

Research Excellence Framework: Impact pilot exercise

Example case studies from Social Work and Social Policy

November 2010

Introduction

1. This document provides some examples of case studies submitted to the impact pilot exercise that the Social Work and Social Policy panel scored highly, and that indicate good practice in terms of the pilot submissions.
2. They are presented here in a revised format to that in which they were submitted. The original template required the impact arising to be described first, followed by the underpinning research and ending with evidence for both previous sections¹.
3. The expert panels recommended that the sections in the template should be reversed, starting with a clear description of the research and justification that it is of high quality, followed by an explanation of how it led to the impact and what that impact was. It was also recommended that the references to the research should be separated from references to 'user contacts' and external sources of corroboration.
4. For the purposes of publishing these examples, therefore, we invited participating institutions to revise the case studies that had been identified as suitable for publication². A revised template and guidance were provided to ensure clear presentation of the evidence for publication. Further refinements to the template and guidance for the full REF will be made subsequently.
5. The examples published were selected from among the highest-scoring case studies submitted to the pilot, to show a range of types of impacts that were submitted, and to provide examples of good practice from among the pilot submissions.
6. The examples do not represent model case studies that should be replicated in REF submissions. As the range of published examples is intended to show, there are many and diverse ways in which impacts arise and can be described for assessment in the REF.

¹ This template can be viewed in the 'Guidance on submissions for institutions participating in the pilot' available at www.ref.ac.uk under Impact pilot exercise.

² For this we provided further guidance, 'REF impact pilot: revised case study template and guidance' (July 2010), available at www.ref.ac.uk under Impact pilot exercise.

Theory, policy and methods cluster. Evidence-based policy: Applications of methodology (University of Leeds)

1. Short summary of the case study

This case study refers to the work of one member of staff and covers applications by a range of policy agencies of the methodological work of the School. There is a long tradition of basic research in 'theory and methods' at Leeds. This work is foundational, designed to improve the way research is conducted rather than to have immediate practical implications. The thesis on 'impact' is that this body of work influenced the 'evidence based policy movement' – both in being a spur to that agenda and in contributing an influential blueprint about how policy evaluation might best be conducted. Methodological writing begun in 1994 establishing a 'realist' approach to programme evaluation, which has found its way into a variety of different policy agencies as they implemented their evidence-based policy strategies in 2005-2009. The passage of the research into the work of these agencies occurs in the form of consultancies, training package provision, partnership-research and professional exchange.

2. Underpinning research

The underpinning research was developed across a number of publications and research awards detailing the 'realist' approach to evaluation, research synthesis and evidence-based policy. This body of work is most widely credited for introducing a 'theory-driven' approach to policy evaluation – so transforming the basic question from 'what works?' to 'what works for whom in what circumstances?' The perspective has become a standard item in the programme evaluation toolkit and used to research interventions that have been implemented across the policy waterfront. The approach is designed to tackle evaluation's most pressing challenge – researching complex, multifaceted programmes set in complex, changing environments, designed to tackle complex and deep-seated problems.

Publications centre on Pawson and Tilley's (1997) *Realistic Evaluation* and Pawson's (2006) *Evidence Based Policy: A Realist Perspective*. In addition there are 14 book chapters, 26 refereed journal papers, 8 articles in professional journals/newsletters, 10 working papers, 10 research reports and one Festschrift, which add detail to the research strategy and provide practical application of the method across a range of programmes and policy domains. Selected references are provided in section 3. Almost all of this 'research on research' was supported with ESRC awards (five in all). These were personal awards and fellowships located within major ESRC investments, centres and research programmes (details are provided in section 3).

Methodological advances cannot be developed in a vacuum. Research principles become honed in practice. Accordingly, Pawson carried out a series of parallel substantive inquiries into the efficacy of a variety of ongoing UK and Canadian programmes. The interventions studied (between 1995 and 2010) include: prisoner education programmes, Megan's Law, youth mentoring and employment initiatives, urban regeneration schemes, public disclosure (naming and shaming), public health law, NHS service modernisation. Most of these involved research contracts won in competitive tender. Income from these approached £1.5m. Clients included:

- HMP Prison Service, Home Office
- Social Science and Humanities Research Council Canada
- Transport Research Laboratory

- Department of Environment, Transport and Regions
- Social Care Institute for Excellence
- The Connexions Service
- Guy's/St Thomas' Trust
- Department for Education and Skills
- Department for Children Schools and Families
- Canadian Health Service Foundation
- HNS Service Delivery Organisation

Selected details are provided in section three.

Research and writing were also supported and funded by three periods as visiting professor. These helped to provide an international footing for the research.

- La Sapienza Facolta di Sociologia, University of Rome, Italy (2005)
- University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada (2006)
- Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Australia (2007)

Save for these three short periods and a year on secondment to the ESRC Centre for Evidence Based Policy and Practice, Queen Mary, University of London, all the research was carried out at the University of Leeds. Pawson was promoted from Senior Lecturer to Reader to Professor during this period.

3. References to the research

Key Publications:

1. R Pawson and N Tilley (1997) *Realistic Evaluation* London: Sage
2. R Pawson (2002) 'Evidence and Policy and Naming and Shaming' *Policy Studies* 23(3/4) pp211-230
3. R Pawson, N Stame and A Fasenella (2003) 'Realismo E Valutazione' *Sociologia E Ricerca Sociale* N 68/69 (A special double edition of the journal)
4. R Pawson, T Greenhalgh, G Harvey, and K Walshe (2005) 'Realist review – a new method of systematic review designed for complex policy interventions' *Journal of Health Service Research & Policy* Vol. 10 (3) pp 21-34
5. R Pawson (2006) *Evidence Based Policy: A Realist Perspective* London: Sage
6. R Pawson (2006) 'Simple Principles for the evaluation of complex programmes' in A Killoran & A Kelly (eds) *Public Health Evidence*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
7. R Pawson and S Sridharan (2009) 'Theory-driven evaluation of public health programmes' In A Killoran & A Kelly (eds) *Evidence Based Public Health*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Evidence of quality:

The Google scholar citations for (1) *Realistic Evaluation* and (5) *Evidence-based Policy: A Realist Perspective* number 1979 and 272 respectively (high by social science standards). Several of the other journal papers and chapters listed exceed a hundred citations. The special edition of *Sociologia E Ricerca Sociale* (3) contains a long essay from Pawson – 'Una prospettiva realista: Politiche basate sull'evidenza empirica' pp 11-57 – followed by a festschrift on nine commentaries honouring his contribution to social science methodology. The piece (4) for the *Journal of Health Service Research & Policy* is ranked as its most cited paper. Many of the above citations go beyond 'referencing' of the monographs and take the form of empirical studies which have applied the realist approach. Over 60

such papers can be found in the area of health care policy.

Key Research Awards: Two examples are chosen, both of which led to interrelated sequences of awards. 'Track record' is one the key indicators of quality and the examples indicate in different ways how influential research agendas can be sustained:

ESRC

1995-1996 ESRC Senior Research Fellowship (£21K – replacement teaching post)

2001-2002 Visiting Senior Fellowship ESRC Centre for Evidence-based Policy and Practice, Queen Mary, University of London (£60K secondment)

2003 Senior Research Fellowship ESRC Research Methodology Initiative (£51K – replacement teaching post)

2006 ESRC/SRC(USA) Visiting Fellowship Award (\$7K travel, accommodation)

2009-2010 ESRC Follow-on-Fund Award (£120K – replacement teaching + research fellow)

Full information can be gained from ERSC website (under 'repository'). They key evidence on merit here is perhaps the longevity and continuity of these awards, covering as they do a period of 15 years. The ESRC has its own 'impact agenda', which over the years has demanded increasing user involvement. The latter Follow-on-Fund award is based on user partnerships and the building of training capacity.

<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/index.aspx>

Prisoner Education Research.

The core award here was for 'The University of Leeds / HMP Full Sutton Research Project' (1990-1998) *HMP Prison Service, Home Office* £435,000. This inquiry combined action and evaluation research, seeking to assess the progress of inmates on a Leeds University course mounted within prison walls. The key evidence of quality is again continuity. This project lead to the creation of an international research network – The International Forum on Prison Education – which gained further funding to evaluate prisoner education in Spain and Canada. The key contract was for 'A Study of Effectiveness in Prison Education' (1993-1996) *Social Science and Humanities Research Council Canada* \$176,696.

4. The contribution, impact or benefit

This research went on to have impact following the classic 'diffusion' model:

- Highly cited work is disseminated widely in presentations and workshops
- Subscribers to these events pick up implications and become users
- Users call on the originator as consultant to further develop the ideas
- Users build and develop the strategies within their own work

Dissemination activities:

Since the original paper on realist evaluation in *The British Journal of Criminology* in 1994, Pawson has made presentations on the approach at 43 international and 49 UK events. A key format here is the 'workshop' in which users are invited to consider how to apply the method in their own policy domain. Dissemination activities with *key* users are described in the following section. An indicative list of recent invited presentations to other users includes:

Learning and Skills Council UK (2007)

NHS - Institute for Innovation and Improvement (2008, 2009)

Social Welfare Ministry Finland (2009)

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Australia (2007)

Plenary addresses and pre-conference workshops were also given at the *European Evaluation Society* (2006, 2008), Australasian Evaluation Society (2007) and to the *ERSC Research Methods Festivals* (2006, 2007, 2008). The membership of Evaluation Societies typically includes policy-makers, programme practitioners, private sector auditors as well as academics.

Some key users and beneficiaries:

Institute of Health Improvement, Harvard.

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) is an independent not-for-profit organisation. Its membership consists of healthcare professionals, managers, educators and researchers. Pawson (April 2008) was invited to give a lecture of realist applications in healthcare at the IHI and a two-day workshop at Dartmouth University. This was followed by a week-long IHI 'summer camp' (Vermont, July 2009) in which senior practitioners meet to discuss the evaluation of their own improvement regimes (infection control, early response teams, etc). Research designs and strategies were put into place to be implemented over the following year. This work is evidenced in a number of publications that have already emerged from the first consultation (See Berwick, Davidoff, Ogrinc and Batalden – section 5)

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence.

Pawson has made an extended contribution to the work of NICE - being a member of its R&D Advisory Committee (2005-10) as well as a Programme Development Group (2008-9) member which developed NICE guidance on Behavioural Change Programmes. He has given lectures and workshops to their Public Health Group (2010) and appeared as an expert witness (on methodology) for a group developing guidance on unintentional injuries (2009). A requirement of the ESRC Follow-on-Fund awards is that research is carried out with a policy partner. Pawson's current project 'Research Synthesis in Action: Investigating the Utility of the Realist Approach in Supporting NICE's Public Health Guidance' follows this remit. It tests the utility of realist synthesis in exploring a relatively unexplored area for review work – namely, the efficacy of legislative interventions in public health. NICE's public health recommendations are evidence-based, rooted in rigorous reviews of existing research. Its own methods and protocols come under regular revision, especially with respect to reviewing complex interventions with a multi-faceted evidence base. The project is designed to continue this process of methodological enhancement. A NICE officer is on part-time secondment to the project, with the role of seeding these developments into NICE routines.

DfES / DCSF

A major concern of these departments is policy evaluation for youths who are NEET. Pawson was a member of a team evaluating the effectiveness of the Connexions service (2003/4). This, together with ESRC-supported work reviewing the efficacy of youth mentoring schemes, led to invitations to present at the DfES annual research conference in 2004/05. As a consequence, Pawson then undertook work acting directly as consultant to the Department in commissioning, advising and quality assuring the research of the Institute of Employment Studies team evaluating the Activity and Learning Agreement pilots (2008/9). A successful application of the method is contained in Research Report DCSF-RR122

SCIE

The Social Care Institute for Excellence is charged with providing the evidence base to guide best practice in social care. Pawson lead a research team to devise a typology of 'Types and Quality of Knowledge in Social Care'. They also advised on appropriate methods for conducting research synthesis for care interventions. The framework developed in these inquiries and training events was adopted by and is still in current use in SCIE's 'Knowledge and Research' data base *Social Care Online*.

Similar evaluations and consultancies:

- *The Kings Fund* (where Pawson is a Senior Associate and assisted in the research design on several of KF's community health action projects)
- *Home Office / Corrections Service Canada* (Pawson was a board member of The International Forum on Prison Education which gained research contracts for projects investigating the rehabilitative potential of education programmes)
- *Canadian Health Service Foundation/ HNS Service Delivery Organisation* (Pawson led a project on realist synthesis for an ongoing programme on 'Methods of Synthesis: Making it useful for evidence based management and policy making')

5. References to corroborate the contribution, impact or benefit

IHI.

A contact at IHI was provided. IHI publications advocating realist approaches include:

Berwick D (2008) The Science of Improvement *JAMA* 299(10):1182-1184

Davidoff F (2009) Heterogeneity is Not Always Noise: Lessons From Improvement *JAMA* 302(23) 2580-2586

Greg Ogrinc and Paul Batalden. (2009).Realist evaluation as a framework for the assessment of teaching about the improvement of care. *The Journal of nursing education*, 48(12):661-667

NICE.

A contact at NICE was provided, who could provide information about Pawson's involvement.

Several NICE guidance documents recommend a 'realist' approach to evidence.

See – 'The Public Health Guidance Development Process' <http://www.nice.org.uk/>

DfES / DCSF

A contact at DCSF was provided, who could provide information of Pawson's evaluation projects and consultancy.

SCIE

The contribution to SCIE's work on knowledge and research in social care is referenced at:

<http://www.scie.org.uk/research/index.asp>

CHSRF

Work for CHSRF is lodged in their 'Insight and Action - Knowledge Summaries'

http://www.chsrf.ca/other_documents/insight_action/html/ia20_e.php

Financing Long-Term Care (London School of Economics and Political Science)

1. Short summary of the case study

Changes in key socio-economic patterns (e.g. population ageing, reductions in availability of informal support, higher service unit costs) are threatening the sustainability of the public social care system. Not surprisingly, the government has been keen to identify new arrangements for funding social care that ensure a fair, efficient and affordable distribution of support in the future.

Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU) researchers in the Health and Social Care research group have used a range of modelling methods to explore present and future costs and benefits associated with alternative scenarios for social care. These are based on different assumptions about patterns of disability, service provision, unit costs and funding systems. This research has made significant contributions to the growing public debate and policy development about future funding arrangements for social care.

2. Underpinning research

The approach builds on work by Wittenberg et al. [1, 2] on the PSSRU Long-Term Care Finance Model that makes projections of future long-term care expenditures for England under a range of defined scenarios, with alternative assumptions about present and future demographic patterns, prevalence of disability, availability of informal care support, service model and costs of providing one unit of service (research income £581,074).

From that platform, and as part of a project for DG Employment and Social Affairs (VS/2001/0272), the methodology was adapted to make projections for four different countries (UK, Germany, Italy and Spain) [3, 4, 5] (research income £36,147). A version of the model was used to prepare projections for as many EU countries as possible, accounting for differences in data availability while maintaining a high level of comparability, and enabling the investigation of the impact of alternative possible future scenarios. That methodology was used in the DG Economic and Financial Affairs and the Economic Policy Committee Ageing Working Group reports on the budgetary implications of ageing [5]. Recently, PSSRU has also developed a model exploring future long-term care costs for young people with physical disabilities and for people with learning disabilities (research income £25,700) [6].

PSSRU invested significant resources to develop a dynamic microsimulation model of the health, social care and benefits systems in England. The model has been used to provide Government with quantitative estimates of the impact of alternative funding arrangements on resource use, cost and some indicators of outcome. A technical paper [7]:

- described the methods and assumptions underlying the newly-developed PSSRU dynamic micro-simulation model used for analysing long-term funding systems
- gave details of potential and actual users of care, their levels of need, and their income and assets
- detailed the system of support available, the current funding arrangements and the benefits system
- looked at costs and the degree to which population need is being met

- and gave an assessment of the current system.

Further analyses are planned which will examine in greater detail key issues for the future of social care such as likely future patterns of the prevalence of disability, availability of social care workforce in the future, and the interrelationship between social care and other related systems (e.g. health care, housing, and pension systems).

3. References to the research

1. Wittenberg, R., Pickard, L., Comas-Herrera, A., Davies, B. and Darton, R. (1998) Demand for long-term care: Projections of long-term care finance for elderly people. Kent: Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU), University of Kent.
2. Wittenberg, R., Pickard, L., Comas-Herrera, A., Davies, B. and Darton, R. (2001) Demand for long-term care for elderly people in England to 2031. *Health Statistics Quarterly*, 12, 5-16.
3. Comas-Herrera, A. and Wittenberg, R. (eds) (2003) European study of long-term care expenditure. Report to the European Commission, Employment and Social Affairs DG. PSSRU Discussion Paper 1840. London: London School of Economics and Political Affairs.
- 4 Comas-Herrera, A., Wittenberg, R., Costa-Font, J., Gori, C., Di Maio, C., Patxot, C., Pickard, L., Pozzi, A. and Rothgang, A. (2006) Future long-term care expenditure in Germany, Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom. *Ageing and Society*, 6(2), 285-302.
5. Comas-Herrera, A., Wittenberg, R. and Pickard, L. (2005) Making projections of public expenditure on long-term care for the European member states: Methodological proposal for discussion. Paper presented at the Commission-AWG-OECD workshop of 21-22 February 2005.
6. Wittenberg, R., Malley, J., Comas-Herrera, A., Fernandez, J-L., King, D., Snell, T. and Pickard, L. (2008) Future demand for social care, 2005 to 2041: Projections of demand for social care and disability benefits for younger adults in England. Report to the Strategy Unit (Cabinet Office) and the Department of Health. PSSRU Discussion Paper 2512. London: London School of Economics and Political Science.
7. Forder, J. and Fernandez, J-L. (2009) [Analysing the costs and benefits of social care funding arrangements in England: technical report](#). PSSRU Discussion Paper 2644. London: London School of Economics and Political Science.

[References 1, 2 and 4 were peer reviewed, as well as references 7 and 10 in section 5. below]

4. The contribution, impact or benefit

Our analyses have fed into the development of policies by Government and other key stakeholders. The PSSRU's pioneering projections models for long-term care expenditure have informed the 1999 Royal Commission on Long Term Care [1], the Treasury's Health Trends Review [2], the Department of Health's study of residential care supply [3], projections of demand for long-term

care for older people for the National Assembly of Wales (research income £10,000) [4], the European Commission's 2006 public expenditure projections [5], and the OECD's 2005 study of long-term care [6], which in turn have led to policy developments, thereby leading to wider public benefits.

The Wanless Social Care Review (research income £133,186) [7] of options for financing social care for older people in England, which were produced by PSSRU in 2005-2006, recommended a more universal system for financing social care and fed into the Treasury's Comprehensive Spending Review [8] and the Social Care Working Group chaired by the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Health. This review received widespread coverage across all national media, and influenced the Government's thinking in its own review of social care funding.

Research by PSSRU provided the analytical modelling for the Government's recent Green Paper on long-term care funding, *Shaping the Future of Care Together* (research income £299,758) [9]. PSSRU provided significant quantitative analytical support to the Green Paper team, using purpose-built aggregate and dynamic microsimulation models allowing the analysis of longitudinal and distributional implications of alternative funding arrangements. By using these models, PSSRU has been able to illustrate for Government the costs to the state and private individuals and associated outcomes of alternative funding models. Given the dynamic microsimulation nature of the model, it is able to explore the distributional implications of changes in the funding arrangements, and how these evolve through time.

The Green Paper considers radical reforms to the care and support system in England and proposes three possible alternative funding models. PSSRU's newly developed dynamic microsimulation model underpinned the quantitative analysis of the Green Paper, evaluating potential and actual care users, their levels of need, system costs and outcomes. In addition, PSSRU are advising the House of Commons Health Select Committee on its review of Long Term Care Funding, and have produced a WHO briefing on funding options for a European Union Ministerial Conference on the Financial Sustainability of Health Systems [10].

Further work is contributing to the development of the subsequent White Paper on care and support (research income £127,051). After many years looking for a new solution for the funding of long term care in England, it could mark a significant stepping stone toward a more universal, more efficient and more fairly distributed financial burden of caring for dependent people.

5. References to corroborate the contribution, impact or benefit

1. Great Britain Royal Commission on Long Term Care (1999) *With respect to old age: long term care - rights and responsibilities*. London: The Stationery Office.
2. Wanless, D. (2002) *Securing our future health: taking a long-term view*. London: HM Treasury.
3. Comas-Herrera, A., Wittenberg, R. and Pickard, L. (2001) *Projections of demand for residential care for older people in England to 2020, report to the Department of Health*. PSSRU Discussion Paper 1719. London: London School of Economics and Political Science.

4. Comas-Herrera, A., Wittenberg, R. and Pickard, L. (2003) Projections of demand for long-term care for older people in Wales to 2020. Report to the National Assembly for Wales. PSSRU Discussion Paper 1989. London: London School of Economics and Political Science.
5. Economic Policy Committee and European Commission (2006) The impact of aging on public expenditure: projections for the EU25 Member States on pensions, health care, long-term care, education and unemployment transfer. European Economy, Special Report No.1/2006. Luxembourg: EU Commission.
6. OECD (2005) Long-term care for older people. Paris: OECD.
7. Wanless, D., Forder, J., Fernandez, J-L., Poole, T., Beesley, L., Henwood, M. and Moscone, F. (2006) Securing good care for older people: Taking a long term view. London: Kings Fund.
8. HM Treasury (2007) 2007 Pre-budget report and comprehensive spending review: Meeting the aspirations of the British people. London: HM Treasury.
9. HM Government (2009) Shaping the future of care together. Cm 7673. London: The Stationery Office.
10. Fernandez, J-L., Forder, J., Trukeschitz, B., Rokosova, M. and McDaid, D. (2009) [How can European states design efficient, equitable and sustainable funding systems for long-term care projects for older people?](#) Copenhagen: World Health Organisation.

The Review of Public Administration in Northern Ireland (University of Ulster)

1. Short summary of the case study

The system of public administration in Northern Ireland evolved in a piecemeal fashion since the prorogation of its Parliament (Stormont) in 1972. The Good Friday Agreement 1998 and the return to devolved government created a momentum for radical public sector reform. The political landscape comprised: 3 MEPs, 18 MPs, 108 Members of the Legislative Assembly and 582 local councillors for a population of 1.8m people. In addition, a complex mosaic of government departments, agencies, local authorities, and quangos prompted the criticism that Northern Ireland was over-governed and over-administered. The Review of Public Administration was launched in June 2002 to examine the existing governance arrangements and to bring forward options for reform within an appropriate framework of political and financial accountability. Carmichael and Knox (University of Ulster) researched the origins, implementation and impacts of the Review of Public Administration on service provision in Northern Ireland. Their work influenced the reform outcomes.

2. Underpinning research

The research which underpinned the case study described here was a body of work that examined devolved government in Northern Ireland since 1999, the faltering nature of the political process which witnessed devolution suspended on four occasions, and one of the first important tasks which local politicians decided to tackle – the Review of Public Administration.

The professed aim of the Review of Public Administration was to improve the quality of public services in Northern Ireland. The job of the government-appointed review team was to significantly reduce the number of public bodies and create common boundaries – a kind of selective administrative rationalisation which excluded core elements of the Executive such as government departments.

The focus of the research project to which this case study refers involved a number of key aims:

- To examine the process leading up to the Review of Public Administration and the extent to which the Review was influenced by the wider political events (suspension of devolved government and whether British ministers exercised leverage on local politicians through the Review to negotiate the return of devolution).
- To critique the findings of the Review and whether the structural reconfiguration of governance institutions would be complemented by a programme of modernising public services.
- To assess the nature of central-local government arrangements emerging from the Review and whether these represented increased centralisation and a continued emasculated role for local government in Northern Ireland.
- To analyse proposals contained in the Review for the introduction of statutory community planning and the power of well-being in Northern Ireland and the extent to which these were endorsed by central government departments.

The research found that Northern Ireland adopted traditional restructuring or 'bureau shuffling'. Of itself, this will not lead to an improvement in the quality of public services. The reforms were disjointed with

little, if any, similarity to the modernising public services agenda in the rest of the United Kingdom. This comparison, in itself, may not be important since reforms in any particular country will almost certainly be shaped by the local context and the priorities of the politicians which are likely to vary considerably. The socio-economic, political and administrative context of Northern Ireland and the role played by elite actors undoubtedly influenced what emerged from the reform agenda. This continues. One of the key reforms in the education sector was the establishment (by January 2010) of a new Education and Skills Authority to reduce significantly the number of delivery bodies. This has proved impossible to implement because the Sinn Féin Minister responsible has been unable to secure approval from the devolved power-sharing Executive.

The key researchers on this project were:

Colin Knox, Professor of Public Policy, School of Policy Studies, University of Ulster

Paul Carmichael, Professor of Public Policy and Government, School of Policy Studies, University of Ulster.

Research across the three grants referred to (section 3) was carried out between 2000 and 2008.

3. References to the research

The ***underpinning research*** in this case study was completed through three ESRC awards as follows:

ESRC (1999): Sub-regional Governance in Northern Ireland: the future of sub-regional governance under a devolved Assembly. Researchers: Paul Carmichael, Colin Knox and Ann-Marie Gray (award reference L327253038).

ESRC (2002): Beyond Devolution: widening and deepening the new governance of Northern Ireland. Researchers: Paul Carmichael and Colin Knox (award reference: L219252108).

ESRC (2007): Modernising Local Government in Northern Ireland. Researchers: Paul Carmichael and Colin Knox (award reference RES-172-25-0013).

Key Research Outputs

Carmichael and Knox's research was judged by the ESRC end of research peer-review process to be 'outstanding'. In addition, there were a number of publications in peer-reviewed journals, edited book, and research monograph, a selection of which from 2005 onwards are:

Knox, C. and Carmichael, P. (2005) 'Devolution - The Northern Ireland Way: An Exercise in Creative Ambiguity', *Government and Policy* (Environment and Planning Series C) Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 63-83.

Knox, C. (2005) 'Community Planning in Northern Ireland: Participative Democracy in Practice?' pp. 289-300 in M. McEldowney, M. Murray, B. Murtagh and K. Sterrett (eds.) *Planning in Ireland and Beyond*, Belfast: Queens University.

Knox, C. and Carmichael, P. (2005) 'Improving Public Services: Public Administration Reform in Northern Ireland', *Journal of Social Policy*, Vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 97 – 120.

Carmichael, P. and Knox, C. (2005) 'The Reform of Public Administration in Northern Ireland: From Principles to Practice', *Political Studies*, Vol. 53, No. 4, pp. 772 – 792.

Knox, C. and Carmichael, P. (2006) 'Bureau Shuffling? The Review of Public Administration in Northern Ireland' *Public Administration*, Vol. 84, No. 4, 2006, pp. 941 – 965.

Carmichael, P., Knox, C. and Osborne, R. (2007) (eds.) *Devolution and Constitutional Change in Northern Ireland*, 2007. Manchester: Manchester University Press 302 pp.

Knox, C. (2007) 'Symbolism or Substance? The Mayoralty in Northern Ireland' pp 47 – 62 in J. Garrard (ed.) *Heads of Local State: International Perspectives in Mayoralty, c. 1800 – 2000*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishers.

Knox, C. (2008) 'Policy Making in Northern Ireland: Ignoring the Evidence', *Policy & Politics*, Vol. 36 (3), pp. 343 – 359.

Knox, C. (2009) 'The Politics of Local Government Reform in Northern Ireland', *Local Government Studies*, Vol. 35 (4), pp. 435 – 455.

Knox, C. (2010) *Devolution and the Governance of Northern Ireland*. Manchester: Manchester University Press 300 pp.

4. The contribution, impact or benefit

We discuss the potential impact of the Review of Public Administration in the first instance and then the reach and significance of **our** research on the outcomes of the Review.

The expectations of the Review of Public Administration were enormous. Without question the structure of public administration in Northern Ireland will benefit from this rationalisation process, if only in helping the public to manoeuvre their way around the public sector maze. The Review estimated potential savings of between £150 - £235m resulting from the changes and argued that these resources will be redirected into front-line services. Conveniently this allows for limited transparency in the outcomes of the Review (savings are absorbed) and hence the most obvious expression of its 'success' is reducing the number of public bodies. What is on offer, however, under the guise of comprehensive reform and strong local government, amounts to little more than tinkering at the margins – bureau shuffling writ large. The outworkings of the Review of Public Administration has, and will continue, to impact on all of the public sector in Northern Ireland (220,000 people or 31% of the workforce) notwithstanding the initial lack of involvement of civil service departments.

The impact of **our research** was to constantly hold the reformers to account against claims made that structural reform (e.g. reorganising health, education, and local government) would lead inexorably to better quality public services in Northern Ireland. Instead, reforms became part of a wider political struggle some of which remain unresolved and have tested the effective working of the Northern Ireland power-sharing Executive.

The **reach** of the impacts is difficult to quantify but we assert that our challenge role influenced the findings of the public consultation process into the Review of Public Administration and its subsequent implementation. Since the roll-out of the Review affects key public services in, for example, education, health, and housing, the potential reach is enormous.

The **significance** of the impacts, or how much difference it has made to beneficiaries, is listed as follows:

- By challenging from the outset the premise of the Review of Public Administration, in particular, why government departments were excluded from the review process, it has led to proposals to reduce the number of government departments.
- By contributing to the public consultation and subsequent policy debate on the proposed number and powers of reorganised local government, the final recommendations for reform have changed accordingly.
- By acting as academic advisors to a reform task force, the research has shaped the model for regulating central-local government relations in the future.
- By conducting the first pilot exercise on community planning in a local authority the research has been used as a benchmark to roll-out this process across Northern Ireland.
- By providing academic advice to two key non-departmental public bodies (Local Government Staff Commission and Northern Ireland Housing Council) earmarked for abolition under the Review, their futures have been secured.

Attribution and other significant factors: It will always be difficult to establish a direct cause and effect relationship between research conducted and impacts on public policy. There is however a cumulative body of evidence (sections 3 & 5) that demonstrates how Carmichael and Knox's research was, and continues to be, an independent source of data which had significant influence in a highly political milieu.

The Review of Public Administration was initiated in 2002 by the devolved administration at the behest of locally elected ministers. Given the instability associated with the wider political settlement in Northern Ireland, the Assembly was suspended four times during the period between December 1999 and March 2007 until the St Andrew's Agreement (2006) resulted in a power sharing Executive. The Review of Public Administration became embroiled in these wider political machinations with British (direct rule) Ministers pushing ahead with public sector reforms against the will of local representatives and 'threatening' them to strike a macro political deal or live with the consequences of their imposed reforms ('like it or lump it' approach). In this political charged environment Carmichael and Knox were able to provide evidenced-based advice to politicians and senior government officials without the wider constraints of these macro political developments. In short, their advice was valued and influenced the unfolding Review of Public Administration.

The evidence of impacts and indicators are outlined in table 1 below.

Table 1: The Review of Public Administration – research impacts			
Key activity areas	Impacts	Evidence	Impact Indicators
Reform of civil service	Proposals in place to reduce the number of government departments by the DUP – the lead party in government	DUP policy document <i>Driving Forward a Reform Agenda</i> (November 2008)	<p>A range of indicators have underpinned this research across all 5 areas. These are not disaggregated by each of the key activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research referred to in NI Assembly debates. • Oral and written presentations to Assembly statutory committees. • Acted as academic advisors to policy makers' task force. • Funding obtained under <i>Knowledge Transfer</i> ESRC initiative. • Participation in practitioners' workshop on 'Relationship between research and policy making' using this case study as an exemplar.
Reform of local government	Changes in original recommendations for local government reform: from 7 to 11 councils with additional functions	Ministerial announcement on new proposals for local government (13 th March 2008)	
Central-local relations	New model to regulate central-local relations which will have statutory endorsement	Report of Task Force to Department of Environment on Central Local Relations (June 2006)	
Community planning	Pilot community plan provides benchmark for roll-out across Northern Ireland	Omagh District Council Community Plan 2007-2010	
Reform of non-departmental public bodies	Retention of 2 non-departmental public bodies threatened with abolition	Continued operation of Local Government Staff Commission and NI Housing Council (2007-08)	

5. References to corroborate the contribution, impact or benefit

Verification – some examples:

1. Briefing paper on public sector reform to the Review of Public Administration Team, Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: http://www.rpani.gov.uk/public_service_reform.pdf

2. Briefing paper on multi-level governance to the Review of Public Administration Team, Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: http://www.rpani.gov.uk/multi-level_governance.pdf
3. Briefing paper on local government representation to the Review of Public Administration Team, Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: http://www.rpani.gov.uk/local_government_representation.pdf
4. Oral evidence to Committee of the Centre, Northern Ireland Assembly: <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/centre/evidence/moe020410.htm>
5. Committee of the Centre, Northern Ireland Assembly, debate on the Review of Public Administration: <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/centre/evidence/moe020508.htm>
6. The Transitional Assembly, debate on the Review of Public Administration: <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/transitional/plenary/061205.htm>
7. Written evidence to the Committee of the Environment, Northern Ireland Assembly on Review of Public Administration: <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/environment/2007mandate/minutes/071122.htm>
8. Debate in the Northern Ireland Assembly on final stage of local government legislation: Local Government (Boundaries) Bill: <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/record/reports2007/080512.htm>
9. Northern Ireland Assembly Research Paper on Review of Public Administration: <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/io/research/0702.pdf>
10. ESRC Key Findings publication on modernising local government in Northern Ireland: http://www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/Images/IMPACT%20GRANT%20-%20CARMICHAEL%20hi-res_tcm6-31845.pdf

Contacts were provided at the following user/beneficiary organisations:

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Northern Ireland Local Government Association

Local Government Staff Commission

Omagh District Council

Child Support Research and Policy Impacts (University of York)

1. Short summary of the case study

The Child Support Policy directed that all lone parents in receipt of social security benefits were automatically referred to the Child Support Agency. The policy was set up without any previous research and proved to be seriously flawed, failing in its objective to make more men pay and pay higher amounts of child maintenance. The cost of failure was high with arrears and IT system costs totalling £4.5 billion by the late 2000s.

The body of research we produced had a direct influence on the Government policy making process, resulting in the disbanding of the CSA in 2006-07 and the return of decision-making process about child maintenance back into the hands of separated parents. This has had a significant impact on all separated parents who use the service and their relationships and may result in more parents making willing payments of child maintenance.

2. Underpinning research

The underpinning body of research was:

- The first ever national survey of Non-resident Fathers in Britain undertaken by Bradshaw (1993-current Professor), Skinner (1995 Research Assistant, [1996-98 PhD student], 1997-99 Research Assistant, 1999-2000 Research Fellow, 2000-08 Lecturer, 2008-current Snr Lecturer), Stimson and Williams between 1995-1999. This was funded by the ESRC as one project (L315 25 3005) in the Population and Household Change Programme. This study was unique and of high quality, gaining a sample of over 600 non-resident fathers.
- A qualitative in-depth study of non-resident fathers exploring the processes through which fathers might make a commitment to pay child maintenance undertaken by Skinner. This was funded by the ESRC as a PhD for Skinner (1996-1998).
- A secondary Analysis of the Families and Children Study undertaken by Skinner and Meyer (visiting Professor from University of Wisconsin) summer of 2006. Not externally funded, but supported by the Department of Social Policy and Social Work. The analysis found that child maintenance payments helped low income mothers; even though only a minority actually received any child maintenance, when they did it made up on average between a third and half of their total income package. This research indicated to policy makers that it was appropriate for the new policy framework to focus on ways to make child maintenance payments reliable among low income lone mother families.
- An international survey of child maintenance experts from 14 countries to examine and compare their child maintenance systems. Undertaken by Skinner, Bradshaw and Davidson (2005-current Research Fellow) in 2006. This was funded by the DWP and informed the redesign of child maintenance policy taking place between 2006 and 2007. It was an expanded and updated study of the original work done by Anne Corden (1993-current Snr Research Fellow) in our Social Policy Research Unit 1999.

Summary of research findings:

Prior to our research, no one knew how many non-resident parents (NRPs) there were, how

many children might be affected by the Child Support Policy or in what ways. Our national survey of non-resident fathers estimated the size of this population and described the patterns of child maintenance payments, the provision of other forms of financial/social support and the factors that might affect provision. The evidence we gathered showed that the policy principles were out of line with the way separated parents operated their financial obligations and family relationships. Financial obligations were entwined with social and emotional bonds with children. Where these did not exist (or were thwarted) the enforcement of an obligation to pay cash to the other parent maintenance was unacceptable to NRP and seen as being unfair. Unlike the stereotype of feckless disinterested fathers embedded within policy, our research showed that post-separation obligations were fraught and complex. It was difficult for parents to work out the 'right thing to do'; they needed supportive policy making not stigmatising.

3. References to the research

- Bradshaw, J. 'Fathers Apart in Britain' ESRC Grant L315253005, 01/01/1995-30/04/1997, £103,218.00.
- Bradshaw, J., Stimson, C., Skinner, C. and Williams, J., (1999) *Absent Fathers?*, London: Routledge.
- Bradshaw, J., Stimson, C., * Skinner, C., and Williams J.,(1999) 'Non Resident Fathers in Britain' in McRae, S. (ed.) *Changing Britain: families and households in the 1990s*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. Peer reviewed as part of outputs for ESRC programme.
- Bradshaw, J. and Skinner, C. (2000) Child Support: the British fiasco, *Focus*, 21, No. 1, 2000, 80-86. Peer reviewed at publication stage.
- Corden, A. (1999) *Making Child Maintenance Regimes Work*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- Skinner, C., (1999) *The financial obligations of non-resident fathers and the implications for social policy*, DPhil Thesis, University of York. Peer reviewed at grant application stage for ESRC competition for PhD funding.
- Skinner, C. and Bradshaw, J. (2000) Non-resident fathers, child support and contact, *Benefits*, 27, 2000, 5-8. Peer reviewed at publication stage.
- Skinner, C. and Meyer, D. (2006) After all the policy reform, is child support actually helping low-income mothers?, *Benefits*, 14, 2006, 209-223. Peer reviewed at publication stage.
- Skinner, C., Bradshaw, J. and Davidson, J., (2007) *Child Support Policy: an international perspective*, Research Report No. 405, Department of Work and Pensions, Leeds: Corporate Document Services, pp. 211, 2007. Peer reviewed at grant application stage.
- Skinner, C. and Davidson, J. (2009) Recent Trends In Child Maintenance Schemes In 14 Countries, in *International Journal of Law, Policy and the Family*, 23, January 2009, 25-52. Peer reviewed at publication stage.

4. The contribution, impact or benefit

The Child Support Policy was set up without any previous research and insisted that child maintenance should be enforced regardless of the state of family relationships. Policy made no allowance for the complex interconnections between the social/emotional relationship with children and the other parent and the financial obligations of non resident parents. Our research highlighted this was extremely important and integral to making commitments to pay maintenance. Consequently, the CSA failed in its objectives to make more men pay and pay

higher amounts of child maintenance. This was despite, and because of, numerous new Acts and changes in operational procedures that further complicated an already unacceptable policy framework to NRPs. The costs of failure was high; in 2005-06 every £1 of child maintenance collected cost the state £0.78p, arrears reached £3.5 billion, and the total costs of the IT systems were around £1 billion (NAO 2009). The policy failed to increase the proportion of lone parents receiving child maintenance (which remained about a third 1991- 2006). The negative impact on separated families' relationships is not quantifiable, but plenty of evidence suggested that the CSA increased parental conflict.

The research we produced in 1999 had a direct influence on the Government policy making process. The CSA was disbanded in 2006-07 and child maintenance decisions were moved back into the hands of separated parents, this was a massive sea-change affecting the whole population of non-widowed lone parents, the other parent (non-resident) and all dependent children. In 2008, the Office of National Statistics estimated that there were 3.3 million dependent children with a non-resident parent in Great Britain. These parents were now free to choose whether or not to use the 'child maintenance collection and enforcement system' (CMEC) or seek advice through their 'Child Maintenance Options' service. The options service is more conciliatory in approach and the stigmatising has gone. Returning decisions to parents was one of the key recommendations from our earlier research evidence; policy needed a non-stigmatising and more helpful approach to increase the number of willing payers of child maintenance (Bradshaw et al 1999).

The influence of our research affects all separated parents and consequently all of the dependent children who live with one non-widowed lone parent, estimated at 30% of all dependent children in the UK. Its influence is shown in three ways: 1) Skinner was invited by both voluntary sector organisations and policy makers to join an exclusive policy network to debate the new policy framework and the future direction of the DWP's research programme; 2) our recommendations were adopted as policy; 3) our research was used by voluntary organisations to influence both the new policy design in these debates and the approach taken by the Child Maintenance Options service.

Skinner's involvement included:

- Invited by the DWP to a private 'Child Support Policy Academic Research Seminar', 2006.
- Invited by One Parent Families to five exclusive high-level policy seminars to inform Sir David Henshaw's review on Child Support Policy, 2006
- Invited by Fathers Direct to a private meeting with Sir David Henshaw to discuss the Child Support Policy Review, Cabinet Office, 2006.
- Research (Skinner and Meyer 2006) was quoted in the White Paper (DWP 2006:105).
- Appointed as Specialist Advisor to the House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee, Investigation of Child Support Reforms, January - March 2007. (HC 219, 2007).
- Invited by the Child Maintenance Re-Design Team of the DWP to a private seminar entitled '*Child maintenance redesign: research seminar*', CIPFA, 2007.
- Invited to give a paper on '*Understanding 'willingness to pay' Child Maintenance*' at a high-level policy seminar chaired by Lord Archy Kirkwood - 'Relationship Breakdown and Child Maintenance, 2008, organised by One Parent Families.

The research work of Skinner also influenced the DWP's child maintenance research plans as follows:

- DWP funded Skinner et al to conduct a new international research project to inform the new policy redesign (Skinner et al 2007; DWP 2007).
- Skinner was employed as academic consultant for the DWP's first ever *Quantitative Survey on Relationship Breakdown*, 11/2006 – 12/2007 (Wikeley et al 2008).
- Skinner appointed as expert consultant to CMEC's first research project '*Promotion of Child Maintenance: Research on Instigating Behaviour Change*' 2009 (report pending).

Skinner also employed as academic consultant for the DWP's first baseline survey of separated parents under the new policy framework, November 2009-Feb 2010.

5. References to corroborate the contribution, impact or benefit

Contacts were provided at the following user/beneficiary organisations:

Gingerbread

NatCen - (Head Office)

House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee

DWP (2006) *A new System of Child Maintenance*, Norwich: TSO (see pages 94 and 105).

DWP (2007) *A new System of Child Maintenance, Summary of Responses To Consultation*, Norwich: TSO (see pages 10, para 1.8; pages 90 paras B.7, B.8, B.9 and page 95).

Gingerbread (previously One Parent Families) *Relationship Breakdown and child maintenance: Creating a successful child maintenance system* Seminar 2.10.08
<http://www.gingerbread.org.uk>

House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee (2007) *Child Support Reform, Fourth Report of Session 2006-07*, London: TSO (see page 7, reference on page 42).

Wikeley, N. Ireland, E. Bryson, C. and Smith, R. (2008) *Relationship separation and child support study* Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No 503, Norwich: TSO.

Bradshaw, J. and Skinner, C., 'Memorandum to the House of Commons Social Security Committee' in House of Commons, HC 798, *The 1999 Child Support White Paper*, Social Security Committee Tenth Report, Session 1998-1999, London: The Stationary Office, pp. 133-139, September 1999.

Skinner, C. (2007) *Putting Children First?* Online briefing paper for Parliamentary Brief, London:
<http://www.thepolitician.org/articles/putting-children-545.html>

The Impact of Research on Child Well-Being (University of York)

1. Short summary of the case study

Since the 1980s we have been engaged in a programme of pioneering research on child well-being. It has included comparative analysis of child poverty, the first “state of children” reports produced in Britain, the development of multidimensional comparative indices of child well-being at national and small area level. The work on child poverty and deprivations influenced UK and EU measures of child poverty and the well-being measures have been adopted by international agencies including UNICEF and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

For the first time, policy makers in the UK could see how UK children stood in comparison with other countries. Our research highlighted how poor Britain’s rates of child poverty and child well-being were and, informed by this evidence, a Government strategy was developed that included targets and monitoring using multidimensional indicators. Our work has influenced the unprecedented developments in social policy for children in the last decade.

The evidence is that, as a result, child poverty and well-being has been improving in the UK. More generally, our work has contributed to taking the national and international discourse beyond income poverty

2. Underpinning research

We started to research the impact of child poverty in Britain when levels of poverty more than doubled during the recession of the 1980s. In summary, there are three elements to the research which we can claim were new, pioneering or original and have made an impact.

1. Three books on child well-being in the UK were the first “state of children” reports produced in Britain and the first to use a multi-dimensional framework.
2. We were the first to populate a multidimensional comparative index with data and to produce indices for different sets of countries. For the first time policy makers in the UK could see how UK children stood in comparison with those from other countries.
3. We developed robust measures of deprivation-based child poverty subsequently adopted by both UK and international government agencies.

In 1994 UNICEF, concerned about rising child poverty rates in rich countries, decided to commission a series of national case studies. Jonathan Bradshaw (1993 – current Professor) wrote the UK case. In 1995 the ESRC launched the 5-16 initiative and Bradshaw successfully bid to develop that work with a project entitled *Poverty: the outcomes for children*. That resulted in a book and articles which sought to trace the impact that rising child poverty in the previous two decades had had on the outcomes for children. One of the recommendations of that work was that we needed to monitor the state of Britain’s children and York researchers suggested that the Office for National Statistics might take this on. When they demurred at the launch of the book, Save the Children suggested that Jonathan Bradshaw should do it and this resulted in two books in 2002 and

2005 reviewing the well-being of children in the UK. For these books we began to produce comparative evidence on poverty and well-being and when, during the Luxembourg Presidency of the EU, a report was produced calling for children to become mainstream within the Lisbon strategy and the Laeken Indicators, we produced a comparative analysis of child well-being in the EU25 for the UK presidency which followed. When UNICEF learned that we were doing this work they asked us to do it for the OECD countries (included Richardson, D, 2005-2007, Research Assistant). They also commissioned us to do it for the CEE/CIS countries and later we updated the original comparisons to the EU 29 and the Pacific Rim. We also used the same methodology to compare child well-being in England at small area level in a project for the Department of Communities and Local Government.

3. References to the research

Bradshaw, J.R., Holmes, H. and Hallerod, B. (1997) 'Adapting the consensual definition of poverty', pp 168-190 in Gordon, D. and Pantazis, C. *Breadline Britain in the 1990s*, Ashgate: Aldershot.

Bradshaw, J. (1997) 'Child welfare in the United Kingdom: rising poverty, falling priorities for children', pp 210-232 in Cornia, G.A. and Danziger, S. (eds), *Child Poverty and Deprivation in the Industrialised Countries, 1945-1995*, Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Bradshaw, J. (eds.) (2001) *Poverty: The Outcomes For Children*, Family Policy Studies Centre: London Order online through the National Children's Bureau <http://www.ncb-books.org.uk>

Bradshaw, J. (ed.) (2002) *The Well-being of Children in the UK*, Save the Children: London.

Bradshaw, J. and Mayhew, E. (eds) (2005) *The Well-being of Children in the United Kingdom*, London: Save the Children.

Bradshaw, J., Hoelscher, P. and Richardson, D. (2007) An index of child well-being in the European Union 25, *Journal of Social Indicators Research*, 80, 133-177.
<http://springerlink.metapress.com/content/f3642p2x00hn5h01/fulltext.pdf>

Bradshaw, J. Hoelscher, P. and Richardson, D. (2007) Comparing Child Well-being in OECD Countries: Concepts and Methods, IWP 2006-03. Florence:UNICEF.
http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/pdf/iwp2006_03_eng.pdf

Richardson, D. Hoelscher, P. and Bradshaw, J. (2008) Child well-being in Central and Eastern European Countries (CEE) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), *Child Ind. Res.* 1: 211-250.

Bradshaw, J. and Richardson, D. (2009) An index of child well-being in Europe, *J. Child Indicators Research*, 2, 3, 319.

Bradshaw J, Noble M, Bloor K, Huby M, McLennan D, Rhodes D, Sinclair I, Wilkinson K. (2009) A Child Well-Being Index at Small Area Level in England, *J. Child Indicators Research* 2, 2, 201-219.

Supporting grants:

- ESRC 5-16 Programme Poverty the Outcomes for Children
- Save the Children (UK) The well-being of children in the UK

- UNICEF Innocenti Centre The well-being of children in Rich Countries
- Department of Communities and Local Government- The well-being of children and small area level in England

4. The contribution, impact or benefit

Our early research highlighted how poor Britain's rates of child poverty were. In 1999, informed by this evidence, Tony Blair declared that it was the Government's intention to eradicate child poverty within 20 years. A strategy was developed which included targets and monitoring using multidimensional indicators in the *Opportunity for all* series (the Government's annual report on poverty and social exclusion, started in 1999). The Department for Work and Pensions adopted a third tier (deprivation based) child poverty measure, which was directly influenced by the Poverty and Social Exclusion study we had been involved in.

In 2007, a UNICEF report written by York academics entitled *Child Poverty in Perspective: An overview of child well-being in rich countries*, found the UK at the bottom of the international league table. This provoked public outcry and enormous media interest and the report is still regularly referred to in the discourse on children. (This is substantiated by a review of the press coverage that UNICEF prepared and a list of the speaking engagements undertaken by Jonathan Bradshaw for at least the following two years).

Taken together, our work has influenced the unprecedented developments in social policy for children in the last decade. Child well-being has become a major domestic issue, politically and for society. In 2001 the Children and Young Person's Unit was established within the Department for Education and Skills and in *Building a Strategy for Children and Young People* began to develop what became the Every Child Matters framework. A Minister for Children was appointed, and an independent Children's Commissioner. Later, a new Department of State was established with Children at the front of its name. Currently, a Child Poverty Unit has been established within the Department for Children, Schools and Families dedicated to meeting the 2020 child poverty targets, and those targets will be enshrined in legislation in the Child Poverty Act 2010. There is a plan to establish an expert child poverty commission, the strategy will be refreshed every three years, and there is to be an annual report to Parliament outlining progress on the targets, implementation and impact of the strategy, and progress on the outcomes of poor children and their families.

There has also been action in other domains of child well-being, including a child health strategy, Healthy Lives, Brighter Future and reviews of child and adolescent mental health services, bullying and behaviour in schools and a number of reports on child protection, including the Staying Safe Action Plan.

The evidence is that, as a result of these initiatives, child well-being has been improving in the UK. Child poverty has fallen since 1998. Most child health indicators have improved. Educational attainment has improved and gaps have narrowed. Participation rates have improved. There is good evidence that the housing conditions of children have got better and that homelessness has fallen. Our work has contributed to all of these outcomes.

More generally, our work has contributed to taking the national and international discourse beyond income poverty. Child well-being is now a preoccupation of the DCSF and British NGOs, international organisations, such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), UNICEF and the European Union. Indeed, both the European Commission and the OECD are now publishing deprivation based poverty measures and multi-dimensional well-being indicators that we espoused.

5. References to corroborate the contribution, impact or benefit

Evidence of impact and influence of our research is demonstrated by the fact that Jonathan Bradshaw was invited to participate in the following activities as a direct result of the body of research undertaken:

2003-	Advisor to the House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee on Child Poverty
2003-	Member of the DWP Technical Working Group on Measuring Child Poverty
2005-	UK expert on the EU panel of experts on Social Inclusion
2006-	Member of the JRF Technical Group on a Strategy for Child Poverty
2006-	Member of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Child Poverty
2007-	Member of the Board of the International Society for Child Indicators
2008-	Honorary Research Fellow, Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa

Contact details were provided at the following user/beneficiary organisations:

- UNICEF
- The Children's Society
- Save the Children