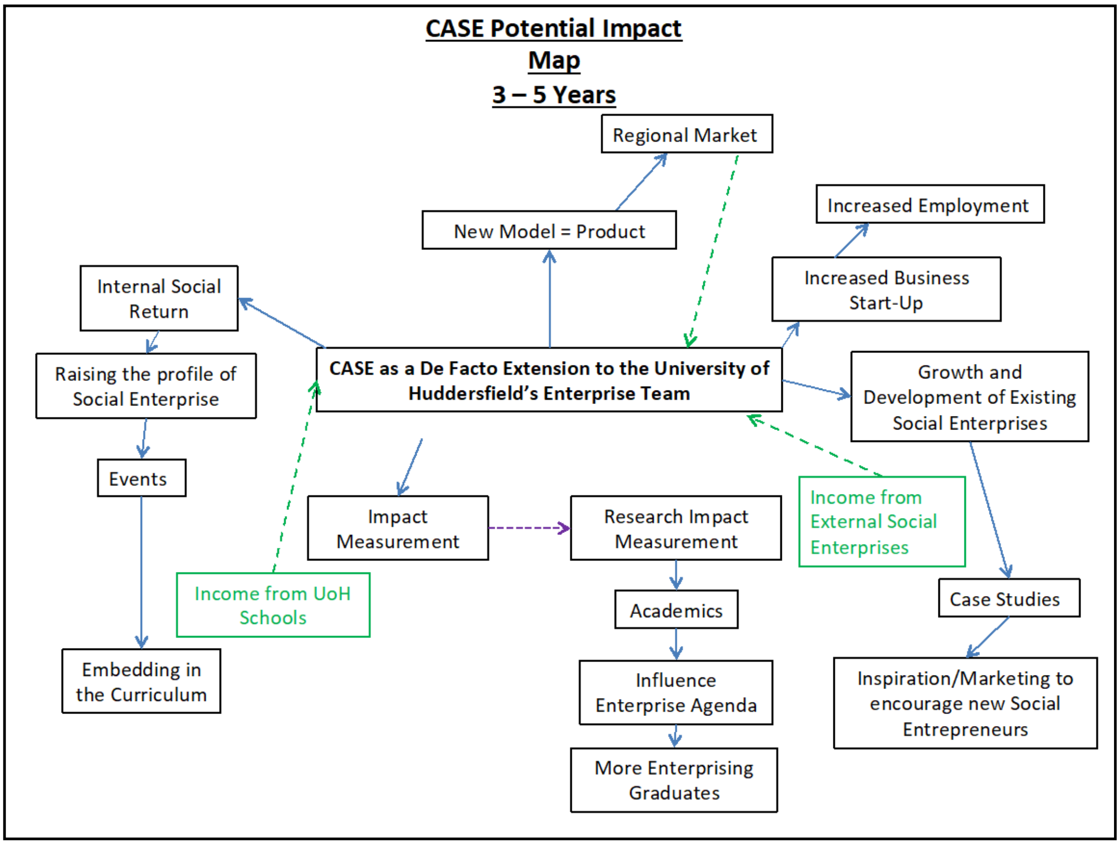


Figure 9.3 Future CASE Impact Map - 5 Years Onwards After Start Of Trading



9.12 Management and Governance

The strategic decisions made on the potential future of CASE which are presented and explored in section 10, Prospects, and the associated risks and problems of those opportunities from section 11, ultimately also feed into considerations of management and governance. If the decision is for CASE to cease trading as an entity (within, or outside of the University of Huddersfield's Enterprise Team), then management and governance considerations are removed. However, if CASE is to continue to function as a de facto extension to the Enterprise Team, or spinout of the university completely, there are differing factors to consider.

9.12.1 Considerations and implications for the 'de facto extension' route

This is the simpler of the two continuance of trading options, providing I remain at the University of Huddersfield, or, consideration is given to succession planning and training of other Enterprise Team staff in social enterprise specific knowledge and skills. The most challenging aspect of this route would be balancing the trading capacity of CASE, with maintaining other Enterprise Team services. Whilst additional staff could be recruited to work either in CASE delivery, or core Enterprise Team services, this would place pressure on CASE to generate and maintain a consistent and reasonably high level of trading activity, in order to service the increased staff costs. Furthermore, the potential to generate a surplus to benefit the University's students and graduates, would be more challenging due to increased overheads. As this potential route would see CASE remaining as a subsidiary of the University of Huddersfield's Enterprises Ltd, management and governance would be according to the University's terms and conditions of operation, and any staff involved with CASE, would remain University of Huddersfield employees.

9.12.2 Considerations and implications for 'spinout' route

This is a more complicated and longer-term potential opportunity for CASE, and would only become an option for consideration with the credibility and financial stability achieved via a successful period of trading activity via the de facto extension route. If that were to be realised, there is still a significant potential disadvantage to full spinout, in that CASE would lose the credibility and externally perceived authenticity and value it carries, whilst operating under the University of Huddersfield brand. Should an opportunity to realise this route and overcome these challenges be created, then Governance would be a matter for careful consideration. The creation of a Board, to advise on strategic and operational direction would be essential and it would seem appropriate to include University of Huddersfield representation on that Board, including some previous beneficiaries. The Board could also implement a model of 'rolling membership' from key partners and associates to ensure the ethos of a collaborative service is maintained; complementing and adding value to the existing service provision.

9.12.3 Recommendation of the future of CASE

Having considered the future options for CASE following the end of this research project, and with an overarching aim to provide effective support for social entrepreneurs from the Enterprise Team, my recommendation at this time is that the Enterprise Team adopt the guiding principles generated from this research, and apply them to the support of any clients approaching us for social enterprise start-up support.

Whilst there may be a future opportunity for CASE as a stand-alone provision to exist and develop, at the time of writing from a client, staff, and institutional perspective, it makes more sense to utilise the value of the learning, but to embed it within the existing service.

As such, CASE will at this point not be reinstated as a trading entity, but the existing Enterprise Team will adopt its principles of support provision, and income generation.

9.13 Financial Information

The following table shows the Profit and Loss Account for the test trade period of 11 months during 2014/15. CASE serviced 8 commercial clients, returning £1078.00 to the University's Research Fund and generating a surplus of £3110.00, which was reinvested to develop knowledge and skills for improved social enterprise start-up support, to run a major social enterprise event on campus, and to award some social enterprise specific grants to students and graduates.

Table 9.5 CASE Profit & Loss Account - 2014/2015

CASE

Forecast Profit and Loss Account - 2014/2015

	£	£
Sales		
Sales		£5,388
Total Sales		**£5,388**
Less Cost of sales		
Employees wages		
Materials and subcontractors	£1,200	
Other direct costs (Top Slice)	£1,078	
		£2,278
Gross Profit		**£3,110**
Gross Profit margin		58%
Operating profit		£3,110
Non operating income/expense		
Interest payable/receivable		
Net profit/loss before tax		**£3,110**
Net Profit Margin		**58%**

There was no lack of opportunity to service more clients than these initial eight, but the capacity of the team and its existing commitments, limited this activity at the time to the extent that the web page promoting the existing of CASE and its services were hidden, in an attempt to stem new referrals.

At the time of this delivery, another member of staff working part time within the Enterprise Team was subcontracted outside of their core-employed hours for some CASE service delivery. However, this increased costs and lowered the profit margin and so future activity either needs to be serviced within contract hours, or the cost of consultancy increased.

10 References

Agarwal, M., & Samanta, S. (2006). Structural Adjustment, Governance, Economic Growth and Social Progress. *Journal of International Trade And Economic Development*, Vol. 15 (3), pp. 387 - 401.

Alter, K. (2004). Social Enterprise: A Typology. Retrieved from https://www.globalcube.net/clients/philippson/content/medias/download/SE_typology.pdf

Alter, K. (2007). *Social Enterprise Typology*. Virtue Ventures LLC, Vol. 12, pp. 1-124, Retrieved from https://www.globalcube.net/clients/philippson/content/medias/download/SE_typology.pdf

Alvord, S. H., Brown, L. D., & Letts, C. W. (2004). Social Entrepreneurship and Societal Transformation. *Journal of Applied Behavioural Science*, Vol. 40 (3), pp. 260 - 282.

Anderson, R., Astbury, B., Boaz, A., Booth, A., Briscoe, S., Byng, R., & Wright, J. (2018). *Doing Realist Research*. Sage.

Anyon, J. (2009). *Theory and Educational Research: Toward Critical Social Explanation*. Routledge.

Austin, J., Stevenson, H., & Wei-Skillern, J. (2006). Social and Commercial Entrepreneurship: same, different, or both? *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice,* Vol. 30 (1), pp. 1 - 22.

Barker, W. (2002). *Measuring Social Value: Suggested Criteria.* Sheffield Community Enterprise Development Unit.

Battilana, J., & Dorado, S. (2010). Building Sustainable Hybrid Organisations: The Case Of Commercial Microfinance Organisations. *Academy of Management Journal,* Vol. 53 (6), pp. 1419 - 1440.

Becker, H. S. (1986). *Writing for Social Scientists*. University of Chicago Press.

BEIS (Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy), (Last updated 2020). England 2014 to 2020 European Structural and Investment Fund. HM Government. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/guidance/england-2014-to-2020-

european-structural-and-investment-funds#about-the-european-structural-and-investment-funds-growth-programme

Birkholzer, K. (2009). *The Role of Social Enterprise in Local Economic Development*. Paper presented at the 2nd EMES International Conference on Social Enterprise, Trento.

BIS, (2011). *Bigger, Better Business. Helping Small Firms Start, Grow and Prosper*. UK: HM Government

BIS, (2011a). Business Support for Social Enterprises: Findings From A Longitudinal Study. Policy Research Group, University of Durham

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (2003). *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods* (4th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

Bridge, S. (2015). Is Enterprise Education Relevant to Social Enterprise? *Journal of Education and Training*, Vol. 57 (8/9), pp. 1009 - 1018.

Bull, M. (2008). Challenging Tensions: Critical, Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives on Social Enterprise. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research*, Vol. 14 (5), pp. 268 - 275.

Buttenheim, A. (2002). Social Enterprise Meets Venture Philosophy: A Powerful Combination. *Los Angeles Business Journal*, Vol. 20 (46), pp. 16 - 22.

Cabinet Office. (2006). *Social Enterprise Action Plan, Scaling New Heights*.

Cabinet Office. (2010). *Building a Stronger Civil Society*.

Cabinet Office. (2011). *Business Support for Social Enterprises: Final Report*.

Cabinet Office. (2013). *2010 - 2015 Government Policy: Social Enterprise*. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-social-enterprise/2010-to-2015-government-policy-social-enterprise: HM Government

Carroll, A. B. (1979). A Three-Dimensional Conceptual Model of Corporate Performance. *Academy of Management*, Vol. 4, pp. 497 - 505.

Centre for Cities, (2013). *Support for Growing Businesses - A Policy Briefing*. Retrieved from: http://www.centreforcities.org/publication/support-for-growing-businesses/

Charities Aid Foundation, (2016). A Timeline of Modern British Philanthropy. Retrieved from https://www.cafonline.org/about-us/blog-home/giving-thought/the-role-of-giving/a-timeline-of-modern-british-philanthropy

Chell, E. (2007). Social Enterprise and Entrepreneurship: Towards A Convergent Theory of the Entrepreneurial Process. *International Small Business Journal,* Vol. 25(1), pp. 5-26.

Chen, H. T. (1990). *Theory-Driven Evaluation*. Sage.

Choi, N., & Majumdar, S. (2013). Social Entrepreneurship As An Essentially Contested Concept: Opening A New Avenue For Systematic Future Research. *Journal of Business Venturing,* Vol. 29, pp. 363 - 376.

Civil Society News (2013). New Government Legislation Contains Definition of Social Enterprise. Vibeka Mair. Retrieved from https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/news/new-government-legislation-contains-definition-of-social-enterprise.html

Clark, G., & Page, M. E. (2019). Welfare Reform, 1834: Did The New Poor Law In England Produce Significant Economic Gains? *Cliometrica*, Vol. 13 (2), pp. 221 - 244.

Clegg, P. J., Towns-Andrews, E., & Halsall, J. P. (2021). Developing Social Enterprise In The Higher Education Setting. In J. P. Halsall, R. Oberoi, & M. Snowden (Eds.), *Social Enterprise In The Higher Education Sector*, pp. 91 - 110 Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Cohen, I. J. (1996). Theories of Action and Praxis. *The Blackwell Companion to Social Theory*, (2nd ed.), pp. 73 - 111.

Conway, C., Dato-On, M., & Kalakay, J. (2016). The Winding Road of Social Entrepreneurship Definitions: A Systematic Literature Review. *Social Enterprise Journal,* Vol. 12 (2) pp. 131 - 160

Crainer, S. (2012). Social Enterprise: The Quiet Revolution. *Business Strategy Review,* Vol. *23* (4), pp. 14 - 21.

Dacin, P. A., Dacin, M. T., & Matear, M. (2010). Social Entrepreneurship: Why We Don't Need A New Theory And How We Move Forward From Here. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, Vol. 24 (3), pp. 37 - 57.

Danermark, B., Ekstrom, M., Jakobsen, L., & Karlsson, J. (2002). *Explaining Society: Critical Realism In The Social Sciences*. Routledge.

Dart, R. (2004). The Legitimacy of Social Enterprise. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership,* Vol. 14 (4), pp. 411 - 424.

Davies, R. (2016). *Public Good by Private Means*. Alliance Publishing Trust.

Dees, J. G. (1998). Enterprising Nonprofits. *Harvard Business Review,* Vol. 76, pp. 54 - 69.

Dees, J. G. (2011). The Meaning Of Social Entrepreneurship. *Case Studies In Social Entrepreneurship And Sustainability*, pp. 22-30. The oikos collection Vol. 2. ProQuest Ebook Central https://ebookcentral.proquest.com

Dees, J. G., & Elias, J. (1998). The Challenges Of Combining Social And Commercial Enterprise. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, Vol. 8 (1), pp. 165 - 178.

Dees, J. G., Emerson, J., & Economy, P. (2002). *Enterprising Non-profits: A Toolkit For Social Entrepreneurs*: Routledge.

Defourny, J., & Nyssens, M. (2008). Social Enterprise in Europe: Recent Trends and Developments. *Social Enterprise Journal,* Vol. 4 (3), pp. 202-228.

Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, (2018). *Civil Society Strategy: Building A Future That Works For Everyone*. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-society-strategy-building-a-future-that-works-for-everyone: HM Government

Department of Trade & Industry, (2002); *Social Enterprise: A Strategy for Success*. London: Department of Trade and Industry, p. 7. Accessed via https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20031220233724/http://www.dti.gov.uk/socialenterprise/strategy.htm

Doherty, B. (2018). Research In The Social Enterprise Journal: From The Margins To The Mainstream. *Social Enterprise Journal*, Vol.14 (1), pp. 108-116.

Doherty, B., Foster, G., Mason, C., Meehan, J., Meehan, K., Rotheroe, N., & Royce, M. (2009). *Management for Social Enterprise*. Sage.

Doyle, J. (2013). Local Enterprise Partnerships To Deliver Progressive Social Outcomes. *Journal of Local Economy*, Vol. 28 (7/8), pp. 921 - 926.

Dressman, M. (2008). *Using Social Theory In Educational Research: A Practical Guide.* Routledge.

East Midlands Development Agency (2008). Business Support Simplification Programme (BSSP). Retrieved from https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20081201161922/http://www.emda.org.uk/businesssupport/bssp.asp

Eikenberry, A. M., & Kluver, J. D. (2004). The Marketization Of The Nonprofit Sector: Civil Society At Risk. *Public Administration Review, Vol. 64* (2), pp. 132-140.

Evans, M., & Syrett, S. (2007). Generating Social Capital? *European Urban and Regional Studies*, Vol. 14 (1), pp. 55 - 74.

Floyd, D. (2013). Measurement And Scale: The Social Entrepreneur 16 Years On. Retrieved from http://www.beanbagsandbullsh1t.com/2013/09/24/measurementand-scale-the-social-entrepreneur-16-years-on/

Funnel, S. (1997). Program Logic: An Adaptable Tool For Designing And Evaluating Programs. *Evaluation News and Comment,* Vol. 6(1), pp. 5 - 7.

Gawell, M. (2013). Social entrepreneurship: Innovative Challengers Or Adjustable Followers? *Social Enterprise Journal,* Vol. 9 (2), pp. 203 - 220.

Gill, J., Johnson, P., & Clark, M. (2010). *Research Methods for Managers*. Sage.

Gilson, L., Hanson, K., Sheikh, K., Agyepong, I., Ssengooba, F., & Bennett, S. (2011). *Building the Field of Health Policy and Systems Research: Social Science Matters.* Report 2

Giotis, C., & Hampson, G. (2009). An Issue Of Brand. *Social Enterprise Magazine,* Vol. 75, pp. 14 - 17.

Glouberman, S., & Zimmerman, B. (2002). Complicated and Complex Systems: What Would Successful Reform of Medicare Look Like? Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265240426_Complicated_and_Complex_Systems_What_Would_Successful_Reform_of_Medicare_Look_Like

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). *Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research: The Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Sage.

Hansard, House of Commons, (2000). Social Enterprise Debate. Retrieved from https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2000-03-15/debates/eb1f1721-0d3e-461d-856c-cb4adf2dfeb6/SocialEnterprises

Harvey, L. (2012). Max Weber - Theory of Social Action. Retrieved from http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/socialresearch/socialaction.htm

Haugh, H. (2005). A Research Agenda For Social Entrepreneurship. *Social Enterprise Journal,* Vol. 1(1) pp. 1 - 12

Haugh, H. (2007). Community-Led Social Venture Creation. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice,* Vol. 31 (2), pp. 161-182.

Haugh, H., & Kitson, M. (2007). The Third Way And The Third Sector: New Labour's Economic Policy And The Social Economy. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, Vol. 31 (6), pp. 973 - 974.

Haugh, H., (2012). The Importance Of Theory In Social Enterprise Research. *Social Enterprise Journal,* Vol. 8 (1), pp. 7 - 15.

HCLG. (Last updated 2021). European Regional Development Fund. HM Government. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-european-regional-development-fund-operational-programme-2014-to-2020

HEFCE. (2013). £2 Million Boost For Universities To Support Social Ventures. Retrieved from National Archive website: https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20180319132747/http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/newsarchive/2013/Name,93968,en.html

Henn, M., Weinstein, M., & Foard, N. (2008). *A Short Introduction To Social Research*. Sage.

Highlands and Islands Development Board, (1979). *The Contribution of the Community Cooperatives of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland to the Development of the Social Economy*. Retrieved from Journal of Rural Cooperation http://departments.agri.huji.ac.il/economics/en/jrc.htm:

Hines, F. (2005). Social Enterprise: An Evaluation Of Business Support To Social Enterprises. *Social Enterprise Journal,* Vol. 1 (1), pp. 13 - 28.

H.M. Government, (2006). The Business Support Simplification Programme. Retrieved from http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN02992/SN02992.pdf

Jagosh, J. (2018). CARES - Centre For The Advancement Of Realist Evaluation And Synthesis. Retrieved from https://realistmethodology-cares.org/

Kalberg, S. (1980). Max Weber's Types of Rationality: Cornerstones for the Analysis of Rationalization Processes in History. *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 85 (5), pp. 1145 - 1179.

Kay, A., Roy, M. J., & Donaldson, C. (2016). Re-Imagining Social Enterprise. *Social Enterprise Journal,* Vol. 12 (2), pp. 217-234.

Kerlin, J. A. (2010). Comparative Analysis Of The Global Emergence of Social Enterprise. *Voluntas, Vol. 21* (2), pp. 162 - 179

Kerlin, J. A. (2013). Defining Social Enterprise Across Different Contexts; A Conceptual Framework Based On Institutional Factors. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, Vol. 42* (1), pp. 84 - 108.

Laville, J.L. & Nyssens, M. (2001) The Social Enterprise, Towards A Theoretical Socio-Economic Approach, in *The Emergence of Social Enterprise,* Borzaga, B. & Defourny, J. (2001) Routledge, pp. 312-332

Levesque, B., Bourque, G. L., & Forgues, E. (2001). The New Economic Sociology. *Relations Industrielles,* Vol. 57, pp. 594 - 596.

Lewis-Beck, M., Bryman, A. E., & Futing Lao, T. (2004). *The SAGE Encylopedia of Social Science Research Methods,* Vol. 1. Sage.

Leyshon, A., Lee, R., & Williams, C. C. (2003). *Alternative Economic Spaces*. Sage.

Local Enterprise Partnership Network. (2018). Local Enterprise Partnership Information. Retrieved from https://www.lepnetwork.net/

Lortie, J., & Castogiovanni, G. (2015). The Theory Of Planned Behaviour In Entrepreneurship Research: What We Know And Future Directions. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal,* Vol. 11 (4), pp. 935 - 957.

Low, C. (2006). A Framework For The Governance Of Social Enterprise. *International Journal of Social Economics*, Vol. 33 (5/6), pp. 376 - 385.

Lyon, F., & Ramsden, M. (2006). Developing Fledgling Social Enterprises? A Study Of The Support Required And Means Of Delivering It. *Social Enterprise Journal,* Vol. 2 (1), pp. 27 - 41

MacDonald, M., & Howorth, C. (2018). Roots of Social Enterprise: Entrepreneurial Philanthropy, England 1600-1908. *Social Enterprise Journal,* Vol. 14 (1), pp. 4-21.

Mair, J., & Marti, I. (2006). Social Entrepreneurship Research: A Source Of Explanation, Prediction And Delight. *Journal of World Business,* Vol. 41, pp. 36 - 44.

Manzano, A. (2016). The Craft Of Interviewing In Realist Evaluation. *White Rose Research Online*. Sage. Retrieved from http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/94454/

Marchal, B., Kegels, G., & Van Belle, S. (2018). Theory And Realist Methods. In N. Emmel, J. Greenhalgh, A. Manzano, M. Monaghan, & S. Dalkin (Eds.), *Doing Realist Research*. Sage.

Marshall D and Lovatt R (2004) Valuing Social Enterprise In The Social Housing Sector: Transforming Social Housing. Housing Studies Association Spring Conference: Sheffield Hallam University

Martin, F., & Thompson, M. (2010). *Social Enterprise - Developing Sustainable Businesses*. Palgrave MacMillan.

Maxwell, J. A. (2012). *A Realist Approach for Qualitative Research*. Sage.

Maxwell, J. A. (2009). Evidence: A Critical Realist Perspective for Qualitative Research. In *Qualitative Inquiry and Social Justice,* pp. 108 - 122. Left Coast Press.

Maxwell, J. A. (2008). The Value Of A Realist Understanding Of Causality For Qualitative Research. In *Qualitative Research And The Politics of Evidence*, pp. 163 - 181. Left Coast Press.

McCall, B., Ogden-Newton, A., & Pearce, J. (2004). *Understanding Social Enterprise*. Retrieved from UK: http://www.cles.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/LW57-Understanding-social-enterprise-May04.pdf

Mendell, M. (2005). *Reclaiming Democracy: The social Justice and Political Economy of Gregory Baum And Kari Polanyi Levitt* McGill Queen's University Press.

Merton, R. K., (1968). *Social Theory And Social Structure*. Free Press.

Meyer, J., & Rowan, B. (1977). Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure As Myth And Ceremony. *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 83 (2), pp. 340 - 363.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Qualitative Data Analysis (2nd Ed.) Sage.

Mole, K. F. Hart, M., Roper, S., & Saal, D. S. (2008). Differential Gains From Business Link Support Advice: A Treatment Effects Approach. *Environment and Planning C: Politics And Space*, Vol. 26 (2), pp. 315 - 334.

Mole, K. F., Hart, M., Roper, S., & Saal, D. S. (2009). Assessing The Effectiveness Of Business Support Services In England: Evidence From A Theory Based Evaluation. *International Small Business Journal*, Vol. 27 (5), pp. 557 - 582.

Morrison, K. (2006). *Marx, Durkheim, Weber: Formations Of Modern Social Thought* (2nd ed.). SAGE.

Moulaert, F., & Ailenei, O. (2005). Social Economy, Third Sector And Solidarity Relations: A Conceptual Synthesis From History To Present. *Urban Studies,* Vol. 42 (11), pp. 2037-2053.

Moulaert, F., & Nussbaumer, J. (2005). Defining The Social Economy And Its Governance At The Neighbourhood Level: A Methodological Reflection. *Urban Studies, Vol. 42* (11), pp. 2071 - 2088.

Mswaka, W. (2011). *Not Just For Profit: An Empirical Study Of Social Enterprises In South Yorkshire.* University of Huddersfield

Neamtan, N. (2002). *The Social and Solidarity Economy: Towards An 'Alternative' Globalisation*. Paper presented at the Citizenship and Globalization: Exploring Participation and Democracy in a Global Context, Vancouver.

Nesta. (2014). *Good Incubation: The Craft Of Supporting Early-Stage Social Ventures*. Retrieved from UK: https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/good_incubation_wv.pdf

Nicholls, A. (2006). *Social Entrepreneurship: New Models Of Sustainable Social Change*. Oxford University Press.

Omorede, A. (2014). Exploration Of Motivational Drivers Towards Social Entrepreneurship. *Social Enterprise Journal,* Vol. 10 (3), pp. 239 - 267

Ormston, R., Spencer, L., Barnard, M., & Snape, D. (2014). The Foundations Of Qualitative Research. In *Qualitative Research Practice* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Paton, R. (2003). *Managing and Measuring Social Enterprises*. London: Sage.

Pawson, R. (2006). *Evidence-Based Policy: A Realist Perspective*. London: Sage.

Pawson, R., Greenhalgh, T., Harvey, G., & Walshe, K. (2004). *Realist Synthesis: An Introduction*. ESRC Research Methods Programme. Retrieved from https://www.betterevaluation.org/sites/default/files/RMPmethods2.pdf

Pawson, R., & Manzano-Santaella, A. (2012). A Realist Diagnosis Workshop. Sage. Retrieved from https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1356389012440912

Pawson, R., & Tilley, N. (1997). *Realistic Evaluation*. Sage.

Payton, T. L., & Moody, M. P. (2008). Understanding Philanthropy: Its Meaning And Its Mission. Indiana University Press.

Pearce, J., & Kay, A. (2003). *Social Enterprise in Anytown*. Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

Peattie, K., & Morley, A. (2008). Social Enterprises: Diversity And Dynamics, Contexts and Contributions. A Research Monograph.

Peredo, A. M., & McLean, M. (2006). Social Entrepreneurship: A Critical Review Of The Concept. *Journal of World Business,* Vol. 41, pp. 56 - 65.

Phillips, D. (1987). *Philosophy, Science, And Social Enquiry: Contemporary Methodological Controversies in Social Science And Related Applied Fields of Research.* Pergamon Press.

Pinch, S., & Sunley, P. (2015). Social Enterprise And Neo-Institutional Theory: An Evaluation Of The Organisational Logics Of Social Enterprise In The UK. *Social Enterprise Journal,* Vol. 11 (3), pp. 303 - 320.

Pinnegar, S. (2006). *Are Complex Programs The Best Response To Complex Policy Issues?* Kensington.

Prabhu, G. (1999). Social Entrepreneurial Leadership. *Career Development International,* Vol. 4 (3), pp. 140 - 145.

Ragin, C. C. (1999). Using Qualitative Comparative Analysis To Study Causal Complexity. *Health Services Research*, Vol. 34 (5), pp. 1225 - 1239.

Research Methodology, (2018). Axiology. Retrieved from https://research-methodology.net/research-philosophy/axiology-2/

Ridley-Duff, R., & Bull, M. (2011). *Understanding Social Enterprise - Theory and Practice*. Sage.

Rogers, P. (2008). Using Programme Theory To Evaluate Complicated And Complex Aspects of Interventions. *Evaluation*, Vol. 14 (1), pp. 29 - 48.

Rotheroe, N., & Richards, A. (2007). Social Return On Investment: Transparent Accountability For Sustainable Development. *Social Enterprise Journal,* Vol. 3 (1), pp. 31 - 48.

Said Business School, (2014). Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship. Retrieved from https://www.sbs.ox.ac.uk/research/centres-and-initiatives/skoll-centre-social-entrepreneurship

Salter, K. L., & Kothari, A. (2014). Using Realist Evaluation To Open The Black Box Of Knowledge Translation: A Start-of-the-Art Review. *Implementation Science, Vol. 9* (1), pp. 1 - 14

Santos, F. M. (2009). *Positive Theory of Social Entrepreneurship*. In: INSEAD, The Business School of the World.

Sayer, A. (2000). *Realism and Social Science*. Sage.

Schofield, S. (2005). The Case Against Social Enterprise. *Journal of Co-Operative Studies*, Vol. 38 (3), pp. 34-35.

Scott, J. A. (2001). After the Bubble: Investing In Internet-Based Social Enterprise in Challenging Times. Report for Flatiron Foundation and the Atlantic Philanthropies

Seanor, P., Bull, M., Baines, S., & Purcell, M. (2014). Where Social Enterprise Practitioners Draw The Line: Towards An Understanding Of Movement From Social Entrepreneurship As Boundary Work, *International Journal of Public Sector Management,* Vol. 27 (4), pp. 353 - 368.

Seanor, P., & Meaton, J. (2007). Making Sense Of Social Enterprise. *Social Enterprise Journal,* Vol. 3 (1), pp. 90 -100.

Sepulveda, L. (2009). *Outsider, missing link or panacea? Some Reflections About The Place Of Social Enterprise In Relation To The Third Sector*. Third Sector Research Centre Working Paper.

Sepulveda, L. (2015). Social Enterprise: A New Phenomenon In The Field Of Economic And Social Welfare. *Social Policy and Administration,* Vol. 49 (7), pp. 842 - 861.

Shaw, E., Shaw, J., & Wilson, M. (2002). *Unsung Entrepreneurs: Entrepreneurship For Social Gain*. Durham.

Shearn, K., Allmark, P., Piercy, H., & Hirst, J. (2017). Building Realist Program Theory For Large Complex And Messy Interventions. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, Vol. 16* (1), pp. 57 - 73.

Sivaev, D. (2013). How Should We Help Business Grow? Delivering Business Support. *The Journal of the Local Economy Policy Unit, Vol. 28* (7-8), pp. 906 - 910
Smallbone, D., Evans, M., Ekanem, I., & Butters, S. (2001). *Researching Social Enterprise*. Centre for Enterprise and Economic Development Research, Middlesex University Business School for The Small Business Service

Smith, C. & Davidson, H. (2016) How Generosity Enhances Wellbeing. In Moody, M., & Breeze, B. (2016), *The Philanthropy Reader*. Routledge.

Smith, G. (2005). Green Citizenship And The Social Economy. *Environmental Politics, Vol. 14* (2), pp. 273 - 289

Social Enterprise Alliance (2010). *Succeeding At Social Enterprise - Hard-Won Lessons For Nonprofits And Social Entrepreneurs* (1st ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Social Enterprise Coalition, (2003). *There's More To Business Than You Think: A Guide To Social Enterprise*. The Social Enterprise Coalition

Social Enterprise International, (2014). An International Definition. Retrieved from http://sei.coop/definition/

Social Enterprise Journal. Meet the New Editor - Simon Teasdale. Retrieved from http://emeraldgrouppublishing.com/products/journals/news_story.htm?id=7535

Social Enterprise UK. (2018). *The Hidden Revolution*. Retrieved from https://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/policy-and-research-reports/the-hidden-revolution/

Social Enterprise UK, (2018). What Is The History Of Social Enterprise. Retrieved from https://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/faq/what-is-the-history-of-social-enterprise/

Social Enterprise UK (2019). State Of Social Enterprise: Yorkshire and Humber. Retrieved from https://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/SEUK-State-of-Social-Enterprise-Yorkshire-and-Humber-v2.lowres.pdf

Spear, R., Cornforth, C., & Aitken, M. (2007). For Love And Money: Governance And Social Enterprise. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/42794847_For_Love_and_Money_Governance_and_Social_Enterprise

Steinerowski, A. (2011). *Developing A Social Enterprise: An Investigation Of Promoters And Barriers.* (PhD), University of Aberdeen, Retrieved from https://pure.uhi.ac.uk/portal/en/studentthesis/developing-a-social-enterprise(8fcefbec-cf03-48eb-b534-209b62b4eb4d).html

Strothotte, T. G., & Wustenhagen, R. (2005). Structure Of Sustainable Economic Value In Social Entrepreneurial Enterprises. *The Emergence of Entrepreneurial Economics*, Vol. 9, pp. 129 - 140

Sutton, E., McEachern, M., & Kane, K. (2018). Communicating A Social Agenda Within HEIs: The Role of the Social Enterprise Mark. *Social Enterprise Journal*, Vol. 14 (3), pp. 328 -347

Teasdale, S. (2010). What's in a name? The Construction of Social Enterprise. In: TSRC Working paper 46.

Teasdale, S. (2012). What's In A Name? Making Sense of Social Enterprise Discourses. *Public Policy and Administration*, Vol. 27 (2), pp. 99 - 119.

Thompson, J. (2008). Social Enterprise And Social Entrepreneurship: Where Have We Reached? *Social Enterprise Journal,* Vol. 4 (2), pp. 149 - 161.

Thompson, J., Alvy, G., & Lees, A. (2000). Social Entrepreneurship: A New Look At The People And The Potential. *Journal of Management Decision (was Management History),* Vol. 38 (5), pp. 328 - 338.

Thompson, J. L., & Doherty, B. (2006). The Diverse World Of Social Enterprises. *International Journal of Social Economics, Vol. 33* (5/6), pp. 361 - 375

Thornton, P. H., Ocasio, W., & Lounsbury, M. (2012). *The Institutional Logics Perspective*, Oxford University Press.

Treasury, (1999). *Enterprise and Social Exclusion*. UK Government. Retrieved from https://www.thenbs.com/PublicationIndex/documents/details?Pub=HMT&DocID=259423

Treasury, (1999). *National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal: Policy Action Team 3*. HM Government

Treasury, (2014). *Social Investment Roadmap*. UK: UK Government. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-investment-roadmap

Treasury, (2018). Budget 2018, HM Government Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/budget-2018-documents

Tricco, A. C., Soobiah, C., Antony, J., MacDonald, H., Lillie, E., Tran, J., D'Souza, J., Hui, W., Perrier, L., Welch, V., Horsley, T., Strauss, S.E., & Kastner, M. (2016). A Scoping Review Identifies Multiple Emerging Knowledge Synthesis Methods, But Few Studies Operationalise The Method. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology,* Vol. 73, pp. 19 - 28.

Triodos Bank. (2018). What We Do. Retrieved from https://www.triodos.co.uk/en/about-triodos/what-we-do/

Trochim, W. M. (2006). The Research Methods Knowledge Base. (2nd Ed.) Retrieved from http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/positvsm.php

Wagner, P. (2001). *A History And Theory Of The Social Sciences: Not All That Is Solid Melts Into Air*. SAGE.

Weber, M. (1964). *The Theory Of Social And Economic Organization*. Free Press.

Weber, M. (1970). From *Max Weber: Essays In Sociology*; translated, edited and with an introduction by H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills. Routledge.

Weber, M. (1975). *Roscher And Knies: The Logical Problems Of Historical Economics.* The Free Press.

Weber, M. (1979). Economy And Society: An Outline Of Interpretive Sociology. University of California Press.

Weber, M. (2015). *The Protestant Ethic And The Spirit Of Capitalism*. Forgotten Books.

Webster, S., Lewis, J., & Brown, A. (2014). Ethical Considerations in Qualitative Research. In K. Metzler (Ed.), *Qualitative Research Practice - A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers,* pp. 77 - 110. Sage.

Weiss, C. (1998). *Evaluation: Methods For Studying Programs And Policies*. Prentice Hall.

West, A. (2004). *Social Enterprise: Moving From A Safe To A Radical Agenda*. University of East London.

Westall, A. (2001). *Value-Led Market-Driven: Social Enterprise Solutions To Public Policy Goals*. Institute for Public Policy Research.

Wong, G. (2018a). Getting To Grips With Context And Complexity: The Case For Realist Approaches. *Gaceta Sanitaria,* Vol. 32 (2), pp. 109 - 110.

Wong, G. (2018b). Making Theory From Knowledge Syntheses Useful For Public Health. *International Journal of Public Health*. Vol. 63, (5), pp. 555 - 556

Wong, G., Greenhalgh, J., Manzano, A., Greenhalgh, T., & Pawson, R. (2017). RAMESES II Project; Philosophies and Evaluation Design. Retrieved from http://www.ramesesproject.org/media/RAMESES_II_Philosophies_and_evaluation_design.pdf

Wong, G., Greenhalgh, T., Westhorp, G., Buckingham, J., & Pawson, R. (2013). RAMESES I (Realist and Meta-narrative Evidence Syntheses: Evolving Standards.

Wong, G., Manzano, A., Greenhalgh, J., Jagosh, J., & Greenhalgh, T. (2016). RAMESES II (Realist and Meta-Narrative Evidence Syntheses: Evolving Standards.

World Health Organisation, (2012). *Health Policy And Systems Research: A Methodology Reader*. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/alliance-hpsr/alliancehpsr_reader.pdf

Young, D. R., & Lecy, J. D. (2014). Defining the Universe of Social Enterprise: Competing Metaphors. *Voluntas*, Vol. 25, (5), pp. 1307 – 1332

Zahra, S., Gedajlovic, E., Neubaum, D. O., & Schulman, J. M. (2009). *A Typology Of Social Entrepreneurs: Motives, Search Processes And Ethical Challenges*. Paper presented at the Strategic Management Society Conference, Catania, Italy.

11 Appendices

11.1 Appendix 1 - Thematic Analysis Of Chapter 2 Literature Review Framework – Social Enterprise

Author	Source/Title	Year	Theme	Findings/Contribution
Kay, A Roy, M Donaldson, C	Social Enterprise Journal - Re-imagining Social Enterprise	2016	Multiple interpretations of social enterprise explored	Discussions on how social enterprise should and could contribute to the creation of a fairer and more just society.
Haugh, H	Social Enterprise Journal - A Research Agenda for Social Entrepreneurship	2005	Social Entrepreneurship Research Agenda	Explores and categorises Social Entrepreneurship into 8 themes. Calls for researches to generate valid theory and data to support the agenda. Notes hindrance due to lack of definition

Crainer, S	Business Strategy Review (J) - Social enterprise; the quiet revolution	2012	Prominence of social enterprise	Rise in prominence of social enterprise
Schofield, S	Journal of Co-Operative Studies - The Case Against Social Enterprise	2005	Rapid acceleration/interest in social enterprise. Can it achieve all it is meant to?	Difficulties and inconsistencies in definition and scope of SE
Peredo, A.M. McLean, M	Journal of World Business - Social Entrepreneurship: A Critical Review of the Concept	2006	Analytical and critical exploration of social entrepreneurship	Proposes a flexible idea/principle of the creation of social value
Young, D.R. Lecy, J.D.	Voluntas - Defining the Universe of Social Enterprise	2013	Focus of social enterprise - profit or social impact	Examines the balance and trade off between profit making and social return and proposes that Social Enterprise is a wide ranging terminology

Kerlin, J.A.	Nonprofit & Voluntary Sector Quarterly - Defining Social Enterprise across different contexts; a conceptual framework based on institutional factors	2013	Social enterprise definitions and development in differing areas	How context influences the development of social enterprise
Seanor, P Meaton, J	Social Enterprise Journal - Making sense of social enterprise	2007	Issues/concerns of participants in a social enterprise network in Bradford	Five key themes emerged - social entrepreneur; organizational identity; common language; growth; and networking
Hines, F	Social Enterprise Journal - Viable social enterprise: an evaluation of business support to social enterprises	2005	To identify the support needs of social enterprises	Results/recommendations for support of Social enterprises based on research commissioned by Triodos Bank,
Gawell, M	Social Enterprise Journal - Social entrepreneurship - innovative challengers or adjustable followers?	2013	Social enterprise impact on society and contextual influences	How civil society organisations (re)construct their roles and thereby social entrepreneurship's dynamic role in society

Thompson, Alvy & Lees	Journal of Management Decision - Social Entrepreneurship - A New Look at the People and the Potential	2000	Exploration of the potential for Social Entrepreneurship to address social issues and needs	Concludes with what is required (externally/from Government)to enable social enterprises to be able to contribute to the social economy
Conway Dato-on, M & Kalakay, J	Social Enterprise Journal - The winding road of social entrepreneurship definitions: a systematic literature review	2016	Review of the literature on definitions	Definitions of social entrepreneurship with reference to four dimensions of entrepreneurship posited by Gartner (1985)
Omorede, A	Social Enterprise Journal - Exploration of motivational drivers towards social entrepreneurship	2014	Motivation, persistence and drivers in social entrepreneurs	Contribution in understanding drive and passion but also importance of context in social entrepreneurship

Kerlin, J.A.	Voluntas - A Comparative Analysis of the Global Emergence of Social Enterprise	2010	Compares the emerging concept and practice of social enterprise across 7 countries	Though increase in social enterprise activity is generally seen in may global settings, definitions are specific to geographical areas. Importance of context again
Dart, R	Nonprofit Management and Leadership - The Legitimacy of Social Enterprise	2004	The emergence and evolution of social enterprise	Proposes future research opportunities in the emerging field
Seanor, P Bull, M Baines, S Purcell, M	International Journal of Public Sector Management - Where Social Enterprise Practitioners The Line: Towards an understanding of movement from social entrepreneurship as boundary work	2014	Exploration of the concept of 'boundaries' in social enterprise	Reelections on the interactions of social enterprises with the public sector

MacDonald, M and Howorth, C	Social Enterprise Journal - Roots of social enterprise: entrepreneurial philanthropy, England 1600-1908	2018	Insight into the roots of social enterprise and comparison to modern day	Importance of considering the social, political and historical context of social enterprises to understand trends and provide authentic explanations. Social Enterprise is a modern 'label' but with firm historical roots
Thompson, J	Social Enterprise Journal - Social Enterprise and Social Entrepreneurship: where have we reached?	2008	DiscussIon of social enterprises, social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurs to achieve clarity of understanding	Discussion around the balance of 'social' and 'entrepreneur' and indication of potential need to 'measure' social value

Chell, E	International Small Business Journal - Towards a Convergent Theory of the Entrepreneurial Process	2007	Discussions around 'not for profit' approach needing to move towards sustainable model	Suggests that the definition of entrepreneurship might be modified to include the creation of 'social and economic value' and may thus be applied to both private, entrepreneurial ventures as well as social enterprises.
Choi, M & Majumdar, S	Journal of Business Venturing - Social entrepreneurship as an essentially contested concept: Opening a new avenue for systematic future research	2013	Exploration of the contested nature of social enterprise and to offer a proposal for future research	Proposal of a 'cluster concept' for social enterprise
Austin, J Stevenson, H Wei-Skillern, J	Entrepreneurship theory & Practice - Social and Commercial Entrepreneurship: Same, Different, or Both?	2006	A comparative analysis of commercial and social entrepreneurship	A proposed list of topics and areas for further research. Including context

Lyon, F Ramsden, M	Social Enterprise Journal - Developing fledgling social enterprises? A study of the support required and means of delivering it	2006	Explores the type of support, the approaches to, and coordination of social enterprise support	The potential contributions that social enterprises can make to social inclusion and economic development.
Haugh, H Kitson, M	Cambridge Journal of Economics - The third way and the third sector: new labour's economic policy and the social economy	2007	Review of the relationship between Labour's economic policy and the third sector	A look at the conditions required to help the third sector to develop
Teasdale, S	Public Policy and Administration	2012	Concept and definition discussions with particular reference to England	A review of the development and variety of definitions and discourses around social enterprise

Dacin, P Dacin, T & Matear, M	Academy of Management Perspectives - Social Entrepreneurship: Why we don't need a new theory and how we move forward from here	2010	Examination of the social entrepreneurship literature and what is unique about the concept and what opportunities it offers for the future	Exploration of definitions and opportunities for further research in the field of social enterprise, by using existing theories and applying them to the social entrepreneurship context

EMERGENT THEMES FROM THE LITERATURE
Increasing interest in, and occurrence of, social enterprise
The contested/contentious nature of Social Enterprise
What is a Social Entrepreneur and does he/she differ from a commercial entrepreneur
Contextual influences on Social Enterprise
Creation of Social Value
Balance between trade and social return
Importance of language
Where social enterprise fits in the business arena - the idea of 'place'
How to support social enterprises

11.2 Appendix 2 – Thematic Analysis Of Chapter 3 Literature Review Framework - Business Support

Author	Source/Title	Year	Theme	Findings/Contribution
Sivaev, D.	The Journal of the Local Economy Policy Unity - How Should We Help Businesses Grow? Delivering Business Support	2013	Business Support	Definition of Business Support and UK institutional sources
Centre for Cities	Retrieved from https://www.centreforcities.org/publication/support-for-growing-businesses/ Support for Growing Businesses - Policy Briefing	2013	Business Support interventions	Business Support strategy, interventions and mechanisms and complexity of provision
Smallbone, D., Evans, M., Ekanem, I., & Butters, S.	Researching Social Enterprise	2001	Social Enterprise specific support programmes	Evaluation of social enterprise support programmes with findings showing fragmented nature of support, misunderstanding of sector and need for clearer strategic direction

Lyon, F. & Ramsden, M	Social Enterprise Journal - Developing fledgling social enterprises? A study of the support required and means of delivering it	2006	Explores the type of support, the approaches to, and coordination of social enterprise support	Types of interventions required by Social Enterprises
Hines, F.	Social Enterprise Journal - Viable social enterprise: an evaluation of business support to social enterprises	2005	To identify the support needs of social enterprises	Results/recommendations for support of Social enterprises based on research commissioned by Triodos Bank,
HM Government - Social Enterprise Unit	Social Enterprise - A Strategy for Success - Policy	2002	Government's strategy for social enterprise support	Creation of an enabling environment for social enterprise, making social enterprises better businesses and establishing the value of social enterprise

HM Government - Cabinet Office	Scaling New Heights - Policy	2006	Policy on the importance of social enterprise and need to support and grow	Why social enterprises are important to the UK economy and a strategy to grow and support the sector
HM Government Cabinet Office	Building A Stronger Civil Society	2010	A Strategy for Voluntary & Community Groups, Charities & Social Enterprises	Improving social enterprises action to finance and support. Seeking the views of the sector
Department for Business Innovation and Skills	Business Support for Social Enterprises: Findings from a Longitudinal Study	2011a	Business Support	Longitudinal study of social enterprise business support. NB. Not start-up specific
Cabinet Office	Business Support for Social Enterprises - Final Report	2011	Lessons for the Future	Evidence of what 'best practice' social enterprise support may look like in the future

Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport	Civil Society Strategy: Building A Future That Works for Everyone	2018	Government Strategy for building a stronger Civil Society	Social Enterprises at heart of the Social Society. Plans to better support and enable growth
Steinerowski, A.	Developing A Social Enterprise: An Investigation of Promoters & Barriers	2011	Growth and development of Social Enterprises	Promoters and barriers to the development and support of social enterprises from a theoretical and practitioner perspective
Seanor, P. & Meaton, J.	Social Enterprise Journal - Making Sense of Social Enterprise	2007	Issues/concerns of participants in a social enterprise network in Bradford	Five key themes emerged - social entrepreneur; organizational identity; common language; growth; and networking
Dees, J.G. Emerson, J. & Economy, P.	Enterprising Non-Profits: A Toolkit for Social Entrepreneurs	2002	Hands-on resource to develop entrepreneurial skills	Value of social enterprise specific planning and interventions

Low, C.	International Journal of Social Economics - A Framework for the Governance of Social Enterprise	2006	Governance models for social enterprises	Two propositions result from this which posit that social enterprise, despite being located within the non-profit sector, may be more likely to exhibit for-profit forms of governance
Spear, R. Cornforth, C. & Aitkin, M.	For Love and Money: Governance and Social Enterprise	2007	Social Enterprise Coalition/Governance Hub research on Social Enterprise governance support needs	Specific recommendations to the governance hub regarding the support of social enterprises
Eikenberry, A.M. & Kluver, J.D.	The Marketization of the Non-Profit Sector	2004	Market trends in the non-profit sector	Impact of non-profit sector to the civil society

Haugh, H. & Kitson, M.	Cambridge Journal of Economics - The third way and the third sector: New Labour's economic policy and the social economy	2007	Review of the relationship between Labour's economic policy and the third sector	A look at the conditions required to help the third sector to develop
Nesta	Good Incubation: The Craft of Supporting Early Stage Social Ventures	2014	Incubation of Social Enterprises report	Insight into the support of early stage social enterprises and types of incubators
Shaw, E. Shaw, J. & Wilson, M.	Unsung Entrepreneurs: Entrepreneurship for Social Gain	2002	Research into the growth of the number of social enterprises and their contribution to society and the economy	Recommendations on the specific support needs of social enterprises

HM Government - Department BIS	Bigger, Better Businesses: Helping Small Firms Start, Grow and Prosper	2011	Coalition Government's plan to help the economy via small business support	Key features of business support for new and growing businesses
HM Government	Social Investment Roadmap	2014	Plans for tax relief for social investment	Creating the right conditions for social enterprises to flourish - keen for sector input to ideas

Emergent Themes From The Literature
What is meant by the term, business support
The complex, fragmented and disjointed nature of business support programmes
A lack of clear understanding of what the social enterprise sector needs in terms of support
Multiple reports calling for engagement with the sector itself when considering the development/evaluation of social enterprise support programmes
The value of social enterprises to the UK economy and society

11.3 Appendix 3 – Ethics Documents

A portfolio of documents was prepared for the University of Huddersfield Business School Ethics Committee to review and approve.

Approval was granted in January 2019 subject to some minor changes, which were incorporated into the final document versions.

Below I have included:

- My final ethics approval application
- Comments from both application reviewers
- Confirmation email from the Business School advising of ethics approval being granted
- Proposed schedule of interviews
- Copies of the documents used with participants

11.3.1 Final Ethics Approval Application Form

SECTION A: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT

Before completing this section please refer to the Business School Research Ethics web pages which can be found under Resources on the Unilearn site (Ethics Policies and Procedures). Applicants should consult the appropriate ethical guidelines.

Please ensure that the statements in Section C are completed by the applicant (and supervisor for PGR students) prior to submission

Researcher(s) details	Philip Clegg
Project title	
Award (where applicable)	Doctor of Enterprise
Supervisor details (where applicable)	Prof. Gerard McElwee Dr. Walter Mswaka
Project start date	EntD commenced 2014 – Data Collection Proposed March 2019

SECTION B: PROJECT OUTLINE (TO BE COMPLETED IN FULL BY THE APPLICANT)

Issue	Please provide sufficient detail for your supervisor to assess strategies used to address ethical issues in the research proposal. Forms with insufficient detail will need to be resubmitted.
Aims and objectives of the study. Please state the aims and objectives of the study.	Social Enterprise in the UK has received increased academic attention in recent years as the Government has been increasingly compelled to seek sustainable and business focused solutions to combating social problems and issues. With an estimated 70,000 social enterprises in the UK, contributing £24 billion to the UK economy, and a higher rate of growth than any other sector, there is little wonder that all recent UK Government's have committed time and resources to strategies to encourage and support. However, the landscape for the provision of effective support of start-up social enterprises remains fragmented and unevenly catered for, across differing regions of the UK. Additionally, despite Government reports calling for engagement from stakeholders and the social enterprise sector itself, there has been no informed response to this call. The purpose of this research is to understand what types of social enterprise start-up support interventions work, for whom, in what circumstances, and why. The resulting answers will be utilised to produce a set of guidelines to assist programme developers, deliverers and policy makers, for them to consider when designing and implementing social enterprise start-up support interventions. Importantly, these guidelines will be **for** the social enterprise sector, **informed by** the social enterprise sector.
Brief overview of research methodology The methodology only needs to be explained in sufficient detail to show the approach used (e.g. survey) and explain the research methods to be used during the study.	The methodological approach will be that of a realist evaluation, of selected social enterprise support programmes available across the West Yorkshire region. My data collection will be qualitative and iterative. By conducting research interviews with those that are currently starting a social enterprise, in addition to interviews with stakeholders that have done so successfully in the recent past, and analysing their collective experiences of what worked for them, in what circumstances, and why, will enable the creation of a set of guidelines to assist the design and delivery of future social enterprise support programmes. This will be achieved by conducting research at two distinct levels: **Part 1** Firstly, by examining a number of Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Programmes available within the West

	Yorkshire Region, via qualitative case-study interviews to understand: • Who is currently providing Social Enterprise Start-Up Support in the West Yorkshire Region of the UK? • What is the nature of this support? This will enable the formulation of Initial Rough Programme Theories (IRPTs) for each programme being examined and this will inform the research questions to be asked of the programme participants in part two of the data collection. **Part 2** The second part of the research is a qualitative data collection via in-depth and iterative case study interviews with those programme participants that are either currently, or have previously accessed the previously identified support programmes. For current participants. To understand: What is working well for them within the programme and why? What potentially may work better and why? What (if anything) that they feel may be missing and why?. For previous participants. To understand: What on reflection, worked well for them within the programme and why? What on reflection may have worked better and why? What on later reflection, was felt to be missing and why?
Does your study require any permissions for study? If so, please give details	I don't think so?
Participants Please outline who will participate in your research. Might any of the participants be considered „vulnerable" (e.g. children)	I am seeking to work with a range of organisations across the West Yorkshire region that offer start-up support to social enterprises. In order to cover the key areas usually associated with start-up business support, the programmes selected will cover a wide range of foci ranging from generic business start-up consultancy, to specific aspects such as finance, business planning, social impact etc. The organisations initially identified as potential respondents are: • The School for Social Entrepreneurs • UnLtd • Key Fund • See Ahead • Social Enterprise Support Centre I do not feel that any participants would be considered as

	being vulnerable.
Access to participants **Please give details about how participants will be identified and contacted.**	I will initially write to programme managers of the identified organisations in order to explain the nature of the research and the approach to be taken. If they agree to participate, I will initially conduct interviews with them, in order to gain an overview of the programme and its intended outcomes. I will then ask to be introduced to a current programme participant for an interview to gain their perspective on what is/isn't working well for them. I will also ask to be introduced to a previous programme participant (within the last five years) who will report on their reflective experiences of the programme.
How will your data be recorded and stored?	Data will be recorded electronically and stored in University electronic data storage facilities as well as password protected computers
Informed consent. **Please explain how you will inform your participants about the study and whether they will** **be in a position to give informed consent.**	An introductory information sheet as well as two interview guides has been developed. They outline the purpose of the study and questions that will be asked. The research will be explained verbally to participants and consent requested.
Right to withdraw **Please identify whether you are offering your participants a right to withdraw from the study and/or to withdraw their data from the study and how this will take place. If you are not offering a** **right to withdraw, please explain why.**	Participants will be able to choose whether or not to participate in the research and will be able to withdraw during the course of it. Withdrawal of data will require them to specifically ask me for this withdrawal. Any research data generated in a group settings would not be able to be withdrawn as this will be from a collective effort. This will be explained prior to a group session should that happen.
Confidentiality **Please outline the level of confidentiality you will offer respondents and how this will be respected. You should also outline about who will have access to the data and how it will be stored. (This information should be included on Information your information sheet.)**	The information sheet and interview guides inform participants that the data collected will be treated in the strictest of confidence. The participants will also be informed that data provided will be stored in password protected storage devices and computers.
Anonymity **If you offer your participants anonymity, please indicate how this will be achieved.**	The information sheet and interview guides remind the participants that that none of the materials or information that the informants provide will directly identify individual respondents, unless a specific request has been made and written consent given.
Harm **Please outline your assessment of the extent to which your research might induce psychological stress, anxiety, cause harm or negative consequences for the participants (beyond the risks encountered in normal life). If more than minimal risk, you should outline what support there will be for participants.** **If you believe that that there is minimal likely harm, please articulate why you believe this to be** **so.**	People will have a choice to participate in the research and will be asked about things that are known to them. The biggest negative consequence will be on people's time.

SECTION C – SUMMARY OF ETHICAL ISSUES (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT)

Please give a summary of the ethical issues and any action that will be taken to address the issue(s).

The data collected will be treated in the strictest of confidence and held on password-protected computers; none of the materials will directly identify individual respondents, unless a specific request has been made and written consent given. No potential informants are considered to be vulnerable.

SECTION D – ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT)

Please supply copies of all relevant supporting documentation electronically. If this is not available electronically, please provide explanation and supply hard copy.

I have included the following documents

Information Sheet	Yes	D	Not applicable	D
Consent Form x 2 types	Yes	D	Not applicable	D
Letters	Yes	D	Not applicable	D
Questionnaire x 2 types	Yes	D	Not applicable	D
Interview schedule	Yes	D	Not applicable	D

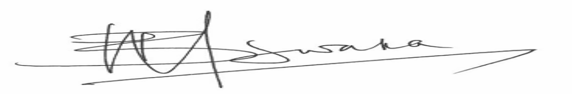
SECTION E – STATEMENT BY APPLICANT

I confirm that the information I have given in this form on ethical issues is correct. (Electronic confirmation is sufficient).

and (for PGR students only)

Affirmation by Supervisor (where applicable)
I can confirm that, to the best of my understanding, the information presented by the applicant is correct and appropriate to allow an informed judgement on whether further ethical approval is required

Supervisor
name/signature:



Dr Walter
Mswaka

Date:
07/01/2019

Name of applicant (electronic is acceptable) Philip Clegg

Date 10/01/2019

11.3.2 Reviewer 1 Comments

The University Of Huddersfield
Business School Research Ethics Committee

Reviewer Proforma

Project Title:	Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Interventions: What type of support works for whom, in what circumstances and why?
Name of researcher (s):	Philip James Clegg
Supervisor (where appropriate):	Gerard McElwee Walter Mswaka
Reviewer name	Dr G Byrne
Date sent to reviewer	11/1/19
Target date for review	25/01/19

Issue	**Advice / Comments to applicant**
Aim / objectives of the study	
Research methodology	
Permissions for study?	The consent form needs to specifically ask for consent for interviews to be recorded
Participants	
Access to participants	
How will your data be recorded and stored?	Data needs to be stored for 10 years
Confidentiality	
Anonymity	
Could the research induce psychological stress or anxiety, cause harm or negative consequences for the participants (beyond the risks encountered in normal life).	
Retrospective applications	
Supporting documents (e.g. questionnaire, interview schedule,	

letters etc)	
Other comments	

OVERALL RESPONSE

APPROVE	
APPROVE SUBJECT TO RECOMMENDATIONS [please specify]	**Please amend consent form as detailed above**
APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS [please specify]	
FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED [please specify]	
REJECT [please specify reasons]	

Reviewer name Dr G Byrne

Date 14/1/19

11.3.3 Reviewer 2 Comments

The University Of Huddersfield
Business School Research Ethics Committee

Reviewer Proforma

Project Title:	Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Interventions: What type of support works for whom, in what circumstances and why?
Name of researcher (s):	Philip James Clegg
Supervisor (where appropriate):	Gerard McElwee Walter Mswaka
Reviewer name	
Date sent to reviewer	
Target date for review	25/01/19

<table>
<tr><th>Issue</th><th>Advice / Comments to applicant</th></tr>
<tr><td>Aim / objectives of the study</td><td rowspan="11">Please see attached. I enjoyed reading your documentation and Good Luck with the research

There is no need to respond to my comments – if you find them useful then please adopt – if not then not a problem!</td></tr>
<tr><td>Research methodology</td></tr>
<tr><td>Permissions for study?</td></tr>
<tr><td>Participants</td></tr>
<tr><td>Access to participants</td></tr>
<tr><td>How will your data be recorded and stored?</td></tr>
<tr><td>Confidentiality</td></tr>
<tr><td>Anonymity</td></tr>
<tr><td>Could the research induce psychological stress or anxiety, cause harm or negative consequences for the participants (beyond the risks encountered in normal life).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Retrospective applications</td></tr>
<tr><td>Supporting documents (e.g. questionnaire, interview schedule,</td></tr>
</table>

letters etc)	
Other comments	

OVERALL RESPONSE

APPROVE	**YES**
APPROVE SUBJECT TO RECOMMENDATIONS [please specify]	
APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS [please specify]	
FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED [please specify]	
REJECT [please specify reasons]	

Reviewer name: John Day

Date: 16-01-2019

11.3.4 Confirmation email of ethics approval being granted

Alex Thompson

Wed 16/01/2019 16:38

Dear Philip,

I have been asked to forward the following to you:

> Dear Philip,
>
> Your application is APPROVED SUBJECT TO RECOMMENDATIONS.
>
> The candidate should make use of the reviewer's suggestions. Please see attached reports from the reviewers for the details.
>
> Professor Alper Kara
>
> Chair of the Business School Research Ethics Committee

You should discuss these recommendations with your supervisors, there is no need to report back to the Research Ethics Committee.

Attached are the comment forms from the Reviewers.

Kind regards,

Alex Thompson
Education Services Administrator (Students and Courses)

11.3.5 Proposed schedule of interviews

The University Of Huddersfield

Business School Research Ethics Committee

Interview Schedule/Participants Information

It is anticipated that should Ethics Approval be granted in February 2019, then data collection could begin from March 2019 onwards.

Data collection is likely to take 3 – 6 months depending on the availability of the research participants and taking into account my P/T availability for this research.

The following 5 organisations have been initially identified as potentially being included in the study, although none have been approached directly at this stage.

1. UnLtd https://www.unltd.org.uk/

2. Key Fund https://thekeyfund.co.uk/

3. See Ahead https://seeahead.co.uk/

4. School for Social Entrepreneurs https://www.the-sse.org/

5. The Social Enterprise Support Centre https://www.sesc.org.uk/about/

Initial interviews would be with the Programme delivery provider/managers at the above organisations to understand the type of support intervention being delivered.

This would be followed by interviews with:

1. A client currently in receipt of start-up social enterprise support
2. A client who has in the recent past (within the last 5 years) received social enterprise start-up support

This should result in 15 interviews in total, comprising:

- Five social enterprise start-up support programme delivery managers

- Five current participants of social enterprise start-up support interventions
- Five previous participants of social enterprise start-up support interventions

11.3.6 Participant Information Sheet

The University Of Huddersfield

Business School Research Ethics Committee

Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a study about support for start-up social enterprises in the West Yorkshire region.

Before you decide to take part it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it me if you wish. Please do not hesitate to ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the study about?

The purpose of this study is to consult the social enterprise sector itself (those people planning to start-up a social enterprise, those already running a social enterprise, and those programme providers offering support) to better understand what type of support interventions work, for whom, in what circumstances and why. This information will help to create a set of policy guidelines for the design and delivery of effective social enterprise start-up support.

This will be a resource **for** the social enterprise sector, informed **by** the social enterprise sector.

Why I have been approached?

You have been asked to participate because you are either:

1. Currently receiving some form of social enterprise start-up support, OR
2. You have in the recent past, received some social enterprise start-up support, OR
3. You manage and/or deliver a programme of social enterprise start-up support

Do I have to take part?

It is your decision whether or not you take part. If you decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form, and you will be free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time from this research project, or a decision not to take part, will not affect your current, or future social enterprise start-up support provision or applications.

What will I need to do?

If you agree to take part in the research you will be asked to take part in an interview with me (Philip Clegg – the researcher) to learn about your experiences and opinions of the support you received or are receiving. The interview will be semi-structured, in that there are some questions to guide your reflections/account of your experience, but with the freedom for you to be open and honest about your experience of start-up social enterprise support. The interview will be recorded to enable me to produce a written transcription of the interview, which you will receive a copy of.

Will my identity be disclosed?

All information disclosed within the interview will be kept confidential.

What will happen to the information?

All information collected from you during this research will be kept secure and any identifying material, such as names will be removed in order to ensure anonymity. It is anticipated that the research may, at some point, be published in a journal or report. However, should this happen, your anonymity will be ensured, although it may be necessary to use your words in the presentation of the findings and your permission for this is included in the consent form.

Who can I contact for further information?

If you require any further information about the research, please contact me on:

Name Philip Clegg – Head of Enterprise & Entrepreneurship, University of Huddersfield

E-mail p.j.clegg@hud.ac.uk

Telephone 01484 47392

11.3.7 Programme Manager Questionnaire Information

The University Of Huddersfield

Business School Research Ethics Committee

Programme Manager Questionnaire Information

The purpose of this research is to understand what type of social enterprise start-up support interventions work, for whom, in what circumstances, and why.

The resulting answers will be utilised to produce a set of guidelines to assist programme developers, deliverers and policy makers, for them to consider when designing and implementing future social enterprise start-up support interventions.

Method

I would like to conduct an interview with a manager/deliverer of your organisation's Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Programme. This will be part of a series of interviews with a number of such programmes, currently available within the West Yorkshire Region. There will be a total of five programmes approached for this research project.

The interview will seek to understand:

- Who is currently providing Social Enterprise Start-Up support in the West Yorkshire Region of the UK
- What is the nature of these support programmes

Following this interview, I would like to be introduced to a current participant of your social enterprise support programme, and also a previous participant from the recent past (within 5 years), to gain their perspectives on the support received.

Details of the questions for the programme participants can be found in the document 'Programme Participant Questionnaire Information'

11.3.8 Organisational Consent Form

University of Huddersfield

Business School Research Ethics Committee

Organisation Consent Form

Title of Research Study:

Name of Researcher: Philip Clegg

School/College/Organisation: One form for each of the 5 participating Start-Up Support Organisations

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to consult the social enterprise sector itself (those people planning to start-up a social enterprise, those already running a social enterprise, and those programme providers offering support) to better understand what type of support interventions work, for whom, in what circumstances and why. This information will help to create a set of policy guidelines for the design and delivery of effective social enterprise start-up support.

This will be a resource **for** the social enterprise sector, informed **by** the social enterprise sector.

Data collection methods to be used

Research participants will be asked to take part in an interview with me (Philip Clegg – the researcher) to learn about their experiences and opinions of the support they either previously received, or are currently receiving. The interview will be semi-structured, in that there are some questions to guide their reflections/account of their experiences, but with the freedom for them to be open and honest about their experience of start-up social enterprise support. The interview will be recorded to enable me (the researcher) to produce a written transcription of the interview, which they (the interviewee) will receive a copy of.

Which participants will be selected for this study?

I would like to interview two clients who have accessed your social enterprise start-up support interventions, as follows;

1. A client who is currently receiving some form of social enterprise start-up support from your organisation
2. A client who has in the recent past, (within the last 3 – 5 years) received some social enterprise start-up support from your organisation

I confirm that I give permission for this research to be carried out and that permission from all participants will be gained in line within my organisation's policy. YES/NO

Name and position of senior manager:

………………………………………………………………………………………

Signature of senior manager:…..………………………………………………

Date: …………………………

Name of Researcher: …………………………………………………………

Signature of Researcher: ………………………………………………………

Date: ……………………

11.3.9 Participant Questionnaire Information Sheet

The University Of Huddersfield

Business School Research Ethics Committee

Programme Participant Questionnaire Information

The purpose of this research is to understand what types of social enterprise start-up support interventions work, for whom, in what circumstances, and why.

The resulting answers will be utilised to produce a set of guidelines to assist programme developers, deliverers and policy makers, for them to consider when designing and implementing social enterprise start-up support interventions.

Method

I would like to conduct an interview with you as either a current, or previous recipient of the [*insert organisation name*] Social Enterprise Start-Up Support.

Questions

The overarching questions mentioned below are intended to act as a framework to enable a discussion with the interviewee of their experiences and thoughts regarding the programme of support they are either taking part in now, or have taken part in previously.

For current participants of support interventions

To identify which specific programme elements (if any) of their business support interventions, are positively contributing to the start-up or continuing success of their social enterprises. These interviews would seek to establish:

- What is working well for them within the programme and why?
- What potentially may work better and why?
- What (if anything) that they feel may be missing and why?

For previous participants of support interventions

To identify on reflection, any areas which were notably absent from their support programme components, and which the respondents felt could/would have made a value adding difference to their start-up, should such advice have been readily available. These interviews would seek to establish:

- What on reflection, worked well for them within the programme and why?
- What on reflection, may have worked better, and why?
- What on reflection (if anything), was felt to be missing and why?

11.3.10 Participant Consent Form

The University Of Huddersfield

Business School Research Ethics Committee

Participant Consent Form

Title of Research Project: Social Enterprise Start-Up Support Interventions: What type of support works for whom, in what circumstances and why?

If you are satisfied that you understand the information and are happy to take part in this project please put a tick in the box aligned to each sentence and print and sign below. (One copy to be retained by Participant / One copy to be retained by Researcher)

I have been fully informed of the nature and aims of this study as outlined in the Information Sheet (Version X, dated YY:YY:YY) □

I consent to taking part in this the study □

I consent to my interview being recorded □

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the research* □

I give permission for my words to be quoted (by use of pseudonym) □

I understand that the information collected will be in kept secure conditions for a period of 10 years at the University of Huddersfield □

I understand that no person other than the researcher/s and facilitator/s will have access to the information provided, or the recording □

I understand that my identity will be protected by the use of pseudonym in the report and that no written information that could lead to my being identified will be included in any report □

Signature of Participant:

Print:

Date:

Signature of Researcher:

Print:

Date:

* A request to withdraw from the research project can be made at any time by emailing me directly at p.j.clegg@hud.ac.uk. I will acknowledge your email and make arrangements for any data already collected to be destroyed, and removed from the project.

11.4 Appendix 4 - Questions for Programme Manager/Directors of Support Organisations

1. What is the overall purpose of your programme/intervention?
2. Do you have any policies/documents about how your programmes are intended to work?
3. Does you programme focus on a particular aspect of social enterprise start-up support?
4. Do you monitor how participants are responding to the interventions during the programme and if so, how?
5. Do you monitor how participants are responding to the interventions after the programme and if so, how?
6. What types of clients attend your programmes?
7. How do they apply to your programme or gain access to support?
8. Who funds the programme?
9. What does the programme/intervention consist of?
10. How long is the programme?
11. Do all participants undertake the same programme? If no, how do they differ and how and when is the differentiation in pathway decided?
12. Can components be repeated; for example if participants need additional support?
13. Do participants work with deliverers in groups or individually?

14. What does success look like to you?

15. Are there any outstanding questions you feel I should have asked you?

11.5 Appendix 5 - Sample Organisational Interview Extract

Sue Osborne – School for Social Entrepreneurs

Interview Transcript – Redacted Version

Extract includes data utilised in Chapter 6, (6.5.2) page 171 of final thesis

Tuesday 10th September 2019

[…] and they need to come together, and/or it might be that they're in that early stage (3 to 4 years) they are quite grant-reliant; they need a trade-up programme. They need to look at how to diversify their income. So there are…yes, we segment in different ways for different programmes.

1. **(12) Do you monitor how participants are responding to the interventions during the programme and if so, how?**

So as you might expect, we do quite a lot of impact data collection. We do… surveys go out to all of the students…so we do a baseline, mid and exit [survey]. And that's something that's done nationally with every student with every programme and we have core outcomes that we're then using certain indicators to assess against. But we also do – very much on each day – each programme day we ask them to complete feedback forms, and those will give us a feel for whether we are hitting the mark, or not. And then we also do, about halfway or a third to halfway through the programme, one of the members of staff will phone all of the members of a cohort, and have an hours conversation with them – to check in with them. So generally, when I was telling you in that recruitment process around those needs that people have – we will have captured that. And so it's a chance for us then – with that member of staff – to say, at the start of the programme you were saying this…how are you feeling now? What else do we need to do…that kind of work. And then again, Dina with her sort of regular phone calls to all the students…she will be – perhaps less formally – but very much checking in on, 'is this meeting your

11.6 Appendix 6 - Thematic Coding of Organisation Respondent's Data

Code	Organisation
#1	**The Realistic Business Consortium**
#2	**Key Fund**
#3	**SEE Ahead**
#4	**School for Social Entrepreneurs**
#5	**UnLtd**

Theme	Quote & Source
1. Overall programme purpose	It's very much to help our clients achieve whatever outcomes they want to achieve from our interactions. #1 People naturally assume that it's growth of their particular organisation, but it isn't necessarily so. #1 Whatever the outcome that particular organisation wants, then we will do our best to try and

	achieve that. So it will be different for every client that we actually meet. #1 I guess ultimately, it is to see social impact delivered. #2 Fundamentally, to see them start-up and grow. So therefore the delivery of that social impact increases. That's what we're always about; that's the first thing that we look at. #2 Our job is to get them to a point where they can apply to us and we can then provide them the finance that they need. That's always been our role. #2 So I think the top line is, our overall purpose is to make organisations/businesses sustainable and we work with people to achieve that, rather than doing it for them. #3 It's very much, business support to help organisations be sustainable. #3 So our focus has always been, cohort based learning – it's about bringing together social entrepreneurs and we talk very much about action learning. So this is trying to take people into a much more sort of action focused style of learning. #4

	So UnLtd does start-up, early growth support to social entrepreneurs and emerging social entrepreneurs. #5 We're buying social impact and the future of social impact through investing in people. #5 Our purpose is the educational development of social entrepreneurs. #5
2. Programme duration/intensity	It's bespoke to the client. #1 So I work with one on a retained NED basis, so we're doing that. Others, go off and do their own thing and if that's what they want to do then that's fine, but they know that we are available whenever they need us. #1 It depends on the term over which we've lent them. So as I've said, it could be twelve months between my first discussion with a client and them actually coming to us for the money. So it's whatever time scale it takes. #2

	Every intervention is different. #3 Very different with each organisation. #3 We do a mix, but our 'bread and butter' programmes tend to be 6 to 12 months long, and then we find that that's a good amount of time to really work with people on that action-learning journey. #4 For the Do It and Grow It awards it's 12 months. And for the Try It, it's 6 months. #5 We're looking at…possibly having some flexibility around extending so that it's 12 months from when they draw the money down. Because then, actually we can be involved in 12 months of support from the doing, rather than 12 months of support where 3 months of it is eaten by administrative processes, or us trying to chase a reference or something. #5
3. In-house skillset/focus	I come from a finance background, but also a coach – I'm an accredited coach as well. #1 He brings marketing, advertising and sales expertise. Also websites. #1

	He had a marketing and print advertising company and was in that particular sector for 20 or 30 years. #1 He's a management consultant but from a recruitment background. So he's generally on the strategic planning side of things; he takes the lead on that. #1 One of our partners is a management consultant. #1 Because coming from a banking background and having been polarised on finance really, in terms of my own background. #1 With a 35-year career, and 20 years in commercial banking, the amount of expertise…and I guess from my own point of view is…you don't realise the caliber of the training that you get in a massive organisation. And how valuable…and what people don't know. Until you actually go and find out, and then are actually able to add real, real value from your own experience. #1 Well it's access to finance. #2

	It’s actually getting them to a point where they can look at finance. #2 We always say it’s business support – so it’s social enterprises being more business-like. #3 We always say that we are generalists, rather than specialists. #3 She was a bank manager for 22 years. #3 Helen is very into Social Impact, so she’ll do anything Social Impact. #3 I’m the marketing lead for SEEAhead, so I will do anything around marketing or new business focus. #3 We’ve both got a PETALS qualification so we’re both, I would say qualified to do it. #3 Third Sector’s always been our passion. #3

	The vast majority of our work is with Third Sector organisations. #3
4. 1:1 Advisor Support	We offer him 1:1. Now that can either be with one of us, or it can be with the three of us. #1 It's very much a relationship. He's taken advantage of one of our services and from that, we're actually now starting to work with him, much more on a 1:1 basis. #1 We would first of all use an Input Survey. #1 We take that away, we analyse it, and we form that into a plan for a full day strategy workshop, which we'll hold with the client. #1 Formulate some action plans with the client at a future meeting, and then monitor those action plans with them. #1 We find that we also need to offer things like the 1:1 coaching really #1

	So, the Input Survey went in, we did the full Strategy day with the three Directors plus their Board. Out of that came an awful lot of information, which we then met with the Directors and formulated it into an Action Plan. #1 So all the social enterprise clients we have are quite likely to pick up the phone and talk to us whenever they need to. #1 It might not work for everybody and so one of us will go and do some individual work with them. #1 We put some more intensive help in and Nigel goes in there every month to help them through that. #1 So we try and put in support wherever we can. #2 Could we send somebody out and try to help in a particular aspect? #2 So if we know of something that would help them develop further, we'd do that. #2

	Doing some 1:1s if anyone wants to go into more depth. #2 Make contact with this client and let's arrange to go out and see them. #2 I then contact the customer, deal with that call and chat through with them what the organisation does. #2 Four meetings of probably an hour and a bit each, and it's just working with them at their pace, until they are comfortable. #2 So the business planning and cash flow, that sort of thing are fundamental to us. #2 A new client we would have an initial meeting with them. #3 And that first meeting would be very much diagnostic. #3 Helen's doing a lot of social impact work and that can be done; you know a couple of days over several months. #3

	So we might have several that want business planning [support]. #3 So I've been going through Business Plan templates and Cash Flow Forecasts. #3 Well actually we think you just need some 1:1 coaching. #4 With our Lloyds Bank programme they all get a mentor, from Lloyds Bank. #4 In between those programme days, they may well be meeting with their mentor and having those sort of more specific conversations. #4 There's lots of 'touch points' between the programme days. #4 So almost all of our experts are really happy to do follow up. In fact, I can't think of anyone actually that wouldn't be willing to do that. #4 They can pick up the phone or email or have direct contact with either the staff at SSE or with the

	experts. Whichever they need. People are really willing to help. They love it. They love the chance to come and meet such inspiring people, so if ever anybody wanted help, I'm sure they always respond voluntarily. #4 There's 1:1 support from the mentors, and then we do as part of that application process, check in with people about their sort of access requirements. #4 Do some 1:1 follow up with them. #4 We had somebody work with them 1:1 all the way through – because that was what they needed in order to access the programme. #4 If people can't engage fully in that group, cohort based learning, but we still feel the programme is right for them for lots of reasons, we will add in and support as and when we need to. #4 They will have access to an Award Manager and that Award Manager should give them access to, mentors and events and other support. #5

	Most of our contact would be personal between the Award Manager and the person, It's a 1:1 relationship. It is a support relationship. #5 It consists of an Award Manager who is trained as a coach. #5 I think that coaching at that point around the plan, in terms of achieving readiness is critical in my view. #5 Coaching's really important because, because we don't take on the problems. The agency sits with the entrepreneur. #5 We do quite a lot of diagnostic work in terms of understanding where people's strengths and weaknesses are. #5 I always encourage people to do, is to focus on the things that they're not good at, because it's in addressing those weaknesses that they secure the long term sustainability of their idea and what their doing. #5 They meet you, they find out what you're doing. They commence a coaching relationship and

	start to apply coaching skills with you. In that first meeting they'll start to identify kind of where you're at, and what the kind of challenges and barriers and blocks might be. And then with you, formulate a plan to address those things. #5 The coaching and mentor relationships which are 1:1. #5
5. Workshops 1:Many	They want me to go and spend the morning talking to clients, or groups/organisations they know. #2 To try and demystify, and try and make organisations and groups aware of what is available to them. #2 I do lots of talks. I've been in Leeds this morning doing a presentation to a group. I'm in Manchester tomorrow, doing a full day thing at a much bigger event. So we're out and about talking to people all the time. #2 We do do various seminars and meetings and presentations, where we'll pull a lot of our clients together. #2 We deliver a lot of workshops. #3

	So the contract in Leeds; there was always a workshop element to that. #3 This is the first time that we've actually put workshops on under our own heading and we market them. #3 We'll write the workshop and deliver it. #3 We also deliver them for UnLtd. But we write them and deliver it but we do it under the UnLtd umbrella. #3 We deliver for National Day Nurseries Association. But they give us the workshop. #3 We do all about, you know, business-planning, introduction to marketing, employing people. #3 'Focus on the Future' – Building a Sustainable Income for your Organisation. #3 'What Difference Do You Make?' - Can you prove what difference your organisation makes, can

	you demonstrate the community impact?' #3 'Creating Your Strategy for Success' so that's strategic planning. #3 Support around business planning, or leadership, or marketing, so we run shorter – 1, 2-day workshops. #4 You would be better coming on this short programme, or these two programmes, just to cover off that issue. #4 We will have a day on social impact, we will have a day on marketing, on leadership. #4 Running a social impact workshop with a group of community businesses. #4 So I took them right back to the basics and we developed a theory of change for each of their different businesses, and then we talked about how they can then overlay that with an impact measurement plan. #4

	The way the programme day works is that we have an expert in the morning, who comes and talks very much to that topic of the day. #4 Let’s run this as a one-day workshop. #4 We usually have 3 or 4 days where they come into much smaller action-leaning sets. #4 We have programme-led work. #5 We have a workshop programme, which offers kind of what I call technical support and input around a range of things from managing cash flow and finances through to things like, leadership. #5 We do a bit of stuff about wellbeing and looking after yourself. And then we might do things like social media marketing. You know, a kind of traditional regular stuff. #5 It tends to be that those two [marketing and finance] are the areas where people’s weaknesses are, or their development areas. #5

	The workshops which are one to many. #5
6a. Networking – Internal	So we hold a Realistic Business Forum every month and all of our clients are invited to that Forum, and it's a method by which we facilitate peer to peer support #1 We find that we also need to offer things like the Forum #1 They all have an invite to the Forum; to come whenever they want to. #1 It's a physical meeting. We have a meeting room at Weetwood Hall at the moment, which we rent on a month-to-month basis; the second Tuesday of every month and every client that we know is invited to come between 9.30 and 12.30 and partake. #1 We feel that the Forum is something that no one else is offering and we've seen real, real benefit for the people that come. And the people that come regularly have acknowledged the value of coming, and you get the same 3 or 4 people that come to every one; or virtually every one. #1 The beauty of the Forum is that we write to all our clients with a formal invitation every month. So they will all have a chance to respond if they are going through a particular issue at the minute.

	#1 So all sorts of things start to happen when you start to get these people together anyway. #1 Going through a particular issue, and that issue had already been experienced with one of our other clients. So we put them in touch with each other. #1 We also get clients to come along and present when we're presenting. So it's 'hear it from the peer…warts and all!' which is quite powerful. #2 I quite often send introductory…I think, oh that person can really help that person. So I do very much feel that my job is joining people together. #3 So a witness session tends to be a social entrepreneur, or a social leader, so someone who has practical knowledge. It's always tied into the theme for the day. #4 So at our graduation events, a lot of our students will talk about what they have learned from their peers. #4

	So action-learning sets have always been a key part of our programmes. We find it very successful to bring those smaller groups of people together and actually those are the groups which often have longevity after the programme. #4 We're in the process of creating, is a sort of CRM system that they [SSE students] can all access. So they can go on and say 'who else is working in homelessness?' or 'who else is working in Rotherham?' #4 We do peer networking events and get people together. #5 We feel that getting people together with some of their supporters and talking is really a valuable thing. #5 It's not for us to connect people, people have to build their own relationships. I think people see value in coming to those things because they meet people. Generally people have a really nice time and meet other folk and are quite energised by hearing from people. #5
6b. Networking - External	But we would like to offer it to social enterprises that we don't deal with on a regular basis. So we've talked to Sue at the SSE to see if we could do one for her graduates that come through. We even got together with SEEAhead and the SSE and a couple of other organisations that we know,

	to see if we could do one regionally. #1 So we're developing that as an idea because we think it really works. #1 Because we all have our own network of people that we know and trust. #1 In the Third Sector, all organisations like Key Fund, smaller and bigger, we work together for the benefit of the client. We are not selfish about our own bit of business. #2 I quite often send introductory…I think, oh that person can really help that person. So I do very much feel that my job is joining people together. #3 But within that peer cycle, I think they are also really referencing the witnesses that have come along – the social entrepreneurs that have come and shared their stories. #4 We have a social entrepreneur, a social leader, a community business leader…whoever, that comes and kind of does that 'heartfelt story' around that theme for the day. #4 Getting them to meet each other and go and visit each other. #4

	Why don't you go and visit this person who has been through our programme a couple of years ago. #4 Connect people to mentors, connect people to – we have a number of contracts and relationships with larger corporates who will offer a range of different things to us through the year at different times. #5
7a. Referrals to 3rd party organisations – social enterprise support specific	If we don't feel that we particularly can help, or if there's a lack of chemistry or if we feel that another organisation such as SSE or SEEAhead, are better equipped to help them progress, then we will direct them there. #1 We have turned people down, and re-directed people where we just feel that we can't get that response and that they'd gain more value elsewhere. #1 We do have friends and consultants who work with social impact, because none of us are social impact measurement experts. So we'll introduce #1 Or just refer them on to people, introduce them to people that we would know, who could help.

	#2 So if we know of something that would help them develop further, we'd do that. #2 Pay for them to have that work completed. #2 We work with others; what we term as associates, to deliver the specialist stuff. So things like HR, Marketing, Social Impact, that kind of thing, will be done by associates. #3 A lot of the stuff we are bringing associates in to help deliver. #3 It's probably the last couple of years that we've come to use the associate model. And it's really opened the doors for us, we've become much more stable as an organisation, being able to offer a wider range of things. #3 We do signpost to people like SEEAhead, or others or even to UnLtd, where we think you need to test it a bit more. #4 What I sort of want to emphasise is that we are a real collaborator and so we are really keen – the

	sector is growing and growing – we know what we do well, but we're also very respectful of what others do well. So where we can't take people onto our programmes, we will absolutely signpost as much as possible – and I know that works the other way- but I think I've alluded to that as we were talking. #4 If somebody we're working with has got a relationship with another provider who's got something…like SSE you know…that's fine. #5 We work with other funders to…you know where we've got mutual goals…to deliver particular programmes. #5 Connect people to mentors, connect people to – we have a number of contracts and relationships with larger corporates who will offer a range of different things to us through the year at different times. #5
7b. Referrals to 3rd party organisations - other	We have turned people down, and re-directed people where we just feel that we can't get that response and that they'd gain more value elsewhere. #1

	We've also got an HR consultant that we know and work with. #1 We have a copywriter who will write copy for websites and all that sort of thing – that we can actually introduce. #1 We have a solicitor who we're working with at the minute, and he's been particularly useful to some of our clients as well. So, we do make those connections where it's appropriate to do so. #1 I've introduced…told them about some grant funders that are out there. #2 Sometimes it's introducing them to…we'll call them professional advisors…somebody who can do that work for them. Business consultants. #2 So we point them to various websites; the good finance website, which is all about finance. #2 Or just refer them on to people, introduce them to people that we would know, who could help. #2

	So if we know of something that would help them develop further, we'd do that. #2 Pay for them to have that work completed. #2 Shall we introduce you to someone along there…because they've been through it too? #2 We'll introduce them to other clients, to talk through and share issues. #2 We work with others; what we term as associates, to deliver the specialist stuff. So things like HR, Marketing, Social Impact, that kind of thing, will be done by associates. #3 We would suggest they brought in an HR specialist, because that's not what we're qualified to do. #3 A lot of the stuff we are bringing associates in to help deliver. #3 It's probably the last couple of years that we've come to use the associate model. And it's really

	opened the doors for us, we've become much more stable as an organisation, being able to offer a wider range of things. #3 So if I think about leadership, there's sort of 3, 4 people that we would go to and it really does depend on what that cohort needs as to which person we would bring in to that particular delivery. #4 What I sort of want to emphasise is that we are a real collaborator and so we are really keen – the sector is growing and growing – we know what we do well, but we're also very respectful of what others do well. So where we can't take people onto our programmes, we will absolutely signpost as much as possible – and I know that works the other way- but I think I've alluded to that as we were talking. #4 We work with other funders to…you know where we've got mutual goals…to deliver particular programmes. #5 Connect people to mentors, connect people to – we have a number of contracts and relationships with larger corporates who will offer a range of different things to us through the year at different times. #5

8. Definition of success from the organisation's perspective	The results for us are in the success of our clients. Absolutely no doubt about it. #1 It's to increase the social impact. That's what we do. #2 Just reiterating really that it's the clients and it's the social impact that is important. #2 So there's financial success. So that we can pay all of our bills on time each month. #3 But there's also that 'warm glow' knowing we're doing a good job and the thank you emails that we get. #3 So actually it's about working with an individual, and seeing that person thrive – both in terms of developing business skills, but developing emotional resilience or whatever it might be that they need to do. #4 I think success, very rarely for us would be about a sort of financial return, in terms of being successful with their business. It's about how resilient a person may be, and how successful they

	are at growing that business because of the impact that it's having. #4 It's those personal journeys – success for those entrepreneurs that I'm interested in. #4 I mean my personal thing would be that my team are prospering and enjoying their work, and being in a good state when they get to every entrepreneur, that they're in a good position to help that person. #5 I think for me, success is that their venture lasts beyond the award. That they don't stop as soon as the money runs out. But more than that, I'd like to see people who have learned a great deal through the process, are still creating social change. #5 But I want those people to prosper. You know that's really what I want…I want them to prosper. #5
9. Impact monitoring	No. We don't have any formal monitoring of progress made. I guess we just rely on the feedback of the client and the results that the guys have, and the organisations have. #1

	I think this is the reason that we don't particularly want to go for funding ourselves, because if we did that, we'd be working to someone else's tune to a degree. But also, we'd need to provide this sort of more formal evidence. We don't feel that we want to do that. #1 Yes. We start off with a baseline. And that baseline for a new organisation will be naught. Or for an existing organisation it will be whatever they are delivering at the moment. To see if we can see incremental growth (if that's the correct word) of what they are doing as a result of us putting the finance in. That's how we tend to do it. #2 The ones that are externally funded, where we have formal monitoring and evaluation to complete – yes. The others, probably not. #3 So as you might expect, we do quite a lot of impact data collection. We do… surveys go out to all of the students…so we do a baseline, mid and exit [survey]. And that's something that's done nationally with every student with every programme and we have core outcomes that we're then using certain indicators to assess against. #4 Each programme day we ask them to complete feedback forms, and those will give us a feel for whether we are hitting the mark, or not. #4

	We also do, about halfway or a third to halfway through the programme, one of the members of staff will phone all of the members of a cohort, and have an hours conversation with them – to check in with them. #4 So they have their baseline, mid and exit [surveys] and then 12 months afterwards, they get another follow-up – in terms of understanding where they are. And then annually, we do…we do collate data, but it tends to be the sort of, what I will clearly call outputs. So it tends to be the turnover, the beneficiaries, the volunteers. #4 We can do a peer-consultation exercise, where people can just share thoughts and advice. #4 There's an oversight element to the 1:1 contact with the Award Manager. Because we stage payments, they aren't allowed to draw down a second, or third, or fourth payment until they've accounted for the previous money. There's an element that if they've said they're going to do a plan that's going to require A, B, C, D, and they haven't done A, then we're not going to give them the money for B. #5 So at the end of the programme, there's a post-award kind of questionnaire that goes out through [our] research [department]. #5

	There's a post-award survey and I think it's two to three months, [after the end of the programme]. Yes there is a survey. And what we do is, we look at that. It's part of our KPIs, looking at people's satisfaction - their experience with us. #5
10. Support weaknesses and gaps in provision	Because they've just been under the cosh, trying to deliver, trying to obtain sales, trying to get funding. And they don't often, put their head above the parapet, or start to take some time out to think. #1 I just wish we worked together a little bit more. Because there seems to be this real defensiveness in the charities sector and the social enterprise sector, to look after yourself, but not really to expand out and collaborate enough. And I've tried to do that in the last 6 months, without any success at all. #1 I just feel that there's a real need to share experience, to share expertise, and work together as organisations and I'm sure we could be much more potent in what we do. #1 And people just need time to reflect. People don't reflect. They just get their heads down and do. #1

	Clients do not have the time to simply go through and look at everything. #2 There's a lack of awareness often as to what is available. #2 And also nervousness…. reluctance if you like…..to borrow money. And I think sometimes it's because they're fearful that they've got a personal liability – which they've not. They might think they have to provide personal security – which they don't. Or it's just a general nervousness. #2 It's like everything is massively oversubscribed. #3 I don't know whether people see the value in paying for them [workshops]. They're not expensive. But it's people paying out for training and they've been so used to getting free training and then there's been a massive lull. #3 Even now, what 7…8 years on? I still miss Business Link and the support we could give. #3 And I'd love to see something like that again. The Third Sector is always neglected. #3

	The free support that's out there is aimed at high growth business, as always. And you don't get high growth social enterprises. #3 I know it's expensive, is face-to-face stuff, but I'm sure there could be something out there for these people. #3 Sometimes it's about getting the students to make sure that they do, do that. [Follow up with support opportunities]. #4 They can't absorb it all on the day – they need to sort of look back at it. #4 It's very difficult for us to understand how much of that change that's going on, can be attributed to our programme. #4 One of the things we do is manage scarcity and it's the scarcity of our own resources to give away. #5

	I would like to see a lot of our attention go into that end, into people who traditionally haven't had opportunities. Some people in our society have access to opportunities through their families and through their networks and other people simply don't. Class is an issue, race is an issue. #5 The interesting bit is that if you think about entrepreneurial behaviours, those people that we know that face barriers, generally are, have more entrepreneurial behaviour. So I get really interested in how we don't just work with white, educated, middle class blokes, but actually get out there to everybody else. And it's not perfect, and it's not easy, and we're not there, and we're not where we want to be. #5 There are some technical barriers to people who've got less access and experience of using IT systems. #5 I think one of our challenges is to pick and find people who want to work with us though. Because some people I think would like to come and just take the money and disappear. #5

11.7 Appendix 7 - Sample Interview Transcript Extract - Current Beneficiary

Sample Interview Transcript

Redacted Version 30th January 2020

Extract includes data utilised in Chapter 7 (Table 7.27) page 222 of final thesis

Programme Specific Questions (This gives me "WHAT WORKS "and "WHY")

The data collection interviews with the organisations so far, have given me an overview of the programmes they run. From that, I can produce a simple programme theory (type of intervention – expected outcomes) diagram to share with each interviewee. This diagram of what they have received should help with the following questions.

From the support you have received from SEEAhead, this is a diagram that represents their types of support and what they expected the benefits to you would be. Please can we discuss the following questions in relation to this diagram?

7. **What is working best for you here and why?**

Previously, it was this [pointing to Diagnostic]…it was the diagnostic. At the moment, errm…it's both of these…the [1:1] support and the referrals to associates and others. That's been very, very useful.

Researcher – OK, so in the nature of this research, I tend to ask why a lot…because that will help in the nature of understanding and outcomes…so thinking about currently…you're saying that the 1:1 support and the referrals are particularly helpful for you.

Absolutely

Researcher – Can you tell me a little bit about why?

Because it's quite specialist what I do, and it's difficult to explain what it is and how it works…which is why when I was working for the libraries, we did a 10 minute film and the Director of Public Health Kirklees is on it…and a GP…errm…so it's very difficult…and also…there are an awful lot of opportunities out there…errm. But you have to be careful. Errm…one thing I have learned is…I have been taken advantage of…people have…You know at the beginning…you sort of go and think…Oh yes, and this is what we do and we do it this way…and then…

One university. Not this one. Not Huddersfield. I went and delivered some errm…training with them and…and…gave them some various different resources…errm. And they wanted to partner up and we were supposed to be going to write an article and everything. And then…their researcher just took over…And errm…even was speaking at a conference. And you know…not as well as I could have done either…And so this is…that's one of the things that I think I've struggled with. That 'hard headed' thing…and I think I've become…

This is why 1:1 support works. Because it's that personal…sort of…errm…am I being too hard headed? Am I being too soft? You know…sort of…because when you've come from not a business background, and you're setting something up like this, errm…and particularly with having worked with the Council and Libraries, where they just…you know it's there for everybody…errm…it's that business head. And …and…learning to sort of protect yourself. Protect your ideas. Because it's difficult to share, and train…but to protect that training…the resources that you use as well. And…and …keep that specialism because we are quite unique because we work…errm…a lot with sort of BAME communities. And we've built a lot of resources around that. So…we work in lots of different ways…and it's very hard to explain.

11.8 Appendix 8 – Sample Interview Transcript Extract - Previous Beneficiary

Sample Interview Transcript

Redacted Version – 24th April 2020

Extract includes data utilised in Chapter 7 (Table 7.36) page 233 of final thesis

8. **What worked least for you at the time and why?**

The action learning didn't particularly work well for me.

Researcher: Can I ask why?

I think the quality of the facilitation, really.

The quality of the facilitation of the group. For some people in the cohort - in other groups because obviously we have small action learning groups - it was a useful space. But for our group, due to lots of reasons, the main one being the quality of the facilitation, didn't work so well, so they became quite laborious.

Researcher: So I think what you're saying, it was not so much the group – the people you were with, but more how it was facilitated. Is that right?

Yes, exactly.

Researcher: Can I dig a bit deeper? Do you think…if you were to give that facilitator some advice, what…how would it have been improved?

I think the facilitator was very newly qualified at it and so did it very much, 'by the book' and it felt very much like you were being facilitated by the book – as opposed to being listened to, and being a bit flexible.

Researcher: So with a different facilitator, but the same group, it might have been a different experience?

Yes, very much so.

11.9 Appendix 9 – Data Collection – Group 2 Questions – Combined and Categorised

Colour	Beneficiary
Black	RBC
Blue	KF
Red	SA
Grey	SSE
Yellow	UL

	Theme			
Question	**Access to Finance**	**Feelings of Self-Doubt/Lack of Specific Skills/Business Acumen**	**Other** **Like the idea of support**	**Other** **Move towards sustainability**
Why did you access start-up	To seek investment to develop a new project which needed	Because I didn't feel I knew enough to do it on my own. I	Help and support in running a social	The help from RBC came later in our journey; at a time

support?	a specific employee and some equipment I was looking for funding I was looking for funding. I needed access to finance I needed funding for essential equipment	needed a sounding board to help with evaluating ideas. Someone with current business landscape knowledge Because I haven't got a business brain I don't like administrative detail Someone with current business landscape knowledge Lack of business acumen I am risk averse I didn't see myself as an entrepreneur	enterprise I liked the idea of support package (mentor, grant, academic support)	when we wanted to move from seeking grant funding, to developing new channels about earned income

	Theme		
Question	**Financial**	**Specific Knowledge**	**Other**
What type of support did you feel you needed?	It was investment to grow and develop that we were seeking and we were quite wary of traditional banks. KF provided support and understanding of our plans too. Funding It was financial support, but also advice because they gave us a lot of information too. So it was support in advice, as well as in finance.	We wanted specific help with starting to develop new products Logistics and who to target and how to start to open doors for discussions regarding the new product Ensuring we could articulate our mission and creating profit with a purpose To understand	Not a clue! No idea whatsoever! At that first instance, it was taking whatever you could get. I had no idea what to do, I had no idea at all. I just knew I wanted to do it. It was the package of support again, but also being with other like-minded people. And to be honest, that's been the best bit.

	It was financial support I needed to buy specific equipment.	the difference between running a commercial and a social venture Legal structure Also a legal structure to support our business because at the time it was just a campaign I needed the pathway to getting it set up. I had no idea what to do, I had no idea at all. I just knew I wanted to do it.	[cohort]

	Theme			
Question	**By Chance/Serendipity**	**A Referral Process**	**Already Connected**	**Research**
How did you find that support?	It was purely by a chance meeting via the local CVS A lot of luck and being in the right place at the right time. But also telling my story to as many people as possible, building a relationship It was purely by chance It was by seeing an online opportunity that just popped up	It was initially a referral from someone I knew that had also worked with UnLtd And then a referral from a chance meeting. It was via a referral route It was a referral process that led me to them	We had previously worked with Malcolm via the Reach Fund in pulling together a business plan. So via a referral from the Reach Fund We were already connected to KF and they understood what we do	I read about SEEAhead and felt that we might work well together. I knew I needed someone that understood the social enterprise agenda

	Results	
Question	**Yes, We had support from others**	**No, just this organisation**
Was it just this support organisation you benefitted from, or did you go to others?	Yes, we went to others Yes we did approach others Not at the same time but did subsequently go to others. I have been supported by other organisations, but the process has been quite organic and developed through a lot of networking with people	We explored another couple of options, but we always knew we wanted to access Key Fund for support No Other than traditional finance lenders, this is the only support organisation we worked with

	Yes, I was also supported by UnLtd I didn't google 'support for social enterprises' but once you start attending things, you stumble upon more help Yes, I also worked with Participate Projects in Bradford	

	Results	
Question	**Within this research's organisation group**	**Outside of this research's organisational group**
If so, which others and why?	Key Fund and UnLtd The specific initiative via UnLtd, was for a project in the South West, which gave us some funding and the ability to start to develop the social	The Reach Fund via Key Fund enabled us to develop our business plan More traditional lenders Voluntary Action Leeds because I had

	model and start to develop Also accessed financial support from Key Fund because an essential piece of equipment died and needed to be replaced The School for Social Entrepreneurs Yes, I was also supported by UnLtd	worked with them in the past The Cranfield Trust have been amazing with mentors. Yes, I also worked with Participate Projects in Bradford Other than traditional finance lenders, this is the only support organisation we worked with