

Reflections on civil
society from the
north of England

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The Progressive Policy
Think Tank

Defining Economic Justice

- No one living in absolute poverty
- Being treated with dignity in your economic life
- Not being excluded from economic reward
- Narrowing uneven levels of wealth and power
- No place left behind
- Looking after our natural resources - future



Parallels - NI and Northern England

- **Prominent Public sector:** an important role – investment and employment.
- **Agglomeration:** Emphasis upon city growth as 'driver of productivity' trickle-down model
- **Centralised government structure:** North of England dependent on Westminster
- **Deficit models** of people and place where policy talks about people in the abstract, language of 'lagging behind' 'underperforming'
- **Tribalism** – questions of identity and political allegiance also delineate the N.England debate.

Future of Civil Society in the North lessons to date:

1. *Changing Space between local government and civil society:*

- Austerity changing the dynamic
- Driven by local government reform and fair funding review
- Commissioning vs grants
- Civil society filling in the cracks

Future of Civil Society in the North lessons to date:

2. Awareness of economic importance of civil society

3rd sector trends
survey – proxy as to
economic impacts of
3rd sector



An 'economic powerhouse'

	North East	North
Number of TSOs	7,000	28,000
FTE employees	37,500	233,000
Value of employees (wages)	£700-900m	£4.75bn
Volunteer base (volunteer hours)	150,000 (10.8 million hours)	930,000 (66 million hours)
Replacement value of volunteering	£78m - £131m a year	£475m - £816m

Role of business

TABLE 2

Larger TSOs gain most from relationships with business
Beneficial relationships with business by organisational size

Percentage of TSOs stating of 'great' or 'some' importance	Smaller TSOs (£0– £50,000)	Medium TSOs (£50,001–£250,000)	Larger TSOs (£250,000 or more)
They give us money to help us do our work	33.5%	45.3%	43.8%
They provide free facilities to help us do our work	26.4%	30.3%	31.6%
They provide volunteers to help us do our work	16.9%	28.2%	31.9%
They provide free expert advice to help us do our work	22.1%	31.9%	39.2%
They provide free media/PR support to help our work	18.2%	25.3%	25.6%

Source: Third Sector Trends survey 2016

Future of Civil Society in the North lessons to date:

3. Devolution and implications for civil society
4. Inequality -civil society organisations in areas of social disadvantage have been hit hardest in recent years
5. Importance of collaboration and support between civil society organisations

Future of Civil Society in the North

lessons to date:

6. Role of business

- In an age of austerity, should business be doing more?
- To what extent are they engaged already
- How to make the best use of the resources/influence they have?

Thank you

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