

The Enabling State: Where are we now?

Wales Report card assessment

July 2019

Context

Five years ago, the Carnegie UK Trust published *The Rise of the Enabling State* (Wallace, 2013). A review of over 180 policy sources, the report identified seven interconnected policy shifts evident across the UK. Together, these changes constitute a move from a *traditional* Welfare State to an *Enabling* State: a state that aims to take a whole of government approach, seeking to empower individuals and communities. Figure 1 provides an overview of these changes, detailing what each shift entails: Each is complex, interdependent and far from risk free.

Five years on from the Rise of the Enabling State, the gap between ambition and implementation feels as great as ever. The demographic and budgetary pressures on public services are continuing and increasing. The need for more personalised, responsive public services and for citizens to have a voice is stronger than ever. The failure to translate this into a reality has never been more obvious.

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About the review

The intention of this review was to identify:

- What are the significant, inspiring examples of progress – the rising stars in policy development?
- Where has progress stalled, and why?
- What are the shared challenges – where should collaborative learning focus?

To assess progress we carried out a desk based review of policy and practice developments since 2013.

To analyse developments consistently across each jurisdiction, we used a framework of indicators related to each of the seven policy shifts highlighted in *Figure 1*. The assessment framework and a full description of our methodology can be found in the full report. After reviewing developments against the indicators, we made an overall progress assessment regarding the policy area in each jurisdiction (producing a 'report card'). We have also produced an overview report drawing together the analysis across the UK.

Figure 1: The shift from Welfare State to Enabling State – the seven interconnected policy shifts



An uneven and uneasy paradigm shift

Five years on from the *Rise of the Enabling State* our review of policy developments in the four jurisdictions re-affirms our 2013 analysis: there is a paradigm shift from a Welfare State to the Enabling State, which involves seven interdependent policy areas across the UK.

There have been a number of important developments since 2013 and the policy landscape and rhetoric has moved considerably. The shift toward an Enabling State involves multiple policy areas unpicking existing structures and ways of working that is buffeted continually by external pressures and drivers. As a result, progress is uneven and non-linear.




































Overall, the challenges associated with the shift to the Enabling State are much more evident now than in 2013, particularly as the government have begun to implement



Enabling State policies. But progress has not been linear. The step changes have not occurred in all areas or in all jurisdictions.

There is a risk in this context that showing unsteady progress as clearly as we have here is viewed as evidence of failure rather than as evidence of how much has already been achieved and how to move forward.

The scale of the budgetary and demand pressures facing public services are significant and in many cases the evidence shows they are hampering and undermining transformation. These are the circumstances in which the shift to the Enabling State is taking place. We hope that this report inspires those involved in policy development and decision-making across the UK to ask what their neighbours are doing, and what they can learn from those experiences.

Table 1: UK summary

Policy Shift	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales
 1. From targets to outcomes				
 2. From top down to bottom up				
 3. From representation to participation				
 4. From silos to working together				
 5. From crisis intervention to prevention				
 6. From recipients to co-producers				
 7. From public to third sector				

Key:  Rising star  Steady progress  Green shoots  Vulnerable

1. From targets to outcomes



Current assessment

There is a strong commitment to outcomes at a national level with the introduction of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and implementation at a local level through Public Service Boards, supported by the Future Generations Commissioner. There is evidence of other frameworks linking to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The focus on wellbeing outcomes requires significant culture change which is slow to emerge.

What we hope to see

Embedding of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 into policy and spending decisions. Further cultural change and upskilling of public bodies to embed a wellbeing outcomes approach into public service outcomes and to effectively improve long-term outcomes for citizens and communities.

2. From top down to bottom up



Current assessment

There has been significant focus on local government reform, however despite the Local Government (Wales) Act 2015 and a number of reviews and consultations, no progress has been made on structural changes to local government. City region deals have been pursued in Swansea and Cardiff, but there are tensions between the traditional GDP focus of the deals and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Overall, it is unclear whether the Welsh Government is committed to localism.

What we hope to see

Clarity on local government reform, with any reforms developed in a positive and constructive way with local government.



3. From representation to participation



Current assessment

The Wales We Want Conversation was a significant participatory exercise but since then partnership has not had a strong emphasis in the implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Participation has continued at the local level with many Public Service Boards engaging with local communities on what wellbeing means to them. Participatory budgeting remains largely aspirational.

What we hope to see

A greater emphasis on community engagement and participation in the implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, participatory budgeting informing future budgets.



4. From silos to working together



Current assessment

Collaboration is a key principle of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and efforts to apply this way of working are evident at the local and national level. Despite the introduction of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, health and social care integration and delivering seamless services remain a challenge. No evidence of pooled budgeting was identified in this review.

What we hope to see

A review of governance and accountability mechanisms to facilitate budget pooling.



5. From crisis intervention to prevention



Current assessment

Wales is a global leader on sustainable development legislation and prevention sits at the heart of safeguarding the interests of future generations. Prevention is an investment and policy priority underpinned by legislation, including the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. The current focus however is largely on mid and downstream interventions with programmes focusing on health, and support for early years and families. Upstream preventative initiatives are facing funding pressures. The focus on Adverse Childhood Experiences is underpinned by a robust evidence base which has informed policy in other jurisdictions.

What we hope to see

Continued efforts to ensure that legislation focusing on prevention is demonstrated in practice, and a greater focus on upstream preventative initiatives.



6. From recipients to co-producers



Current assessment

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 provide an enabling legislative environment for transformative co-production in Wales, but this has not yet been translated into mainstream policies and practices based around transformative co-production rather than just collaboration.

What we hope to see

A development on from policies and practices that support user voice and collaboration to those that create the conditions for citizens to be equal partners in the design and delivery of services, particularly in health and social care.



7. From public to third sector



Current assessment

A policy ambition to support greater community ownership appears to have stalled and funding available to support communities to take on assets has reduced. While the Third Sector Scheme and the Third Sector Partnership Council point to an aspiration to involve the third sector more in commissioning and service delivery the funding environment is challenging and local authorities are not currently best placed to deliver this.

What we hope to see

Re-invigoration of Community Ownership in Wales, a focus on local commissioning and procurement and opportunities to involve the third sector more effectively.

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